

TSEFET'S PERICOPE #89^D

BESB	Greek
<p>¹⁷ Consequently beloved be forewarned to keep guard in order not to (<i>fall into</i>) lawless deceit^a (<i>opposite of truth - truthless</i>) withdrawing from your own ordination^b (Heb. קמס)^c</p> <p>¹⁸ But increasing in generosity and knowledge of our Master and redeemer Yeshua haMashiach. To him (<i>be</i>) honor now and to the hidden^d day, amen.</p>	<p>¹⁷ ὑμεῖς οὖν, ἀγαπητοί, προοινώσκοντες φυλάσσεσθε, ἵνα μὴ τῆ τῶν ἀθέσμων πλάνη συναπαχθέντες ἐκπέσητε τοῦ ἰδίου στηριγμοῦ,</p> <p>¹⁸ αὐξάνετε δὲ ἐν χάριτι καὶ γνώσει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ σωτῆρος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. αὐτῷ ἡ δόξα καὶ νῦν καὶ εἰς ἡμέραν αἰῶνος. [ἀμήν.]</p>

^a [VGNT] **πλάνη** [pg 516]

has apparently the act. sense of "deceit" in BGU IV. 1208⁶ (B.C. 27–6) "by means of which (*sc.* a writing-tablet) you are acquainting me with the deceit of Kalatytis." Cf. *Kaibel* 351³ where the editor understands the word as denoting the craft and stratagem, which hunters use against wild beasts. See further *s.v.* **πλανάω**. In the NT **πλάνη** is generally, if not always, used in the pass. sense of "error": cf. Armitage Robinson *ad Eph* 4¹⁴.

^b TDNT 7:655

^c Cf. E. Lohse, *Die Ordination im Spätjudent. u. im NT* (1951), 28-66

^d TWOT (1631a)

(1631a) **עָלָם** ('ōlām) forever, ever, everlasting, evermore, perpetual, old, ancient, world, etc. (RSV Similar in general, but substitutes "always" for "in the world" in Psa 73:12 and "eternity" for "world" in Eccl 3:11.) Probably derived from 'ālam I, "to hide," thus pointing to what is **hidden in the distant future** or **in the distant past**. The Ugaritic cognate is 'lm, "eternity."

1629.0 **עָלַם** ('ālam) I, be hidden, concealed, secret.

H5956 **עָלַם** 'ālam

BDB Definition:

1) to conceal, hide, be hidden, be concealed, be secret

1a) (Qal) secret (participle)

1b) (Niphal)

1b1) to be concealed

1b2) concealed, dissembler (participle)

1c) (Hiphil) to conceal, hide

1d) (Hithpael) to hide oneself

Same as TWOT 1629 (see above)

DELITZSCH HEBREW TRANSLATIONⁱ

וְאַתֶּם חֲבִיבֵי אֲשֶׁר יִדְעֶתֶם זֹאת מֵרֹאשׁ הַשְּׁמֵרוֹ לְנַפְשֵׁיכֶם פְּתוּמְשִׁכּוֹ אַחֲרֵי טְעוֹת אֲנֹשֵׁי בְלִיעַל
 וְנִפְלְתֶם מִמְעוֹזְכֶם: ¹⁸ וְרַבּוֹ בְּחֶסֶד וּבְדַעַת אֲדִינּוֹ וּמוֹשִׁיעֵנּוּ יֵשׁוּעַ הַמְּשִׁיחַ אֲשֶׁר-לוֹ הַכְּבוֹד גַּם-הַיּוֹם
 וְגַם-לְיּוֹם הָעוֹלָם אָמֵן:

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INTRODUCTION

Here in these two final verses Hakham Tsefet sets the groundwork for returning to the book of Mark. For those who might be skeptical we will see the mastermind of a “dumb fisherman” and Hakham in the reopening of the Mesorah of Mordechai. These words are set to dovetail and make a perfect path of continuity between the three works of Hakham Tsefet (Mordechai, Yehuda and Hakham Tsefet 1-2)

Mordechai (Mark) is broken almost in half to accomplish this task. I would contend that all of this is Hakham Tsefet’s master plan.

Why did Hakham Tsefet break Mordechai in half to interject his Letters?

His Eminence Hakham Rabbi Dr Yoseph ben Haggai has been hinting all along that Hakham Tsefet is breaking the works apart for a very needful reason. I will attempt to answer this question here based upon my understanding of the mind of the master fisherman. Nevertheless, I would also pose this question to the readers for their answers.

We have been repeatedly been told that the Psalmist reads or hears the Torah Seder weekly. His responsa is the Psalm that we read weekly. His Eminence has called the Psalmist responsa the “Davidic Midrash.” Hakham Tsefet has offered a similar responsa albeit in P’shat. Hakham Tsefet is addressing the weekly problems that he has dealt with in his writings. Mordechai is the weekly readings in relation to Messiah. We might juxtapose the words of Mordechai where we left off.

Mordechai 9:40 For he who is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ For whoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in My name, because you belong to Christ, truly I say to you, He shall not lose his reward.

He that is not with us is against us. Hakham Tsefet has taken time to address the issue of the false teachers, prophets and those (in this pericope) how would defect from the faith. This

problem was greatly inflated in the time of Hakham Tsefet. Therefore, Hakham Tsefet interjected his letters in the middle of Mordechai to deal with this issue. However, when he returns to the theme of Mordechai he will allow the material to overlap. I will not divulge all that material here. I believe this will all be self-evident next week.

Our reading of Mordechai concluded near Rosh Chodesh Sivan. During that time, we were in the final days of counting the Omer. Here we see an evaluation – counting of sorts. Not only will we see the evaluation of the varied things in this week's Torah Seder. We will see the census of Bnei Yisrael in next week's Torah Seder. Therefore, we left off Mordechai with a counting and will resume Mordechai with a counting.

This week's counting in the Torah Seder gives us a hint that we are about to go to the book of Numbers (B'midbar) and return to the book of Mordechai.

Taking upon yourself the Yoke of the Torah

It is so very interesting that Hakham Tsefet bring to our focus those who would defect from such a high and lofty position such as ordination. This would bring us to a question. What caused Hakham Tsefet to relate the defect of ordination with this particular Torah Seder?

*During the time of Judah ha-Nasi it was decreed that any religio-legal decision, including decisions relating to purely ceremonial law, could only be given by those properly authorized (Sanh. 5b). While any qualified Jewish person could serve as a judge in civil cases, only Jews of pure descent were eligible to adjudicate in criminal matters involving capital punishment (Sanh. 4:2). Ordination was also required to judge in cases involving corporal punishment and fines, to **intercalate months and years**, to release the firstborn animals for profane use by reason of disqualifying blemishes, to annul **vows**, and to pass the ban of excommunication (herem).^e*

Here the idea of ordination seems to permeate the mind of Hakham Tsefet because the vows and intercalation of Jubilee years is a part of our Torah Seder. This required men of great wisdom and pedigree.

In Erez Israel it also became necessary for individual scholars to obtain the consent of the patriarch before ordaining their pupils. On account of the high regard entertained for the patriarchs of the house of Hillel, who were the recognized heads of the Jewish community of the Holy Land during the centuries subsequent to the demise of Rabban Johanan b. Zakkai, no ordination was considered valid without the patriarch's consent. The patriarch himself was at first permitted to confer it without consulting the Sanhedrin. Later the patriarch could only grant the degree in cooperation with the court (TJ, Sanh. 1:3, 19a).^f

I have cited these references from the Encyclopedia Judaica for the sake of seeing how far one would have to fall to “withdraw from his ordination.”

This defection must have encountered great delusion. Consequently, Hakham Tsefet forewarns his talmidim to keep guard. The bait is always to the easy way. The pseudo prophets and teachers offer a life of lawlessness. Here “lawlessness” is compounded in the plural form of ἄθεσμος *athesmos*, meaning (habitual) lawless activity. Here I would suggest the thought of ...

^e Encyclopedia Judaica, Second Edition, Keter Publishing House Ltd Volume 18 pg. 274

^f Ibid

1. Habitual lawlessness (activity)

2. Actual defection whereby the “Ordained” turned his back on the Torah lifestyle.

It is very hard to imagine how subtle this offer must have allured the “Ordained” to defect. I cannot imagine this situation. It is too farfetched for me to conceive.

It seems evident to me that Hakham Tsefet was inspired to this notion from the Psalmist.

Psalms 89:39. But You abandoned and You rejected; You became wroth with Your anointed.

Rashi’s Comments to Psalms 89:39 are as follows.

39 But You abandoned You dealt strictly with his children in counting their iniquity until You abandoned them and You rejected them in the days of Zedekiah.

Hakham Tsefet juxtaposes the idea of God abandoning his anointed King for the idea of the Ordained who has defected. Certainly, this is why God has abandoned His anointed.

Looking a bit further into the Psalm, this week further instigates the plea for increased generosity and almsgiving.

Psalms 89:50. Where are Your former acts of kindness, O Lord, which You swore to David in your trust?

The Psalmist questions God causing Hakham Tsefet to see that the true path to causing God to be generous with us is for us to be generous.

And, Hakham Tsefet must have known well the argument that was used to cause the defection.

52. Which Your enemies disgraced, O Lord, which they disgraced the ends of Your anointed.	52. For Your enemies have scorned, O LORD, for they have scorned <i>the delay of the footsteps of your Messiah, O LORD.</i>
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The Targum explains the Torah verse and the reason for defection clearly. Why have they defected and fallen into lawlessness?

Because they have come to believe the lie, that Messiah is NOT returning. This actually is a summation of the previous pericopes of Hakham Tsefet. Believing this lie has caused the “Ordained” to fall into lawlessness and forsake the Ordination (highest calling in Messiah) for the sake of the epicurean life.

“Eat drink and be merry!”

Antithesis

“Increasing in generosity and knowledge of our Master Yeshua haMashiach”

Hakham Tsefet offers a solution to the problem. Remain steadfast by increasing your knowledge of Messiah. The Greek γνῶσει *gnosei* word is often a substitute for דַּא'ת *da'at*.

Da'at is the marriage of wisdom and understanding. These two characteristics are not easy to come by. Therefore, Hakham Tsefet suggests that the talmid of the Master must increase in the knowledge of Messiah. There are many facets of Messiah hard to comprehend. The way we will apprehend those subtle aspects is through steadfast diligence.

The Hidden Day

This word was VERY hard to try to capture in this pericope. Upon reflection, I see now why it is so hard to grasp. The hidden aspects of Messiah have caused many to defect.

The loss of understanding who and what Messiah is all about is but the first phase of defection. The second phase of that defection stop moving in the direction of one's "calling." The third phase forsaking of the "Ordination" The final phase is the return to lawlessness.

Because so much of Messiah remains hidden, we are challenged on multiple levels. However, that which was hidden and lost comes to light with every new day.

My Teacher and beloved Hakham, Rabbi Dr. Yoseph ben Haggai has taught me that the Gemara reports that after the death of Moshe Yehoshua forgot 300 mitzvot and had 700 doubts. The Gemara further states that thousands of laws were lost through varied means.^g These laws remain hidden until we gain knowledge of Messiah. As we gain knowledge of Messiah, we gradually regain the lost mitzvot and principles for Torah Living.

CONNECTIONS TO TORAH READINGS

Torah Seder

The entire Torah Seder plays on the value of men, beasts and fields. It seems that Hakham Tsefet looks at all of this data and looks at the real worth of a man. He values the real worth of a man by his commitment to the Torah. What man is the man that is valued beyond all men? The Hakham! Therefore, we should all seek to be Hakhamim not withdrawing from our Ordination.

And, Hakham Tsefet must have known well the argument that was used to cause the defection from Ordination.

Vayikra 27:52. Which Your enemies disgraced, O Lord, which they disgraced the ends of Your anointed.

Targum Vayikra 27:52. For Your enemies have scorned, O LORD, for they have scorned the delay of the footsteps of your Messiah, O LORD.

Tehillim

Hakham Tsefet connects with Tehillim through the idea of hiding and forever. Verses 89:46-47

It also seems evident to me that Hakham Tsefet was inspired to this notion from the Psalmist.

Psalms 89:39. But You abandoned and You rejected; You became wroth with Your anointed. (v17 withdrawing from your own ordination)

^g T'murah 16a

Ashlamatah

Judges 11:30. And Jephthah vowed a vow to the Lord, and said, If you shall without fail deliver the Ammonites into my hands,

This vow was not a valid vow. Jephthah acts improperly when he makes this vow. His act is actually an act of lawlessness. He should have gone to Phinehas to have this vow annulled. His pride and position as a Judge caused him to err^h. Therefore, like the Ordained who defected because of his lack of wisdom and knowledge of Messiah, Jephthah errs in his rash vow.

MITZVOT

Torah Add	M#	Mitzvah	Oral Torah
Vayikra 27:2	350	The Precept of one who vows a Person's valuation, that he should give his prescribed price	Arachin ⁱ
27:10	351	The prohibition against exchanging animals consecrated for Holy things	T'murah 1:1, 5:3
	352	That if one exchanges an animal consecrated for an offering, both animals are consecrated	T'murah 2.3
27:11-12	353	The precept that one who vows an animal's valuation should give as values it.	T'murah 7:1
27:14	354	That if one vows the evaluation of a house he should give the Kohen's valuation plus a fifth.	Arachin
27:16	355	That if one vow's a field's valuation he should give the values set by Scripture	same
27:26	356	Prohibition against changing consecrated animals from one kind to another	T'murah 7:1
27:28	357	The precept that if one vows a herem on property of his, it goes to the Kohanim	T'murah 5.1
	358	That land put under herem by its owner is not to be sold but to be given to the Kohanim	Arachin
	359	The precept that land under a vow of herem is not to be redeemed	
27:32	360	The precept that the Tithe of permissible domestic animals is to be given every year.	Bekhorot 8.1
27:33	361	That the Tithe of animals is not to be sold but only eaten in Jerusalem	Bekhorot 5.1

^h The Stone Edition Tanach, Mesorah Publications, ltd , Artscroll Series. pg 617

ⁱ The entire tractate of Arachin is devoted to this issue. (See also the same tractate in the Tosefta)

 RELATED MISHNAYOT

Implied Mishnayot

Sanhedrin 1:3 “The laying of hands [on a community sacrifice] by elders and the breaking of the heifer’s neck [Dt. 21:1–9] are done by three judges,” the words of R. Simeon. R. Judah says, “By five.” The rite of removal of the shoe [breaking the levirate bond] (Dt. 25:7–9) and the exercise of the right of refusal are done before three judges. [The evaluation of] fruit of fourth-year plantings [which is to be redeemed (Lev. 19:23–25)] and of second tithe (Dt. 14:22–26) whose value is not known is done before three [judges]. Assessment of the value, [for purposes of redemption,] of things which have been consecrated is done before three [judges]. [Property pledged as security for] vows of valuation, in the case of movables, is evaluated by three [judges]. R. Judah says, “One of them must be a priest.” And [evaluation of property pledged as security for vows for valuation] in the case of real estate is done by nine and a priest. And so for [the valuation vow covering] men.

Sanhedrin 4:4 And three rows of disciples of sages sit before them. Each and every one knows his place. [If] they found need to ordain [a disciple to serve on the court], they ordained one who was sitting in the first row. [Then] one who was sitting in the second row joins the first row, and one who was sitting in the third row moves up to the second row. And they select for themselves someone else from the crowd and set him in the third row. [The new disciple] did not take a seat in the place of the first party [who had now joined in the court] but in the place that was appropriate for him [at the end of the third row].

Reflections and things to ponder

Why did Hakham Tsefet break Mordechai (Mark) in half to interject his Letters?

What caused Hakham Tsefet to relate the defect of ordination with this particular Torah Seder?

Endnotes

ⁱ The Delitzsch Hebrew New Testament was translated from the Elzevir 1624 Received Greek Text by the 19th century German scholar Franz Julius Delitzsch (1813 to 1890), co-author of the well-known multi-volume Keil and Delitzsch Commentary of the Old Testament. Delitzsch's New Testament was first published in 1877. Since the first publication his work has been republished with only minor revisions, and it has maintained its literal style for the Hebrew of Delitzsch's day. This was before Modern Hebrew was created, and consequently the Hebrew leans heavily on the Tanakh for vocabulary, words and expressions. Students of the Tanakh should therefore be able to understand Delitzsch's translation without much difficulty.

The current text was entered by Ewan MacLeod and proofread against a printed copy of Delitzsch's work. As Delitzsch's work goes back to 1877, it is now in the public domain.