**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 Hakham’s poignant question at the end of His “School of the Prophets” commentary, where He challenged us as to our goals.

*The poignant question that G-d is asking us through the Prophet today is: what has been our part in making Ha-Shem One and His name (authority) One through daily study of the Torah, practicing its commandments and “making stand many disciples” as Abraham our father did? If this is not our all pervasive goal and main characteristic in our lives then obviously we have failed to perceive, understand and internalize the love of and for G-d, most blessed be He!*

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in D’barim 6:4?

**The Lord is our God; the Lord is one** – When will HaShem be one?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in D’barim 6:5?

**And you shall love [the Lord] Perform His commandments out of love** – How does this love compare to the one who fears HaShem?

**with all your heart** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew phrase: בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ?

**and with all your soul** – How is this accomplished?

**and with all your means** What is the meaning of the Hebrew phrase: וּבְכָל־ מְאֽדֶךָ?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in D’barim 6:6?

**And these words... shall be** - What is this “love” [referred to in the previous verse]?

**which I command you this day** **they should not appear to you as an antiquated edict** – What is the meaning of “antiquated”?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in D’barim 6:7?

**And you will teach them** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם?

**to your sons** - Who are these sons?

**and speak of them** – How are we do do this?

**and when you lie down** – Is this to be done whenever we lie down?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in D’barim 6:8?

**And you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand** – How do we do this?

**and they shall be for ornaments between your eyes** – What are these ornaments?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in D’barim 6:9?

**the doorposts of your house** – Do we put one on every doorpost?

**and upon your gates** – Which gates are these?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in D’barim 7:4?

**For he will turn away your son from following Me** – What do we learn from this?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in D’barim 7:7?

**Not because you were [more] numerous** – How is this to be understood?

**For you are the least [of all the peoples]** – How are we the least of all peoples?

**for you are the least** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew phrase: כִּי־אַתֶּם הַמְעַט?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in D’barim 7:8?

**But because of the Lord’s love** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew phrase: כִּי מֵאַהֲבַת ה?

**and because He keeps the oath** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: וּמִשָּׁמְרוֹ?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in D’barim 7:9?

**to a thousand generations** - But earlier, (verse 5:10) it says: “To thousands [of generations].” Why the difference?

**with those who love Him** – Who are the ones who love Him?

**and keep His commandments** – Who are the ones who keep His commandments?

1. ‎Why have the Jews, sent by G-d into the Diaspora, ended primarily in the Occidental world?‎

Because the Occidental world is the “left side” which suffered the greatest damage when Adam fell. The left side of the brain was damaged and the exile of the Jews has allowed a correction to the logical functions of the West. They have improved mathematics, science, and language – all left brain functions.

1. ‎How does D’barim 7:3 set the tone for our relationship with the Gentiles?‎

The tone seems to be that we need to be separate from them as a community and that if they come into our community then they need to convert or leave. Even though we are to minister to them and bring them close to God and the Torah; we are to diligently be on guard to keep ourselves separate from them lest we walk in their ways and become unfaithful.

1. ‎What lesson can we learn from Hakham Tsefet’s failure to maintain association with Yeshua?‎

We are all prone to leave when difficulties arise. This suggests that we should pray to be strengthened so that we can stand firm. Their relationship was one of fear not love. We need to learn to love HaShem in order to stand firm.

1. ‎What does Hakham Tsefet’s present pericope of Mordechai 14:26-31 have to do with the High Holy Days?‎

Pesach and Succoth are mirror image festivals and we have just completed Succoth. Additionally, the key words “inscride” and “statute” used in the Torah relate to the greetings of this time of the year. The dispersion of the Jews in Yeshua’s time was used by HaShem to bring the tikkun to the western world so that they can take advantage of the High Holy Days. The bi-modality of the Torah gives us a rehearsal at Pesach as well as at Succoth.

1. In your opinion what is the intent of Hakham Tsefet’s pericope by the hand of his scribe Mordechai (Mark) 14:26-31 for this Shabbat?

I believe his intent is to strengthen and encourage us by helping us to see that even the great ones fall but, they repent and continue the work.

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

The psalmist picks up the “love” of the Shema and elaborates on it. V.1 Mimics the words of the shema, in Hebrew, as a clear connection to our Torah portion. We find *yeshma* in v1, which comes from the root *shema*. In that same verse we find a word that matches the first word in the second sentence of the shema – *ahabti*, which comes from the root *ahab*. In the shema we have the command, “You shall love”. In the Psalm we have David answering this command with, “I love”. Thus we have a clear verbal tally to our Torah portion.

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

The first paragraphe of the Shema fired his heart as he use the verbal tally echad – one (v.9), to speak about the end of days. He explicitly connects to “HaShem will be one”.

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

## Torah Seder

The Markan text connects verbally with D’varim 7:2 through the word “smite.” Hakham Tsefet records that idea from Zekharya 13:7 This verse from Zekharya also sets the tone for the diaspora as related in D’varim 7:3—5

## Tehillim

These Psalms are alluded to in Mordechai as the “Hymns” which were sung before departing to the Mount of Olives. This Prophetic passage also lets us know that we have just experienced the Festival of Sukkot.

## Ashlamatah

The Prophet Zekharya looks to the day when G-d will be L-rd over all the earth. This connects with the idea previously stated in Zekharya where the Shepherd is smitten and the flock is scattered. The Jewish people must first go into diaspora before G-d can be L-rd over all the earth.

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?

First, learn and say the shema twice a day – evening and morning. Second, call upon HaShem to strengthen us for the coming trials. Third, Focus on the Torah work that is set before us.