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| **Esnoga Bet Emunah****4544 Highline Dr. SE****Olympia, WA 98501****United States of America****© 2015**[**http://www.betemunah.org/**](http://www.betemunah.org/)**E-Mail:** **gkilli@aol.com** | **Menorah 5** | **Esnoga Bet El****102 Broken Arrow Dr.****Paris TN 38242****United States of America****© 2015**[**http://torahfocus.com/**](http://torahfocus.com/)**E-Mail:** **waltoakley@charter.net** |

**Triennial Cycle (Triennial Torah Cycle) / Septennial Cycle (Septennial Torah Cycle)**

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| **Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings** | **Third Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle** |
| **Sivan 05, 5775 – May 22/23, 2015** | **Seventh Year of the Shmita Cycle** |

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:**

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| **Amarillo, TX, U.S.**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 8:32 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 9:34 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 9:34 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 9:35 PM | **Austin & Conroe, TX, U.S.**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 8:04 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 9:03 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 9:04 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 9:04 PM | **Brisbane, Australia**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 4:46 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 5:41 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 5:40 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 5:40 PM |
| **Chattanooga, & Cleveland, TN, U.S.**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 8:25 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 9:27 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 9:28 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 9:29 PM | **Manila & Cebu, Philippines**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 6:01 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 6:53 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 6:54 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 6:54 PM | **Miami, FL, U.S.**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 7;45 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 8:41 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 8:42 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 8:42 PM |
| **Murray, KY, & Paris, TN. U.S.**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 7:43 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 8:47 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 8:48 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 8:49 PM | **Olympia, WA, U.S.**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 8:31 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 9:47 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 9:48 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 9:50 PM | **Port Orange, FL, U.S.**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 7:55 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 8:53 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 8:54 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 8:54 PM |
| **San Antonio, TX, U.S.**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 8:05 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 9:04 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 9:04 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 9:05 PM | **Sheboygan & Manitowoc, WI, US**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 7:59 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 9:10 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 9:11 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 9:12 PM | **Singapore, Singapore** Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 6:49 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 7:40 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 7:40 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 7:40 PM |
| **St. Louis, MO, U.S.**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 7:54 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 8:59 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 9:00 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 9:01 PM | **Tacoma, WA, U.S.**Fri. May 22 2015 – Candles at 8:30 PM**Eve First day of Shabuoth**Sat. Mat 23 2015 – Candles at 9:46 PM**Eve Second day of Shabuoth**Sun. May 24 2015 – Candles at 9:47 PM**Holiday ends:**Mon. May 25 2015 – Hab.. at 9:49 PM |  |
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**For other places see:** [**http://chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp**](http://chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp)

**Roll of Honor:**

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David and beloved wife HH Giberet Batsheva bat Sarah

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

His Honor Paqid Adon David ben Abraham

His Honor Paqid Adon Ezra ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Karmela bat Sarah,

His Honor Paqid Adon Yoel ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Rivka bat Dorit

His Honor Paqid Adon Tsuriel ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Gibora bat Sarah

Her Excellency Giberet Sarai bat Sarah & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Barth Lindemann & beloved family

His Excellency Adon John Batchelor & beloved wife

Her Excellency Giberet Laurie Taylor

Her Excellency Giberet Gloria Sutton & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Gabriel ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Elisheba bat Sarah

His Excellency Adon Yehoshua ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Rut bat Sarah

Her Excellency Giberet Prof. Dr. Emunah bat Sarah & beloved family

Her Excellency Giberet Patricia Sand

His Excellency Adon El-Adamah Ruach

Her Excellency Giberet Lydia Ruach

Her Excellency Giberet Anternette Clabon

Her Excellency Giberet Rosalyn Reed

Her Excellency Giberet Shanique Scipio

Her Excellency Giberet Olette Jennings

His Excellency Adon Ernest Davis

Her Excellency Giberet Claudine Johnson

Her Excellency Giberet Veronica Lagrone

Her Excellency Giberet Misty Freeman

Her Excellency Giberet Erma Dupree

**For their regular and sacrificial giving, providing the best oil for the lamps, we pray that G-d’s richest blessings be upon their lives and those of their loved ones, together with all Yisrael and her Torah Scholars, amen ve amen!**

**Also a great thank you and great blessings be upon all who send comments to the list about the contents and commentary of the weekly Torah Seder and allied topics**.

**If you want to subscribe to our list and ensure that you never lose any of our commentaries, or would like your friends also to receive this commentary, please do send me an E-Mail to** **benhaggai@GMail.com** **with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!**

**Shabbat “Ki HaAretz, Asher” - “For the land which”**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Shabbat** | **Torah Reading:** | **Weekday Torah Reading:** |
| **כִּי הָאָרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר** |  | **Saturday Afternoon** |
| **“Ki HaAretz, Asher”** | Reader 1 – D’barim 11:10-12 | Reader 1 – D’barim 12:20-22 |
| **“For the land which”** | Reader 2 – D’barim 11:13-21 | Reader 2 – D’barim 12:23-25 |
| **“Porque la tierra a la cual”** | Reader 3 – D’barim 11:22-25 | Reader 3 – D’barim 12:26-28 |
|  | Reader 4 – D’barim 11:26-29 |  |
| D’barim (Deut.) 11:10 – 12:19 | Reader 5 – D’barim 11:30-32 | **Monday & Thursday****Mornings** |
| Psalm 119:49-72 | Reader 6 – D’barim 12:1-10 | Reader 1 – D’barim 12:20-22 |
| Ashlam.: I Kings 21:2-4,7-8,11-13,17-18 | Reader 7 – D’barim 12:11-19 | Reader 2 – D’barim 12:23-25 |
| P. Abot 4:12 |  Maftir – D’barim 12:17-19 | Reader 3 – D’barim 12:26-28 |
| N.C.: Mark 14:55-65;Lk 22:63-71; Rm 11:17-24 | I Kings 21:2-4,7-8,11-13,17-18 |   |

**Counting of the Omer**

**Friday Evening May 22, 2015**

**Evening: Counting of the Omer Day 49**

**Then read the following:**

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| **Day of the Omer** | **Ministry** | **Date** | **Ephesians** | **Attributes** |
| **49** | **Moreh/Moreh** | **Sivan 5** | **6:23-24** | **House of the Presence – Teacher****Virtue: Humility****Ministry: Meturgeman/ Moreh /Zaqen (Interpreter/Teacher/Elder)** |

**Ephesians 6:23-24 Shalom[[1]](#footnote-1) to the brothers, and love[[2]](#footnote-2) with faithful obedience,[[3]](#footnote-3) from G-d the Father and the master Yeshua HaMashiach. Chesed be with all those who love our master Yeshua HaMashiach[[4]](#footnote-4) in sincerity. Amen ve Amen.**

**Blessings Before Torah Study**

**Blessed are You, Ha-Shem our G-d, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us through Your commandments, and commanded us to actively study Torah. Amen!**

**Please Ha-Shem, our G-d, sweeten the words of Your Torah in our mouths and in the mouths of all Your people Israel. May we and our offspring, and our offspring's offspring, and all the offspring of Your people, the House of Israel, may we all, together, know Your Name and study Your Torah for the sake of fulfilling Your delight. Blessed are You, Ha-Shem, Who teaches Torah to His people Israel. Amen!**

**Blessed are You, Ha-Shem our G-d, King of the universe, Who chose us from all the nations, and gave us the Torah. Blessed are You, Ha-Shem, Giver of the Torah. Amen!**

**Ha-Shem spoke to Moses, explaining a Commandment. "Speak to Aaron and his sons, and teach them the following Commandment: This is how you should bless the Children of Israel. Say to the Children of Israel:**

**May Ha-Shem bless you and keep watch over you; - Amen!**

**May Ha-Shem make His Presence enlighten you, and may He be kind to you; - Amen!**

**May Ha-Shem bestow favor on you, and grant you peace. – Amen!**

**This way, the priests will link My Name with the Israelites, and I will bless them."**

**These are the Laws for which the Torah did not mandate specific amounts: How much growing produce must be left in the corner of the field for the poor; how much of the first fruits must be offered at the Holy Temple; how much one must bring as an offering when one visits the Holy Temple three times a year; how much one must do when performing acts of kindness; and there is no maximum amount of Torah that a person must study.**

**These are the Laws whose benefits a person can often enjoy even in this world, even though the primary reward is in the Next World: They are: Honoring one's father and mother; doing acts of kindness; early attendance at the place of Torah study -- morning and night; showing hospitality to guests; visiting the sick; providing for the financial needs of a bride; escorting the dead; being very engrossed in prayer; bringing peace between two people, and between husband and wife; but the study of Torah is as great as all of them together. Amen!**

**Contents of the Torah Seder – ‎ D’barim (Deut.) 11:10 – 12:19**

* Canaan and Egypt Contrasted – Deut. 11:10-12
* Reward and Punishment in Judaism – Deut. 11:13-25
* The Law of the Central Sanctuary – Deut. 12:1-7
* Private Altars to be Prohibited – Deut. 12:8-14
* Extension of Prohibition of Private Sanctuary – Deut. 12:15-19

**Reading Assignment:**

**The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me’Am Lo’Ez - Vol 17: Deuteronomy – III – Gratitude & Discipline**

By: Rabbi Yitzchaq Behar Argueti & Rabbi Shmuel Yerushalmi

Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1992)

Vol. 17 – “Deuteronomy – III – Gratitude & Discipline,” pp. 82-128.

**Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan**

**for: D’barim (Deut.) ‎11:10 -12:19‎**

| **RASHI** | **TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN** |
| --- | --- |
| 10. **For the land to which you are coming to possess is not like the land of Egypt, out of which you came, where you sowed your seed and which you watered by foot, like a vegetable garden.** | 10. **For the land to which you go in to possess it is not like the land of Mizraim, from whence you have come, in which you did sow your seed, and water it yourself as a garden of herbs**;  |
| 11. **But the land, to which you pass to possess, is a land of mountains and valleys and absorbs water from the rains of heaven,** | 11. **but the land which you pass over to inherit is a land of mountains and valleys: it drinks water from the rain that comes down from the heavens**;  |
| 12. **a land the Lord, your God, looks after; the eyes of Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.** | 12. **it is a land which the LORD your God inquires after by His Word, that He may bless it evermore; [JERUSALEM. A land which the LORD your God inquires after continually.] the eyes of the LORD your God look upon it from the beginning of the year to the year's end**.  |
| 13. And it will be, if you hearken to My commandments that I command you this day to love the Lord, your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, | 13. And it will be that if you diligently obey My commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve Him with all your heart, and with all your soul,  |
| 14. I will give the rain of your land at its time, the early rain and the latter rain, and you will gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil. | 14. then will I give you the rain of your land in its time, the early in Marchesvan, and the latter in Nisan, that you may gather in your corn, your wine., and your oil.  |
| 15. And I will give grass in your field for your livestock, and you will eat and be sated. | 15. I will give herbage also in thy field for your cattle, that you may eat and have enough. |
| 16. Beware, lest your heart be misled, and you turn away and worship strange gods and prostrate yourselves before them. | 16. Take heed to yourselves, lest you be led away by the imagination of your heart, and turn aside to serve the idols of the Gentiles, and worship them,  |
| 17. And the wrath of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will close off the heavens, and there will be no rain, and the ground will not give its produce, and you will perish quickly from upon the good land that the Lord gives you. | 17. and the LORD's anger be provoked against you, and He shut up the clouds of heaven, and let not the rain come down, and the earth yield no provender, and you perish soon from off the glorious land which the LORD will give you.  |
| 18. And you shall set these words of Mine upon your heart and upon your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand and they shall be for ornaments between your eyes. | 18. But lay these my words upon your heart, and upon your soul, and bind them, written upon tephillin, as a sign upon the upper part (wrist) of your left hands, and let them be for tephillin over your forehead between your eyes.  |
| 19. And you shall teach them to your sons to speak with them, when you sit in your house and when you walk on the way and when you lie down and when you rise. | 19. And you will teach them to your children to study them when you are sitting in your house with your kindred, and when you are walking in the way, and in the evening when you lie down, and in the morning when you arise. [JERUSALEM. And when you repose, and when you rise up.]  |
| 20. And you shall inscribe them upon the doorposts of your house and upon your gates, | 20. And you will write them upon parchment, upon the posts, and affix them to three (things), against your chest, against the pillars of your house, and against your gates:  |
| 21. in order that your days may increase and the days of your children, on the land which the Lord swore to your forefathers to give them, as the days of heaven above the earth. | 21. that your days and the days of your children may be multiplied on the land which the LORD sware to your fathers to give you, as the number of the days that the heavens abide over the earth. |
| 22. **For if you keep all these commandments which I command you to do them, to love the Lord, your God, to walk in all His ways,** **and to cleave to Him,** | 22. **For if you diligently keep every commandment that I command you to do it, to love the LORD your God, and walk in all the ways that are right before Him,** **and cleave unto His fear,**  |
| 23. **then the Lord will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will possess nations greater and stronger than you.** | 23. **then will the Word of the LORD drive out all these nations from before you, and you will possess the heritage of nations greater and stronger than yourselves.**  |
| 24. Every place upon which the soles of your feet will tread, will be yours: from the desert and the Lebanon, from the river, the Euphrates River, and until the western sea, will be your boundary. | 24. Every place where the sole of your foot will tread will be yours, from the wilderness and the mountain; (among) your mountains will be the house of the sanctuary, and from the great river, the River Phrat, unto the ocean sea, whose waters are (old as) the creation, on the western side will be your limit.  |
| 25. No man will stand up before you; the Lord your God will cast the fear of you and the dread of you on all the land upon which you tread, as He spoke to you. | 25. Not a man will be able to stand before you; but the LORD your God will set the fear and dread of you upon the faces of all the inhabitants of the land that you tread upon, as it has been told you. [JERUSALEM. Not a ruler nor a prince will stand before you; but your terror and your fear.] |
| 26. Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse. | 26. MOSHEH the prophet said: Behold, I have this day set in order before you a Blessing and its contrary:  |
| 27. The blessing, that you will heed the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today; | 27. the Blessing, if you will be obedient to the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you this day;  |
| 28. and the curse, if you will not heed the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn away from the way I command you this day, to follow other gods, which you did not know. | 28. and its contrary, if you will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, [JERUSALEM. And their contraries, if you will not hearken.] but will go astray from the path which I have taught you this day, in turning aside after the idols of the nations whom thou have not known.  |
| 29. And it will be, when the Lord, your God, will bring you to the land to which you come, to possess it, that you shall place those blessing upon Mount Gerizim, and those cursing upon Mount Ebal. | 29. And it will be, when the LORD your God will have brought you to the land into which you are going, to possess it, you will place six tribes upon the mountain of Gerizim, and six tribes on the mountain of Ebal. They who recite the blessings will turn their faces towards Mount Gerizim, and they who recite the curses will turn their faces towards Mount Ebal. |
| 30. Are they not on the other side of the Jordan, way beyond, in the direction of the sunset, in the land of the Canaanites, who dwell in the plain, opposite Gilgal, near the plains of Moreh? | 30. Are they not situated beyond Jordan by the way of the sunset, in the land of the Kenaanah, who dwell in the plain over against Gilgela by the side (of the place) of the vision of Mamre?  |
| 31. For you are crossing the Jordan, to come to possess the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you, and you shall possess it and dwell in it. | 31. For you are to pass over Jordan to enter and possess the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you will hold and will dwell therein.  |
| 32. And you shall keep to perform all the statutes and ordinances that I am setting before you today. | 32. Look well, therefore, that you perform all the statutes and judgments that I have set before you this day. |
|   |  |
| 1. These are the statutes and ordinances that you shall keep to perform in the land which the Lord God of your fathers gives you to possess all the days that you live on the earth. | 1. These are the statutes and judgments which you are to observe to do in the land which the LORD God of your fathers gives you to inherit all the days that you live upon the earth.  |
| 2. You shall utterly destroy from all the places where the nations, that you shall possess, worshipped their gods, upon the lofty mountains and upon the hills, and under every lush tree. | 2. You will utterly destroy all the places in which the people (whose land) you will possess have worshipped their idols, upon the high mountains and hills, and under every tree of beautiful form.  |
| 3. And you shall tear down their altars, smash their monuments, burn their asherim with fire, cut down the graven images of their gods, and destroy their name from that place. | 3. You will lay their altars in ruin, break down their pillars, burn their abominations with fire, and utterly destroy the images of their gods, and abolish their names from that place. |
| 4. You shall not do so to the Lord, your God. | 4. Not so may you do to blot out the inscription of the Name of the LORD your God.  |
| 5. But only to the place which the Lord your God shall choose from all your tribes, to set His Name there; you shall inquire after His dwelling and come there. | 5. But in the land which the Word of the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes for His Shekinah to dwell there, unto the place of His Shekinah will you have recourse,  |
| 6. And there you shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and the separation by your hand, and your vows and your donations, and the firstborn of your cattle and of your sheep. | 6. and come thither, and bring your sacrifices and consecrated oblations, your tithes, the separation of your hands, your vows, your voluntary offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and flocks.  |
| 7. And there you shall eat before the Lord, your God, and you shall rejoice in all your endeavors you and your households, as the Lord, your God, has blessed you. | 7. And you will there eat before the LORD your God, and rejoice in all that you put your hand unto, you and your households, in which the LORD your God will have blessed you. |
| 8. You shall not do as all the things that we do here this day, every man [doing] what he deems fit. | 8. It will not be lawful for you to do (there) as we do here today, whatever any one thinks fit for himself;  |
| 9. For you have not yet come to the resting place or to the inheritance, which the Lord, your God, is giving you. | 9. for you are not yet come to the Sanctuary, to the dwelling of Peace, and to the inheritance of the land which the LORD your God will give you.  |
| 10. And you shall cross the Jordan and settle in the land the Lord, your God, is giving you as an inheritance, and He will give you rest from all your enemies surrounding you, and you will dwell securely. | 10. But when you have passed over Jordan and dwell in the land which the LORD your God will give you to inherit, and He has given you repose from all your enemies round about, **then will you build the house of the Sanctuary, and afterward will dwell securely.** |
| 11. And it will be, that the place the Lord, your God, will choose in which to establish His Name there you shall bring all that I am commanding you: Your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the separation by your hand, and the choice of vows which you will vow to the Lord. | 11. And to the place which the Word of the LORD will choose to make His Shekinah to dwell there, will you bring all your oblations, firstlings, and tithes, which I command you; there will you offer your sacrifices and hallowed victims, there eat your tithes and the separation of your hands, and all your goodly vows which you may have vowed before the LORD.  |
| 12. And you shall rejoice before the Lord, your God you and your sons and your daughters and your menservants and your maidservants, and the Levite who is within your cities, for he has no portion or inheritance with you. | 12. And you will rejoice before the LORD your God, you and your sons and daughters, your servants and handmaids, and the Levite who is in your cities, for he has no portion or inheritance with you. |
| 13. Beware, lest you offer up your burnt offerings any place you see. | 13. Beware lest you offer your sacrifices in any place which you may see fit;  |
| 14. But only in the place the Lord will choose in one of your tribes; there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you. | 14. but in the Place which the LORD will choose in the inheritance of one of your tribes, there will you offer your sacrifices and do whatever I command you.  |
| 15. However, in every desire of your soul, you may slaughter and eat meat in all your cities, according to the blessing of the Lord, your God, which He gave you; the unclean and the clean may eat thereof, as of the deer, and as of the gazelle. | 15. Nevertheless, after every wish of your soul, you may kill and eat flesh according to the blessing of the LORD your God, which He will give you in all your cities; they who are unclean so as not to be able to offer holy things, and they who are clean that they may offer holy things, may eat of it alike, as the flesh of the antelope or of the hart.  |
| 16. However, you shall not eat the blood; you shall spill it on the ground like water. | 16. Only be careful to pour out the blood upon the ground like water.  |
| 17. You may not eat within your cities the tithe of your grain, or of your wine, or of your oil, or the firstborn of your cattle or of your sheep, or any of your vows that you will vow, or your donations, or the separation by your hand. | 17. It will not be lawful for you to eat the tenths of your corn, or wine, or oil, or the firstlings of your herd or flock, nor any of the vows that you have vowed, or freewill offerings, or the separation of your hands in your cities;  |
| 18. But you shall eat them before the Lord, your God, in the place the Lord, your God, will choose you, your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, and the Levite who is in your cities, and you shall rejoice before the Lord, your God, in all your endeavors. | 18. but you will eat it before the LORD your God, in the place which the LORD your God will choose; you, and your sons and daughters, and your handmaids, and the Levites who are in your cities; and you will rejoice before the LORD your God, in all that you put your hand unto.  |
| 19. Beware, lest you forsake the Levite all your days upon your land. | 19. Beware that you aggrieve not the Levite all your days in which you dwell in your land. |
|  |  |

**Welcome to the World of P’shat Exegesis**

In order to understand the finished work of the P’shat mode of interpretation of the Torah, one needs to take into account that the P’shat is intended to produce a catechetical output, whereby a question/s is/are raised and an answer/a is/are given using the seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel and as well as the laws of Hebrew Grammar and Hebrew expression.

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

[cf. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=472&letter=R>]:

**1. Ḳal va-ḥomer:** "Argumentum a minori ad majus" or "a majori ad minus"; corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori.

**2. Gezerah shavah:** Argument from analogy. Biblical passages containing synonyms or homonyms are subject, however much they differ in other respects, to identical definitions and applications.

**3. Binyan ab mi-katub eḥad:** Application of a provision found in one passage only to passages which are related to the first in content but do not contain the provision in question.

**4. Binyan ab mi-shene ketubim:** The same as the preceding, except that the provision is generalized from two Biblical passages.

**5. Kelal u-Peraṭ and Peraṭ u-kelal:** Definition of the general by the particular, and of the particular by the general.

**6. Ka-yoẓe bo mi-maḳom aḥer:** Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage.

**7. Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano:** Interpretation deduced from the context.

**Rashi’s Comments on D’barim 11:10 -12:19**

**10 [The land to which you come...] is not like the land of Egypt** but better than it. This promise was made to Israel when they left Egypt, for they would say, “Perhaps we will not come to a land as good and beautiful as this one.” One might think that Scripture is speaking derogatorily of it [the Land of Israel], and so he said to them: It is not like the land of Egypt, but it is worse than it! Therefore, Scripture says, “And Hebron was built seven years before Zoan of Egypt...” (Num. 13:22): One man built [both of] them—Ham built Zoan for his son, Mizraim, and he built Hebron for Canaan [his other son]. It is customary that one first builds the better city and afterwards builds the inferior one, because the refuse [left over] from the first, he puts into the second, and in any case, the favorite one first. Thus we learn that Hebron was a more beautiful city than Zoan. Egypt was superior to all other lands, as is stated [of it], “like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt” (Gen. 13:10), and Zoan was the best of the land of Egypt, as it was the seat of royalty, for so it is stated: “For his princes were in Zoan” (Isa. 30:4), and Hebron was the worst city of Eretz Israel. For this reason, they set it apart for a burial ground, and yet it was better than Zoan. In Tractate Kethuboth (112a), however, our Rabbis explained the above in another manner: Is it possible that a man would build a house for his younger son [here Canaan], and only afterwards for his older son [Mizraim]? We must therefore explain [the meaning of שָׁנִים נִבְנְתָה וְחֶבְרוֹן שֶׁבַע to be] that Hebron was built up seven times better than Zoan.

**[The land of Egypt,] out of which you came** Even the land of Goshen and the land of Rameses in which you dwelt, and which is the best of the land of Egypt, as it is said, “in the best of the land, [in the land of Rameses]” (Gen. 47:11)—even that is not like the land of Israel.

**[like the land of Egypt...] which you watered by foot** The land of Egypt required bringing water from the Nile by foot in order to water it; you had to rise from your sleep and toil. And only the low-lying areas were watered [i.e., were irrigated by the Nile], but not the high land, so you had to carry up water from the lower to the higher areas. **But this [land, namely Canaan] “absorbs water from the rains of heaven.”** While you sleep in your bed, the Holy One, blessed is He, waters both low and high areas, both areas that are exposed and those that are not, all at once [Sifrei]

**like a vegetable garden** which does not have enough water from rain, and one has to water it by foot, [carrying water] upon one’s shoulder.

**11 a land of mountains and valleys** The mountain land is superior to the land of the plain: On the plain, in an area of land that would produce a kor [a measure of grain], one would actually sow only [enough seed to produce] a kor. On the mountain, however, from an area of land that would produce a kor, one could take out of it five kor s, four from its four slopes and one on its summit.-[Sifrei 11:11]

**and valleys** - וּבְקָעֽת . These are plains.

**12 the Lord, your God, looks after** But does He not look after all lands, as it is said, “To rain on the earth where no man is” (Job 38:26) ? Rather, it is as if God cares only for it, and with that caring, which He cares for it, He cares for all the [other] lands along with it.-[Sifrei 11:12]

**the eyes of the Lord, your God, are always upon it** to see what it requires and to make for it new decrees, sometimes for good and sometimes for bad, as is found in [Tractate] Rosh Hashanah (17b).

**from the beginning of the year [to the end of the year]** At the beginning of the year [i.e., Rosh Hashanah], it is judged [by God] what will be at its conclusion (Rosh Hashanah 8a).

**13 And it will be, if you hearken** [The word] וְהָיָה is referring to what is said above (verse 11): “and absorbs water from the rains of heaven”

**And it will be, if you hearken** Heb. וְהָיָה אִם שָׁמֽעַ תִּשְׁמְעוּ lit., And it will be, if hearkening you will hearken. If you hearken to the old [i.e., if you study what you have already learned], you will hearken to the new [i.e., you will have a new and deeper understanding]. Similar is [the meaning of] “And it will be, if you forget” (אִם שָׁכֽחַ תִּשְׁכַּח) (Deut. 8:19): If you have begun to forget [the Torah you have learned], eventually you will forget all of it, for so it is written in the Megillah 1: “If you leave Me for one day, I will leave you for two days.” - [Sifrei on Deut. 11:22, Yerushalmi Ber. 9:5, Midrash Shmuel 1]

**command you this day** ["this day" suggests] that [the commandments] should [always] be to you as new, as though you had just heard them on this very day.-[Sifrei, 11:32]

**to love the Lord** You should not say: "I will learn in order to become rich, [or] in order to be referred to as ‘Rabbi,’ [or] in order that I receive a reward. Rather, whatever you do, do out of love [for God], and ultimately, the honor will come."-[Sifrei]

**and to serve Him with all your heart** i.e. with a service of the heart, and that is prayer, for prayer is called service, as it is said, “your God, Whom you serve regularly” (Dan. 6:17). But was there a [Temple] service in Babylon? Rather, [the term service is used] because he prayed, as it is said, “where there were open windows [in his upper chamber opposite Jerusalem, and three times a day he kneeled on his knees and prayed...]” (Dan. 6:11). And so, too, it states regarding David, “My prayer shall be established like incense before You” (Ps. 141:2). -[Sifrei]

**[To love the Lord...] with all your heart, and with all your soul** But did he not already admonish us, [by the words] “[And you shall love the Lord, your God,] with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deut. 6:5)? [That, however, was] an admonition addressed for the individual, [while this is] an admonition to the community.-[Sifrei]

**14 I will give the rain of your land** You will have done what is [incumbent upon] you; [so] I will do what is [incumbent] upon Me.-[Sifrei]

**at its time** At night, so it will not disturb you. Another explanation of

**at its time** is: On Sabbath [Friday] nights, when everyone is at home.

**the early rain** Heb. יוֹרֶה . This is the rain that falls after [the] sowing [season], which thoroughly sates (מְרַוֶּה) the soil and the seeds.

**the latter rain** Heb. מַלְקוֹשׁ . The rain that falls just before the harvest time, to fill the grain on its stalks. The term מַלְקוֹשׁ refers to something that is late, as in the Targum [Onkelos], we translate וְהָיָה הָעֲטֻפִים לְלָבָן “the ones that delayed were Laban’s” (Gen. 30: 42) as לְקִישַׁיָּא . Another explanation: For this reason, it is called מַלְקוֹשׁ namely because it falls upon the ears (מְלִילוֹת) ) and the stalks (קַשִּׁין) [i.e., just before the harvest, thus מַלְקוֹשׁ is a combination of these two words].

**and you will gather in your grain** You will gather it into the house, and not your enemies, as it is said: "[The Lord swore...] 'I will no longer give your grain as food [to your enemies, and foreigners will no longer drink your wine.... [But those who gather it in will eat it..." (Isa. 62:8, 9), and not as it is said “And it was when Israel had sown, [that Midian came up... and they destroyed the produce of the earth]” (Jud. 6:3, 4).

**15 And I will give grass in your field [for your livestock]** so that you will not have to lead them to distant pastures. Another explanation: That you will be able to trim your grain all through the winter and cast it before your livestock, and if you refrain from doing this thirty days before the harvest, it will not produce any less grain. -[Sifrei]

**and you will eat and be sated** This is another blessing: That the bread will be blessed within the stomach, that you may eat and be sated.

**16 Beware, [lest your heart be misled]** Since you will eat and be full, beware that you do not rebel [against the Holy One, blessed is He], for nobody rebels against the Holy One, blessed is He, except out of satiety, as it is said, "lest you eat and be sated... and your herds and your flocks multiply... What does he [Moses] say after this? “and your heart grows haughty, and you forget the Lord, your God” (Deut. 8:12-14).

**and you turn away** to depart from the Torah, and as a result of this,

**and worship strange gods** for as soon as a man departs from the Torah, he goes and cleaves to idolatry. Similarly, David said, “for they have driven me today, from cleaving to the Lord’s heritage, saying, 'Go, worship [strange gods]’” (I Sam. 26:19). But who [actually] said this to him? [He meant to say,] Since I am driven from being occupied with the Torah, I am closer to the danger of worshipping strange gods.-[Sifrei]

**strange gods** [Gods] that are strangers to those who worship them. The worshipper cries out to it, but it does not answer him; consequently, it becomes to him as a stranger.

**17 [The ground will not give] its produce** Heb. יְבוּלָהּ . It will not yield the quantity that you bring (מוֹבִיל) to it, as it said: “You have sown much, but you bring in little” (Hag. 1:6). - [Sifrei]

**and you will perish quickly** In addition to all the other sufferings, I will exile you from the land that caused you to sin. This may be compared to a king who sent his son to a feast hall and admonished him, “Do not eat or drink more than necessary, so that you will arrive home clean.” The son, however, did not take heed. He ate and drank more than he needed, and he regurgitated and soiled all the guests. They took him by his hands and feet, and threw him behind the palace.-[Sifrei]

**quickly** I will give you no extensions. And if you ask: Was not an extension given to the generation of the flood, as it is said, “and his days will be [i.e., an extension will be given to him for] one hundred and twenty years” (Gen. 6:3)? [The answer is that] the generation of the flood had no one to learn from, but you do have someone to learn from. - [Sifrei]

**18 And you shall set these words of Mine** Even after you have been exiled, make yourselves distinctive with My commandments: Put on tefillin and make mezuzoth, so that these will not be new to you when you return. Similarly, it is said, “Set up markers for yourself” (Jer. 31:20). -[Sifrei]

**19 [And you shall teach them to your sons,] to speak with them** From the moment your son knows how to speak, teach him, “Moses commanded us the Torah” (Deut. 33:4). Let him learn speech through this (Sukkah 42a). From this, our Rabbis taught: **When the infant begins to talk, his father should speak to him in the Holy Tongue, and should teach him the Torah. If he does not do this, it is as though he buries him,** as it is stated [here], “And you shall teach them to your sons to speak with them...” [in order that your days may increase, and the days of your children].

**21 in order that your days may increase and the days of your children** If you do so, they will increase, but if not, they will not increase, for the words of the Torah may be interpreted, so that we may deduce from a negative statement its positive inference, and from a positive statement, its negative inference.-[Sifrei]

**[the land which the Lord swore to your forefathers] to give them** it is not written here “to give you,” but rather, “to give them.” From this, we learn that [the tenet of] the resurrection of the dead has its basis from the Torah.-[Sifrei]

**22 For if you keep [all these commandments]** Heb. שָׁמֽר תִּשְׁמְרוּן [The repetition of שָׁמֽר is to] admonish us many times to be careful with one’s learning, lest it be forgotten. -[Sifrei]

**to walk in all His ways** God is merciful, so you, too, be merciful; He bestows loving-kindness, so you, too, bestow loving-kindness.-[Sifrei]

**and to cleave to Him** Is it possible to say this? Is God not “a consuming fire” (Deut. 4:24)? **Rather, it means: Cleave to the disciples and the Sages, and I will consider it as though you cleave to Me**.-[Sifrei]

**23 Then the Lord will drive out [all these nations from before you]** Since you have fulfilled what is [incumbent] upon you, I will do what is [incumbent] upon Me.-[Sifrei]

**stronger than you** You are strong, but they are stronger than you, for if it were not that the Israelites were strong, what is the praise that he [Moses] is praising the Amorites by saying of them that they are, "stronger than you"? But, [the answer is that] you are stronger than all other nations and they [the Amorites] are stronger than you.-[Sifrei]

**25 No man will stand up [before you]** From this verse it is understood only [that] “a man” [will not be able to stand up before Israel]. How do we know that a nation, a family, or a woman with her witchcraft will also not be able to stand up before Israel? Therefore, it says: לֹא־יִתְיַצֵּב , "there will be no standing up [before you]"—at all. If so, why does it say: "man"? [It means any man], even as [mighty as] Og, king of Bashan. -[Sifrei]

**The Lord... will set] the fear of you and the dread of you [on all the land]** Heb. פַּחְדְּכֶם וּמוֹרַאֲכֶם . Is not פַּחַד the same as מוֹרָא [both meaning fear]? But [the answer is that] פַּחְדְּכֶם “the fear of you,” refers to those near by, and מוֹרַאֲכֶם , “the dread of you,” to those distant, for פַּחַד denotes “sudden fear,” and מוֹרָא denotes anxiety enduring many days.

**as He spoke to you** And where did He speak [about this]? “I will cast My terror before you” (Exod. 23:27). -[Sifrei]

**26 A blessing and a curse** [i.e.,] those that were stated, [respectively,] on Mount Gerizim and on Mount Ebal.

**27 The blessing** on the condition that you listen [and obey].

**28 [If you... depart] from the way that I command you this day,** to follow [other gods] This teaches that whoever worships idols departs from the entire path that Israel has been commanded. From here [our Rabbis] said: One who acknowledges [the divinity of] pagan deities is as though he denies the entire Torah.-[Sifrei]

**29 you shall place those blessing** As the Targum [Onkelos] renders it: מְבָרְכַיָא יָת , “those who bless.”

**upon Mount Gerizim** [ עַל , usually “upon,” here means] “facing Mount Gerizim.” [The Levites] turned their faces [toward the mountain] and began with the blessing: “Blessed is the man who does not make any graven or molten image....” Each of the curses in that section [beginning Deut. 27:15] were first stated in the expression of a blessing. Afterwards, they turned their faces towards Mount Ebal and began [to recite the corresponding] curse.-[Sotah 32a]

**30 Are they not [on the other side of the Jordan]?**-[Moses] gave [geographical] landmarks [describing the mountains]. beyond Heb. אַחֲרֵי , [I.e.,] after crossing the Jordan, much further on in distance, for that is the meaning of the expression אַחֲרֵי , “beyond”; wherever [the term] אַחֲרֵי is used, [it signifies] “a great separation [in time or place].”

**[on the other side of the Jordan, way beyond,] in the direction of the sunset** [i.e.,] beyond the Jordan, toward the west. And the cantillation marks of the verse prove that [ אַחֲרֵי and דֶּרֶךְ ] refer to two separate things, for they are marked with two [conjunctive] accents [thus demonstrating that these words are not connected]: אַחֲרֵי is punctuated with a pashta [which separates the word from the succeeding one], and דֶּרֶךְ is punctuated with a mashpel [which we call a yetib]. In addition, [the דּ of the word דֶּרֶךְ has a dagesh inside it [which indicates that the word דֶּרֶךְ begins a new phrase or topic]. If, however, אַחֲרֵי דֶּרֶךְ were one phrase [meaning “beyond the direction”], then אַחֲרֵי would have been punctuated by a conjunctive accent, namely a shofar hafuch [which we call a mahpach] and דֶּרֶךְ by a pashta [the combination of which indicates the connection between those words. Additionally, the ד of the word דֶּרֶךְ ] would not have a dagesh inside it. [But this is not so, and thus אַחֲרֵי and דֶּרֶךְ are separate words in this verse.]

**opposite** Far off from Gilgal.

**[near] the plains of Moreh** This is Shechem, as is stated: “to the place of Shechem, to the plain of Moreh” (Gen. 12:6).

**31 For you are crossing the Jordan** The miracles [that will occur for you during your crossing] of the Jordan will be a sign in your hands that you will come and inherit the land [as promised].-[Sifrei]

**Chapter 12**

**2 You shall utterly destroy** Destroy and then destroy them again. From here [we derive that] one who eradicates idolatry must thoroughly uproot it [i.e., remove every trace of it].-[A.Z. 45b]

**from all the places where the nations,... worshipped** And what shall you destroy from them? Their gods that are on the mountains, etc.

**3 altar** [constructed] of many stones.

**monument** [constructed] of one stone. This is the בִּימוּס [the pedestal for an idol] concerning which we learn in the Mishnah (A.Z. 3:7): A stone that was originally carved for an idol’s pedestal. asherah a tree that is worshipped.

**and destroy their name** By giving them disgraceful nicknames. What they call בֵּית גליא , “exalted temple,” [you] should call בֵּית כְּלִיָא , “dug out house,” what they call עַיִן כָּל , “the all-seeing eye,” [you] should call עַיִן קוֹץ “the thorn eye.”-[A.Z. 46a]

**4 You shall not do so [to the Lord your God]** to burn sacrifices to God in any place you choose, but rather at the place that He will choose. Another explanation is: "And you shall tear down their altars... and destroy their name... [but] do not do so [to the Lord your God]"; this is an admonition [addressed] to one who would erase the Name [of God from any writing] or remove a stone from the altar or from the courtyard (Mak. 22a). Rabbi Ishmael said: Would it enter your mind that the Israelites would tear down the altars [of God]? Rather, [the meaning of “You shall not do so” is that] you should not do like the deeds of the nations so that your sins would cause the sanctuary of [i.e., built by] your fathers to be destroyed.-[Sifrei]

**5 you shall inquire after His dwelling** Heb. לְשִׁכְנוֹ . This is the Mishkan in Shiloh.

**6 and your sacrifices** Obligatory peace offerings. your tithes [I.e.,] the tithe of the cattle and the second tithe, to eat them within the walls [of Jerusalem].

**the separation by your hand** These are the first fruits, of which it is stated: “And the kohen shall take the basket from your hand” (Deut. 26:4).

**and the firstborn of your cattle** to give them to the kohen, and he shall offer them up there.

**7 as the Lord, [your God,] has blessed you** Commensurate to to the blessing, bring [the offerings].-[Sifrei]

**8 You shall not do as all [the things] that we do [here this day]** This refers back to [what is stated above], “For you are crossing the Jordan...” (Deut. 11:31), meaning: When you will cross the Jordan, you immediately are permitted to offer up [sacrifices] on a bamah [a temporary altar] during the entire fourteen years of conquering [the nations] and dividing [the land among the tribes], but on a bamah you may not sacrifice all that you sacrifice “here this day,” in the Mishkan, which is with you and has been anointed and is [thus] fit to sacrifice therein sin-offerings and guilt- offerings, vows and donations, whereas on a bamah, you may sacrifice only what is vowed or a donated. And that is the meaning of “every man [doing] what he deems fit” vows and donations that you donate because you deem fit to bring them, not because of any obligation [imposed upon you]; only these may you offer up on a bamah.-[Sifrei ; Zev. 117b]

**9 For you have not yet come [to the resting place]** All those fourteen years [of conquering and dividing the land]. not yet Heb., עַד עַתָּה , the same as עֲדַיִין , “not yet.”

**to the resting place** This is Shiloh.

**[or to] the inheritance** This is Jerusalem.-[Sifrei ; Zev. 119a]

**10 And you shall cross the Jordan and settle in the land** You will have apportioned it [among yourselves] and every man will recognize his portion and [the territory of] his tribe.

**and He will give you rest** [I.e.,] after conquering and dividing [the land] and having obtained rest from the “nations which the Lord left over, through whom to test Israel” (Judg. 3:1). And that was only in the days of David. Then:

**11 It will be, that the place [which the Lord your God will choose... there you shall bring all that I am commanding you]** [At that time,] build for yourselves the Temple in Jerusalem. And so [Scripture] states concerning David, "And it was, when the king sat in his house and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies surrounding him, that the king said to Nathan the prophet, 'See now, I dwell in a house of cedars, but the Ark of God dwells within the curtain’" (II Sam. 7:1, 2) [i.e., the temporary Mishkan].

**there you shall bring [all that I am commanding you]** Above (verse 6), [the same expression] is stated referring to Shiloh, but here it is stated referring to Jerusalem. Accordingly, Scripture separates the two to permit [sacrificing on a bamah during the intermediate period] between the existence of] one [sanctuary] and the other. After Shiloh was destroyed, and they came to Nob [and erected the Mishkan there], and then again, when Nob was destroyed and they came to Gibeon, [sacrificing on] a bamah was permitted—until they [finally] arrived in Jerusalem.-[Zev. 119a]

**the choice of your vows** This teaches that one should bring [offerings] from the choicest.-[Sifrei]

**13 Beware, [lest you offer up your burnt-offerings any place you see]** [This negative form of the positive command in verse 11 is repeated in order] to attach a negative commandment to this matter.

**any place you see** [i.e.,] that enters your mind. However, you may offer [anywhere] by the bidding of a prophet, for example, as Elijah [did] on Mount Carmel (I Kings 18:22). -[Sifrei]

**14 [But only in the place the Lord will choose] in one of your tribes** in the territory of Benjamin. But above (verse 5), it says, “[the place which the Lord... will choose] from all your tribes.” How can these be reconciled? When David purchased the threshing-floor [later to become the Temple site] from Araunah the Jebusite (II Sam. 24:24), he collected the [required] gold from all the tribes; however, the threshing-floor itself was [situated] in the territory of Benjamin.- [Sifrei]

**15 However, [you may slaughter and eat meat in all your gates,] in every desire of your soul** What is the text speaking about? If [you think that] it [is speaking] about [non-sacrificial] meat eaten to satisfy the appetite, to permit it for them without offering up any sacrificial portions, [we already have a reference to this, for Scripture] says elsewhere: “When the Lord, your God, expands your boundary... and you say, 'I will eat meat... [you may eat meat…]’ ” (verse 20). So what is this [verse] speaking about? It is [referring to] animals designated for holy [sacrificial] purposes that had [subsequently] become blemished, that they are to be redeemed [that is, replaced by their equivalent value in money] and they may [then] be eaten anywhere. Now one might think that [this rule applies] even if the blemish is a temporary one. Therefore, Scripture says: רַק —"However" [lit., “only.” This limits the permission to that of a permanent blemish].-[Sifrei]

**you may slaughter and eat [meat]** You have no permission to sheer or milk [the blemished animals], but only to eat the [meat] after their ritual slaughter.-[Bech. 15b]

**the unclean and the clean [may eat thereof]** Since they formerly had holy status, about which it is stated: “And the flesh that touches any unclean thing shall not be eaten” (Lev. 7:19), it is necessary to give explicit permission for both the unclean and clean person alike to eat [from the meat, even] from the same dish...

**as of the deer and as of the gazelle** of which no sacrifice is [ever] brought.

**as of the deer, and as of the gazelle** This [comparison to a deer and a gazelle] exempts these [redeemed animals] from [the obligation of] “the foreleg, the jaws, and the maw” (see Deut. 18:3) [just as the deer and the gazelle are exempt from these gifts to the kohen].-[Chul. 130a; Sifrei]

**16 However, you shall not eat the blood** Although I said that these [animals] do not require sprinkling the blood on the altar, you shall not eat it.

**you shall spill it [on the ground] like water** [This comes] to tell you that it does not require covering [with earth (see Lev. 17:13)] (Sifrei ; Chul. 84a). Another explanation: [The phrase, “like water,” teaches us that] it is like water insofar as it renders seeds susceptible [for receiving ritual uncleanness (Lev. 11:38).] -[Chul. 35b]

**17 You may not eat within your cities the tithe of your grain]** Scripture comes to attach a negative commandment to this matter [i.e., eating the firstborn, tithes, etc., outside the walls of Jerusalem, in addition to the positive command (stated in verse 6)].

**You may not [eat]** [Heb. לֹא תוּכַל lit., “you cannot eat.”] Rabbi Joshua the son of Korchah said: You are able, but you are not permitted [to do so]. Similar to this, in the verse “As to the Jebusites, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out” (Josh. 15:63), they were [physically] able to do so but they were not so permitted, since Abraham had made a [non-aggression] treaty with them when he bought the cave of Machpelah from them. [In fact,] they were not Jebusites [of the Jebusite nation] but Hittites. They were, however, called Jebusites after the city, named Jebus. So it is explained in Pirkei d’Rabbi Eliezer (chapter 36). And this is what is stated [when David was about to drive out the Jebusites. They said to him], “Unless you take away the blind and the lame [you shall not come in here]” (II Sam. 5:6), [referring to] the images [that stood at the gates] upon which the oath [that Abraham had taken regarding the Jebusites] was written.

**[You may not eat within your gates...] the firstborn of your cattle** This prohibition is addressed to the kohanim [in contrast to “the tithe of your grain,” since Israelites were never permitted to eat the firstborn, even within the walls of Jerusalem].

**or the separation by your hand** This refers to the first fruits (see above on verse 6). -[Sifrei, Mak. 17a]

**18 [But you shall eat them] before the Lord** [i.e.,] within the walls [of Jerusalem].

**and the Levite who is in your cities** If you have nothing to give him from his portion, such as the first tithes, then give him the tithe of the poor. And if you have no tithe of the poor, invite him [to partake of] your peace offering.-[Sifrei]

**19 Beware, lest you forsake the Levite** **This [in addition to the positive command expressed in the previous verse,] is to attach a negative commandment to the matter.**

**[Beware, lest you forsake the Levite...] upon your land** **But in exile, you are not admonished regarding him more than poor Israelites.-[Sifrei]**

**Ketubim: Psalm ‎119:49‎-72**

| **RASHI** | **TARGUM** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. ¶ Praiseworthy are those whose way is perfect, who walk with the law of the Lord.  | 1. **ALEPH** How happy are the perfect of way, who walk in the Torah of the LORD. |
| 2. **Praiseworthy are those who keep His testimonies; who seek Him wholeheartedly**. | 2. **How happy those who keep His testimony; with a whole heart they will seek His instruction.** |
| 3. Not only have they committed no injustice, they walked in His ways. | 3. Truly they have not acted deceitfully; in His proper ways they have walked. |
| 4. You commanded Your precepts, to keep diligently. | 4. You have given your commandments, to keep very much. |
| 5. My prayers are that my ways should be established, to keep Your statutes. | 5. It is good for me that my ways are straight, to keep Your decrees. |
| 6. Then I shall not be ashamed when I look at all Your commandments. | 6. Then I will not be disappointed when I look to all Your commandments. |
| 7. I shall thank You with an upright heart when I learn the judgments of Your righteousness. | 7. I will give thanks in Your presence with uprightness/generosity of heart, when I learn the judgments of Your righteousness/generosity. |
| 8. I shall keep Your statutes; do not forsake me utterly. **{P}** | 8. I will keep Your decrees; do not abandon me utterly. |
| 9. ¶ In what manner should a youth purify his way? To observe according to Your word. | 9. **BETH** In what way will a youth purify his way? To keep [it] as Your words. |
| 10. With all my heart I searched for You; do not cause me to stray from Your commandments. | 10. With all my heart I have sought Your teaching; do not let me go astray from Your commandments. |
| 11. In my heart I hid Your word, in order that I should not sin against You. | 11. In my heart I have hidden Your Word, that I might not sin in Your presence. |
| 12. **Blessed are You, O Lord; teach me Your statutes.** | 12. **Blessed are you, O LORD; teach me Your decrees**. |
| 13. With my lips I recited all the judgments of Your mouth. | 13. With my lips I have recounted all the judgments of Your mouth. |
| 14. With the way of Your testimonies I rejoiced as over all riches. | 14. In the way of Your testimonies I have rejoiced, as at a stroke of luck. |
| 15. Concerning Your precepts I shall converse, and I shall look at Your ways. | 15. I will speak by Your commandments, and I will behold Your ways. |
| 16. With Your statutes I shall occupy myself; I shall not forget Your speech. **{P}** | 16. I will find delight in Your decrees, I will not forget Your utterance. |
| 17. ¶ Bestow kindness upon Your servant; I shall live and I shall keep Your word. | 17. **GIMEL** Requite Your servant with good; I will live, and keep Your words. |
| 18. **Uncover my eyes and I shall look at hidden things from Your Torah**. | 18. **Uncover my eyes, and I will behold wonders from Your Torah.** |
| 19. I am a stranger in the land; do not hide Your commandments from me. | 19. I am a dweller in the land; do not take away Your commandments from me.  |
| 20. My soul is crushed from longing for Your judgments at all times. | 20. My soul has longed with longing for Your commandments at all times. |
| 21. You shall rebuke cursed willful sinners who stray from Your commandments. | 21. You have rebuked the malicious; cursed are all who stray from Your commandments. |
| 22. Remove from me disgrace and contempt, for I kept Your testimonies. | 22. Remove from me humiliation and shame; for I have kept Your testimonies. |
| 23. Although princes sat and talked about me, Your servant conversed about Your statutes. | 23. For leaders sit speaking against me; Your servant is engaged in instruction of Your decrees. |
| 24. Also, Your testimonies are my affairs, men of my counsel. **{P}** | 24. Also Your testimonies are my delight, the source of my counsel. |
| 25. ¶ My soul clung to the dust; revive me according to Your word. | 25. **DALET.** My soul is joined to the dust; heal me according to Your Word. |
| 26. I told of my ways, and You answered me; teach me Your statutes. | 26. I numbered my ways and You received my prayer; teach me Your decrees. |
| 27. Make me understand Your precepts, and I shall speak of Your wonders. | 27. Give me insight into the way of Your commandments, and I will speak of Your wonders. |
| 28. My soul drips from grief; sustain me according to Your word. | 28. My soul is grieved by weariness; sustain me according to Your Word. |
| 29. **Remove from me the way of falsehood, and favor me with Your Torah.** | 29. **Remove from me the path of lies; and [by] Your Torah have compassion on me**. |
| 30. I chose the way of faith; Your judgments I have set [before me]. | 30. I have chosen the faithful path; I have placed Your judgements [with me]. |
| 31. I clung to Your testimonies; O Lord; put me not to shame. | 31. I have joined myself to Your testimonies, O LORD; do not make me ashamed. |
| 32. [In] the way of Your commandments I shall run, for You will broaden my understanding. **{P}** | 32. I will run in the path of Your commandments, for You will expand my heart/mind. |
| 33. ¶ Instruct me, O Lord, [in] the way of Your statutes, and I shall keep it at every step. | 33. **HAI.** Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your decrees, and I will keep it totally. |
| 34. **Enable me to understand and I shall keep Your Torah, and I shall keep it wholeheartedly.** | 34. **Give me insight, and I will keep Your Torah, O LORD; and I will keep it with a whole heart**. |
| 35. Lead me in the path of Your commandments for I desired it. | 35. Make me walk in the course of Your commandments, for I desire it. |
| 36. Extend my heart to Your testimonies and not to monetary gain. | 36. Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to money. |
| 37. Turn away my eyes from seeing vanity; with Your ways sustain me. | 37. Turn my eyes away from the sight of deceit; by Your Words heal me. |
| 38. Fulfill for Your servant Your word that is for Your fear. | 38. Confirm Your Word to your servant, which [leads] to Your worship. |
| 39. Remove my disgrace, which I feared, for Your judgments are good. | 39. Take away my reproach, which I fear, for Your judgments are good. |
| 40. Behold, I longed for Your precepts; with Your righteousness sustain me. **{P}** | 40. Behold, I have yearned for Your commandments; in Your generosity heal me. |
| 41. ¶ And may Your acts of kindness befall me, O Lord, Your salvation according to Your word. | 41. **VAV.** And let Your kindness come upon me, O LORD, Your redemption in accordance with Your Word. |
| 42. And I shall answer a word to those who disgrace me, for I trusted in Your word. | 42. And I will give answer to those who mock me, for I have trusted in Your Word. |
| 43. And do not take out utterly from my mouth a word of truth, because I hoped for Your words. | 43. And do not remove the Word of truth from my mouth utterly, for I have waited long for Your judgments. |
| 44. **And I shall keep Your Torah constantly, forever and ever.** | 44. **And I will keep Your Torah always, for ages upon ages**. |
| 45. And I shall walk in widely accepted ways, for I sought Your precepts. | 45. And I will walk in the wideness of the Torah, for I have sought Your commandments. |
| 46. And I shall speak of Your testimonies in the presence of kings, and I shall not be ashamed. | 46. And I will speak of Your testimonies before kings, and I will not be ashamed. |
| 47. **And I shall engage in Your commandments, which I love.** | 47. **And I will delight myself in Your commandments, which I love**. |
| 48. And I shall lift up my palms to your commandments, which I love, and I shall converse about Your statutes. **{P}** | 48. And I will lift my hands to Your commandments, which I love, and I will speak of Your decrees. |
| 49. ¶ **Remember a word to Your servant, through which You gave me hope.**  | 49. **ZAYIN Remind your servant of the Word, for You waited long for me**. |
| 50. This is my consolation in my affliction, for Your word has sustained me. | 50. This is my comfort in my pain, for Your Word has sustained me. |
| 51. Willful sinners derided me greatly; I did not turn away from Your Torah. | 51. The malicious mock me greatly; I have not turned away from Your Torah. |
| 52. I remembered Your judgments of old, O Lord, and I was consoled. | 52. I remembered Your judgments of old, O LORD, and I was comforted. |
| 53. Quaking gripped me because of the wicked men who abandoned Your Torah. | 53. Trembling seized me because of the 54. wicked/lawless who forsake Your Torah. |
| 54. Your statutes were to me as songs in the house of my sojournings. | 54. Your decrees became psalms for me in my dwelling place. |
| 55. **At night I remembered Your name, O Lord, and I kept Your Torah.** | 55. **I remembered Your name in the night, O LORD, and I kept Your Torah.** |
| 56. This came to me because I kept Your precepts. **{P}** | 56. This became merit for me, for I kept Your commandments. |
| 57. ¶ "The Lord is my portion," I said, to keep Your words.  | 57. **HETH** My portion is the LORD, I have promised to keep Your words.  |
| 58. I entreated You with all my heart; favor me according to Your word. | 58. I have prayed in Your presence with a whole heart; have pity on me according to Your Word.  |
| 59. I considered my ways, and I returned my feet to Your testimonies. | 59. I have thought to improve my way, and I will turn my feet to Your testimonies.  |
| 60. **I hastened and did not delay to keep Your commandments.** | 60. **I was eager, and did not delay to keep Your commandments.**  |
| 61. Bands of wicked men robbed me; I did not forget Your Torah. | 61. The band of wicked/lawless men has gathered against me; I have not forgotten Your Torah.  |
| 62. At midnight, I rise to give thanks to You for Your just judgments. | 62. In the middle of the night I will rise to sing praise in Your presence, for the sake of Your righteous/generous judgments.  |
| 63. **I am a companion to all who fear You and to those who keep your precepts.** | 63. **I am a companion to all who revere You, and to those who keep Your commandments.**  |
| 64. O Lord, the earth is full of Your kindness; teach me Your statutes. **{P}** | 64. Your goodness, O LORD, fills the earth; teach me Your decrees.  |
| 65. ¶ You have done good with Your servant, O Lord, according to Your word. | 65. **TET** You have shown goodness to Your servant, O LORD, according to Your words.  |
| 66. The best of reason and knowledge, teach me for I believe in Your commandments. | 66. Teach me good sense and knowledge, for I have believed in Your commandments.  |
| 67. Before I recited, I erred, but now I keep Your word. | 67. Before I was afflicted, I was in error, but now I have kept Your Word.  |
| 68. You are good and You do good; teach me Your statutes. | 68. You are good, and do good; teach me Your decrees.  |
| 69. Willful sinners have heaped false accusations upon me, but I keep your precepts wholeheartedly. | 69. The malicious have shouted me down with lies; I will keep Your commandments with a whole heart.  |
| 70. Thick like fat is their heart, but I engage in Your Torah. | 70. The impulse of their heart is dulled as with fat; as for me, my delight is Your Torah.  |
| 71. It is good for me that I was afflicted, in order that I learn Your statutes. | 71. It is good for me, for I was humbled, so that I might learn Your decrees.  |
| 72. **The instruction of Your mouth is better for me than thousands of gold and silver.** **{P}** | 72. **Better for me is the Torah of Your mouth, than a thousand talents of gold and silver.**  |
|   |   |

**Rashi’s Commentary of Psalm 119:49-72**

**49 Remember a word through which You gave me hope,** through Nathan the prophet to your servant.

**52 Your judgments of old** that You bring sufferings and You repent of your anger and forgive. Therefore, I was consoled.

**55 At night I remembered** At a time of distress and darkness.

**56 This came to me** A crown that fits me [was given] to me as a testimony and to my children who are fit to reign, as a reward for my having kept Your precepts. So did the Sages of Israel explain it. I found this:

**57 to keep Your words** the fulfillment of your words, with which You gave me hope, in that You are my portion.

**58 I entreated You** Heb. חליתי , from the expression of (Lam. 3:24): “‘The Lord is my portion,’ says my soul; ‘therefore, I will hope (אוחיל) to Him.’”

**59 I considered my ways** The loss of a commandment as compared to its gain, and the gain of a transgression as compared to its loss. Therefore, “I returned my feet to Your testimonies,” because I saw that it [Your way] is the best of all of them.

**61 Bands of wicked men robbed me** Heb. עודני . Bands of wicked men plundered me, like (Gen. 49: 27): “in the morning he will eat plunder (עד) .” In this manner, Menachem (p. 131) associated it. It may also be interpreted as an expression of עוֹד , more, i.e., increased and outnumbered me.

**67 Before I recited** to You about Your commandments, before I uttered them in the study halls, I erred in them and sinned. But now that I have recited them, I kept your Torah, for study teaches me to turn away from sin: therefore, I beg of You, “Teach me the best of reason and knowledge.”

**I recited** Heb. אענה , an expression of studying and reciting in the study hall, like (verse 172): “My tongue will utter (תען) Your word.” Similarly (Mal. 2:12): “From the man who commits it, the Lord shall cut off one of acuity or erudition (ועונה) from the tents of Jacob.” An ingenious one among the sages, and one who can answer among the students.

**69 Willful sinners have heaped false accusations upon me** Heb. טפלו , they joined upon me, and similarly (Job 14:17): “and You have attached Yourself (ותטפל) to my iniquity.”

**71 It is good for me that I was afflicted** That I was chastised and afflicted in order that I repent of the evil way and keep Your statutes. In other commentaries I found the following:

**It is good for me that I was afflicted**, etc. It appeared good to me when I suffered privations in order to learn Your statutes, when I learned the Torah in pain.

**Meditation from the Psalms**

**Psalm 119:49-72**

**By: H.Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David**

I am repeating my introduction from the first part of this psalm for continuity.

The life of King David was devoted to the attainment of self-perfection in the service of God. Every action and every step in David’s life was calculated to bring him closer to this lofty goal. In this psalm of one hundred seventy-six verses, the lengthiest in the Book of Tehillim, David painstakingly charts the progressive stage of his determined ascent toward spiritual perfection. The psalm follows the sequence of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet; eight verses begin with א, aleph, the next eight with ב, beit, and so on, because this psalm embodies an orderly program for achieving personal perfection. The Talmud[[5]](#footnote-5) refers to this psalm a תמניא אפין, the repetition of eight. Whereas the number seven symbolizes the power of This World, which was created in seven days, eight symbolizes release from the desires of the mundane work which distract a person from his spiritual aspirations.[[6]](#footnote-6)

In these verses David describes the many obstacles and danger that confronted him in his lifetime. Yet his spirit refused to be overwhelmed by sorrow, for he embraced the fount of joy, the Torah. As David followed the guiding light of G-d’s Torah, his lips burst forth in these ecstatic verses of praise for G-d’s salvation. This psalm opens with the statement: Praiseworthy are those whose way is wholesome, who walk with the Torah of HaShem. It goes on to cite scores of examples of how David strived to walk with G-d. In conclusion David declares: ‘I have attempted to follow You all my life HaShem. If I have failed, I beseech You not to abandon me! I have strayed like a lost sheep; seek out Your servant, I have not forgotten Your commandments’.[[7]](#footnote-7)

Our Torah portion opens with HaShem’s admonition that we should **open our hand** liberally to our needy brother. King David picks up this verbal cue in our portion of Psalm 119:173 by pleading for HaShem **to open His hand** to help him. Radak[[8]](#footnote-8) indicates that this is midda-kneged-midda action.[[9]](#footnote-9) That is, just as King David opened his hands to do what HaShem commanded, by taking care of the needy, so also should HaShem take care of him.

This ‘open hand’ for the needy is also echoed in the opening words of our Ashlamata:

***Amos 8:4*** *Hearken to this, you who swallow up the needy, and to cut off the poor of the land.*

Thematically, there are a couple of connections between the Torah, with the Targum, and our Psalm portion. Consider the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Torah (Targum)** | **Psalm** |
| **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 15:7** But if you be not diligent in the precepts of the Law, and there be among you a poor man in one of your cities of the land which the LORD your God gives you, you will not harden your heart, nor hold back your hand from your poor brother; | **Tehillim (Psalm) 119:168** I kept Your precepts and Your testimonies, for all my ways are before You. **{P}** |
| **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 15:11** **But forasmuch as the house of Israel will not rest in the commandments of the Law, the poor will not cease in the land:** therefore I command you, saying: You will verily open your hands toward your neighbors, to the afflicted around you, and to the poor of your country. | **Tehillim (Psalm) 119:143** Distress and anguish have overtaken me; Your commandments are my occupation. |

Now I would like to examine the ramifications for this section of Psalms as it relates to our prayers.

David exclaims,[[10]](#footnote-10) ‘Seven Times a Day I have praised you for Your righteous ordinances’. Rashi explains that these seven times are in fact the seven berachot[[11]](#footnote-11) that we recite every day which relate directly to kriyat shema;[[12]](#footnote-12) three berachot in shacharit,[[13]](#footnote-13) two before kriyat shema and one after, and four berachot in Arbit,[[14]](#footnote-14) two before kriyat shema and two after. Seven focused berachot a day revolving around our fundamental daily kriyat shema.[[15]](#footnote-15) David HaMelech expressed it clearly, “Seven Times a Day I have praised you”, and this is what he meant![[16]](#footnote-16)

The Beit Yosef[[17]](#footnote-17) quotes the Gaonim[[18]](#footnote-18) who cite the source in the verse ‘Seven times a day I have praised You’.[[19]](#footnote-19) The Mishnah Berurah[[20]](#footnote-20) lists them:

(1) after Pesuke DiZimra,

(2) after Shemone Esre,

(3) after Kedusha Di’Sidra,

(4) after Aleinu,

(5) after Ashrei of Mincha,

(6) after Shemone Esre of Mincha,

(7) after the evening kriyat shema before Shemone Esre.

According to the Jerusalem Talmud,[[21]](#footnote-21) shema is “sandwiched” between four blessings in the evening and three in the morning, for a total of seven each day, so that it will correspond to the verse:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 119:164*** *Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous ordinances.*

The Gemara[[22]](#footnote-22) says that the intent of this verse is referring to the seven berachot surrounding the kriyat shema.[[23]](#footnote-23) In the morning there are two before the shema and one after the shema. At night there are two before the shema and two after. The seven praises mentioned in the verse are the seven blessings of the shema, and the “just laws” are those referred to in the shema itself.

The meforshim[[24]](#footnote-24) on the prayers explain that the two berachot before the shema are designed to help us focus on two main ideas:

1. The first berachot is designed to help us focus on the fact that HaShem constantly renews creation. The natural order is only a façade. In fact HaShem is constantly renewing the world every second and second. When we focus on this idea we must realize that whatever we want and need in life can only come directly Him and not through any other intermediary.

2. The second berachot is designed to help us focus on the fact that Klal Israel is the focal point of all of HaShem’s great and powerful love. He made us partners with Him in creation and we have to accept that Yolk and follow his Torah.

The Gemara,[[25]](#footnote-25) in berachot, says that in the first berachot before the shema, which refers to the renewal of Creation, we should always mention both the day and nigh time periods. The reason for this is that even though we want to focus on the renewal of the specific time period at hand nevertheless Chazal didn’t want to give the impression to heretics that there are multiple deities (the God of day and the God of night) therefore we always mention both together to show that the One G-d has dominion over all of the time periods.

The Gemara[[26]](#footnote-26) says that there are two different versions of the customs of the second berachot of the shema. One version is *ahavat olam*[[27]](#footnote-27) the other version is *ahavah rabbah*.[[28]](#footnote-28) Since the Gemara did not conclude which custom is the correct one, therefore the custom is to say *ahavah rabbah* in the morning and *ahavat olam* at night. There is basis for this split in the scripture because the verse says in Yeshayahu “You renew the world in the morning, how great is your trust in us”. The usage of the word “great” is connected to the morning.

The Rif[[29]](#footnote-29) gives a basis of why we should hold like the opinion that says “Ahavat Olam” always. The Shulchan Aruch[[30]](#footnote-30) rules like the Rif, therefore the Sefardi custom is to say *ahavat olam* both at Shacharit and Arbit.

The berachot after the shema has to do with the fact that HaShem redeemed us from Egypt and constantly protects us throughout all the future exiles.

Let’s briefly review. The Talmud states that one can fulfill the Sinaitic obligation of Torah study through the morning and evening Shema.[[31]](#footnote-31) However, it is not merely that one can fulfill the commandment of learning Torah by reciting the Shema. "The end goal of the mitzva of the Shema is because of Torah study".[[32]](#footnote-32) In other words, the mitzva of Shema is essentially identical with that of Torah study, and Ahavah Rabbah is a blessing on Torah study. Following this logic brings us to the conclusion that the last blessing, ga'al Israel, the one after the Shema, is for that aspect of the Shema that constitutes the commandment to re­member the Exodus.

What do the Rishonim say?[[33]](#footnote-33)

There are situations when for some reason a blessing cannot be said before a mitzva and is post­poned until after the mitzvah was performed.1 presumably the reason for the exception in this case is that one cannot formu­late a proper blessing on the Shema until he has internalized the facts of the Exodus from Egypt. It is only after we fully integrate the historic experience of the Exodus, revelation, and redemp­tion as laid out in Ernet V'Yatziv that we can appreciate what the Shema has to teach us about God and His Kingship. Only then can we pronounce a blessing.

The Meiri[[34]](#footnote-34) and the Tosafot[[35]](#footnote-35) are of the opinion that the blessing on the Shema is the sec­ond one, Ahavah Olam, or Ahavah Rabbah. This approach is consis­tent with the understanding that the Shema is primarily a paradigm of Torah and that Ahavah Rabbah is a blessing on Torah study.

Many authorities, including the Rambam,[[36]](#footnote-36) believe that all the blessings together are the blessings of the Shema. They draw a parallel to blessings before and after the public reading of the Torah and the Megillah. Like these, the Shema is a scriptural reading recited in a formal setting, and, like them, there are blessings before and after it. This opinion should mandate that whenever the Shema is recited, even after the time for the morning prayers has passed, the blessings must be recited with it.

The first blessing echoes and amplifies the motif of accep­tance of the yoke of Heaven expressed in the Shema, and the second blessing does the same for Torah study. The third bless­ing elaborates on the Exodus and connects the Shema to the Shemone Esrei. The realization of this basic fact led the Sages to mandate that the blessings be repeated together with the Shema whenever possible to preserve the richness of the Shema experience.

Now that we have looked at the blessings which surround the Shema, let’s look at the shema, itself, in greater detail.

Shema is the quintessential statement of the Jew. Its importance is underscored by its inclusion in the tefillin, mezuzah, and our prayers.

For those who do not know what the Shema is, it is worth while to give a basic definition that we can expand upon throughout this study. The word ‘Shema’ is an English transliteration of the Hebrew word שמע. Shema means ‘to hear’, and is taken from the first word of the following Torah command:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4-9*** *Hear, O Israel: HaShem our G-d, HaShem is one: 5 And thou shalt love HaShem thy G-d with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*

The Shema is an affirmation of our covenantal relationship and a declaration of faith in one G-d. The obligation to recite the Shema is separate from the obligation to pray and a Jew is obligated to say Shema in the morning and at night, as we can see from the above passage.

The Master of Nazareth, Yeshua, called the Shema, “the first commandment of all”.

***Mordechai (Mark) 12:28-34*** *And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? 29 And Yeshua answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: 30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. 31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. 32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: 33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. 34 And when Yeshua saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.*

The Rambam, as we shall see, cited ‘belief in G-d’ as the first commandment. The Master of Nazareth taught that that the Shema was the first commandment of all.

The Shema consists of three paragraphs extracted from several Torah verses. Before we look at the details, it is worthwhile to understand the importance of this prayer / command.

The importance of this prayer is underscored by the Talmud,[[37]](#footnote-37) where we learn that the reading of the Shema morning and evening fulfills an important mitzva:

***Yehoshua (Joshua) 1:8*** *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

So important is this prayer that as soon as a child begins to speak his father is directed[[38]](#footnote-38) to teach him the Shema and the verse:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 33:4*** *Moses commanded us a law, even the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.*

The Talmud teaches us that this important prayer even reaches into our dreams:

***Berachot 57a*** *If a man were to dream that he is reciting the Shema, he is worthy that the Divine Presence should rest upon him…*

The significance of the Shema is that it is a prayer, in which we accept the **yoke of The Kingdom**. The reciting of the first verse of the Shema is called the *acceptance of the yoke of the kingship of G-d*.[[39]](#footnote-39) Accepting the yoke of the Kingdom[[40]](#footnote-40) is a vital part of understanding the Shema.

The Ramban[[41]](#footnote-41) has said that the primary function of all the mitzvot is to learn the fear of G-d.[[42]](#footnote-42) Chazal[[43]](#footnote-43) teach that “Fear of G-d”[[44]](#footnote-44) is reverential awe.

These are the four rungs in the ladder of prayer. In the first phase of the "service of the heart" (which culminates in the first section of the Shema), the objective is to develop a feeling of love towards HaShem, a yearning and craving to draw close to Him. The second phase (coinciding with the second section of the Shema) is the development of feelings of reverence and awe toward HaShem. The third phase (associated with the blessing "True and Enduring", recited between the Shema and the Amida) is the fusion of love and awe in our relationship with HaShem. In the fourth phase (attained during the silent recitation of the Amida) we transcend emotion itself, abnegating all feeling and desire to achieve an utter commitment and unequivocal devotion to HaShem.

The directives of the Shema, Devarim 6:4ff, intimate two ways for Israel to express its love for HaShem: **to do** and **to hear**. Later Hakhamim will refer to these “ways” as “**duties of the limbs**” and “**duties of the heart**”, the “duties of the limbs” implying what the Hakhamim came to call *halacha.* Derived from the causative verb *halak* (to walk, i.e., to make someone else walk, to lead, to guide), *halacha* is that component of Torah which provides guidance through definitive rulings or commandments (mitzvot). It answers the questions ‘what,’ ‘when,’ and ‘how’ in Israel’s call to holiness.

Rambam[[45]](#footnote-45) lists the reading of the Shema as the tenth of the positive mitzvot:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Mitzva #** | **Verse #** | **248 Positive Mitzvot** |
| P 1 | Ex. 20:22 | Believing in G-d |
| P 2 | Deut. 6:4 | Unity of G-d |
| P 3 | Deut. 6:5 | Loving G-d |
| P 4 | Deut. 6:13 | Fearing G-d |
| P 5 | Exo23:25; Deu11:13; 13:5 | To serve G-d |
| P 6 | Deut 10:20 | To cleave to G-d |
| P 7 | Deut. 10:20 | Taking an oath by G-d's Name |
| P 8 | Deut. 28:9 | Walking in G-d's ways |
| P 9 | Lev. 22:23 | Sanctifying G-d's Name |
| P 10 | Deut. 6:7 | Reading the Shema twice daily |

Let’s look at the details of the "Shema", the prayer HaShem's people pray twice a day; once in the evening and once in the morning. The basic command is found in:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 6:4-9*** *Hear, O Israel: HaShem our G-d, HaShem is one. Love HaShem your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.*

In the above passage, you will notice that we speak of these commands when we sit at home. When do we sit at home? We sit at home in the *evening*. Then we talk of them when we walk along the road. When do we walk along the road? We walk along the road in the *morning*. The scripture then goes on to tell us to talk of them when we lie down. When do we lie down? We lie down in the *evening*. Finally, we are to talk about them when we get up. When do we get up? We get up in the *morning*. So, the pattern holds: "evening" begins the day, and "morning" ends the day.

**HaShem is One!**

The human body has a mashal, an analogy, about HaShem’s oneness. This mashal is based on our observation of the world. Our observation is that this world is composed of differentiated parts. We observe this same differentiation when we observe other human beings. They seem to be composed of parts: Head, hands, legs, etc. This is analogous to this world which seems to be composed of parts. Further, as we saw in our last mashal, HaShem seems to be composed of parts. Yet, we know that HaShem is ONE. That is our declaration in the Shema: HaShem is one! To understand this paradox, HaShem gives us a mashal in our own bodies that will help us understand this paradox.

When others observe us, they see parts. When we observe ourselves externally we see parts. However, when we grasp ourselves internally we see only the totality. We do not grasp ourselves, internally, as a collection of parts. We see only… ourselves! When we use our intellect, or our creativity, we do not have the sensation of moving to another part. We have only the sensation of ourselves as a unity.

Our awareness of ourselves is always in totality. We grasp ourselves as a unity, not a collection of parts.

From this mashal we learn how to view HaShem as one. Since the whole world is nothing more than a manifestation of HaShem, we learn that despite the appearance of parts, this world is one as HaShem is one. Thus we can begin to understand a bit about the unity of HaShem by observing how we are unified to ourselves.

**Malchut - Kingship**

One of the important functions of the Shema is to make HaShem our King. The Rambam taught this concept:[[46]](#footnote-46)

*“The Second Mitzva is the commandment in which we are commanded regarding knowledge of the Oneness [of G-d], namely, that we should know that the Creator of Existence and its Primary Cause is One, as He stated, “Understand, O Israel, HaShem is our G-d, HaShem is One” (Devarim 6:4). In many midrashim you will find the Sages saying, “Al menas le’yached es Shemi” (“for the purpose of unifying My Name”) and “Al menas le’yachdeini” (literally, “for the purpose of unifying Me” - obviously, we cannot take this literally), and the like. Their intent in this statement is that the only reason He took us out of slavery and acted kindly and benevolently with us was in order that we should be a state of knowledge of [His] Oneness, for we are obligated in this. In many places this mitzva is referred to as “the mitzva of Oneness.”* ***This mitzva is also called “Malchut,” as the Sages say, “To accept upon oneself the yoke of the Malchut Shamayim,”[[47]](#footnote-47) which means recognition and knowledge of [His] Oneness.***”

Thus, we see that according to Chazal, the idea of *“Malchut HaShem”* (Kingship of HaShem)is the same as the idea of *“Yichud HaShem”,* the seclusion of HaShem*.* With this idea, the *Adon Olam* prayermakes sense. To say that HaShem was *Melech* (King)before any form was created is to say that He was One before He created the universe. Likewise, to say that HaShem will be *Melech* (King)after everything ceases to exist is to say that His Oneness will not be affected in any way when the universe ends. Lastly, we can understand the tenth *pasuk* of *Malchiyot* (Kingship). Even though the *Shema* doesn’t mention any form of the word *“Melech”* (King)it is nevertheless the perfect expression of *Malchut HaShem* (Kingship of HaShem)*,* for it explicitly states that HaShem is One.

There is one more question we must answer: **How is *Malchut*** (Kingship) **a metaphor for Oneness?** The Rambam may have supported his statement from the words of Chazal, but what were Chazal thinking when they decided to refer to the idea of *Yichud HaShem* (the seclusion of HaShem) by the analogy of *Malchut*?

Before we answer this question, let us briefly review the idea of HaShem’s Existence and HaShem’s Oneness. The Rambam writes:[[48]](#footnote-48)

*“The First Fundamental Principle is the Existence of the Creator, praised is He. Namely, that there Exists an Existence which is perfect in all manners of existence, and this Existence is the cause of the existence of all other existences, and through Him their existence is established, and their existence stems from Him. And if one could entertain the thought of the removal of His Existence, the existence of every other existence would be nullified and they would not remain in existence. And if one could entertain the thought of the removal of all existence besides Him, then His Existence, may He be exalted, would not be nullified, and would not lack, for He, may He be exalted, does not need the existence of any other . . . all of them are dependent on His Existence. And this first fundamental principle is that which is indicated by the statement, “I am HaShem your G-d.”*

HaShem refers to Himself as *“Eheyeh Asher Eheyeh”,* the Existing Being Who Is the Existing Being, or the Inherently Existent Being. In other words, our existence is a contingent and accidental existence; at one point in time, we did not exist, and sooner or later, we shall cease to exist; we do not have to exist, but rather, we exist because HaShem wills it. HaShem’s existence, on the other hand, is independent and essential; He always existed, exists now, and will always exist; unlike us, HaShem must exist. To suggest that HaShem could cease to exist is as absurd as the notion that water could cease to be wet. It is the nature of water to be wet, and it is the Nature of HaShem to Exist, as it were.

*“The Second Fundamental Principle is His Oneness, may He be exalted. Namely, that this Cause of everything is One, not like the oneness of a species and not like the oneness of a class, and not like one unified composite, which can be divided into many unities, and not one like a simple body, which is one in number but is subject to division and subdivision ad infinitum, but He, may He be exalted, is One – a Oneness unlike any other oneness in any way.”*

HaShem is One, and Only One. If our conception of G-d’s oneness contains any plurality whatsoever, then it must be incorrect. If our conception of G-d’s oneness is comparable in any way whatsoever to the oneness of anything else, it must be incorrect. G-d’s oneness is absolute, unshared by and incomparable to any other oneness. In fact, Chazal teach that when we say HaShem is one, we mean that there is nothing except HaShem!

**Thus, *Malchut HaShem* is not a metaphor for HaShem’s rulership over His creations. Rather, it is a metaphor for His Absolute Uniqueness - Oneness which is unlike any other**. To say that HaShem is *Melech* (King) is to say that HaShem’s existence and oneness are completely superior and utterly different than the existence and oneness of any of His subjects.

The Rebbi formulated the idea in an eloquent, easy-to-remember expression: ***Malchut* does not refer to HaShem’s KingSHIP, but HaShem’s KingNESS**. It is not a metaphor for His rulership over His creations, for HaShem was King before the universe existed. Rather, *Malchut* is a metaphor for His uniqueness, distinctness, and utter superiority of existence to all other beings.

By now we can see that the psalmist compressed a lot of meaning into a simple pasuk:

***Tehillim (Psalms) 119:164*** *Seven times a day do I praise Thee, because of Thy righteous ordinances.*

**Ashlamatah: 1 Kings 21:2-4, 7-8, 11-13, 17-18**

| **RASHI** | **TARGUM** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. ¶ And it was after these happenings, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, next to the palace of Ahab, the king of Samaria.  | 1. And after these things, Nabaoth the Jezreelite who was in Jezreel had a vineyard by the side of the palace of Ahab the king of ‎Samaria. |
| 2. And Ahab spoke to Naboth saying, "Give me your vineyard and I will have it for a vegetable garden since it is near my house, and I will give you instead of it a vineyard which is better than it-if it pleases you, I will give you money, its worth." | 2. And Ahab spoke with Nabaoth, saying: “Give to me your vineyard, and it will be my vegetable garden, for it is near, ‎by the side of my house; and I will give to you in its place a vineyard that is‎ better than it. If it is good in your eyes, I will give to you silver whose value is equal.” |
| 3. **And Naboth said to Ahab, "The Lord forbid me to give the inheritance of my forefathers to you."** | 3. **And Nabaoth said to Ahab: “Far be from ‎me from before- the LORD to give the inheritance of my fathers to you.”** |
| 4. And Ahab came to his house sad and upset because of the matter that Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him and said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my forefathers." He lay on his bed, turned away his face, and did not eat bread. | 4. And Ahab went to his house, troubled and sullen over ‎the word that Nabaoth the Jezreelite spoke with him, and said: “I will not give to you the inheritance of my fathers.” And he lay ‎upon his bed, and he turned his face, and he did not eat bread. |
| 5. And Jezebel his wife came to him, and spoke to him, "For what is this that your spirit has left you and you do not eat bread?" | 5. And Jezebel his wife came unto him and spoke with him: “Why ‎is your spirit turning around, and you are not eating bread?” |
| 6. He spoke to her, "For I have spoken to Naboth the Jezreelite and I have said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money or if you wish I will give you a vineyard instead of it. And he said, 'I will not give you my vineyard.' " | 6. And he spoke with her, “‎Because I spoke with Nabaoth the Jezreelite, and I said to him: ‘Give to me your vineyard for silver; or if you wish, I will give to ‎you a vineyard in its place.’ And he said: ‘I will not give to you my vineyard.’”‎ |
| 7. **And Jezebel his wife said to him, "Do you now exercise kingly power over Israel? Arise, and eat bread and let your heart be merry, I will give you Naboth the Jezreelite's vineyard."** | 7. **And Jezebel his wife said to him: “Are you now succeeding in the kingship over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be ‎happy. I will give to you the vineyard of Nabaoth the Jezreelite.”**  |
| 8. And she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed [them] with his seal, and she sent the letters to the elders and the officials who were in his city, who sat with Naboth. | 8. And she wrote a letters in the name of Ahab and sealed them ‎with his signet ring,5 and she sent letters to the elders and to the young noblest who were in his city, who were dwelling with ‎Nabaoth. |
| 9. And she wrote letters saying, "Proclaim a fast and place Naboth in the forefront of the people. | 9. And she wrote in the letters, saying: “Proclaim a fast and set up Nabaoth at the head of the people. |
| 10. And set up two wicked men opposite him and they will testify against him saying, 'You have cursed God and the king,' and they shall remove him and stone him, and he will die." | 10. And set up two ‎men, sons of wickedness, opposite him. And let them witness against him, saying: **“You have blasphemed before the LORD, and ‎you have cursed the king. And take him out and stone him, and let him be killed.”** |
| 11. And the men of his city did, the elders and the officials that dwelled in his city, as Jezebel sent to them, as it was written in the letters that she had sent to them. | 11. And the men of his city, the elders and ‎the young nobles who were dwelling in his city, did just as Jezebel sent unto them, just as it was written in the letter that she sent ‎unto them. |
| 12. They proclaimed a fast, and they set Naboth at the head of the people. | 12. They proclaimed a fast and set up Nabaoth at the head of the people.‎ |
| 13. And the two wicked men came and sat opposite him, and the wicked men testified against Naboth in front of the people saying, **"Naboth cursed God and the king." And they took him out of the city and stoned him with stones, and he died.** | 13. And two men, sons of wickedness, came, and they sat opposite him. And the men of the sons of wickedness witnessed against ‎Nabaoth before the people, saying: **“Nabaoth blasphemed before the LORD and cursed the king.” And they took him outside the ‎city and stoned him with stones, and he died. ‎** |
| 14. And they sent to Jezebel saying: "Naboth has been stoned and has died." | 14. And they sent unto Jezebel, saying: "Nabaoth has been stoned, and he is dead." |
| 15. And it was when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned and that he died, that Jezebel said to Ahab, "Get up, and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money, for Naboth is not living but dead." | 15. And when Jezebel heard that Nabaoth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab: “Arise, take possession of the ‎vineyard of Nabaoth the Jezreelite who was not willing to give it to you for money, for Nabaoth is not alive but is dead.” |
| 16. And it was as Ahab heard that Naboth had died, that Ahab got up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite to take possession of it. **{P}** | 16. And ‎when Ahab heard that Nabaoth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Nabaoth the Jezreelite to take possession of it. |
| 17. And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite saying,  | 17. And a word of prophecy was from before the LORD with Elijah who was from Teshub. saying: |
| 18. "Arise and go down toward Ahab the king of Israel, who is in Samaria. Behold! he is in Naboth's vineyard where he has gone down to take possession of it. | 18. "Arise, go down to meet Ahab ‎the king of Israel who is in Samaria. Behold he is in the vineyard of Nabaoth where he went down to take possession of it. |
| 19. And you shall speak to him saying, 'So said the Lord, "Have you murdered and also inherited?" And you shall speak to him saying, 'Thus said the Lord; "In the place that the dogs have licked the blood of Naboth, shall the dogs lick your blood, even yours!"' | 19. And you will speak with him, saying: ‘Thus said the LORD: “Have you killed, and also have ‎‎you taken possession?” And you will speak with him, saying: ‘Thus said the Lord: “In the place in which the dogs licked the blood of ‎Nabaoth, the dogs will lick your blood also.’” |
| 20. And Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, my enemy?" And he said, "I have found [you] because you have sold yourself to do what is bad in the eyes of the Lord.  | 20. And Ahab said to Elijah: “Have you found me, O my enemy?" And he said: “I have found (you), because you have planned to do what is evil before the LORD. |
| 21. I will bring disaster upon you and I will expunge after you and I will cut off from Ahab every male child and those that are restrained and those that are free in Israel. | 21. Behold I am bringing upon you evil, and I ‎will search after you and destroy for Ahab everyone knowing knowledge, bond and free, in Israel. |
| 22. And I will make your house as the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat and the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the anger which you have angered [Me] and you have caused Israel to sin. | 22. And I will make your house ‎like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah on account of the provocations that you ‎provoked and you made Israel sin. |
| 23. And also concerning Jezebel, the Lord spoke saying, 'The dogs will eat Jezebel in the valley of Jezreel. | 23. And also concerning Jezebel the LORD decreed saying: ‘The dogs will eat Jezebel in the ‎property of Jezreel.’  |
| 24. The dead of Ahab in the city will be eaten by the dogs, and the dead in the fields the fowl of the sky will eat.' " | 24. Whoever belonging to Ahab will die in the city, the dogs will eat; and whoever will die in the field, the birds ‎of the heavens will eat." |
| 25. But there was none like Ahab who had sold himself to do bad in the eyes of the Lord, that Jezebel his wife instigated him. | 25. Only there was no one like Ahab who planned to do what is evil before the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife ‎led astray |
| 26. And he very abominably went after idols, like all that the Amorites had done, whom the Lord had expelled from before the children of Israel. **{P}** | 26. And he acted very wickedly to go after the idols according to all that the Amorites did whom the LORD drove out from ‎before the sons of Israel. |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Rashi’s Commentary on 1 Kings 21:2-4, 7-8, 11-13, 17-18**

**1 And it was after these happenings** [lit. after these things,] still another incident to bring his death close.

**2 its worth** [lit. the worth of this, i.e.,] the worth of this vineyard.

**8 to the elders** wicked and ignorant elders, elders of shame.

**9 Proclaim a fast** On a fast day it was their custom to search for the sins in their hands.

**13 Naboth cursed** Heb. ברך , [lit. blessed, a euphemism for קללה ,] curse. The Targum renders: Naboth blasphemed against God and cursed the king.

**15 Get up and take possession** Some of our Sages say that the property of those executed by the king belong to the king. And some of them say that he [Ahab] was the son of his [Naboth’s] father’s brother. He killed him and his children [as well], and was therefore fit to inherit his [property].

**20 you sold yourself** You sold yourself to anger your Creator. Heb. התמכרך , you sold yourself [reflexive form] like (Deut. 28:68) והתמכרתם , “and you will sell yourselves there to your enemies.”

**23 in the valley of Jezreel** Heb. חל , the Aramaic translation of valley.

**25 But there was none like Ahab** The Scripture testifies concerning him that there was none among the kings like him, for Jeroboam and all those after him worshipped the calves out of fear that if the people would go up to Jerusalem, the kingdom would return to the house of David, but this one [Ahab] added the Baal and the Asherah to anger God.

**sold himself** was sold to idolatry. I saw in Yerushalmi that Hiel was his counselor, and every day he [Hiel] would estimate his [Ahab’s] value and he [Ahab] would give it to the pagan deities.

**27 and put sackcloth on his flesh**, and he fasted, he walked barefoot.

**Hakham’s Meditation**

Our Ashlamatah covers two Petuchot (Pericopes), the first from 21:1-16 and the second from 21:17-26. The verbal tally between the Torah Seder and Ashlamatah is as follows:

**Deut. 11:10**

**כִּי הָאָרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה בָא-שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ--לֹא כְאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הִוא, אֲשֶׁר יְצָאתֶם מִשָּׁם:  אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע אֶת-זַרְעֲךָ, וְהִשְׁקִיתָ בְרַגְלְךָ כְּגַן הַיָּרָק.**

For the land, whither you go in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence you came out, where you did sow your seed, and did water it with your foot, **as a garden of herbs;**

**1 Kings 21:2**

**וַיְדַבֵּר אַחְאָב אֶל-נָבוֹת לֵאמֹר תְּנָה-לִּי אֶת-כַּרְמְךָ וִיהִי-לִי לְגַן-יָרָק,**

And Ahab spoke unto Naboth, saying: 'Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for **a garden of herbs,**

The Ashlamatah may divided as well thematically along the same lines as the Petuchot it covers:

* After these events Ahab was seized with such a desire for a vineyard which was situated near his palace at Jezreel, that when Naboth, the owner of the vineyard, refused to part with his paternal inheritance, he became thoroughly dejected, until his wife Jezebel paved the way for the forcible seizure of the desired possession by the shameful execution of Naboth (1Kings 21:1-16).
* But when Ahab was preparing to take possession of the vineyard, Elijah came to meet him with the announcement, that both he and his wife would be visited by the Lord with a bloody death for this murder and robbery, and that his idolatry would be punished with the extermination of all his house (1Kings 21:17-26).

**Jezreel –** According to WIkipedia[[49]](#footnote-49)

**Jezreel** ([Hebrew](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_language): **יזרעאל**‎ *Yizre'el*, "God sows") was an ancient [Israelite](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israelite) city and fortress originally within the boundaries of the [Tribe of Issachar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tribe_of_Issachar),[[50]](#footnote-50) and later within the northern [Kingdom of Israel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Israel_%28Samaria%29). According to the [Book of Kings](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Books_of_Kings), the royal palace of [King Ahab](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Ahab) in Jezreel was adjacent to the [vineyard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vineyard) of [Naboth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naboth). Prior to the division of the [United Kingdom of Israel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom_of_Israel), the city was also the hometown of [Ahinoam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahinoam), first wife of [King David](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_David).

The modern [archaeological site](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archaeological_site) is located on a low hill on the southern edge of the [Jezreel Valley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jezreel_Valley)'s eastern edge in northern [Israel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel).[[51]](#footnote-51) Archaeologists [David Ussishkin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Ussishkin) and John Woodhead believe that Jezreel was a fortress that served as a cavalry base for [King Ahab](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Ahab).

Jezreel has been identified with the modern Zerin, (cf. Joshua 19:18) on the most western point of the range of Gilboa, reaching down into the great and fertile valley of Jezreel, to which it gave its name.

The Jewish Encyclopaedia[[52]](#footnote-52) describes Naboth as:

Jezreelite of the time of Ahab, King of Israel; owner of a small plot of ground near Jezreel (II Kings 9:21, 25-26) and of a vineyard contiguous to Ahab's palace at Jezreel (I Kings 21:1); the Septuagint reads, "a vineyard hard by the thrashing-floor of Ahab, King of Samaria," without indicating its situation. Ahab desired the vineyard for a garden of herbs and proposed to buy it from Naboth or give him a better one in exchange. Naboth, however, refused to part with the vineyard on the ground that it was the inheritance of his fathers. It seems that Ahab would have abandoned his purpose, but his wife Jezebel took the matter into her own hands. Writing in Ahab's name to the elders and nobles of Naboth's city, probably Samaria, she ordered them to proclaim a solemn fast and set Naboth on high among the people; then two wicked men were to testify that Naboth had cursed God and the king, the punishment for which was stoning. Jezebel's order was executed to the letter, and Naboth having been stoned, Ahab took possession of the vineyard (I Kings 21:1-16). It seems from II Kings 9:26 that Naboth's sons perished with their father, probably being killed soon afterward by order of Jezebel in order that they might not claim the vineyard as their inheritance. The execution of Naboth took place outside the city, where the dogs licked up his blood (I Kings 21:13, 19), according to Josephus ("Ant." viii. 15, § 6), at Jezreel).

The offer of King Ahab seems fair to uninformed eyes, however Keil and Delitzch[[53]](#footnote-53) correctly comment on v. 3 –

“Naboth refused to part with the vineyard, because it was the inheritance of his fathers, that is to say, on religious grounds **(חָלִילָה כִּי מֵיהוה)**, because the sale of a paternal inheritance was forbidden in the Law (Lev. 25:23-28; Num. 36:7.). He was therefore not merely at liberty as a personal right to refuse the king's proposal, but bound by the commandment of God.”

Commenting on this passage, Rev. Bill Long states:

The word *nabata* in Arabic means "vineyard," and so Naboth's name may have been derived from his holdings. **It is as if his vineyards had become renowned in the region and he was simply known as the "vineyard guy."** If Napa is synonymous in America with wine, so Naboth in ancient Israel was synonymous with a fine vineyard. Ahab longed to possess this vineyard. We aren't told whether there is a long family dispute between Ahab's and Naboth's people or whether Ahab, always sensitive to his "back side," is trying to clip the wings of another prominent noble. We are just told that he wants Naboth's vineyard.

**But before we dump on Ahab, we ought to look more closely at how things are described. He makes a proposal to Naboth which is actually not a bad one, from one perspective.** In our common law system of law, we have the concept of "eminent domain." It provides that the State may take any and all of your private land as long as it pays you "just compensation" for it. **Sometimes the state doesn't have to compensate you *at all* if it is just a "partial taking." Actually, this area of law is really a "hot button issue" in many states in America today.** In Ahab's case he is giving Naboth the choice *not only* of just compensation but of what we might call a "comparable parcel." From the perspective of *our* system of property law, what Ahab does is perfectly reasonable, merciful--and legal.

**But Israel has a particular attachment to land in accordance with the Torah, much greater even than we have**. Land is not only a source of wealth and security; it gives a family identity and continuity. The whole principle of the Jubilee year in Israelite life presupposes that the land *ought never* to leave the family's possession or, if it does, it is restored to the family in the 50th year. Well, the concept of the Jubilee was just that--a brilliant idea that probably never was actually put into effect, but it reflects the strong values of the people. **Land is inviolate. Even if the king wants the land.**

Anyhow, King Ahab was a week man cleaving more to his pagan machiavellic wife that hated any religious man with gusto, than to G-d, most blessed be He! What is interesting to observe is that the corrupt elders of Samaria carry out a kangaroo court at the behest of Jezebel against Naboth, in a similar vein as the corrupt priesthood in Jerusalem together with Sadducee Scribes and Elders carry out their kangaroo court against the Master.

The accusation against Naboth was: ***“Naboth did curse (blaspheme) God and the king.”***

And the accusation against the Master was:

**Mar 14:61** And Yeshua kept silent, and made no reply. ‎Again, the Kohen Gadol interrogated him, and said, **‎‎“Are you the Messiah, the son of the [Most High] ‎Blessed [be He]?”** ‎

**Mar 14:62** And Yeshua said to him, I am, and you will ‎see the son of man sitting at the right hand of the [All] ‎Powerful and He (G-d) will come with the clouds of ‎heaven.

**Mar 14:63** And the Kohen Gadol tore his tunic, and ‎said, “Why do we need witnesses anymore? ‎

**Mar 14:64** Behold, **from his own mouth you have ‎heard blasphemy**. How does it appear to you?” And ‎they all [the Kohanim, the Soferim and the Zakanim ‎‎(of the Tz’dukim)] decided, that he deserved to die. ‎

Both the elders and the nobles of Samaria and the corrupt priests and the elders and scribes of the Sadducees in both cases unlawfully determined that the falsely accused “deserved to die” Why this abuse of authority and perversion of the justice system? The answer is offered in both the Torah Seder for this week and the Pericope of the Nazarean Codicil for this week as well: they all transgressed the commandment **“to cleave unto G-d”** (Deut. 11:22).

**PIRQE ABOT**

**Pereq Dalet**

**Mishnah 4:12**

**By: Hakham Yitschaq ben Moshe Magriso**

**Rabbi Meir said: Decrease your occupation and occupy yourself with the Torah. Be lowly of spirit before every man. If you neglect the Torah, you have much negligence facing you. If you work in the Torah there is much reward to be given to you.**

The master teaches that a person should not be overly concerned with business, since God has many ways of providing a livelihood for one who has fear of Heaven (*yirath Shamayim*). Therefore one should minimize his concern with business, and maximize his study of Torah.

Do not ask, "How can I leave my business to study Torah and lose two hours each day What a person earns does not depend on how hard he works or on how much time he spends in his business. If God favors a person for being a good Jew, He can provide all his needs in a moment. It is not within a person's own power to gain wealth.

A person may feel that he will earn more if he skips his afternoon (minchah) or evening (arvith) prayers, or if he does not study Torah one or two hours a day. He should realize that the sin will weigh heavily on him, and he will be punished on the great Day of Judgment (Yom HaDin HaGadol). Besides, even in this world, he will not earn any more than was destined for him.

Obviously, then, a person does not gain by neglecting prayer and Torah study. As a result of this, his livelihood can actually decrease. On the other hand, when a person diminishes his business efforts to make time to study Torah, he gains.

We thus find that the prophet Jeremiah told the Israelites that they were being punished for not occupying themselves with the Torah. They replied that they were concerned with their livelihood and had no time to study. To this the prophet replied, "O generation, see God's word: Have I then been a desert to Israel . . . [that My people say, ׳We go abroad, we can no longer come to You׳]" (Jeremiah 2:31).

Jeremiah showed the people the urn of manna that was concealed in the Holy Temple before the Holy Ark (Aron HaKodesh). He told them of God's miracles, how their fathers were in the desert and how God sustained them for many years with the manna. He said, "If you obey God and study His Torah, God will provide you, too, with a livelihood from the place where you least expect it."

The master goes on to say that if you want to have time for business and Torah study, "Be lowly of spirit before every man." Do not con-sider yourself important and seek status. A person suffers much evil from straining and slaving all day to make extra money. Why? Because he sees that his neighbor serves himself with a silver pitcher and he wants the same. This is true of all luxuries.

If you want to keep up with all your neighbors, you will have to slave day and night, at a tremendous personal cost. Your pursuit will be endless. You will earn the copper and convert it into silver. But as the days go by, you will say to yourself, “Why can’t I convert it into gold? That person did, nd he in’t nearly as smart as I am.” When a person has these detrimental thoughts and constantly wishes to have more than his neighbour, he continues struggling all his life.

But if you behave with humility, and consider yourself inferior to others, you will remain healthy and happy all your life. You will earn what you need without struggle. If you see your neighbor serving himself out of a silver pitcher, you will say, "He deserves it, because he is better than I. But I am satisfied to be served out of earthenware or copper. I am I and he is he."

The same is true of all luxuries which you can get along without. Thus you will not have to struggle so for a livelihood, and you will have time to think about the next world. Usually a person does not have to work very hard for the necessities of life. But even more important, if a person is satisfied with his bare necessities, he does not have to give up anything in Judaism for his livelihood; he will find ample time during the day for everything.

If you do not take this advice, and you neglect the Torah, then "you will have much negligence facing you." Many things will force you to neglect the Torah. If you spend the entire day doing unnecessary things, then Providence will purse you with suffering and anxiety, so that you will not have time to hold a book in your hand. Providence merely reacts to a person's own actions.

But if you follow the advice given you and get along with your bare necessities, devoting your time to the Torah, then your livelihood will be provided for you by Providence. It will come from places where you least expect it.

The great reward set aside for you in the World to Come consists of the 310 worlds that God will give each righteous person. This is alluded to in the verse, "To give those who love Me substance (yesh)" (Proverbs 8:21). The numerical value of yesh is 310.

Here the master says, "There is (yesh) much reward to be given to you." Here too, the word yesh alludes to the 310 worlds.

**Verbal Connections**

**By H.Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David &**

**HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah**

**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 11:10 -12:19**

**Tehillim (Psalm) 119:49-72**

**Melachim Alef (1 Kings) 21:2-4, 7-8, 11-13, 17-18**

**Mk 14:55-65, Lk 22:63-71, Rm 11:17-24**

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Psalm are:**

Land / earth - ארץ, Strong’s number 0776.

LORD - יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

Foot / feet - רגל, Strong’s number 07272.

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Ashlamata are:**

Goest in / came - בוא, Strong’s number 0935.

Possess - ירש, Strong’s number 03423.

Came out / carried forth - יצא, Strong’s number 03318.

Garden - גן, Strong’s number 01588.

Herbs - ירק, Strong’s number 03419.

LORD - יהוה, Strong’s number 03068.

God - אלהים, Strong’s number 0430.

Eyes / thee - עין, Strong’s number 05869.

**Devarim (Deuteronomy) 11:10-12** For the **land <0776>**, whither thou **goest in <0935> (8802)** to **possess <03423> (8800)** it, is not as the **land <0776>** of Egypt, from whence ye **came out <03318> (8804)**, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy **foot <07272>,** as a **garden <01588>** of **herbs <03419>**: 11 But the **land <0776>**, whither ye go to **possess <03423> (8800)** it, is a **land <0776>** of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: 12 A **land <0776>** which the **LORD <03068>** thy **God <0430>** careth for: **the eyes <05869>** of the **LORD <03068>** thy **God <0430>** are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.

**Tehillim (Psalm) 119:59** I thought on my ways, and turned my **feet <07272>** unto thy testimonies.

**Tehillim (Psalm) 119:64** The **earth <0776>**, **O LORD <03068>**, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes.

**Melachim Alef (1 Kings) 21:2** And Ahab spake unto Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a **garden <01588>** of **herbs <03419>**, because it is near unto my house: and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to **thee <05869>**, I will give thee the worth of it in money.

**Melachim Alef (1 Kings) 21:3** And Naboth said to Ahab, The **LORD <03068>** forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.

**Melachim Alef (1 Kings) 21:4** And Ahab **came <0935> (8799)** into his house heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.

**Melachim Alef (1 Kings) 21:13** And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme **God <0430>** and the king. Then they **carried him forth <03318> (8686)** out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he died.

**Melachim Alef (1 Kings) 21:18** Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to **possess <03423> (8800)** it.

**Hebrew:**

| **Hebrew** | **English** | **Torah Seder****Deu 11:10 – 12:19** | **Psalms****Psa 119:49-72** | **Ashlamatah****I Kings 21:2-4, 7-8,11-13, 17-18** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ba' | father | Deut. 11:21Deut. 12:1 |  | 1 Ki. 21:31 Ki. 21:4 |
| vyai | man, men | Deut. 11:25Deut. 12:8 |  | 1 Ki. 21:111 Ki. 21:13 |
| lk;a' | eat, ate | Deut. 11:15Deut. 12:7Deut. 12:15Deut. 12:16Deut. 12:17Deut. 12:18 |  | 1 Ki. 21:41 Ki. 21:7 |
| ~yhil{a/ | GOD | Deut. 11:12Deut. 11:13Deut. 11:16Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:25Deut. 11:27Deut. 11:28Deut. 11:29Deut. 11:31Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:2Deut. 12:3Deut. 12:4Deut. 12:5Deut. 12:7Deut. 12:9Deut. 12:10Deut. 12:11Deut. 12:12Deut. 12:15Deut. 12:18 |  | 1 Ki. 21:13 |
| ~ai | if | Deut. 11:13Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:28 |  | 1 Ki. 21:2 |
| rm;a' | saying |  | Ps. 119:57 | 1 Ki. 21:21 Ki. 21:31 Ki. 21:41 Ki. 21:71 Ki. 21:131 Ki. 21:17 |
|  #r,a, | land, earth, ground | Deut. 11:10Deut. 11:11Deut. 11:12Deut. 11:14Deut. 11:17Deut. 11:21Deut. 11:25Deut. 11:29Deut. 11:30Deut. 11:31Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:10Deut. 12:16 | Ps. 119:64 |  |
|  rv,a] | which, whom | Deut. 11:10Deut. 11:11Deut. 11:12Deut. 11:13Deut. 11:17Deut. 11:21Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:24Deut. 11:25Deut. 11:27Deut. 11:28Deut. 11:29Deut. 11:31Deut. 11:32Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:2Deut. 12:5Deut. 12:7Deut. 12:8Deut. 12:9Deut. 12:10Deut. 12:11Deut. 12:12Deut. 12:14Deut. 12:15Deut. 12:17Deut. 12:18 | Ps. 119:49Ps. 119:63 | 1 Ki. 21:41 Ki. 21:81 Ki. 21:111 Ki. 21:18 |
|  aAB | entering, go, come | Deut. 11:10Deut. 11:29Deut. 11:31Deut. 12:5Deut. 12:6Deut. 12:9Deut. 12:11 |  | 1 Ki. 21:41 Ki. 21:13 |
| tyIB;  | house | Deut. 11:19Deut. 11:20Deut. 12:7 | Ps. 119:54 | 1 Ki. 21:21 Ki. 21:4 |
| %r'B' | blessed | Deut. 12:7 |  | 1 Ki. 21:13 |
| !G" | garden | Deut. 11:10 |  | 1 Ki. 21:2 |
| rb;D' | talking, spoken, spoke | Deut. 11:19Deut. 11:25 |  | 1 Ki. 21:21 Ki. 21:4 |
| rb'D' | words | Deut. 11:18 | Ps. 119:49Ps. 119:57Ps. 119:65 | 1 Ki. 21:41 Ki. 21:17 |
| %r,D, | road, way | Deut. 11:19Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:28Deut. 11:30 | Ps. 119:59 |  |
| hy"h' | come, came, have, become | Deut. 11:13Deut. 11:29Deut. 12:11 | Ps. 119:56 | 1 Ki. 21:21 Ki. 21:17 |
| ql,xe | portion | Deut. 12:12 | Ps. 119:57 |  |
| qxo | statues | Deut. 11:32Deut. 12:1 | Ps. 119:54Ps. 119:64Ps. 119:68Ps. 119:71 |  |
| hwhy  | LORD | Deut. 11:12Deut. 11:13Deut. 11:17Deut. 11:21Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:23Deut. 11:25Deut. 11:27Deut. 11:28Deut. 11:29Deut. 11:31Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:4Deut. 12:5Deut. 12:7Deut. 12:9Deut. 12:10Deut. 12:11Deut. 12:12Deut. 12:14Deut. 12:15Deut. 12:18 | Ps. 119:52Ps. 119:55Ps. 119:57Ps. 119:64Ps. 119:65 | 1 Ki. 21:31 Ki. 21:17 |
| bj;y" | joyful |  | Ps. 119:68 | 1 Ki. 21:7 |
| ac'y" | came, took | Deut. 11:10 |  | 1 Ki. 21:13 |
|  qr'y" | vegetable | Deut. 11:10 |  | 1 Ki. 21:2 |
| vr'y" | possess | Deut. 11:10Deut. 11:11Deut. 11:23Deut. 11:29Deut. 11:31Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:2 |  | 1 Ki. 21:18 |
| bv;y" | sit, sat | Deut. 11:19Deut. 11:30Deut. 11:31Deut. 12:10 |  | 1 Ki. 21:81 Ki. 21:111 Ki. 21:121 Ki. 21:13 |
| yKi | when, since. Because | Deut. 11:29Deut. 12:12 |  | 1 Ki. 21:2 |
|  lKo | all, whole, every, entire | Deut. 11:13Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:23Deut. 11:24Deut. 11:25Deut. 11:32Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:2Deut. 12:5Deut. 12:7Deut. 12:8Deut. 12:10Deut. 12:11Deut. 12:13Deut. 12:14Deut. 12:15Deut. 12:17Deut. 12:18Deut. 12:19 | Ps. 119:58Ps. 119:63Ps. 119:69 |  |
| @s,K, | money |  | Ps. 119:72 | 1 Ki. 21:2 |
|  bt;K' | write | Deut. 11:20 |  | 1 Ki. 21:81 Ki. 21:11 |
|  aol  | no, none, not | Deut. 11:17Deut. 11:25 |  | 1 Ki. 21:4 |
| ble | heart |  | Ps. 119:58Ps. 119:69Ps. 119:70 | 1 Ki. 21:7 |
| dm;l' | teach | Deut. 11:19 | Ps. 119:64Ps. 119:66Ps. 119:68Ps. 119:71 |  |
|  !mi | than, outside, because | Deut. 11:23 | Ps. 119:53Ps. 119:72 | 1 Ki. 21:21 Ki. 21:13 |
| hw"c.mi | commandments | Deut. 11:13Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:27Deut. 11:28 | Ps. 119:60Ps. 119:66 |  |
| jP'v.mi  | judgments | Deut. 11:32Deut. 12:1 | Ps. 119:52Ps. 119:62 |  |
| hl'x]n"  | inheritance | Deut. 12:9Deut. 12:12 |  | 1 Ki. 21:31 Ki. 21:4 |
| !t;n" | give, gave, given | Deut. 11:14Deut. 11:15Deut. 11:17Deut. 11:21Deut. 11:25Deut. 11:26Deut. 11:29Deut. 11:31Deut. 11:32Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:9Deut. 12:15 |  | 1 Ki. 21:21 Ki. 21:31 Ki. 21:41 Ki. 21:7 |
| db,[, | sevants, slaves | Deut. 12:12Deut. 12:18 | Ps. 119:49Ps. 119:65 |  |
| d[; | as far as, utterly | Deut. 11:24 | Ps. 119:51 |  |
|  !yI[; | eyes | Deut. 11:12Deut. 11:18Deut. 12:8 |  | 1 Ki. 21:2 |
| l[; | above, because, over | Deut. 11:21 | Ps. 119:62Ps. 119:69 | 1 Ki. 21:41 Ki. 21:7 |
| hT'[; | now, yet | Deut. 12:9 | Ps. 119:67 | 1 Ki. 21:7 |
| ~ynIP' | before, face | Deut. 11:23Deut. 11:25Deut. 11:26Deut. 11:32Deut. 12:7Deut. 12:12Deut. 12:18 | Ps. 119:58 | 1 Ki. 21:4 |
| ~Wq | rise | Deut. 11:19 | Ps. 119:62 | 1 Ki. 21:71 Ki. 21:18 |
| lg<r, | foot, feet | Deut. 11:10Deut. 11:24 | Ps. 119:59 |  |
| bk;v'  | down | Deut. 11:19 |  | 1 Ki. 21:4 |
| ~v' | where, there | Deut. 11:29Deut. 12:2Deut. 12:5Deut. 12:6Deut. 12:7Deut. 12:11Deut. 12:14 |  | 1 Ki. 21:18 |
| ~ve | name | Deut. 12:3Deut. 12:5Deut. 12:11 | Ps. 119:55 | 1 Ki. 21:8 |
| rm;v' | beware, careful, observe | Deut. 11:16Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:32Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:13Deut. 12:19 | Ps. 119:55Ps. 119:57Ps. 119:60Ps. 119:63Ps. 119:67 |  |
| tx;T; | under, place | Deut. 12:2 |  | 1 Ki. 21:2 |
| bAj | good | Deut. 11:17 | Ps. 119:68Ps. 119:72 | 1 Ki. 21:2 |
|  bz"[' | forsake | Deut. 12:19 | Ps. 119:53 |  |
| hf'[' | did, do ,make | Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:32Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:4Deut. 12:8Deut. 12:14 | Ps. 119:65 | 1 Ki. 21:71 Ki. 21:11 |
| lc,ae | beside | Deut. 11:30 |  | 1 Ki. 21:2 |

Greek:

| **Greek** | **English** | **Torah Seder****Deu 11:10 – 12:19** | **Psalms****Psa 119:49-72** | **Ashlamatah****I Kings 21:2-4, 7-8, 11-13, 17-18** | **Peshat****Mk/Jude/Pet****Mk 14:55-65** | **Remes 1****Luke****Lk 22:63-71** | **Remes 2****Acts/Romans****Rm 11:17-24** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ἀκούω** | hear, heard | Deu 11:13 Deu 11:22 Deu 11:27  |  |  | Mk. 14:58Mk. 14:64 | Lk. 22:71 |  |
| **ἄλλος** | another |  |  | 1Ki 21:2 | Mk. 14:58 |  |  |
| **ἀνήρ** | men, man |  |  | 1Ki 21:111Ki 21:13 |  | Lk. 22:63 |  |
| **ἄνθρωπος** | man, men |  |  |  | Mk. 14:62 | Lk. 22:69 |  |
| **ἀνίστημι** | rose up, stood up |  |  | 1Ki 21:71Ki 21:15 1Ki 21:18  | Mk. 14:57Mk. 14:60 |  |  |
| **ἀποκρίνομαι** | answered |  |  |  | Mk. 14:60Mk. 14:61 | Lk. 22:68 |  |
| **ἀρχιερεύς** | chief priest |  |  |  | Mk. 14:55Mk. 14:60Mk. 14:61Mk. 14:63 | Lk. 22:66 |  |
| **γίνομαι** | became, to be, came to pass, happened |  | Psa 119:56  | 1Ki 21:31Ki 21:41Ki 21:7  |  |  | Rom. 11:17 |
| **δεξιός** | right |  |  |  | Mk. 14:62 | Lk. 22:69 |  |
| **διδάσκω** | teach | Deut. 11:19 | Ps. 119:64Ps. 119:66Ps. 119:68Ps. 119:71 |  |  |  |  |
| **δύναμις** | power |  |  |  | Mk. 14:62 | Lk. 22:69 |  |
| **ἐκκόπτω** | cut down | Deu 12:3 |  |  |  |  | Rom. 11:22Rom. 11:24 |
| **ἐπερωτάω** | ask, questioned |  |  |  | Mk. 14:60Mk. 14:61 | Lk. 22:64 |  |
| **ἔρχομαι** | came, went |  |  | 1Ki 21:4 | Mk. 14:62 |  |  |
| **ἕτερος** | other | Deu 11:16Deu 11:28 |  |  |  | Lk. 22:65 |  |
| **ἔχω** | next to, have | Deu 11:30  |  |  | Mk. 14:63 | Lk. 22:71 |  |
| **ἡμέρα** | days | Deu 11:21 Deu 11:31Deu 12:1 |  |  | Mk. 14:58 | Lk. 22:66 |  |
| **θεός** | GOD | Deut. 11:12Deut. 11:13Deut. 11:16Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:25Deut. 11:27Deut. 11:28Deut. 11:29Deut. 11:31Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:2Deut. 12:3Deut. 12:4Deut. 12:5Deut. 12:7Deut. 12:9Deut. 12:10Deut. 12:11Deut. 12:12Deut. 12:15Deut. 12:18 |  | 1 Ki. 21:13 |  | Lk. 22:69Lk. 22:70 | Rom. 11:21Rom. 11:22Rom. 11:23 |
| **κάθημαι** | sitting down | Deu 11:19 |  |  | Mk. 14:62 | Lk. 22:69 |  |
| **καταμαρτυρέω** | against |  |  | 1Ki 21:13 | Mk. 14:60 |  |  |
| **λαός** | people |  |  | 1Ki 21:12 |  | Lk. 22:66 |  |
| **λέγω** | saying |  |  | 1Ki 21:21Ki 21:131Ki 21:17 | Mk. 14:57Mk. 14:58Mk. 14:60Mk. 14:61Mk. 14:62Mk. 14:63Mk. 14:65 | Lk. 22:64Lk. 22:65Lk. 22:66Lk. 22:67Lk. 22:70Lk. 22:71 | Rom. 11:19 |
| **μαρτυρία** | witness |  |  |  | Mk. 14:55Mk. 14:56Mk. 14:59 | Lk. 22:71 |  |
| **νῦν** | now | Deut. 12:9 | Ps. 119:67 | 1 Ki. 21:7 |  | Lk. 22:69 |  |
| **ὅλος** | entire | Deu 11:13  | Psa 119:58Psa 119:69 |  | Mk. 14:55 |  |  |
| **ὁράω** | appear, see |  |  |  | Mk. 14:62 |  | Rom. 11:22 |
| **οὐρανός** | heavens | Deu 11:11 Deu 11:17 Deu 11:21 |  |  | Mk. 14:62 |  |  |
| **πᾶς** | all, entire, whole, every | Deut. 11:13Deut. 11:22Deut. 11:23Deut. 11:24Deut. 11:25Deut. 11:32Deut. 12:1Deut. 12:2Deut. 12:5Deut. 12:7Deut. 12:8Deut. 12:10Deut. 12:11Deut. 12:13Deut. 12:14Deut. 12:15Deut. 12:17Deut. 12:18Deut. 12:19 | Ps. 119:58Ps. 119:63Ps. 119:69 |  | Mk. 14:64 | Lk. 22:70 |  |
| **περικαλύπτω** | blindfold |  |  |  | Mk. 14:65 | Lk. 22:64 |  |
| **πιστεύω** | trust |  | Psa 119:66  |  |  | Lk. 22:67 |  |
| **πολύς, πολλός** | many, much |  |  |  | Mk. 14:56 | Lk. 22:65 |  |
| **προφητεύω** | prophesy |  |  |  | Mk. 14:65 | Lk. 22:64 |  |
| **στόμα** | mouth |  | Psa 119:72  |  |  | Lk. 22:71 |  |
| **συνέδριον** | council |  |  |  | Mk. 14:55 | Lk. 22:66 |  |
| **συνέχω** | hold together | Deu 11:17 |  |  |  | Lk. 22:63 |  |
| **υἱός** | sons | Deu 11:21Deu 12:12Deu 12:18 |  | 1Ki 21:13 | Mk. 14:61Mk. 14:62 | Lk. 22:69Lk. 22:70 |  |
| **ὑψηλός** | highest | Deu 11:30 Deu 12:2 |  |  |  |  | Rom. 11:20 |
| **φοβέω** | fear |  | Psa 119:63  |  |  |  | Rom. 11:20 |
| **χρηστότης** | good, graciousness |  | Psa 119:66Psa 119:68 |  |  |  | Rom. 11:22 |
| **χρεία** | need |  |  |  | Mk. 14:63 | Lk. 22:71 |  |
| **Χριστός** | anointed |  |  |  | Mk. 14:61 | Lk. 22:67 |  |

**Nazarean Talmud**

**Sidra of “D’barim (Deut.) “11:10 — 12:19”**

**“Ki HaAretz, Asher” “For the land which”**

**By: H. Em Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham &**

**H. Em. Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai**

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| **School of Hakham Shaul’s Tosefta****Luqas (LK)**Mishnah **א:א** | **School of Hakham Tsefet’s** **Peshat****Mordechai (Mk)** Mishnah **א:א** |
| **And the men who were holding[[54]](#footnote-54) him began to ridicule[[55]](#footnote-55) him** while **they beat[[56]](#footnote-56)** him**, and** after **blindfolding him they repeatedly asked** him**, saying, “Prophesy![[57]](#footnote-57) Who is the one who struck you?” And they were saying many other** things **against him, reviling** him**. And when day came, the council of Zekanim** of the Tz’dukim (Sadducees) **of the people gathered, both Kohen Gadol and** their **soferim, and they led him away to their council,[[58]](#footnote-58) saying, “If you are the Messiah, tell us!” But he said to them, “If I tell you, you will never faithfully obey, and if I ask** you**, you will never answer! But from now on the Son of Man** (the Prophet)[[59]](#footnote-59) **will occupy the office[[60]](#footnote-60) of a plenipotentiary agent** (Shiliach - Apostle,right hand) **of God’s authority.” So they all said, “Are you then the Ben HaElohim?” And he said to them, “You say that I am.” And they said, “Why do we have need** of **further testimony? For** we **ourselves have heard** it **from his mouth!”** | **¶And they led Yeshua away** from **Gat** Shamni **to the** house of the **Kohen Gadol; And all the Kohanim, the Soferim and the Zekanim** (of the Tz’dukim) were present. **And Tsefet followed him** (Yeshua), **at a distance; into the courtyard of the** house of the **Kohen Gadol; and he sat with the** (young Temple) **guards, warming himself by the fire.** **And the Kohen Gadol and all the assembly** (of the Tz’dukim) **sought for testimony against Yeshua, to put him to death: but they could not find one. For many testified falsely against him, but their testimonies did not agree.** **And some false witnesses stood up against him, and said: We have heard[[61]](#footnote-61) him say, “I will destroy this temple, which is made with hands; and in three days[[62]](#footnote-62) I will build another not made with hands.” But even on this they did not agree. And the Kohen Gadol stood up before them, and interrogated Yeshua and said, “Do you not have an answer? Why do these testify against you?” And Yeshua kept silent, and made no reply. Again, the Kohen Gadol interrogated him, and said, “Are you the Messiah, the son of the** Most High Blessed be He?” **And Yeshua said to him, I am, and you will see the son of man sitting at the right hand of the** All **Powerful and He** (G-d) **will come with the clouds of heaven.[[63]](#footnote-63) And the Kohen Gadol tore his tunic, and said, “Why do we need witnesses anymore?[[64]](#footnote-64)** **Behold, from his own mouth you have heard blasphemy. How does it appear to you?” And they all** the Kohanim, the Soferim and the Zekanim (of the Tz’dukim) **decided, that he deserved to die. And some began to spit in his face, and to strike him, saying, “Prophesy!” And the servants struck him on the cheeks.** |

|  |
| --- |
| **School of Hakham Shaul’s Remes****Romans**Mishnah **א:א** |
| **¶But if some of the** (non-fruit bearing) **branches were pruned away, you being** from **an uncultivated olive tree[[65]](#footnote-65) were grafted in among them** (the fruit-baring branches) **also join fellowship in the fatness of the olive root. Therefore, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant,[[66]](#footnote-66) remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, "some of the** non-fruit-bearing **Branches were pruned away so that I might be grafted in?"[[67]](#footnote-67) You are correct they were pruned away because of their fruitlessness,[[68]](#footnote-68) but you** were made to **stand by your faithful obedience.[[69]](#footnote-69) Do not be conceited,[[70]](#footnote-70) but fear, for if God did not spare the original branches, He will not spare you, either. Behold then the loving-kindness and strictness[[71]](#footnote-71) of God; to those who fell, strictness, but to you, God's loving-kindness, if you continue in His loving-kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.[[72]](#footnote-72) And they if they cease to continue in their disobedience, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature an uncultivated olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the original branches be grafted into their own olive tree?** |

**Nazarean Codicil to be read in conjunction with the following Torah Seder**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dt 11:10–12:19 | Ps 119:49-72 | I Kg 21:2-4, 7-8, 11-13, 17-18 | Mordechai 14:55-65 | 1 Luqas 22:63-71 | Rm 11:17-24 |

**Commentary to Hakham Tsefet’s School of Peshat**

We posted most of our thoughts on the Peshat portion of this week’s Torah Seder last week. Here we will comment briefly on the joint pericopes of Peshat and Tosefta (Mark and Luke).

**“If they cease to continue in their disobedience”:**

The Kohen Gadol and his “council” all know they are wrong! Nevertheless, they do not want any Messiah to ruin their plans and scheme of subversion. Yosef bar Qyp[[73]](#footnote-73) (Caiaphas) was the strongest “High Priest” who lived in the period of Yeshua’s life. Yosef bar Qyp was not intimidated by Pilate or any of his petty officers. It was quite the contrary; he intimidated Pilate to the point of having Yeshua crucified.[[74]](#footnote-74)

If we only look at the trial of Yeshua as an illegitimate and ad hoc “Sanhedrin,” we will miss some of the key points in our materials. Firstly, let us say that the council of Yosef bar Qyp was in no way associated with the Sanhedrin. The Greek term **συνέδριον –** *sunedrion* means an “assembly.” We must be very careful not to think that the authentic “Sanhedrin” had anything to do with the death of Yeshua. The entire plot was concocted by Yosef bar Qyp. We will give answer to this claim in a coming Torah Seder. Our point here is that the party of Yosef bar Qyp were perfectly aware of what they were doing. The questioning posited during this so-called “trial” shows their awareness of qualifications that Messiah must possess in his office.

**They beat[[75]](#footnote-75)** him**, and** after **blindfolding him they repeatedly asked** him**, saying, “Prophesy!** This statement shows that they clearly knew that Messiah must be a “Prophet” like Moshe.[[76]](#footnote-76) Now the depth of this statement needs a little elucidation if we are to understand it in the context of what we are trying to say. The Tz’dukim know that Moshe did not give the Torah alone without a verbal/Oral elucidation to explain the things “written: in the Torah. Of course, our readers will know without a doubt that the Tz’dukim did not accept the Oral Torah. Therefore, they cannot accept a Messiah that comes with and as an embodiment of the Mesorah.

Hakham Shaul has shown in the Tosefta of Luqas (Luke – Hillel) that the government of the Tz’dukim was passing away per se.

**Luk 22:53** **But this is your hour and the domain of darkness!”**

Philo points out that those who do not accept the whole Torah are filled with darkness.

Leg 3:4 And let us in the next place consider how any one is said to be **concealed from God**. (7) And we must understand this in the following manner. In the wicked man, the true opinion concerning God is overshadowed and kept out of sight, for he is **full of darkness**, having no divine irradiation, by means of which he may be able to contemplate things as they are. And such a man is a fugitive from the Divine company.[[77]](#footnote-77)

Hakham Shaul citing the above passage from 1 Luqas (Luke) 22:53 responded in his Remes commentary that matched the Tosefta above and asks “**Has God rejected His people?**” Why would he join these two passages? Simply stated we can see that he saw that G-d did in fact reject **some** of His people, specifically the Tz’dukim.

**“Concealed from God”** this is a direct refusal to keep the Mitzvoth of G-d. "For at three seasons of the year every male must **appear before the Lord** the God of Israel"[[78]](#footnote-78)

In light of our comments last week we would opine that those who have rejected the Oral Torah, which we have commented on ad nauseam remain in darkness. Our point here being that those aspects of Judaism that failed to accept the Oral Torah have, at least in part been rejected. Will they be accepted again by G-d in the future? How can those who are full of darkness and concealed from G-d earn his favor?

Philo captures our hearts cry.

Be You therefore O my soul in all your entirety always visible to God…[[79]](#footnote-79)

**Commentary to Hakham Shaul’s School of Remes**

**Shavuot**

With the advent of Shavuot upon us, we always have the question of how the present text of Romans is related to the festival. In reading about the Exodus from Mitzrayim, we note that there was a “mixed multitude” that accompanied the B’ne Yisrael to Har Sinai.

Exo 12:38 A mixed multitude also went up with them, 1along with flocks and herds, and a very large number of livestock.

It should be evident that this “mixed multitude” included a great number of Gentiles. But, we note that just a few verses below G-d deals with the Pesach offering and the “Stranger.”

Ex 12:43 The LORD said to Moshe and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it;

Form this passage it would appear that the Gentile will never be able to eat of the Passover sacrifice. And we must concur with the Torah. However, there is a caveat.

Exo 12:48 But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he will be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it.

Now we can see that the “stranger” can eat the Pesach offering” if he is circumcised according to the manner of Moses our teacher. However, this is only a way of saying that the Gentile who wishes to eat of the Pesach offering must convert and become Jewish. And, now we see that Hakham Shaul is dealing with those who are being “grafted in” as a way to celebrate Shavuot. Nevertheless, the allegory does not stop here. The allegory when studied and explained aright is telling us that all who enter into, be grafted into the B’ne Yisrael MUST accept the Torah – i.e. the sap that flows from the root! We would also opine that the audience of the “Roman Congregation” readily understood what Hakham Shaul was intimating. In the words of George Foot Moore who makes this point clear.

Nothing but misunderstanding can come from calling the *ger toshab* a “proselyte” or semi-proselyte;” he was not a convert to Judaism at all. [[80]](#footnote-80)

The point established by Hakham Shaul is showing and speaking to the Gentiles who wish to turn towards G-d that they cannot remain a Gentile, but that they must convert.

**Thematic Connections**

We have repeated ad nauseam the importance of the verbal tally. However, we also must learn how to approach the text from thematic and or inspirational words, sentences and themes. Finding these connections can be daunting and mentally trying. In the present case, we would opine that Hakham Shaul looks at the pericope of Mordechai (Mark) and the Torah Seder knowing that the death of Aaron brings a change in the Priesthood. In similar manner, we note that by his study of Hakham Tsefet’s materials that he knows that the parenthetical priesthood of the Levites is now defunct. In the hands of the Tz’dukim (Sadducees), the parenthetical priesthood is depleted of every nuance of authentic sanctity and is reverted to the Firstborn. This means that a “branch” sect of the Jewish people is no longer valid. This is not a degradation to the Levites. Their Roman overlords did not allowed them to carry out their duties. Nonetheless, we note that the Tz’dukim had ravaged the office of the Priesthood to the point of no return. Now we can begin to see what Hakham Tsefet and Hakham Shaul were seeing in their times. It was evident that there would be a destruction of the Temple and a dispersion of the Jewish people among the Nations once again. The works of the Nazarean Codicil must be established so that the Jewish people who followed the Master would not be lost. This same thought fostered among the P’rushim of that day caused them to prepare for the coming extended exile. We would like to think that this mission was far more collaborative than everyone would think. Yet we must ask the question, out of the Jewish groups that existed in the first century who would accept the role and mission to talmudize the Gentiles.

From the present materials, we can now determine which “branches” of Judaism were being pruned away. The number of “Judaisms” alive during the first century is a matter of debate. History has shown that some of those branches all but disappeared. However, some of them have amazingly resurfaced in our present time. These “branches” allegorically speaking have brought what would seem to be irreparable damage to the Olive Tree, i.e. Judaism. When the horticulturist has to look at the health of the tree when attending to its care he must determine what branches are producing fruit and which are not. He will often discover that the tree has dead limbs or limbs that do not produce fruit. The worse scenario is the latter. The nonproductive branch steals necessary resources from the tree. This can be seen allegorically if we look at the priesthood that Hakham Tsefet and Hakham Shaul were witnessing in their day. The Tz’dukim, a branch of Judaism per se, deprived the Jewish people of vital resources. In reviewing all the damage that was done by these “priests” we intimate that they robbed the Jewish people of the First Century of the opportunity to usher in the days of Messiah.

What we must remember and learn from Hakham Shaul’s pericope this week gives way to the truth unexplained by many “false-branches” who, like the Tz’dukim would drain the Jewish community of its livelihood. **A branch grafted into the Olive tree cannot be fromanother species!** Therefore, we are not speaking of just any “wild” branch grafted into the Olive Tree (Orthodox Judaism). Consequently, the “wild” olive branch we understood to be an “uncultivated branch.” There are several situations that can be the case in point. However, there are also halakhic issues at hand. First, are the rulings concerning “mixtures” as we have it in the Mishnah, tractates Kilyaim and Orlah. It is evident that the tree that provided the new “branches”[[81]](#footnote-81) was possibly a tree that remained unattended (uncultivated) for some time or a new tree that was not yet in the state of edible fruit (orlah). These trees are “uncircumcised” (orlah) per se. This is very relevant to our proximity of Shavuot. The so-called “wild olive” is simply an “uncircumcised” branch who when grafted into the stock of the B’ne Yisrael is no longer uncircumcised nor a stranger!

Lev 19:23-25 ¶ 'When you enter the land and plant all kinds of trees for food, then you will count their **fruit as uncircumcised** (orlah). Three years it shall be uncircumcised (orlah) to you; *it* will not be eaten. 'But in the fourth year all its fruit will be holy ("set apart for G-d's service by formal, legal restrictions and limitations."), an offering of praise to the LORD. 'In the fifth year you are to eat of its fruit, that its yield may increase for you; I am the LORD your God.

If we understand this passage correctly, we will see that the fruit of the tree is forbidden until the fifth year. From this we understand that the tree, or at minimum the branches is left uncultivated (uncircumcised). The Greek word περιΐ́στημι ˗ *periistēmi* means to “stand around.” Because it is also the Greek word for circumcise we can note that there is a “cutting around” or perhaps we might interject the idea of being “pruned” and or “pruned away.” Therefore, we note that “cutting away,” “pruning off” and “circumcision” are all related. A Gentile convert must be “cut off” from his previous Gentile world in order to be “grafted into” the stock of the B’ne Yisrael.

**But you** were made to **stand[[82]](#footnote-82) by your faithful obedience:[[83]](#footnote-83)** As noted above περιΐ́στημι ˗ *periistēmi* means to “stand around.” What we would like to point out is that the later part of this compound word ἵστημι ˗ *histē*mi means to **stand**. Thus, we see that the “pruning away” has a double meaning. Firstly, the branch is pruned away from the parent tree. Secondly, it is “grafted” into the principal tree where it is made to stand in the fifth year. The allegorical picture should now begin to appear. The talmid’s master knows that he cannot reap from the soul of his talmid until the fifth year. This is to say that the student must complete four levels of Torah learning before he can begin to serve at the bench.

παιδείας καὶ σοφίας[[84]](#footnote-84) ˗ Education and Hokhmah

Giving the present subject matter it would be impossible to escape the idea of “branches” of education.

﻿b. Sotah 49b ﻿Behold Rab Judah declared that Samuel said in the name of Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel, … There were a thousand pupils in my father's house; five hundred studied Torah and five hundred studied Greek wisdom, and of these there remained only I here and the son of my father's brother in Assia![[85]](#footnote-85)

What this Gemarah intimates is that Greek philosophy (education in the arts and sciences) will not demean the talmid from becoming a good Paqid and eventual Hakham. The Greek word **παιδεία** referred to the rearing and education of the ideal member of the polis.[[86]](#footnote-86) This idea relates to the Jewish notion of Kallah and the Kallah sessions that we have mentioned before.

If we may judge from later arrangements, not only in Babylon, but in Palestine, there were two kinds of public lectures, and two kinds of students. The first, or more scientific class, was designated Kallah (literally, bride), and its attendants Bene-Kallah (children of the bride). These lectures were delivered in the last month of summer (Elul), before the Feast of the New Year, and in the last winter month (Adar), immediately before the Feast of Passover.[[87]](#footnote-87)

**Philo’s view of παιδεία**

With Philo, therefore, the philosophic maxims that happiness is life in accordance with virtue or in accordance with reason or in accordance with nature come to mean life in accordance with the Law (Nomos/Torah).

The Law of Moses, therefore, contains a system of law given by revelation, which accomplishes all that the philosophers aim to attain by those ideal systems of law, which they try to devise by reason.[[88]](#footnote-88)

This means that the Torah, both Oral and Written as we have postulated on countless occasions supersedes philosophic attempts to attain wisdom or so called “theology.”. But, this is NOT a claim suggesting that we need not be well versed in these matters and subjects. The Biblical account of Daniel and his three companions is a testimony to the Jewish mind as we have stated.[[89]](#footnote-89) Therefore, if we follow the thesis that Philo has posited we understand that **παιδεία** is in fact a vital part of wisdom and that ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία (secular education) is a means to σοφίας, making one wise. The present pericope is a case in point. Hakham Shaul uses an “art” and or “science” to make his point on the allegorical factors that we have posited here. Were it not for our knowledge of science and art we would have no clue as to what Hakham Shaul was speaking of.

What should now become evident to the reader is the allegory of **παιδείας[[90]](#footnote-90) καὶ σοφίας**,**[[91]](#footnote-91)** education and wisdom. Or, to better clarify the allegory, we see that Torah education – **σοφίας** is best when joined with **παιδείας[[92]](#footnote-92)** in the course of becoming a Paqid or Hakham. Lieberman shows in his work *Greek in Jewish Palestine* that the Greek language had permeated every level of Jewish life in Eretz Yisrael.[[93]](#footnote-93) Thus, we postulate that Yeshua as a true Hakham of Hillel’s training mastered Greek and most likely several other languages. This would also be true for his Talmidim.

Furthermore, out of the Jewish groups that existed in the first century, it was the Orthodox Nazareans associating with the ideology of the House of Hillel who accepted the role and mission to talmudize the Gentiles. How could they possibly be equipped for the task? The above-cited Gemarah teaches us that Greek and Greek wisdom was better known and studied in some elite Jewish circles than some scholars might believe or give credit to.

It was not to the Tz’dukim who bankrupted the Levitical Priesthood through their Epicureanism. The Shammaites disqualified themselves by being vehemently opposed to the existence of the Gentiles, to the point of forbidding them to interact on any level with the Jewish people. This might be tantamount to saying that it was forbidden for the talmid to avoid education in mathematics, science and other skillful education. Furthermore, the Zealots who were committed to violence and thuggery disqualified themselves for this mission. The Qumran community had adopted an ascetic monastic attitude only allowing special members into their ranks. The rest of the House of Hillel was occupied with the mission of the preservation of Judaism overall.

Do we find it strange that Hakham Shaul’s mind drifts towards Gat Shamni in these pericopes?

**Allegorical Tree trimming and the tress’ health**

The removal of dead limbs and those that do not produce fruit is important to the health of any fruit tree. As such, we can readily understand the allegory that Hakham Shaul is positing. We remove the limbs that deter the productivity of the tree as a normal landowner would. Thus, we note that the allegory fits individual and groups. This is because the tree is often pictured as an allegorical man. This allegory fits both Adam and Yeshua. Firstly, we note that Adam, before he fell was said to have a stature wherein his head reached into the heavens and his feet were planted on the earth. Consequently, the allegory of the tree fits Adam very well. The crown of the tree reaches into the heavens and the trunk, i.e. body spans between the heavens and earth. The feet are the roots and lower trunk fastened to the earth. The branches that raise into the heavens are blown in the wind, or by the Ruach. The reader will take note that the Ruach moving the limbs about is the **voice of the Divine**. We must also interject the understanding that the Hebrew word for “leaf” also means to “ascend.” When Adam and Chavah (Eve) fell due to eating fruit from the wrong branch, they hid themselves in the trees of the Garden. They specifically hid themselves from the Voice of the Divine walking through the Garden to find the (fallen) man among the moving leaves who was now lost in the Garden. Not only was he lost in the Garden he was confused by the fruit from the forbidden branch. With his “branches”[[94]](#footnote-94) Adam, before he fell could reach into the Heavens and bring down the heavenly nectar of the Ohr HaGanuz (primordial light). Adam’s sin made him a bare branch, or a branch with no leaves, “ability to ascend.” Therefore, he sewed for himself leaves to appear as if he were a fruit-bearing tree. And to once again be able to ascend and receive the Heavenly Light. The bare limb without leaves left Adam with no way to ascend into the heavens any longer. He possessed no leaves to drink in the Ohr HaGanuz. He now possessed no ability to reach for the heavens as if to reach out to the Oalm HaBa.

Yeshua’s tree on the Gilguleth (which is translated "Place of a Skull") was the place of atonement for many sins of antiquity. Here is the mystical picture of redemption and resurrection. Many fruit bearing trees are deciduous. The allegorical picture of leaves falling off the trees is also awe-inspiring. Deciduous, means to fall off with maturity. The tree appears to die and resurrect in the cycle of spring. The fruit of the tree is also a picture of this truth. The fruit falls to the earth. When a seed has been covered with the appropriate amount of earth the seed will sprout from the earth and begin the process of growth in to a tree of its own. The earth receives the seed stripping away all parts that will allow the seed to sprout. But, the earth not only strips the tree of things that are not necessary, it also invests life into the seed by the declaration of G-d made at creation.

Gen 1:11 Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, *and* fruit trees on the earth **bearing fruit after their kind** with seed in them"; and it was so.

Another way to understand this pericope of Romans is to see it as echoing the blessing that G-d,, most blessed be He bestowed upon our father Abraham, and which states:

**Gen 12:3** “And I will **bless (***or* **graft in)** them that bless you, and him that **curses (***or* **blasphemes)** you will I curse; and in you will all the families of the earth/land **be blessed (***or* **grafted in).”**

It is here in this text of Genesis 12:3 that we have the precedent for Hakham Shaul’s words: “**But if some of the** (non-fruit bearing) **branches were pruned away, you being** from **an uncultivated olive tree were grafted in among them** (the fruit-baring branches) **also join fellowship in the fatness of the olive root.”**

**Coming Festival:**

**Shabuoth – Pentecost**

**Saturday Evening May 23 – Monday Evening May 25th, 2015**

**For further information see:**

[**http://www.betemunah.org/shavuot.html**](http://www.betemunah.org/shavuot.html) **&** [**http://www.betemunah.org/freedom.html**](http://www.betemunah.org/freedom.html)

**NOTE:**

**There will be no class on Sunday morning due to the Festival of Shabuoth.**

**Shalom Shabbat ve Chag Shabuoth Sameach!!**

**Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai**

**Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David**

**Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham**

1. Shalom has the fullest connotation of referring to wholeness. His inference is that the structured congregation is a whole/complete congregation. This can only be that case when each officer takes his position and maximizes that office. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Unity and giving [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. At this conclusory statement, we see the “manifestation” of the “Will of Messiah.” Through the Seven officers of the Congregation, the congregation can come in full contact with the “will of Messiah.” This contact elevates the Esnoga to a level of intimate knowledge of Messiah (Adam Kadmon). By coming to an intimate knowledge (Da’at) of Messiah we are drawn back to Gan Eden, the Garden of Delight. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The Messiah is mentioned twice in Hakham Shaul’s closing. Herein we see that twice mentioned Messiah represents the achievement of maturity and all readiness to receive the Torah from Har Sinai, i.e. Malkhut! [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Berachot 4b [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See prefatory remarks to psalm 60. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. v. 176 - These opening remarks are excerpted, and edited, from: *The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim*, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. **David Kimchi** (1160–1235), also known by the Hebrew acronym as the **Radak**, was a medieval Rabbi, biblical commentator, philosopher, and grammarian. Born in Narbonne, Provence, he was the son of Rabbi Joseph Kimchi and the brother of Rabbi Moses Kimchi, both biblical commentators and grammarians. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ibid. 7, on verse 119:73. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Tehillim (Psalms) 119:164 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Berachot = Blessings [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Kiryat Shema = Reciting the Shema [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Morning prayers [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Evening prayers [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. These Berachot are D’Rabanan. Kol Bo (Siman 5e and 122) say that Brachot Pesuke DiZimra are D’Rabanan but Brachot Kriyat Shema are DeOritta. Rabbenu Yosef ben Pelet and Rabbenu Yishaya agree. However, it seems (lacking explicit sources) that we hold Le’halacha that the Brachot are D’Rabanan as many times the Achronim use the idea of Safek Brachot LeHakel by these Brachot as well [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Ibid. 10 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Orach Chaim 55 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The Gaonim were the presidents of the two great Babylonian, Talmudic Academies of Sura and Pumbedita, in the Abbasid Caliphate, and were the generally accepted spiritual leaders of the Jewish community world wide in the early medieval era, in contrast to the Resh Galuta (Exilarch) who wielded secular authority over the Jews in Islamic lands.

Gaonim is the plural of גאון (Gaon), which means "pride" or "splendor" in Hebrew and since the 19th century "genius" as in modern Hebrew. As a title of a Babylonian college president it meant something like "His Excellency".

The Gaonim played a prominent and decisive role in the transmission and teaching of Torah and Jewish law. They taught Talmud and decided on issues on which no ruling had been rendered during the period of the Talmud.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Tehillim (Psalms) 119:164 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Mishnah Berurah 55:5. The Mishnah Berurah (Hebrew: משנה ברורה‎ "Clarified Teaching") is a work of halacha (Jewish law) by Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan (Poland, 1838–1933), also colloquially known by the name of another of his books, Chafetz Chaim "Desirer of Life".

His Mishnah Berurah is a commentary on Orach Chayim, the first section of the Shulchan Aruch which deals with laws of prayer, synagogue, Shabbat and holidays, summarizing the opinions of the Achronim (post-Medieval rabbinic authorities) on that work. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Talmud Yerushalmi 9a [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Ibid. 21 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Orach Chaim: Siman 59 and 236 [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The terms meforshim and parshanim (commentaries/commentators) almost always refer to later, post-Talmudic writers of Rabbinic glosses on Biblical and Talmudic texts. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Gemara according to Rabbeinu Yonah / Shulchan Aruch 59:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Berachot 11b [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. An eternal love [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. A great love [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Isaac ben Jacob Alfasi ha-Cohen (1013 - 1103) (Hebrew: ר' יצחק אלפסי) - also known as the Alfasi or by his Hebrew acronym Rif (Rabbi Isaac al-Fasi), was a Moroccan Talmudist and posek (decider in matters of halacha - Jewish law). He is best known for his work of halacha, the legal code Sefer Ha-halachot, considered the first fundamental work in halakhic literature. He was born in the Algerian city Al Qal'a of Beni Hammad, but spent the majority of his career in Fes, and is therefore known as "Alfasi" ("of Fes" in Arabic). [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Shulchan Aruch (60:1). The Shulchan Aruch (Hebrew: שֻׁלחָן עָרוּך‎, literally: "Set Table") also known by various Jewish communities but not all as "the Code of Jewish Law". There are various legal codes in Judaism but the Shulchan Aruch is the most widely consulted. It was authored in Safed, Israel, by Yosef Karo in 1563 and published in Venice two years later. Together with its commentaries, it is the most widely accepted compilation of Jewish law ever written. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Nedarim 8 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Pnei Meivin, Orach Chaim 133 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. This section is an except from: *With All Your Heart: The Shema in Jewish Worship, Practice and Life*,  By Meir Levin [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Magen Avot 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Sotah 39a, s.v. "kol kohen" [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Hilchot Berachot 1:17; Hilchot Tefillah 7:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Menachoth 99b [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Sukkah 42a [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Mishna Berachot 2:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Governance of G-d [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. An acronym for *Nachmanides*, also known as Rabbi Moses ben Nachman Girondi, Bonastruc ça Porta. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Yirat Shamayim – Lit. Fear of Heaven. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. **Chazal** (Hebrew: חז"ל‎) is an acronym for the Hebrew "**Ḥ**akhameinu **Z**ikhronam **L**iv'rakha", (**ח**כמינו **ז**כרונם **ל**ברכה, literally "Our Sages, may their memory be blessed"). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. It is well known that the sea is a remez for the **fear of G-d**. [As **Chazal** teach that the color of the sea is like that of heaven... which is like that of the throne of Glory.] That is the meaning of 'from the great sea.' These are the people who are great in their fear of HaShem. [Fear of HaShem is the border.] [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. In Sefer HaMitzvot [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Lit. Kingship of Heaven [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Commentary on Sanhedrin, Chapter 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Cf. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jezreel_%28city%29> [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Cf. Joshua 19:18 [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. David Ussishkin, "Jezreel - Where Jezebel Was Thrown to the Dogs", Biblical Archaeology Review: July/August 2010. See: <http://www.bib-arch.org/bar/article.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=36&Issue=4&ArticleID=2> [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Cf. <http://74.86.52.18/view.jsp?artid=10&letter=N> [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Keil, C.F. & Delitzsch, F. (2011 Reprint), Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. 3, p. 191. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. **συνέχω** (aor. συνέσχον) surround, hem in, encircle; stop (of ears); control, rule (2 Cor 5.14); hold prisoner, [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. **ἐμπαιχθήσομαι**; (1) as expressing verbal mockery and derision *ridicule, make fun of, mock* someone. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. **δέροντες** – removal of the skin by beating or flaying. The text here indicates that they were whipping and striking Yeshua with the fist.

Δέρω means literally *flay, skin.* It is used in this sense only in the ﻿LXX﻿ (Lev 1:6; 2 Chr 29:34; 35:11), which uses it in a cultic-technical sense of peeling the skin off a sacrificial animal. Balz, H. R., & Schneider, G. (1990-c1993). *Exegetical dictionary of the New Testament*. Translation of: Exegetisches Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans. Vol 1 p. 288 [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. **προφητεύω** here and in Mordechai (Mark) 14:65 shows that among the Tz’dukim (Sadducees) it was believed that Messiah would be a Prophet. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. The word **συνέδριον** used here cannot be a formal and or an informal meeting of the Sanhedrin. This is because the alleged meeting is taking place on Pesach. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Here Yeshua, a Parush (Pharisee) acknowledges that the P’rushim (Pharisees) believed that Messiah would be a Prophet as well. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Here we have interpreted the intention of the passage and not given a direct verbal translation. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Verbal connection to D’barim 11:13 [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Verbal connection to D’barim 11:21 [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Verbal connection to D’barim 11:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Verbal connection to D’barim 10:16 [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. **ἀγριέλαιος** *agrielaios* – **Meaning:** the meaning of this word intimates the selection of branches from another "Olive Tree." Here it must be noted that Hakham Shaul is NOT speaking of a foreign species of plant. (Cf. M. Kilyaim 1:7) Here his intention must be that he is speaking to Israelites who are also olive trees (possessing the Nefesh Yehudi), but had become wild. The verse as it reads in Greek is impossible. We never graft an "uncultivated" branch into a "cultivated" tree. Therefore, we must turn to the Oral Torah and see that the "wild olive" are branches from a grove that has been left uncultivated. In this case the owner of the grove may choose to select branches from the "uncultivated" trees as a means of making the trees of his cultivated grove more productive. No other species would benefit from being grafted into the olive tree.

Mishnah Kalyim 1:7. “One kind of tree may not be grafted on to another kind, nor one kind of vegetable on to another kind, nor a tree on to a vegetable, nor a vegetable on to a tree. R. Judah permits [the grafting of] a vegetable on to a tree.”

While we do not have a direct verbal connection to Vayikra (Leviticus) 19:23-25 we do have similar ideas conjoined in our pericope. The Greek word for Hebrew ˗*orlah* is περιΐ́στημι *periistēmi* meaning to “stand around.” However, the truest understanding in the present pericope means to “*keep* *away.”* We would then say that we leave the fruit of its branches uncultivated. We might also note that the tree itself need not be left alone. It is the “branches” that must not be “cultivated.” [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. John 4:22 "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.” [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. **ἐγκεντρίζω** ˗ *egkentrizō* is cross-linguistically related to the Hebrew word קטב ˗ *qeṭeb*, meaning to “cut off.” See **ἐκκόπτω** also below. Interestingly the idea of being “grafted in” also means to be “cut off.” What Hakham Shaul is saying here is that to be “grafted into” the B’ne Yisrael, one must be “cut off” from his previous life as a Gentile. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Unfaithfulness to produce fruit [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. The ability to “stand” is because the Gentile (with the nefesh Yehudi) is made to stand by a Hakham. Thus, we say that he stands in faithful obedience to G-d and his Torah Teacher. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. “High” – minded. Verbal connection to D’barim 11:30 [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Here **ἀποτομία** means to be dealt with harshly in the sense of strict Din (justice). [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. **ἐκκόπτω** relates to the Hebrew word "karet" to be "cut off."

**ἐκκόπτω** fut. **ἐκκόψω**; 1aor. **ἐξέκοψα**; 2aor. pass. **ἐξεκόπην**; 2fut. pass. **ἐκκοπήσομαι**; literally, of a tree *cut down* (MT 3.10); of a branch *cut off*; used metaphorically in [Rom 11:22](file:///G%3A%5CDocuments%5C001%20Nazarean%20Talmud%5C001%20-%20Mishnaic%20Import%5C001%20Mark%5CSketches%5CGoToVerse%20NAU%20Rom%2011%3A22%20%7C%20POPUP), [Rom 11:24](file:///G%3A%5CDocuments%5C001%20Nazarean%20Talmud%5C001%20-%20Mishnaic%20Import%5C001%20Mark%5CSketches%5CGoToVerse%20NAU%20Rom%2011%3A24%20%7C%20POPUP) ; of a hand *cut off* (MT 5.30); figuratively, of removing the opportunity for something *eliminate, do away with, remove* (2C 11.12) Friberg, Timothy, Barbara Friberg, and Neva F Miller. *Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*. Victoria, B.C.: Trafford, 2005. (see entry **ἐκκόπτω**) [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. See, Bond, Helen K. *Caiaphas: Friend of Rome and Judge of Jesus?*. 1st ed. Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004. p. 5 [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. This claim can be validated by the above cited work of Helene Bond. Bond shows how that all previous High Priests occupied their office for only about a year. This was not the case with Yosef bar Qyp (Caiaphas) who remained in office for eighteen or nineteen years. Ibid. 42-44 [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. **δέροντες** – removal of the skin by beating or flaying. The text here indicates that they were whipping and striking Yeshua with the fist.

Δέρω means literally *flay, skin.* It is used in this sense only in the ﻿LXX﻿ (Lev 1:6; 2 Chr 29:34; 35:11), which uses it in a cultic-technical sense of peeling the skin off a sacrificial animal. Balz, H. R., & Schneider, G. (1990-c1993). *Exegetical dictionary of the New Testament*. Translation of: Exegetisches Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans. Vol 1 p. 288 [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Cf. D’barim (Deut.) 18:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Philo. *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*. New updated ed. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Pub, 1993. p. 50 [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Cf. D’barim (Deut.) 16:15 [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Philo. *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*. New updated ed. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Pub, 1993. p. 51 [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Moore, G. F. (1960). *Judaism In the First Centuries of the Christian Era: Age of the Tannaim* (Vol. I). Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers Inc. Vol 1 p. 339 [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. We will posit more than one allegorical solution below. Gentiles with the Nefesh Yehudi [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Cf. m. Abot 1:1 [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. The ability to “stand” is because the Gentile (with the nefesh Yehudi) is made to stand by a Hakham. Thus, we say that he stands in faithful obedience to G-d and his Torah Teacher. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. σοφία – Sophia From G4680; wisdom (higher or lower, worldly or spiritual): - wisdom. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. ﻿ So Greek wisdom was studied by Rabban Gamaliel's pupils. Assia was a town east of the lake of Tiberias, v. Sanh. (Sonc. ed.) p. 151, n, 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. **πόλις** –city

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paideia [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. Edersheim, A. (1993). *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.* Peabody: Henderson Publishers. Book 2 Chapter 10 p. 171 [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Wolfson, Harry Austryn. *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, Volume 1: Structure and Growth of Philosophical Systems from Plato to Spinoza*. 4 Revised edition. Harvard University Press, 1962. 2:304 [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Dan 1:17 As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and intelligence in every *branch of* literature and wisdom; [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. παιδεύω – *paideu*ō From G3816; to train up a child, that is, educate, or (by implication) discipline (by punishment): - chasten (-ise), instruct, learn, teach.

However, παιδεύω among scholars usually means secular education, or education in science and the arts, also known as ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. σοφία – Sophia From G4680; wisdom (higher or lower, worldly or spiritual): - wisdom. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Specifically ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία – secular education [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Lieberman, Prof Saul. *Greek in Jewish Palestine/Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*. New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary Press, 2012. p.15 [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Speaking here in allegory [↑](#footnote-ref-94)