**Some Questions to Ponder:**

1. From all the readings for this Shabbat, which reading touched your heart and fired your imagination?

I was touched by the Pirke Avot reading, particularly the the seven calamities and their midda-kneged-middah effects.

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 28:26?

**On the day of the first fruits** – Why is it called the “day of the first fruits”?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 29:11?

**besides the atonement sin-offering** – What is this offering?

**and the continual burnt offering** – Is this the regular burnt offering?

**and their libations** – What does this refer to?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 29:18?

**And their meal-offerings and their libations, for the bulls** – What do the bulls symbolize?

**and for the lambs** – What do the lambs represent?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 29:35?

**A time of restriction for you** – What is the restriction?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 29:36?

**one bull, one ram** – What do these represent?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 29:39?

**These you shall offer up for the Lord on your festivals** – What is the meaning of this pasuk?

**besides your vows** – When are these vows completed with their offering?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 30:1?

**Moses spoke to the children of Israel** – Why is this pasuk written?

1. From where were the sacrificial victims brought and why this?

**Rams** from Moab because they were the very best.

**Sheep** from Hebron because they were the very best.

**Pigeons** from the King’s moutain because they were the very best.

**Oil** from Tekoah because it was the very best.

1. Why is the Shofar blown on Rosh Ha-Shanah?

The shofar is sounded to move men’s hearts to repentance, so that God will save us from the afflictions that the constellations portend for the year, and inscribe us in the book of life and plenty.

So that the sound of the trumpets will disturb HaSatan when he comes to accuse us.

1. What is the significance of the numbers of bulls offered each day on the Festival of Tablernacles is continually reduced by one?

This signifies that the nations of the world will diminish in number from day to day , until they disappear.

1. How did Rabbi Akiba answer to a pagan when he asked: “Why do you celebrate the festivals, when G-d despises your festivals (cf. Isaiah 1:14)? – Nothing has changed much since the times of R. Akiba!

He answered by showing him that the festivals that are hated are ‘**your**’ festivals, not ‘**My**’ festivals. “Your” festivals were on the 15th day of the eighth as instituted by Jeroboam. (I kings 12:32-33)

1. Why did G-d allow the destruction of the Second Temple and the exile of the Jewish people in 70 c.e.?

Because the people did not adhere to his ways in tithing, keeping the Sabbath and properly keeping the festivals and daily Torah study, God removed the Temple, disbanding the overall community and sending the people into diaspora.

The moment the people cannot accept this sanctity of ‎Eretz Yisrael. they deserve to be driven into exile. Incest and the shedding of innocent blood are also the products of the mentality of a community that does not recognize the sanctity of Eretz ‎Yisrael. Exile becomes inevitable.

1. In your opinion what is the intent of Hakham Tsefet’s pericope by the hand of his scribe Mordechai (Mark) for this Shabbat?

To show that buildings are not the important things, but rather that our actions are what support and sustain those buildings.

Llloyd Nelson: I think Hakham Tsefet is pointing us to the up coming 9th of Ab and all the ramifications that go with it. I believe this is an attempt to stir our hearts to do a search of our own contributions which aided in the destruction of the temple, and use that searching to correct those things in ourselves, which will lead to the rebuilding of the Body of Messiah/Temple that will stand forever.

Walter Oakley: Hakham Tsefet is trying to tell us that a new path to G-d is about to open. That path is through the Mesorah of Yeshua and the Sages of the School of Hillel as laid out in the First and Second century. Hakham Tsefet is trying to tell us that a new path to G-d is about to open. That path is through the Mesorah of Yeshua and the Sages of the School of Hillel as laid out in the First and Second century.

Dr. Elizabeth Oakley: He is prophesying that the Temple is about to be destroyed. The Talmid was looking at the pseudo glory of the buildings; however, Yeshua was looking at the spiritual depravity and disobedience of the children of Israel.

Eli Kuala: Once Hashem destroys something, it can never be rebuilt or ever, it is destroyed completely. But in Hashem’s mercy, it is replaced by something else.

Lukas A. Nelson: I see an emphasis toward understanding that things previously established and fought for physically, have become increasingly spiritual in nature.

1. In what way does the Torah, Psalm, Prophetic reading of Malachi, and Mark 13:1-2 point to the fact that this is the second of three penitential Sabbaths?

**Torah** – repeated offerings for ‘atonement’

**Psalm** – He removed the Gentiles and gave them the land in order that they might keep His ordinances and observe His Torah.

**Malachi** - we are to remember the law of Moshe.

**Mark** – The fact that the Temple would be destroyed.

1. What part of the Torah Seder fired the heart and imagination of the Psalmist for this week?

The Psalmist focused in on the Succoth offerings by alluding to the water libation, the abundant food, and the major theme of the festival – joy!

1. What part of the Torah Seder fired the heart and the imagination of the prophet this week?

The prophet begins with a statement of acceptance which was often used of the offerings mentioned in our Torah portion. He provides a contrast to the Torah offerings by speaking of those who have not *served* HaShem (service to HaShem is prayer, which was offered with the offerings). Finally, He commands the people to remember the Torah of Moshe and to teach them the statutes and the ordinances which spoke of the offerings in our Torah portion.

1. What part of the Torah Seder fired the heart and the imagination of the prophet in the Special Ashlamata?

The Prophet speaks of the service of the Gentiles to their Idols as a contrast to Israel who have forsaken His service – the prayers that were a part of the offerings in our Torah portion. The constant theme of the prophet is a condemnation for not serving HaShem. HaShem keeps enticing the people with “*His worship*”, as denoted by the offerings in our Torah portion.

1. What part/s of the Torah Seder, Psalm, and the prophets fired the heart and the imagination of Hakham Tsefet for this week?

Walter Oakley: **TORAH SEDER**

Thematically the Torah Seder deals with the Mishkan and the offerings that were to be offered there. The pericope of Mordechai deals with the Temple, which was a graduation of the Mishkan.

**TEHILLIM**

Psalm 105:45 tells us that HaShem gave the Bne Yisrael statutes and laws. These statutes and laws would have been the foundation of the Temple complex. However, when the mitzvot were abandoned the Temple became pointless and source of Divine contempt. Yeshua expressed that fact that this contempt would end the Temple’s existence in his prophecy.

**ASHLAMATAH**

The forsaking of the Mitzvot relates to the Ashlamatah as noted concerning the Psalm.

**SPECIAL ASHLAMATAH**

The same is true of our special Ashlamatah, where the priests (guardians of the Temple) lost their fear of G-d through assimilation, the new form of idolatry.

1. After taking into consideration all the above texts and our Torah Seder, what would you say is the general prophetic message from the Scriptures for this coming week?

Seek to worship HaShem in spirit and in truth with joy!

Dr. Elizabeth Oakley: There is always a consequence to sin. When we are rebellious and disobedient, it removes us from God’s presence. We should strive to follow closely the commandments of God, both oral and written, so that we do not find ourselves separated from God’s fellowship.

Lloyd Nelson: Continue weeping and soul searching because of the calamities which have befalling our people, and use what ever we can glean to the building/strengthening of the Body of Messiah.

Lukas A. Nelson: Place a barrier of careful thought between the Torah Adonai has given us and any customs which prevail today given as a gift to us by haughty rebels and foolish wicked.

Eli Kuala: The world in Jerusalem which seemed to be the center of Judaism at the time, was no different in world activity, trade, business, etc., than the world we live in today. It was controlled by Herod and his cruel reign, but yet allowed the schools of Shammai and Hillel to continue to prosper without interference. But despite the Jews living in two worlds, a world of most of the population were very much directed/controlled in their lives by a government very much corrupt in its ways, but the government allowed the Jewish people the freedom of Torah study and growth, for a time. It seems, in my opinion, no different in that world than the world we live in today, where most worldly governments allow the freedom of Torah study, and allows Torah to still maintain an ability and freedom to expand and grow among those who choose it, but still maintain corruptness. We must be careful not to take lightly that freedom we possess.

Walter Oakley: That path of the Mesorah of Yeshua and the Sages of the School of Hillel as laid out in the First and Second century is the path to finding G-d’s favor.

Hakham Haggai: Remember the three sins that brought down the Temple. Let us not repeat the same mistakes.