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אשר כתיבו לכתוב נשמות
להזכיר לאור כל תעלומות
סודותיו הנודעו סדיק כליות
כזי חכם בעל החלומות
וקבל הסם בעל חיות
סדיק ספק נחם וסלמות
יחזר לכחם קדושת תמימות
וכס סודות ושלילות סתומות
באף ספר ואלה שמות

כדף הסם אלהי תעבדות
והיה הנותן תבנית לבסיות
וכספר הזה והחיות חיות
וחלה התחדש: אחרי חיות
יכולר חכי הכבדית היהדות
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יחן ככתב חיות ראמות
דבר חסד כעשה מתחמות

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ואלה
עשה הוי בעבור שהכיר סוף
הספר הראשון כי יוסף ראה ל
לכבוני בני שלמים: האשר כי
אחיו ברדיה: הן ועשים: ומה רובני חולת אלה
נה כהריון הארץ סוף לכתוב: וכתוב את
כל העובדות האל: ואחרי חלה התעבדות אלה
לאכסים האל חלה חלון להרפה היה חכמה לחלה
ומה חולת לויסמויות הלוי חכמה הלוי: יעבדי
היות חולת אלה חלולי: היה האר כסף טאל ללה
חלה ונחיה: וסם: לסק זמר וסמות לסק רב

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MOSES – THE TRAGEDY OF HIS PERSONAL LIFE

BY LOUIS I. RABINOWITZ

INTRODUCTION

As far as I am aware, despite the rabbinic dictum that “We have not seen does not constitute evidence,” the subject of this article has never received adequate treatment. The justifiable concentration on Moses the man of God, Moses the teacher, Moses both the national and spiritual leader of his people, has put into the shade Moses the human individual, Moses the family man in relation to his wife and children, Moses’ abnormal upbringing.

A study of this subject has revealed it as a tragedy of the first order, especially when it is compared with the life of his brother Aaron who, distinguished though he was, cannot be compared with the outstanding personality of Moses.

In undertaking this research, I have relied to a great extent upon the Oral Torah, the amplification by the Rabbis of the Talmud and Midrash and with the classical medieval commentators, which fill in so many of the gaps in the biblical narrative. But I feel it incumbent to stress that far from these being the fruits of a fertile imagination, they are largely based upon a penetrating examination and interpretation of the text, together with a profound psychological insight into human nature.

I have found it a fascinating study; I hope that my readers will at least find it of interest.

THE CHILDHOOD OF MOSES

A pall of silence covers the period of the childhood of Moses from the time that he became the adopted child of the Egyptian princess, the daughter of Pharaoh, until his flight to Midian, the result of his compassion and association with the sufferings of his brethren and his subsequent flight to Midian. That it was an

Rabbi Prof. L.I. Rabinowitz, formerly Chief Rabbi of South Africa and Professor of Hebrew at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, is Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the Encyclopedia Judaica and Editor of the Judaic Year Book. He was also Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem.

abnormal life is beyond question, and that silence can be broken from the few details which are recorded by the elaboration of the Rabbis.

The central point to be considered is, to what extent was he aware that he was not a true Egyptian but a Hebrew foundling (literally!) adopted by the Egyptian princess who had taken compassion on him. On the one hand, he was vouchsafed, literally, to "drink his mother's milk" (Exodus 2:7-9) and, what is more important, to be raised by his natural mother until "he grew up" (ibid. v. 10). For how long was that? "*Until he was weaned*", and the Midrash, (Exodus R. 1:31) states with reason that it was for a period of 24 months, after which *she brought him to the daughter of Pharaoh and he became her son* (v. 10).

How much knowledge of his true origin could he "imbibe" with his mother's milk during that brief period of babyhood?

The fact that *when Moses grew up, he went out unto his brethren, and looked upon their burdens* (Exod. 2:11) suggests that he was aware that he belonged to them. But it is not necessary to attribute his knowledge of his origin to what he had been able, consciously or unconsciously, to imbibe from his mother. His adopting mother was perfectly aware of his origin. Not only at the moment when she saw him did she say, *This is one of the children of the Hebrews* (2.6), but the very name she gave him, *because I drew him out of the water* (2.10), served as a constant reminder to the child of his true origin.

On the other hand, when the daughters of Jethro reported to their father that he had rescued them from the shepherds, they specifically referred to him as an *Egyptian man*, and there can be no doubt but that, reared during his formative years in the royal palace, he had, at least outwardly, adopted the manners and dress of an Egyptian, and the Midrash (Exod. R. 1, 38) states, "though a Hebrew he was dressed as an Egyptian."

There now comes the question as to how the members of the royal household in particular and the Egyptians in general looked upon this foundling who had been miraculously saved from the cruel fate which had been decreed upon the people to which he belonged, to become a member of the royal household.

On that the Biblical record is completely silent but that silence is broken by the Rabbis who maintain that he was regarded with suspicion and distrust. The Midrash (Exod. R. 1, 31) relates: The daughter of Pharaoh was wont to kiss and embrace and fondle him as though he were her natural son, nor would she

have him leave the precincts of the royal palace. But he was so beautiful that all flocked to look upon him, and whosoever saw him could not tear themselves away from him. And Pharaoh also would kiss and fondle him. But one day he playfully took Pharaoh's crown and placed it on his own head as though he were destined to succeed him when he grew up . . . And the Egyptian soothsayers were present and they declared, "We are afraid of this one who takes the crown and places it on his head, that he should not prove to be the one of whom we have foretold that he is destined to take the kingship from thee." And some proposed that he be put to death by the sword, and others by fire. Moses however was saved. Can it be doubted that such fears and suspicions of this member of the hated and feared Israelites, who had reached this position of eminence, were actually entertained?

How long this abnormal state of affairs lasted, we are not told. According to one view, he was twenty years of age when he committed the act which resulted in his flight; according to another, forty.

There is one more point to be considered in this connection. In the Jerusalem Post of June 14th. 1982 there appeared a report by Charles Hoffman on the proceedings of an International Congress on Adoption held shortly before that in Eilat, the second only of its kind ever held. The report opens with the following passage: — "The contradictions of pain and joy, love and rejection, mystery and normalcy that stalk adopted children and their families throughout their lives are indelibly stamped upon them at the beginning of their relationship."

The extent to which this can be taken into consideration with regard to the tragedy of the personal life of Moses is worthy of some thought but, be that as it may, that the formative years of Moses were abnormal is beyond question.

MOSES IN MIDIAN BEFORE THE DIVINE CALL

The brief period that Moses lived in Midian until the Divine call came to him may be regarded, with one reservation, as the only period in his life when he lived a normal domestic life. The one reservation is reflected in the name which he gave to his first born son Gershom, *because I was a stranger in a foreign land* (Exodus 2:22), and thus, to that extent, he did not feel "at home". It is probably the realization of this which brings the Rabbis to render the first word of the previous verse, usually translated *And Moses was content to dwell with the man*

(Jethro) and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter as: “And Jethro extracted a vow from Moses that he would remain with him” (this will be dealt with in another connection at the end of this chapter). He becomes a shepherd, he lives a normal life with his wife. When he finally leaves, it is with one son already born and, as will be suggested, with his wife pregnant with the second.

According to the Talmud, the fact that he took a Midianite woman to wife was to be thrown up against him on more than one occasion during the period of his ministry.

There is a remarkable passage in the Talmud (Baba Batra 109b) which is a homily on the theme that “one should always enter into a worthy marriage”, and in illustration thereof, it contrasts the descendants of the two brothers, Aaron and Moses. Aaron’s marriage was a “respectable” and “prestigious” one. His wife was Elisheva, the daughter of Aminadav, the sister of Nahshon ben Aminadav (Exod. 6:23). Nahshon was “the head of his father’s house” of the tribe of Judah (Num. 1:7) and *nasi* of his tribe (ibid. 2:3), as well as commander of its army (10:14).

Elsewhere (Tractate Zebahim 102a), the Talmud states that Elisheva had five reasons for happiness which were not vouchsafed to any others of the daughters of Israel. “Her brother-in-law (Moses) was a ruler, her husband High Priest, his son Eleazar *Segan* (Deputy High Priest), her grandson Phinehas commander of the army (Num. 31:6), and her brother prince of his tribe”.

On the other hand, continues the Talmud, from Moses who married the daughter of Jethro, an idolatrous priest, there descended Jonathan who served also in that capacity (this will be dealt with later). The Talmud asks: But was not Phinehas, the son of Elazar and grandson of Aaron, also the grandson of Jethro, the rabbis identifying Putiel (whose daughter Elazar married) with Jethro (Ex. 6:25)? And it replies that if he was of “tainted descent” on his mother’s side, his father was descended from Joseph!

This tarnished descent of Phinehas is again pointed up in another passage of the Talmud (Sanhedrin 82b), which offers a remarkable reconstruction and elaboration, largely based on a close examination of the brief Biblical record, of the action of Phinehas in taking the law into his own hands and putting Zimri ben Salu and the Midianite woman with whom he committed adultery to death (Numbers 25:1-8 and 14-15). It includes the statement that Zimri forcibly

dragged his consort before the Sanhedrin and, addressing Moses, asked: “Is it permitted to me to have sexual relations with a Midianite woman?” And before Moses could reply, he continued, “And if it is forbidden, how did you take a Midianite woman to wife?” Moses was so confused that he forgot the Halachah. The rest of that remarkable passage is not relevant to our theme, but it goes on to state that after Phinehas had thus by his action saved the honour of the people and brought the plague to an end, instead of praising him, the people reviled him saying, “Look at this descendant of Putiel, whose maternal grandfather was an idolatrous priest, who has slain a prince of Israel.” It does not say so, but is there not in it a tacit suggestion that Phinehas acted as he did, and took up the cause of Moses when his unworthy marriage was thrown in his face, because he himself was tarred with the same brush?

But that is not all. As stated above, the rabbis agree that Jethro extracted a vow from Moses as a condition of giving him his daughter in marriage. Various suggestions are made as to the nature of that vow, e.g. that he would remain with him and not return to Egypt, though Midian was a foreign country to him. The Mechilta, however, actually makes the shocking statement that the vow was to the effect that the first son born to them would be brought up in Jethro’s faith, though he could do as he desired with subsequent children, and Moses agreed!

It is a startling comment. I have an idea that its major purpose is to stress that the spiritual mission and dedication of Moses – as distinct from what may be called his “national” feeling in slaying the Egyptian taskmaster – begins only with the first call of God to him. It is during the brief period in Midian before then alone, that Moses lives a normal life as husband and father. After that the position changes completely.

It is also possible that it was given partly to explain what happened to the grandson of Moses.

GERSHOM AND ELIEZER – THE FIRST PHASE

I am reversing the natural order and shall deal with the children of Moses before dealing with his marital relations.

The birth of Gershom, the elder son of Moses is duly recorded (Exodus 2:23); but that “distinction” is not even accorded to the second son, Eliezer! Like Topsy he “just happened”!

The first mention of him by name is when Jethro proceeds to the camp of Moses at Mt. Sinai, together with Zipporah and her sons, of whom we are informed: *And her two sons, of whom the name of the one was Gershom . . . and the name of the other Eliezer* (18. 3–4). When he was born? On this the Bible is silent.

It would appear that Eliezer was already born when Moses decided to return to Egypt to fulfil his divine mission, since it is specifically stated that *Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass* (Exodus 4:20). But even this is denied by Nachmanides, who gives as a parallel the verse, “*And the sons of Palu were Eliav*” (Num. 26:8) although there was only one. Nachmanides is of the opinion that Zipporah became pregnant with Eliezer either on the journey from Midian to Egypt, “or in Egypt itself, if indeed she reached there”, but he inclines to the former opinion.

The discussion centers round the interpretation of the mysterious incident related in Exodus 4:20–26 when Zipporah saves Moses’ life by circumcising their son.* According to Nachmanides, Eliezer was born during that journey. His birth and his subsequent circumcision were the reason for the return of Zipporah and her children to her father’s home in Midian (this will be discussed in the next section). The lack of certainty is reflected in the comment of Ibn Ezra to this verse: — “We do not know whether Gershom was born during Moses’ early years or his later years . . . but his second son, Eliezer, was born during that journey”, and he expresses his opinion that it was only Gershom who was able to ride on the ass; Eliezer had perforce to be carried in his mother’s arms.

One thing is certain, however. The family was shortly to be broken up.

GERSHOM AND ELIEZER — PHASE TWO. A BROKEN HOME

Whether it was immediately after the circumcision of Eliezer, or immediately after they reached Egypt that Zipporah returned with her children to her father’s home, one thing is certain: the breach did take place. Nachmanides is of the opinion that the need for Eliezer to be healed rendered it impossible for Zipporah to continue the journey with him, and it was for that reason that she returned home with her children. Another view, stated in the Mechilta, and quoted by

* According to R. Simeon b. Gamaliel it was the life of the child, not of Moses (Nedarim 32a).

Rashi (on 18:2), makes it a little later. “When the Holy One, blessed be He, said to Moses in Midian: Go, return to Egypt, ‘and Moses took his wife and children . . . and Aaron went forth to meet him, and met him in the mountain of the Lord,’ he said to him, ‘Who are these?’ To which Moses replied, ‘They are my wife whom I married in Midian, and these are my children’. Whereupon Aaron inquired, ‘And where are you taking them?’, and when Moses replied ‘to Egypt,’ Aaron said, ‘We are in anguish over those who are already there, and you come to add to them?’ Whereupon Moses said to her, ‘Go back to thy father’s house’, and she took her sons and departed”.

In neither case, therefore, did Zipporah and her children reach Egypt and, as Ibn Ezra rightly points out, it is more than hinted at in Exodus 4:20. Whereas it states that Moses took his wife and his sons, the verse continues that he (Moses alone) returned to the Land of Egypt.

The reunion of Moses with his family did not take place until the third month after the Exodus from Egypt. During this whole period the home is broken up and Moses’ two sons are brought up in the home of their grandfather. To whatever extent that was to influence them, it was not given to them to participate in the discomfiture of Egypt, the struggle for the Exodus or the Crossing of the Red Sea.

GERSHOM AND ELIEZER, THE REUNION AND THEREAFTER

When the news of the Exodus from Egypt *and all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people* reached the ears of Jethro, he decided to come to the camp of the Children of Israel, bringing Zipporah and her two sons with him (Exodus 18:1–3). Perhaps too much should not be made of the fact that while Moses *bowed down and kissed* his father-in-law (18:7), no such sign of affection is recorded with regard to his wife and sons! But something has to be said with regard to the statement that Jethro came *after he (Moses) had sent her away* (18:2). It is not inappropriate here to refer to the fact that the Malbim, with his sensitive appreciation of the nuances of the Hebrew idiom, maintains in another context that, whereas the verb *shalach* — שלח in the Kal implies that the person sent is expected to return (cf. e.g., Gen. 32:4; Num. 13:1 and 20:14), in the Piel it excludes the possibility of return (Cf. Exodus 17:1). The word used here is in the Piel, and in the Talmud *Shilluchin* is actually a synonym for divorce. Thus it

suggests that when Moses sent her away, it was with the idea of a final separation. In this connection it should be noted that in fact Nachmanides, in his second interpretation of the verse, states: "Jethro was afraid that it was his intention to divorce her." And it also appears that had it not been for the success of Moses, his wife and children would have remained with her father. Moses did not summon her to return.

The tragedy of Moses' married life will be dealt with later. We concern ourselves now with what we are told, or not told, about his sons and their descendants after this reunion.

GERSHOM AND ELIEZER — AN ELOQUENT SILENCE

The silence, both in the Bible and in rabbinical literature, on the children and descendants of Moses, especially when compared with that of his brother Aaron, is more than eloquent; it is positively deafening! Let us consider two examples from the Biblical text. Twice in the Book of Numbers are we given a census of all the twelve (actually 13) tribes of Israel: One in the second year after the Exodus, before the decree that with the sole exception of Joshua and Caleb all the males between the ages of 20 and 60 were doomed to die in the wilderness (Numbers 3-4 end), and the other, after that decree had been fulfilled (Num. 26 and cf. vv. 64-65).

The former opens with what purports to be *the generations of Aaron and Moses, on the day that the Lord spake to Moses on Mt. Sinai*. It continues, *And these are the names of the sons of Aaron*, etc., but there is not a single word about the sons of Moses! And the same silence occurs in the second census 38 years later.

That silence is too great to be overlooked by the rabbis. On the former passage Rashi quotes from the Talmud (Sanhedrin 19b) to the effect that "he who teaches the son of another Torah is regarded by Scripture as though he had begotten him". It is therefore the descendants of Aaron who are included in the generations of Moses and Aaron, since, "though Aaron begot them, Moses taught them, and they are regarded as his children also." It is a beautiful homily, but it does not explain the failure to name the descendants of Moses. The astonishing fact is that with the sole exception of the record of Gershom's birth and the existence of Eliezer, they are not mentioned even once in the whole

Pentateuch, and even in the vast rabbinical literature there is only one doubtful reference to one of them, Gershom. When Eldad and Medad began to prophesy in the camp, *there ran a young man and told Moses and said, 'Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp'* (Num. 11:27) and the Tanhuma identifies this anonymous young man with Gershom. (A suggestion in the Sifre that it was Joshua is rightly rejected by R. Simeon in view of the mention of him as being with Moses in the next verse; cf. Yalkut Shimoni Numbers 737). Is this possible flicker of concern for the prestige of his father? But even worse than silence is the one reference to a descendant of Moses (apart from the genealogical record in Chronicles which will be referred to) in the later books. In Judges 18:30 we are told that the tribe of Dan set up a graven image for themselves, *and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land* **יהונתן בן גרשם בן מנשה**. The “nun” in the name Manasseh is suspended, and the Talmud rightly states that Jonathan was the grandson of Moses, but the suspended “nun” was added out of respect for him, to make it read Menasheh.

It is at least gratifying to note that in the subsequent Biblical record we are told that the descendants of Moses did fulfil a respectable if not distinguished role in the Temple. In I Chron 26:24–28 it is stated: *Shebuel the son of Gershom the son of Moses, was ruler over the treasuries. And his brethren by Eliezer, Rehabiah his son, and Jeshai his-son, and Joram his son, and Zichri his son, and Shelomith his son. The Shelomith and his brethren were over all the treasuries of the dedicated things which David the king . . . had dedicated.* According to the Talmud, which loves to identify characters in the Bible with others of different names, Shebuel is none other than Jonathan, who repented of his ways and is therefore called Shebuel – “he who returned to God with all his heart”, and for this reason there is no suspended “nun” to turn Moshe into Menasheh. He is Shebuel the son of Gershom, the son of *Moses*.

A DIVINE DECREE

According to the Rabbis, Moses was keenly aware of the fact that it would not be given to him what was given to his brother Aaron, namely, to have his sons follow in his tradition of the priesthood. Moreover it was foretold to him at the very outset of his ministry, and that as a punishment. When Aaron's death was decreed, Moses was told to ascend Mt. Hor with him and with Aaron's son

Elazar; and to *strip Aaron of his priestly garments and put them on Elazar his son*, which Moses did (Numbers 20:26-28). The Tanhuma comments (par. 17): "Said the Holy One, blessed be He, to Moses: 'With that wilt thou comfort him, in that he bequeaths his crown to his children, which thou wilt not.'" Rashi expresses this thought in the following words: "Take Aaron . . . i.e. with words of consolation, (saying), Happy art thou that thou seest thy crown handed down to thy son, something which I shall not be vouchsafed."

The Talmud (Zebahim 102b) discusses the question of the extent to which Moses could be regarded as a priest in view of the fact that in Psalm 99:6 it states: *Moses and Aaron among His priests*. It is conceded that he did exercise sacerdotal functions, but although there is a difference of opinion as to whether it was only for the seven days of consecration or during his whole life, it is unanimously agreed that it was not to be handed down to his sons as Aaron was privileged to do. The Talmud makes it a *punishment* for Moses, dating from the very first revelation of God to him, because of his reluctance to accept his mission of bringing the people out of the bondage of Egypt (Exodus 4:10-14). God reproves him saying, "Is there not Aaron thy brother, *the Levite*? I know that he can speak well." Here Aaron is referred to as the "Levite" instead of, as always elsewhere, the priest. And the Talmud states that in that appellation lay the reproof and the punishment of Moses: "I had intended that you would serve as priest, and Aaron a rank and file Levite. Now it is he who will be the priest and you the Levite. Thus of his descendants it is stated: *But, as for Moses the man of God, his sons are named among the tribe of Levi* (1 Chron 23:14), undistinguished and almost unnoted. There was no choice. From the very outset of Moses' call, he was to know that it would not be given to him to see his children follow in his way.

WHY?

What possible logical explanation can one proffer of the failure of the children of Moses, "our teacher and master", "the teacher of all Israel", to follow in their father's footsteps, apart from this suggestion of punishment?

A possible hint is given in the Talmud, and in an apposite context, although his children are not mentioned. In Tractate Zebahim 101b it is stated that although the priesthood was made hereditary in the descendants of Aaron from the time of

their progenitor, it was not confirmed until his grandson Phinehas took the vigorous action he did (Numbers 25:12). And it goes on to state that “Moses was different because he was involved with the Divine Presence (the Shechinah) from dawn to dawn.” It is true that the reference is to the day preceding the Revelation only, and that in Shabbat 86a it is made to refer to his abstinence from cohabitation, but can the thought not be extended to suggest that not only his separation from his wife, which will be discussed shortly, but his failure to give due attention to his own children was the result of his total absorption in his Divine Mission?

MOSES’ MARRIED LIFE

We come at last to the final tragedy in the personal domestic life of Moses, that of his marital relationship.

With the sole exception of Ibn Ezra, who quotes a suggestion that the “Cushite woman” whom Moses married, as a result of which he was maligned by his sister Miriam and his brother Aaron (Numbers 12:1–3), was actually a second wife, an Ethiopian whom Moses had married during a conquest of Ethiopia, a suggestion which he rejects, it is universally conceded that Moses was monogamous and the “Cushite woman” was none other than Zipporah, the name being an affectionate reference to her dark beauty. All the ancient authorities agree that the burden of the complaint against him was that he had ceased to have conjugal relations with her, despite the fact that she was as beautiful in character as in outward appearance. As to how this confidential fact came to the notice of Miriam (who told it to Aaron) there are two opinions given in the Sifre. Both agree that Zipporah did not divulge it directly, but it slipped from her tongue in an unguarded moment in her distress. The one is that Zipporah ceased to adorn herself, and when Miriam asked her the reason, she answered that Moses was not interested. The other is more picturesque: After the prophesying of Eldad and Medad in the camp (Num 11:26–29), Miriam, who was standing next to Zipporah, heard her say bitterly, “I am sorry for the wives of these men, if they have engaged in prophecy. They will now cease to have relations with their wives as my husband has done.” (The Sifre Zuta gives the same explanation, but with regard to the 70 who were authorised).

From what time did Moses separate from his wife? One single word of Rashi

throws a flood of light on this question. On the words *concerning the Cushite woman*, he comments "concerning his divorce from her." As has been stated above, there is every evidence that during his sojourn in Midian, before the first call of God came to him, he lived a normal life with his wife and children. If indeed his celibacy was due to his communion with God, then it must have commenced immediately after the first Revelation to him in Midian. This accords completely with the suggestion put forward earlier as regards the period when he sent her back to her father, intending it to be a final separation. By that time Gershom had already been born and Zipporah was pregnant with Eliezer; no more children were born to them after that.

CONCLUSION

This then is the picture of Moses which emerges from the study. Deprived of a normal childhood and the affectionate love of his parents, surrounded by suspicion in Pharaoh's household, deprived of the legitimate pleasure of normal relations with his wife, and above all the knowledge that he was to derive no "*nachas*" from his children following in his footsteps, and his complete absorption in his Divine Mission, add up to the tragedy of his personal life.

From the *Zohar* II, 21 . . .

"Now Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian . . . and he came to the mountain of God . . . (III,1)". Even though Jethro was a pagan idolator, since he had treated Moses with loving kindness (חסד), Moses tended his flock with dedication and with commitment, sparing no effort to bring them to the best pastures.

ESTHER'S PLAN TO SAVE THE JEWS:

Overall Strategy, Initial Failure, Ultimate Success

BY NATHAN AVIEZER

1. INTRODUCTION

The Book of Esther portrays threat and deliverance. It is the story of the impotence of the Jew against the vicissitudes of History. It bears the message that although Man must do his utmost, deliverance can come only from God. These themes lie buried in the text. It is our goal to reveal them.

The story of the Book of Esther, as it is traditionally told, has in the course of time become overlaid with interpretation. Therefore, it is useful to examine the story afresh, paying close attention to the Biblical text and avoiding, as far as is possible, any interpretation that is not rooted in the text. It will be seen that a careful reading of the text reveals a brilliant but dangerous plan, formulated by Esther, to save the Jews from destruction at the hands of Haman. It will also be shown that, in spite of her masterful execution, Esther's plan, as formulated, fails. However, through the occurrence of two totally unexpected events, her plan achieves ultimate success. The occurrence of two of such timely and unexpected events can only be attributed to Divine intervention.

The present study of the narrative focuses on a number of topics that have not generally received sufficient attention:

- (i) The important difference between Mordecai's proposed course of action to save the Jews and the plan that Esther formulated and implemented.
- (ii) The overall strategy of Esther's plan.
- (iii) Esther's skill in carrying out her plan.
- (iv) The initial failure of Esther's plan.
- (v) The two totally unexpected events that led to ultimate success:

Nathan Aviezer is a Professor of Physics at Bar-Ilan University. After receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, he held research positions at the University of Illinois and at the IBM Watson Research Centre until his Aliya in 1967. Recently, he has been a frequent visitor at the University of Cambridge, England.

- (a) The blunder committed by Haman.
- (b) The intervention of Harvona, the King's chamberlain.

2. THREAT

The background to the events that we shall be discussing is explicit in the Biblical account. Haman has risen to a dominant position in the court of King Ahasuerus and has decided, because of a personal grudge against Mordecai and because of his vicious hatred of the Jews, to annihilate the entire Jewish community of the Persian Empire. Haman obtains the permission of the King to carry out this terrible deed and sets a date for the holocaust. Before Haman's rise to power, the beautiful Esther had been chosen Queen to replace the deposed Vashti and has become the object of a deep and passionate love on the part of the King, who is unaware that Esther is Jewish and thus subject to destruction under Haman's decree. Mordecai, the leader of the Jewish community and Esther's cousin, decides that the only way to save the Jews is for Esther to exploit her privileged position with the King by approaching him and pleading with him to spare the lives of the Jews.

This sets the background to the dramatic events described in Chaps. 5-7 of the Book of Esther. We shall consider these events in detail.

3. STRATEGY

Esther rejects out of hand Mordecai's suggestion (4:8) that she go directly to the King and plead for mercy for her people. Such an act could only lead to disaster. Esther realizes full well that as long as Haman is in power, the Jews are lost. Haman must first be eliminated. Only then will the conditions be created that will make it possible to plead successfully with the King to spare the Jewish people. With this thought clearly in mind, Esther formulates a bold plan for Haman's destruction.

To understand the inherent difficulty of successfully carrying out such a plan, one must fully appreciate the enormous power of the position held by Haman in the court of the King. Haman has not only become the chief personal advisor to the King (3:1), he has even been elevated by the King to the status of demigod, with the people required by royal decree to bow down to him (3:2). Haman acts largely with the complete authority of the King. The King has even accorded

formal sanction to this authority by giving Haman his ring (3:10), which is the official seal of the Empire and confers vast power upon the bearer (8:8). Only if one appreciates the immense power wielded by Haman, can one begin to understand the enormous difficulty of the task confronting Esther. Indeed, one can but stand in awe at the courage of this brave woman, who sets out *alone* to challenge the second most powerful figure of the mighty Persian Empire.

Esther bases her plan on exploiting the fact that the King is subject to fits of rage over personal slights (1:12) and, in his rage, sometimes makes far-reaching decisions (1:21) without due regard as to their effect on his ultimate welfare. Even after the King regains his composure and regrets his decision (2:1), he does not revoke such decrees, it being a cardinal principle of the King that royal decrees are irrevocable (8:8). Thus, Esther's plan is basically to repeat the incident of Vashti, forcing Haman into the role occupied by the deposed Queen, in the hope that he will suffer a similar fate. There is no doubt in Esther's mind that Haman is much more important to the King than she is. Rational considerations on the part of the King must immediately lead to his favoring Haman over Esther. Therefore, Esther must enrage the King against Haman and, most important, get the King to act *irrationally* in the heat of his rage — all this before Haman can collect his wits and rise to his own defence, a task for which he is more than adequately equipped.

Esther fully recognizes the enormous difficulty confronting her and how much she will be in need of Divine help. Accordingly, when finally pressured by Mordecai to act (4:14), Esther's first step is to call upon all the Jews in Shushan to fast and pray for the success of her plan (4:16).

4. CONFRONTATION

Esther proceeds to carry out her plan with the sure hand of a master tactician. She enhances the King's love for her by risking an uninvited appearance in the court (4:11), by her invitation to the King and Haman to the first banquet and finally by her tantalizing request of the King that he and Haman attend a second banquet the following day, at which time she will reveal to the King what she wishes of him (5:8). The King's passion for Esther is intensified, while Haman remains completely unsuspecting (5:9). The trap is ready to be sprung.

At this point occurs the most dramatic scene in the entire Book of Esther.

Esther accuses Haman of ordering her death, thus bringing her confrontation into the open in the presence of the King. All of Esther's elaborate preparations have been directed solely to determining the outcome of this confrontation. The following few minutes are vital. We shall therefore make a detailed study of the precise sequence of events depicted in the narrative describing this crucial scene.

At first, all goes well. The dramatic accusation of Esther succeeds beyond all expectations; Haman has become utterly panic stricken and the King has become furious (7:6). But then, Esther's plan promptly collapses. The King does not *act*, in spite of his rage. Worse still, he storms out of the banquet hall into the garden (7:7), which serves to remove the control of events from Esther's grasp. The plan has failed! With each passing moment, the King's fury will subside more and more as the King begins to assess the matter rationally and inevitably to realize that he has no reason whatsoever to be angry with Haman. Haman has done nothing wrong. His plan to kill the Jews is certainly not a crime in the King's eyes. The King himself has all along been completely indifferent to the fate of the Jews (3:11). Moreover, Haman had no way of knowing that Esther was Jewish (2:20). Therefore, the King will eventually calm down and then conclude that it is actually Esther, and not Haman, who has deceived him and his anger will be redirected against her. One can imagine these thoughts racing through Esther's mind as she sat, helplessly, awaiting the return of the King from the garden.

Suddenly, a new development occurs. Haman makes a mistake. In his panic, which Esther has so successfully sown, Haman feels the immediate need to do something to defend his position. Haman is unable to collect his thoughts sufficiently to realize that cold logic dictates that his best course is to do nothing at all until the King returns and calms down. Haman's moment of acute danger had already passed as soon as the King stormed out of the banquet hall without making any decision or giving any order. Moreover, Haman compounds his error by pleading with Esther (7:7). If Haman is going to plead at all, his pleas should be directed to the King, his benefactor, and not to Esther, his enemy. But Esther is present and the King is not – and Haman in his complete and utter panic desperately feels that he must act immediately, and thus commits a twofold blunder. However, at this moment, Haman has committed a blunder but nothing more.

Now occurs a totally unexpected, almost incredible development, which gives

new life to Esther's plan. The King returns to the banquet hall and, seeing Haman pleading with Esther, misinterprets the pleading as an attempt on the part of Haman to rape the Queen (7:8). In this way, Haman's simple error of judgment becomes transformed into a catastrophe. The King's rage now exceeds all bounds. But, most important, for the *first* time, Haman stands accused in the King's eyes of something which is very much a crime. In fact, it is the worst possible crime, being of the most intimate nature against the person of the King. Esther's hopes are immediately rekindled. But, to no avail. The King *still* fails to act against Haman — no order is given, no decision is taken. The wily Haman may yet extricate himself from this situation. One must not for an instant forget the position of enormous power which he occupies.

At this point comes the real test of Esther's tactical abilities. She must have had the overwhelming desire to say something or to do something that would lead the King to order Haman's execution. But, master tactician that she is, Esther does not repeat Haman's error. She never forgets that under no circumstances must she jeopardize her role in the King's eyes as that of the threatened innocent Queen, a role she has worked so hard to create and cultivate. Under no circumstances must she change her role to that of advisor to the King. Esther instinctively chooses the correct course of action. She remains quiet and says nothing, awaiting developments.

Developments are not long in coming. Suddenly, a second totally unexpected event occurs — the intervention of Harvona, one of the King's chamberlains (7:9). Harvona quickly sizes up the situation, sees his opportunity and, skilled intriguer that he is, Harvona hurls an important new charge against Haman — accusing him of plotting to kill Mordecai. Just the previous night (6:1), the King had been deeply moved (6:3) when reminded of how his life had been saved by Mordecai (6:2) and, in his sincere gratitude, had immediately ordered that Mordecai be rewarded (6:6). Now, only a few hours later, the King hears, for the *first* time, the incredible news that Haman intends to hang this very man. Moreover, Harvona cleverly adds that a gallows has been prepared for this purpose in Haman's yard (7:9). The King could not fail to grasp the implied suggestion that nothing could be more fitting than using this very gallows to hang Haman, the attempted rapist of the beloved Queen and the attempted murderer of the savior of the King. It is this picture, so vividly and skillfully painted by Harvona, that finally drives the

enraged King to act, and he promptly orders that Haman be executed (7:9). Note that Haman's real crime — the planned destruction of all the Jews in the Persian Empire — is of no relevance at all.

5. DELIVERANCE

The plan devised and executed by Esther ultimately succeeds, but not in the manner that Esther envisaged. Esther's dramatic accusation against Haman — that he planned to have her killed — proved inadequate. The irrational act expected of the King, ordering the execution of his chief minister, was simply too outrageous to be brought about by Esther's accusation alone.

This does not, of course, imply that Esther contributed but little to the downfall of Haman. It was Esther who drove Haman into the panic in which he committed the compound blunder that led to his eventual destruction. It was Esther who drove the King into the rage that enabled Harvona to make the King act. Events proved that a vital role in the success of the plan was played by Esther's skill, determination and courage. But events also make clear that these were not enough; it was Divine intervention that led to the ultimate success. The message of the Book of Esther is that deliverance occurs only through an interplay of human endeavor and Divine providence. Even though Esther could not succeed without Divine help, such help was not forthcoming until after Esther had done her utmost. It is not without cause that Esther's name graces this profound Book of the Bible.

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A GUIDE TO ISAIAH

BY CHAIM PEARL

We take pleasure in starting herewith a series of notes and interpretations of the first 12 chapters of Isaiah, composed by Rabbi Chaim Pearl. This series is intended as an aid to a study program for students who may find the Hebrew commentators inaccessible. The relevance to eternal issues and problems is highlighted.

INTRODUCTION

Before we read the first chapter let us briefly review some of the salient facts which we know about Isaiah.¹ His lineage and the years of his career are recorded at the very beginning of the book. The name of his father is given as Amoz, about whom nothing is known except for a rabbinic tradition that he was the brother of Amaziah king of Judah (798~785 B.C.E.). Isaiah's work was concentrated in Jerusalem, the capital of the southern kingdom of Judah, and spanned the reigns of Uzziah, Jotahm, Ahaz and Hezekiah. Actually, we learn from chapter 6, 1 that Isaiah began to prophesy in the year of king Uzziah's death which was about 740 B.C.E. He was active until after king Hezekiah's death. A tradition has it that

1. The name Isaiah means "God will help", and in a sense the name embraces Isaiah's central teaching which calls for total faith and reliance on God. The prophet is married, and in one place his wife is referred to as the "prophetess". He had four children of whom two sons are mentioned by the names they carried to advertise Isaiah's lesson to the public. One was called *Maher shallal chash baz* which means something like "the spoil and the prey will come quickly", referring to the imminent destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel and its ally Syria by the mighty Assyrian conquerors. The other son is called *She'er yashuv*, "a remnant shall return" and the name was intended as a visible message of comfort to the people of Judah who are thereby reminded of the prophet's assurance that the Jewish people will never be totally destroyed.

Rabbi Dr. Chaim Pearl, rabbi emeritus of the Conservative Synagogue Adath Israel of Riverdale, New York, was formerly the spiritual leader of the Birmingham Hebrew Congregation, England. He is the author of several acclaimed books on Judaica.

he was martyred by king Manasseh, the son and successor of Hezekiah, which would mean that Isaiah died about 680 B.C.E.

Throughout Isaiah's life time the superpower in the whole Middle East was Assyria, to the north-east of Israel. Today much of its territory straddles Iraq and Iran. But Assyria's military supremacy was challenged, notably by Syria to the north of the Jewish state and by Egypt to the south west. Throughout the entire period, the Jewish kingdoms of Israel and Judah were constantly pressed by these powers to join an alliance against Assyria. Thus in 736 Pekah, a usurper on the throne of the northern kingdom of Israel, and Rezin king of Syria tried to get Ahaz of Judah to join them in their military adventures against Assyria. Isaiah, as always, counselled neutrality, national calm and strong faith. In the result, Ahaz sent tribute to Assyria with an appeal for help against Syria and Israel. And so Judah's independence was lost to the domination of mighty Assyria. A few years later king Hezekiah of Judah had to face the same dilemma – to side with Assyria's enemies or to remain subservient to the great power. For a time, under Isaiah's influence, Hezekiah resisted Egypt's enticements to join the alliance against Assyria. But later the Jewish king rebelled and in so doing called down upon his kingdom the ferocious military might of Assyria which had already destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel in 721 B.C.E. and had scattered the ten tribes throughout its vast empire. Having defeated Egypt, Assyria was now the unquestioned master of the region – at least for the time being. Sennachareb invaded the territory of Judah in 701 B.C.E., overran the country and deported much of the population. Finally, he laid siege to Jerusalem and the situation looked hopeless for the Jewish state. Still Isaiah counselled steadfastness and faith. Miraculously, the Assyrian army was smitten by a mysterious plague which broke up the enemy camp, and the threatening siege was lifted. Meanwhile, a new power was beginning to assert itself – Babylon – which would in time become the new superpower of the region.

The historical outline is found in Isaiah chapters 7, 36, 37 and 39.

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The historical record of the period however is not the important feature of Isaiah's prophecy. This is unquestionably his religious and social message.

When Isaiah began his career the kingdom of Judah was enjoying a period of

great prosperity. Under king Uzziah the country had gained in wealth and influence. But, as often happens, all this produced in the upper classes a spirit of arrogance and ostentatious pride in their wealth. The rich oppressed the poor, and the weak and fatherless were downtrodden by the powerful. Amidst all this social evil and high placed corruption there was another serious weakness – in the religious life of the country. Foreign trade had opened the doors to heathen infiltration and idolatrous practices which many of the Jews enthusiastically copied. Even when they fulfilled their obligations in the Temple there was a painful insincerity which made their sacrificial ritual a mockery and an outrageous insult to religion. Against these twin evils of social corruption and irreligious disloyalty, Isaiah the prophet fearlessly preached the word of God. For Isaiah the matter is clear. God will not tolerate such evil and those who are guilty will be destroyed and the land will be decimated. Only righteousness can save the people and their land.

A reading of the Book of Isaiah is the key to our understanding of prophetic Judaism which rests on the twin foundations of social justice and religious sincerity. But a closer examination of the book also gives us the unique teachings which are especially emphasised by him. These include the following five concepts which can quite easily be identified by the intelligent student because they are frequently repeated in Isaiah's exhortations.

1. CONCEPTS OF GOD

a) The holiness of God. He is transcendent. That is, He is totally outside the world of Nature which He created and over which He rules.

b) At the same time He is the God of History who is actively involved in the affairs of man and of nations.

c) Because God is the God of the individual and nations, it is clear that the ultimate value of true religion is in the quality of a man's faith in God. Total and unshaken faith will bring personal and national strength and security.

2. THE PRIMACY OF ETHICS

While the religious ceremonial of the Temple ritual and its sacrifices are important, the ethical dimension of a man's behaviour is even more significant

and takes precedence over the ritualistic aspects of religion. Ritual without ethics is an abominable hypocrisy.

3. THE FUTURE OF THE JEWS

Only righteousness will save a nation. Conversely, evil will bring on destruction. But the Jews will never be totally destroyed because there will always be a faithful remnant who will return to God's law and save the future.

4. THE CENTRALITY OF JERUSALEM

Jerusalem has a very special place in the theology of Isaiah. It is uniquely the City of God and the visible symbol of His law which is established for Israel and ultimately for all the nations. Jerusalem will become the meeting place for all peoples who will come there to recognise and experience the truth of the teaching of the only One God of all mankind.

5. THE MESSIANIC AGE

The golden age of Judaism is not found in the past so much as in the future. The prophet looks forward to the day when there will be no more war or other evil, and when Israel will be redeemed as it becomes a light to all the nations. This points to the great messianic age. In Isaiah's vision it will be introduced by a unique messianic personality working with the spirit of God.

As was indicated, the above five main religious and social teachings are repeated by Isaiah again and again.² As you read these chapters try to identify and classify these messages. This will help you towards a deeper knowledge of Isaiah and to an appreciation of his epochal contribution to the ideals of prophetic Judaism which have enriched and ennobled all mankind.

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The second part of Isaiah, comprising chapter 40–46 presents a literary problem. Since they deal with a historical situation after the Babylonian

2. Other prophets followed in Isaiah's paths, for his example blazed the trail for the fearless preaching of God's word. Although Isaiah was not the first of the Bible's literary prophets, those who preceded him worked in the northern kingdom. Isaiah was thus the first of the prophets who lived *and taught* in Jerusalem and the south.

destruction of the First Temple in 586 B.C.E., they could hardly have been written by Isaiah the prophet who lived roughly one hundred and fifty years before. With the possible exception of Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089–1164), all ancient and medieval Jewish scholars believe that Isaiah of the first part of the book is the same prophet who preached the later messages, except that he did so through his powerful prophetic vision which enabled him to foresee the future. But since the 19th century, this traditional view has not been maintained by any serious or scientific scholar of the Bible. So today there is veritably a unanimous view that the second part of the book was written by a different hand. We therefore frequently hear about Deutero-Isaiah, or the Second Isaiah. Indeed, some scholars would even divide the book into more than two parts,³ but this is not necessary. In any case the main purpose of this guide is not served by entering into minute academic problems.

What is important in this issue however, is to remember the sound and wise comment of Chief Rabbi J.H. Hertz, in his invaluable Commentary on the Pentateuch, in which he states that it is really of no importance to Judaism that the book was written by one man or by more than one. The only thing which really matters is the supreme value and eternal significance to the Jews and to the whole world of the messages which are found in this unique book of our Bible. Not the authorship is important, but the teaching. It is not the singer but the song.

Although the book contains one or two references to disciples who may have put some of Isaiah's oral prophecies into writing, a talmudic tradition has it that king Hezekiah and his scribes were responsible for transmitting and editing Isaiah's speeches and putting them into the form of the book which we now have.

ISAIAH – CHAPTER ONE

This chapter has been called "The Great Arraignment" because the prophet here brings his stern accusations against the people who are guilty of social corruption and faithless rebellion against God.

The variety of the prophetic indictments and the several concepts which are

3. Since the last ten chapters deal with the situation after the return from exile.

found here make it a fine anthology of the prophet's teachings and an appropriate first chapter of the book.

In language, style and subject matter the chapter has much in common with the final didactic song of Moses, Deuteronomy, 32.

The first chapter of Isaiah is the special *haphtarah* or prophetic lesson, read in the Synagogue on the Shabbat before *Tisha B'Av*. That Shabbat takes its name *Shabbat Chazon* from the first word of the chapter.

1. *The vision of Isaiah* All prophecy, according to Maimonides — with the exception of the prophecy of Moses — is experienced by the prophet in a dream, or during a vision while he is awake and inspirited by an inner feeling of God's message.

Judah and Jerusalem After king Solomon's death (c. 900 B.C.E.) the country was divided into two separate kingdoms — the northern kingdom of Israel with ten tribes and Samaria as its capital, and the southern kingdom of Judah with the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and Jerusalem as its capital. Some prophets worked in the northern kingdom, some in both, and others — like Isaiah — lived and taught in the south, although he also preaches messages about Israel, Egypt, Syria, Moab and other nations.

In the days of Uzziah, Jotham etc. This places his career roughly in the period 740–680 B.C.E.

2. *Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth* Isaiah calls on the heavens and the earth because they are eternal witnesses.

3. *Children have I reared, and brought up* The Hebrew *romamti* means “to raise up”, to “set on high”, so the sin of ingratitude is especially serious and unnatural, for even a dumb animal has the instinct to recognise its master and the source of its food.

4. *They have contemned the Holy One of Israel* The Hebrew verb *niatzu* means to “blaspheme”, to despise and hold in contempt. The designation of God as “the Holy One of Israel” is found in Isaiah nearly 40 times, while the rest of the Bible uses the description less than six times. It is therefore a uniquely Isaianic

description of God as the mighty Creator and Ruler of the Universe who has a special relationship with His people Israel.

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5–6. The prophet here personalises the national destruction.

5. *On what part will ye be stricken?* A good alternative translation is “The more you are stricken the more ye stray away”. This emphasises the extreme stubbornness of Israel who are not brought back to God even by punishment.

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7–8. This prophetic description of national calamity relates to the situation at the time of Sennachareb’s invasion of Judah when much of the land was devastated, many of the people deported and Jerusalem was besieged (701 B.C.E.).

8. *The daughter of Zion* A personification of Jerusalem.

As a booth in a vineyard A lonely and desolate hut where, during the season, the watchman stayed to guard the vineyard. So too the *lodge in the garden of cucumbers*. Out of season, those fragile shelters would be a picture of extreme desolation and loneliness.

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9. An Isaianic concept of the small remnant which will always be there to insure the survival of the Jewish people.

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10–15. This is a powerful indictment of the hypocrisy of religious “piety” when the sacrifices and other forms of worship are practised by someone who is socially corrupt.

Isaiah here specifically mentions four areas of religious worship, the sacrifices, Sabbath and festival observance, worship in the Temple and prayer. It must be clear that, in principle, he does not oppose any of those religious observances. How can he? Even the sacrifices are not necessarily opposed by the prophet. What he is opposed to is religious observance when it is dishonoured by the

hypocrite who commits all kinds of evil and thinks he can put himself right with God by observing the religious ritual. So he proclaims in God's name: "I cannot endure iniquity along with solemn assembly" (verse 13).

The reference to the days of the New Moon in the same context as the Sabbath and festivals makes it clear that in the biblical period *Rosh Chodesh* (New Moon) was observed as a holiday. (See also I Sam. 20, 18, 27-28).

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16-17. A clear and concise challenge to the people and its leaders to return to ethical values.

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18-20. The chapter switches to a different track with its promise of atonement. Verse 18 has been introduced into the liturgy for *Yom Kippur*.

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21-23. A dirge on the moral decay of Jerusalem. The opening word calls to mind the lamentations of Jeremiah.

21. *Harlot* In prophetic literature, particularly in Hosea, the relationship of God to Israel is frequently described in terms of a marriage covenant. This is because no relationship between two parties can be so close as that of husband and wife. Israel's disloyalty thus brings on her the ignominious term of harlot.

22. *Thy silver is become dross* The phrase can have a literal meaning here and refer to the commercial dishonesty in the community. Most probably it is a metaphorical expression describing the leadership which has become corrupt.

23. *They judge not the fatherless* It is likely that the judges were paid their fee by the litigants. Therefore the orphan and the widow, being too poor to pay, were deprived of a just hearing.

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24-28. The situation is so bad that God Himself will intercede to remove all

corruption from the land. Ultimately the foundations of Judean society will be re-established on the values of justice and righteousness.

27. *Zion shall be redeemed with justice and they that return of her with righteousness* True national strength will be achieved only on the basis of clear moral principles. Anything less than that will end in national decay. This, above all, is the most important and unambiguous teaching of the prophet, and it runs throughout all his preaching. Military power and political intrigue will all lead to nothing if the moral life of society is polluted with crime and injustice. The true strength of the nation can be measured only in terms of its morality.

28. *The transgressors and the sinners* Those who willfully rebel and those who sin through simple weakness, ignorance or error.

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29-31. Having delivered his speech against the social evil of his times, the prophet adds that a moral order of society will also lead to a purified religious life when all traces of idolatry will be banished.

29. *Terebinths . . . gardens* The traditional places of pagan worship. In the new society they will all be destroyed.

31. *The strong* An expression of ridicule for the idol.

And his work The Hebrew is "and his maker", i.e., the worshiper who fashioned the idol. They will both be consumed.

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FAMOUS AND NOTEWORTHY QUOTATIONS TO COMMIT TO MEMORY

At the end of each chapter we will give a few quotations which are worthy of committing to memory. The quotation may summarise a good part of the prophetic message, or the beauty of its language or its relevance for the contemporary situation make it worth memorising.

Chapter One

Verse 1.

חזון ישעיהו בן אמוץ

The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz

The opening phrase of the book. Also the noteworthy beginning of the *Haphtarah* for *Shabbat Chazon*, the Sabbath before *Tisha B'Av*.

Verse 17.

למדו היטב דרשו משפט אשרו חמוץ שפטו יתום ריבו אלמנה

Learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

A summary of Isaiah's insistent teaching on the centrality of social justice as the demand of God.

Verse 27.

ציון במשפט תפדה ושביה בצדקה

Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and they that return of her with righteousness.

A concise and beautifully worded ideal which teaches that national strength will be found only if the Jewish state lives its life and orders its policies on the values of justice.

*And all thy children shall be
taught of the Lord
And great shall be
the peace of thy children*

וכל בניך
למדי ה'
ורב שלום
בניך

Isaiah 54, 13

FOR THE SAKE OF MY NAME

BY YITZHAK GLUCKSMAN

The third commandment says that God will not forgive anyone who takes “His name” in vain (New JPS — ‘swears falsely’). All succeeding generations have taken this commandment very seriously. Ibn Ezra says that to use God’s name in vain is even a more serious offense than murder or stealing or breaking any of the commandments that follow the third command. Rashi, quoting the Rabbis, gives a very strict interpretation of this verse. He says that the prohibition not only concerns swearing falsely, which is the plain meaning of the verse, but also applies to using God’s name in a situation that doesn’t warrant it. He gives the example of swearing to an obvious truth such as swearing that a tree is a tree or a rock a rock. Commenting on Lev. 19:12 which states, “You shall not swear by My name falsely, thereby profaning the name of your Lord”, our Sages broaden the previous restrictions on the use of God’s name by saying that using even one of the ‘attribute names’ (כְּנוֹיָן) and not only the tetragrammaton is profaning God’s name.

Ibn Ezra gives a very satisfactory reason why, though the name of God is used in oaths, it is such a serious offence if a man swears falsely. When one swears or takes an oath, Ibn Ezra explains, by using the name of God the swearer is in essence saying that ‘just as God is true, so is my word true’. Therefore, when one swears falsely it is tantamount to saying that God is false or trivial.

As it appears in an oath, the use of God’s name is formal and ritualistic. If one could substitute a phrase to take the place of the ‘name of God’, possible substitutions might be: ‘the sanctity of God’ or ‘the holiness of God’, or something in that vein. Instead of saying, ‘I swear by the name of God’, one could say, ‘I swear by the sanctity of God . . .’ and not change the meaning of the oath. In both cases, one is swearing by a symbol which represents something that God stands for.

Yitzhak Glucksman, currently the secretary of The World Jewish Bible Society, is a graduate of The Jewish Theological Seminary with both a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree in Bible. In addition to his post at the World Jewish Bible Society, he teaches Bible at the Parkes Institute and at Midreshet Jerusalem.

FOR THE SAKE OF MY NAME

In Psalms, or in any prayer in general, one often comes across the phrase 'for the sake of Your (God) name . . .'. The following are just four (cases) out of many passages where this phrase occurs: *For the sake of My name I control my wrath, to My own glory I am patient with you and I will not destroy you* (Is. 48:9); *He restores my soul, He guides me in straight paths for His name's sake* (Ps. 23:3); *Because You are my rock and my fortress therefore for Your name's sake lead me and guide me* (Ps. 31:4); and *Though our iniquities testify against us, act O Lord for the sake of your name* (Jer. 14:7). In these four passages, each makes an appeal to God and uses the phrase 'for the sake of your name'. However, each prayer is appealing to a different aspect of God. To the first prayer, the name of God is akin to his patience. In the second prayer, He leads the subject on the right path for the sake of His name. In the third, the name of God is both a fortress and a guide. In the final prayer, for the sake of God's name, He will be compassionate (or is requested to be compassionate) on a sinful nation. The list does not exhaust the places in the Bible where the phrase 'for the sake of your name' is used (other places include Ps. 25:11, 43:11, 79:9, 106:8, 106:47, etc.) and in those passages one can again see that when the author of the prayer uses this phrase, he is generally referring to a specific trait or characteristic of God.

On numerous occasions the Psalmist uses the phrase "the name of God" (שם ה'). What exactly is he referring to? The preceding paragraph was meant to be a preliminary illustration demonstrating that when the Psalmist invokes the name of God he might not be referring to the same characteristic or manifestation of God that he did in a previous psalm, even though the phrase 'the name of God' or 'for the sake of his name' is used in both psalms. Though a definite answer to the question 'what does the name of God refer to?' might never be given, the best method for understanding what this term means is by cataloguing the context in which it appears and what are the word clusters that are found around it.

TO PRAISE THE LORD

The majority references that mention the name of God are passages of praise, like: *Let them praise your name as great and awful. Holy is He* (Ps. 99:3), or *Therefore I will give thanks unto you, O Lord, among the nations and will sing praise to your name* (Ps. 18:50) or *Sing praise to the Lord, O righteous ones, and*

give thanks to His holy name (Ps. 30:5). As can be seen from the preceding cases the name of God is used by the Psalmist for thanks in granting victory in a war, or saving someone from disease; or sometimes to let God know that he is an obedient and pious subject and merits divine protection, as in Ps. 22:23. Occasionally, the praise of God's name has a flavor of the temple ritual like in Ps. 116:7: *I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call upon the name of the Lord, or With a free will offering will I sacrifice to you, I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good* (Ps. 54:8). In many cases it is difficult to determine whether the praise of the name of the Lord is a personal way of saying thanks or is a public ceremony that might have taken place in the Temple.

Just as the righteous will sing praise to God's name, the wicked are wont to reject or curse it. Examples of this are: *How long, O God, shall the adversaries reproach? Shall the enemy blaspheme Your name for ever?* (Ps. 74:10) and *Therefore I am concerned with My holy name which the House of Israel has caused to be profaned among the nations to which they have come* (Ez. 36:21).

A theme very often repeated and similar to the 'praise of God's name' theme is that of singing glory to His name. *O Lord, our Lord how glorious is Your name in all the earth?* (Ps. 8:2, 10) or *Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but unto Your name give glory for Your mercy and truth's sake* (Ps. 115:11). The fine line distinguishing between glorifying the name of God and praising it is that praising His name is usually in the context of a statement of thanks while the act of glorifying His name appears to be a more pious prayer which is not necessarily motivated by God's actual or desired intervention in the affairs of man. A case in point where this distinction is more synthetic than real is in Ps. 92:2-3 where it states: *It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord and to sing praises to Your name, O most high*. In this case there is no difference between praising or glorifying the name of God.

INVOKING HIS PROTECTION

The Psalms, being prayers par exemple, frequently request God to intervene on behalf of the Psalmist or of the nation. In connection with this theme, the 'name of God' is often synonymous with the power of God to protect and aid people, as if invoking the 'name of God' is a way of aligning oneself with His power: *The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous run to it and is set up on high*

(Prov. 18:10). In Psalm 91 God reaffirms this concept by saying (vs. 14): *Because he has set his love therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high because he has known My name.* In the past few examples, the 'name of God' is a source of security for those who proclaim it.

When the Israelites will reap the benefits of a restoration, they will cling to the name of God and therefore insure that God will be vigilant to protect and shield them: *So we shall not turn back from You. Quicken us, and we will call upon Your name* (Ps. 80:19). Another example is: *Also the seed of His servants shall inherit it; and they that love His name shall dwell therein* (Ps. 69:37). These are just two instances of how the Israelites will be righteous and hold fast to the name of the Lord during the restoration.

The name of God and the security one obtains by paying allegiance to it is such a powerful concept that it is commonly used in battle psalms when the Psalmist wishes to say that with God's help, there is no way Israel can be defeated in battle. Examples of this are: *All nations encompass me about; verily in the name of the Lord I will cut them off* (Ps. 118:10, 11, 12), *Through You do we push our adversaries down, through Your name do we tread them under that rise up against us* (Ps. 44:6), and most vividly in the war psalm 20:6: *We will shout for joy in Your victory and in the name of God we will set up our standards.*

GOD'S NAME IN HIS ATTRIBUTES

When investigating the cluster of words or phrases that are found around the 'name of God', one finds that they often parallel the context of the passage. For example, if the context of a passage is glorifying God, then in many cases the 'name of God' will have an accompanying phrase conveying the meaning of the 'glory of God'. Or in a passage praising God, the phrase that appears with the name of God will be 'His praise' or something very close to that. On other occasions though, the result of looking for clusters that appear around the 'name of God' will yield surprising results.

By far the most common parallel to the name of God is the tetragrammaton or some other synonym for God. Examples of the tetragrammaton being parallel to the 'name of God' are found in Ps. 18:50, 30:5 or 92:2. Other times the phrase is parallel to Elohim such as in Ps. 44:9, 145:1, 2, and 74:10. Finally, other times 'ךך' ('in you' or 'through you') is parallel to the name of the Lord as is found in

Ps. 9:1, 3, 5:12, 32:11 and 44:6. In all the cases where the 'name of God' is parallel to the tetragrammaton or the like, the meaning of that phrase is very close to the meaning of the 'name of God' as it appears in the third commandment, where the phrase refers to everything that God stands for.

God's *tzedek* is parallel to his name in three places. In Ps. 7:18 and 89:17 they come within the context of praising God. *I will give thanks to the Lord according to His righteousness (צדק) and I will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high (Ps. 7:18)*. In 143:11 the context is that of a man asking for divine help: *For Your name's sake, O Lord, deliver me; in Your righteousness bring me out of my trouble*.

The *חסד* and *אמת* of God appears with the name of God in Ps. 138:2 and is found in the context of a ritualistic praise of the Lord. *I will bow down to Your holy temple and give thanks to Your name for Your mercy (חסד) and for Your truth (אמת)*. There are three very interesting cases where God's name is parallel to His praise. The first case is in Ps. 45:9 which has already been quoted above. The second example is in Ps. 106:47 where it says: *Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the nations that we may give thanks to Your holy name that we may triumph in Your praise (תהלה)*. The last and most striking case is Ps. 48:10–1 where it is written: *We have thought on your lovingkindness (חסד), O God, in the midst of Your temple. As is Your name O God, so is Your praise (תהלה) unto the ends of the earth, Your right hand is full of righteousness (צדק)*. In this last example, the 'name of God' appears in very close proximity to God's *חסד*, *צדק* and *תהלה*.

The cluster of *צדק*, *חסד* and *תהלה* are to be found, quite understandably, in psalms where the context calls for praise of God for one reason or another. For psalms with a different context, there are other words that appear in apposition to the 'name of God' such as God's glory (*כבוד*) or his power (*עוז*). The parallel of God's *כבוד* of His name appears in many places. Just two examples are: *So the nations will fear the name of the Lord and all the kings Thy glory (כבוד) (Ps. 102:16)* and *Blessed be His glorious name for ever and let the whole earth be filled with His glory, Amen, Amen (Ps. 72:19)*. The parallel of God's power (*עוז*) to His name occurs in two previously quoted passages, Prov. 18:10 and Ps. 20:2, which occur in the motif of 'God's name as security against an enemy'.

THE NAME OF GOD AND HIS ACTIONS

There are often phrases within this context that appear around the term 'the name of God' which do not describe an attribute of God. In the previous examples, God's name was almost identical with His different attributes. It will be shown from the following examples that the term 'the name of God' is also used in connection with His actions. The first case in point where God's name is equivalent to His actions is found in Ps. 105:1 and Is. 12:4. In these two passages the parallel pair with the Lord's name are His deeds (עלילות). *O give thanks to the Lord, call upon His name; make known His doings (עלילות) among the people.* A second case is Ps. 106:9: *Nevertheless He saved them for His name's sake that He might make known His mighty power.* In this case, in addition to the four examples cited earlier in the paper, for the sake of God's name, the Psalmist desires to reveal His might throughout the world. In other words, it is God's activity within the universe that wins Him his prestige. An example of a third case of God's name being equivalent to His actions is Ps. 138:2, which has a meaning similar to Ps. 106:2: *You have magnified your word (אמרתך) above all your name.* The final and most famous case of God's name being known through his actions is Ex. 15:3 where it says in the song of victory: *God the warrior, God is His name.*

TO KNOW AND TO FEAR GOD

Two more significant parallels to the term 'the name of God' remain. The first case is Ps. 86:11 where it states: *Teach me O Lord Your way that I may walk in Your truth (אמתך), make one my heart to fear Your name.* Although אמתך was already used in the same context as חסד and the 'name of God' in Ps. 138:2, it has a different function here. In this prayer, the psalmist is equating the name of God with the knowledge of God. To know God's truth is to know God's name, with the focus being on the intellectual process. The second case is the famous Ps. 119:55 where it is written: *I have remembered Your name, O Lord, in the night and have observed Your laws (תורתך).* In this verse some connection is being made between the knowledge of God's name with the observance (or knowledge?) of His law. How close in spirit Ps. 86:11 and Ps. 119:55 are must be decided by the reader, but I think a common grain runs through both. I believe that these two passages represent a progression that may be stated as: a) to know

God's name requires a great deal of knowledge and b) the knowledge of God's name inevitably leads to obedience of His law. There is a transcendental link between these two verses that implies a connection between an intellectual, abstract knowledge of God and the inevitability of this knowledge leading to obedience to God.

HOW CAN MAN REFER TO GOD

The purpose of this paper is not to catalogue all the references to the phrase 'the name of God' or to list the different word clusters that surround it. There are many more examples in the Bible where this phrase appears, but the number of examples cited so far is sufficient in order to arrive at some sort of conclusion of what this term implies. The essence of this paper lies in the understanding that prayer has man talking to God. When he wants to get as intimate as is possible with God, man's recourse is to address the name of God. As has been shown, God's name sometimes represents His totality and other times represents either an attribute or divine activity. The fundamental question that this paper is asking is: 'Whom is man addressing when he uses the 'name of God?', or more succinctly, 'what is man's knowledge of God?'

There have been examples that show that the name of the Lord is parallel or similar to divine attributes, divine actions and divine knowledge. Whatever the context or word clusters are, it is understood that the 'name of God' is meant to represent an acknowledged and recognized quality of God. From this one can learn not so much about divine lovingkindness or divine power or the like, but about the limit of man's comprehension of God. How does one address God? How can a single person speak to the infinite? What case can a man successfully plead and what can he hope to achieve? God is so overwhelming that the best man can hope for is to address himself to an attribute of God. God's name can at best be understood as his characteristics, actions and knowledge. God's name qua essence is too much for man to speak to.

'God's name' is the farthest that man can achieve in his understanding of Him. One can comprehend Him through His different qualities and one can appeal to these different aspects of God, but one can not address the totality of God. The 'name of God' represents both the peak and limit of man's understanding of the divine.

THE HEBREW ELEMENT IN EVERYDAY ENGLISH – 1

BY GABRIEL SIVAN

This series of eight radio talks, broadcast by Kol Yisrael's English and Overseas Services in March–April 1979, is an amplified version of one originally recorded for the South African Broadcasting Corporation's "Radio Today" program in November 1976.

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INTRODUCTION: THE BIBLICAL HERITAGE

Most listeners to this programme will have some idea of the far-reaching effects of the *Tanakh* or Hebrew Bible in many spheres of human life: ethics, education and social welfare; jurisprudence and international law; political thought and the concept of democracy; literature, art and music. There is one more sphere in which our Bible has left its imprint on Western culture, and that is everyday speech. Here, particularly where the English language is concerned, we have acquired through the medium of Hebrew "a goodly heritage" (Ps. 16:6).

In this series of talks my aim is to show how Biblical (and, in a few cases, later Hebrew) words and phrases have influenced modern English. A limited number of specialized terms have passed virtually unaltered from Hebrew into our daily speech; others have done so in borrowed (Greek, Latin or other) dress; many proper names are given to children without parents being aware of their derivation; Biblical place names occur in several countries far from the Land of Israel; and a host of standard phrases and proverbial expressions have been absorbed by English and other European languages. Another of these talks will deal with words of Hebrew origin that tell some intriguing story.

But for the pioneering work of translators such as John Wycliffe, William

Dr. Gabriel Sivan, author of *The Bible and Civilization*, and co-author of *Judaism A–Z*, is a member of the editorial board of Dor le-Dor. Born in England, he emigrated to Israel on the eve of the Six-Day War of 1967, was one of the editors of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, and later served as director of education with the South African Zionist Federation.

Tyndale and those later scholars who produced the *King James Bible* or *Authorized Version* of 1611, none of these momentous developments would have been possible. For outside the ranks of Jewry, from the era of the Church Fathers until the dawn of the Reformation, Jerome's Latin Vulgate – the Catholic Bible – was accessible only to literate members of the Christian clergy. Renaissance Humanism and the New Learning promoted a "return to the sources" that inspired the establishment of various chairs of Hebrew (at Basle, Tübingen, Paris, Cambridge and a few other universities) and translations of the Bible into the vernacular. This process was accelerated by Protestant scholarship, which soon gave Englishmen, Germans, Netherlanders and many Frenchmen a new insight into the Scriptural word, thus substantiating Ralph Waldo Emerson's claim that "our Jewish Bible has implanted itself in the table-talk and household life of every man and woman in the European and American nations".¹

Revolutionary changes took place within many languages of the West, affecting not merely idiom and vocabulary but, even more, the entire outlook and psychology of the peoples concerned. These changes would determine the course of European literature for centuries to come, stimulating the genius of Goethe, Heine and Thomas Mann in Germany, of Du Bartas, Agrippa d'Aubigné and Victor Hugo in France, and of Shakespeare, Milton, Blake and Kipling in England. Let me quote Sir George Adam Smith, an eminent Hebraist and expert on Biblical geography, who observed that "the vivid simplicity of Hebrew narrative and the majestic eloquence of the prophets did much to mould the youth of our own and of the German language and the styles of our earliest writers."²

In their struggle against religious and political enemies, Dutch Calvinists, French Huguenots, Scots Presbyterians and English Puritans all saw themselves fighting idolatry under the banner of the Lord of Hosts. They made their own form of covenant with God (inspired by that of Israel), invoked Biblical precedents when framing their religious and social laws, and rode into battle with the Psalms of David on their lips. Before long, this lifestyle was transported to

1. Emerson, *Representative Men* (1845).

2. G.A. Smith, "The Hebrew Genius as exhibited in the Old Testament", in *The Legacy of Israel*, ed. E.R. Bevan and C. Singer (Oxford, 1927), p. 12.

South Africa with the early Dutch colonists and to New England with the Pilgrim Fathers. In New England, especially, a modicum of Hebrew knowledge became praiseworthy among the stern Puritans and the hallmark of an 18th-century American gentleman. Hebrew inscriptions figure on the seals of Yale and Columbia, two colleges founded during the Colonial period, and little surprise was evidently aroused by a story current during the Revolutionary War (and ultimately traceable to a French general who fought alongside the Americans) to the effect that "certain members of Congress proposed that the use of English be formally prohibited in the United States, and Hebrew substituted for it."³ Fact or fancy, this tale certainly encourages one speculation: how different today's world would be with 200 million Hebrew-speaking Americans!

Those who "see eye to eye" with me here may not realize that *that* familiar idiom stems from the Hebrew *ki ayin be-ayin yir'u* (כי עין בעין יראו) in the Book of Isaiah (52:8). I shall have more to tell you about these matters in the course of the next few talks.

THE HEBREW ELEMENT IN EVERYDAY ENGLISH – 2

HEBREW LOANWORDS

In last issue's introductory talk I mentioned the fact that a few Hebrew terms have passed into our daily speech with only the slightest modification. Among these are words possessing a hallowed religious association, which early Bible translators could not easily convey in other languages, and they include אמן (*amen*; "so be it"), אפוד (*ephod*; the High Priest's "apron" or vestment), הללויה (*Hallelujah!*; "Praise the Lord!"), and סלה (*selah*; perhaps a musical direction to the Temple choir). On the basis of the Tower of Babel story (Gen. 11:1–9), and

3. H.L. Mencken, *The American Language* (New York, 1919), p. 79, and *Supplement I* (New York, 1945), pp. 136–138; A.I. Katsh, "Hebraic Foundations of American Democracy", in *The Hebrew Impact on Western Democracy*, ed. D.D. Runes (New York, 1951), p. 30, and "The Hebrew Heritage", in *The Jerusalem Post* (July 4, 1976); G. Sivan, *The Bible and Civilization* (Jerusalem/New York, 1973), p. 236; M. Davis, "The Holy Land Idea in American Spiritual History", in *With Eyes Toward Zion*, ed. M. Davis (New York, 1977), pp. 8, 27.

prompted no doubt by Jewish mystical speculation, Christian scholars were formerly convinced that Hebrew was the *matrix linguarum* or mother tongue of all mankind; Jerome was one of those who propagated this idea, which still found advocates in 17th-century New England.* We must be careful, therefore, to distinguish between genuine Hebrew loanwords and terms which (though found in the Bible) stem from other languages: *sack* is a widespread Semitic term, but *ass* (*aton*) comes from Old Persian, *nitre* (*neter*) from Egyptian, and *sapphire* (*sappir*) from Sanskrit.

Now let us take a closer look at some of these Hebraic elements in our English vocabulary. An alphabetical listing reminds us, first of all, that the very word *alphabet* derives by way of Greek from the Hebrew letters *alef* and *bet* (א, ב) and that Western orthography is rooted in the system of ancient Israel. Moving onward, we find *Baal* (בעל), the name of a Phoenician god that became synonymous with any idolatrous cult; our familiar *camel*, from the Hebrew *gamal* (גמל); the angelic *cherub*, properly *keruv* (כרוב), later interpreted to mean a beautiful and innocent child; *Gehenna*, a Greek corruption of *Gé-Hinnom* (גֵי-הַנוֹם), that notorious place of idolatry and human sacrifice which acquired the sense of “hellish torment or captivity”; and *jubilee*, the fiftieth year of emancipation proclaimed by a blast of the ram’s horn or *yovel* (יובל), a term somehow confused with the Latin verb *jubilare* (“to give a joyful shout”) and extended to mean any fiftieth anniversary or joyous season. Next we have *leviathan*, from the Hebrew *livyatan* (לִיְוִיָּתָן), a “sea monster” or whale, and since the early 19th century the common designation for a huge ship; *manna*, properly *man* (מַן), Israel’s God-given food in the wilderness and hence any sweet and refreshing substance; *Messiah*, from *mashi’ah* (מָשִׁיחַ), the “anointed one”, specifically Israel’s future redeemer and — by extension — the deliverer of an oppressed nation or country; *paschal*, relating to the Jewish festival of *Pesah* (פֶּסַח) or Passover but also applied by Christians to Easter; *Sabbath*, from *Shabbat* (שַׁבָּת), the seventh day of rest and cessation from labor; *Satan*, properly *satan* (שָׂטָן), the “adversary”, a name for the Devil; *seraph*, from *saraf* (שָׂרָף), an angelic being associated with fire and ardor; and *shekel*, the Biblical

* *Hebraea est Linguarum Mater* was the title of a thesis by one of the first Harvard graduates: see W. Chomsky, *Hebrew: The Eternal Language* (Philadelphia, 1957), p. 19.

coin or unit of currency (שקל) which has acquired pejorative overtones in the familiar expression, “raking in the shekels”.

Many of these terms have also been endowed with adjectival and verbal forms: a baby is “cherubic”, people are “jubilant” or “jubilate”, a new movement may be described as “messianic”, a professor takes his “sabbatical” leave and some Christians are “Sabbatarians”, an evil force is “satanic”, and one may detect a “seraphic” smile.

This roster of borrowed Hebrew terms is still not complete. Our *sycamore* tree is the Biblical *shiqmah* (שקמה); *cane*, *canal*, *canister*, *cannon* and *channel* all derive from *qaneh* (קנה), meaning “a reed”; *balm* or *balsam*, from the fragrant *bosem* (בשם), *cinnamon* or *qinnamon* (קנמון), and three other spices mentioned in Psalm 45:9 – *myrrh* (מור), *aloes* (אהלוח) and *cassia* (קציעה) – have lent a touch of the Orient to Western speech; and even the fabrics known as *damask* and *gauze* together with the vegetable we call the *shallot* or *scallion* owe their designations to Biblical place names (Damascus, Gaza and Ashkelon). Through Greek we may have acquired *ape*, from *qof* (קוף), and *horn*, from *qeren* (קרן); while it is still more probable that Latin transmitted the Hebrew *kuttonet* (כחנה) in the modified guise of *tunic*.

To end this talk, let me mention five words which English has taken from early Christian sources: *Abba*, Aramaic for “father” (אבא), a term current in Jewish prayer during 2nd Temple times and from which *abbey* and *abbot* derive; *Armageddon*, the site of a decisive battle, better known to Israelis as *Har Megiddo* (on the southern flank of the Emek or Jezreel Valley); *Hosanna*, from *hosha-na* or *hoshi'ah-na* (הושענא, הושיעה נא), “Save, we beseech Thee!”, an appeal for deliverance which the Church transformed into a shout of praise to God; and *Rabbi*, literally “my master” (רבי), a post-Biblical title given to an ordained Jewish teacher and religious leader. Younger listeners are most probably aware that *abba* is the modern Hebrew equivalent of “Daddy”.

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND MEANING

BY ASHER FINKEL

The book of Daniel in light of the apocalyptic section (11:2–12:4) reflects a knowledge of historical events from Darius II to Antiochus IV. The final composition seems, therefore, to have been prepared in the early Hasmonean period, a view held by the philosopher Porphyry of the third century C.E. (as cited by Jerome in his Commentary on Daniel).¹ The rabbinic tradition also maintains (Bab. Talmud *Bava Batra* 15a) that Daniel was included in the Scriptures by the members of the Great Synagogue. These were religious representatives of the Jewish theocratic state who met on different critical occasions from the days of Ezra (Neh 8–10) to the days of Simeon the Hasmonean (I Macc 14:28ff). During the Persian period, these men were responsible for the canonization of the prophetic works with the inclusion of Ezekiel and the Minor Prophets. Their view is preserved as a canonical ending to Malachi (3:22–24), which reaffirms the divine authoritative nature of the Pentateuch. It also recognizes the cessation of prophecy in their days (compare *Seder Olam Rabba* 30), the reason for closing the second part of the canon, for they anticipate the restoration of prophecy through the return of Elijah on the Great Day of the Lord.

During the early Hasmonean period hagiographical works were collected and preserved (II Macc 2:14). The recent composition called Daniel was admitted into the Hagiographa, and the original edition of the Maccabees preserved allusions to this work (I Macc 1:14, 54; 2:58, 59; 9:27). Within a century Daniel was recognized and cited as Scriptures by the Essenes (Qumran texts), and the Pharisees (Tosefta *Sanhedrin* 13:3). Its impact on the different religious

1. P.M. Casey, "Porphyry and the Origin of the Book of Daniel", *Journal of Theological Studies* 27 (1976), pp. 15–33.

Asher Finkel, Ph.D. (Tuebingen U.), was born in Jerusalem and was ordained at Yeshiva University. He is full professor at Seton Hall University, graduate program of Jewish and Christian studies. He has published in the field of post biblical Judaism.

movements was immeasurable. Like Daniel in his reflection on and projection of Jeremiah's text on the seventy years in exile (9:2, 24–27), the Essene teachers too employed a form of *peshet* interpretation. They projected the prophetic words on events and persons current in their days, while utilizing symbolic expressions (Kittim = Romans; Ephraim = Pharisees; Manasseh = Hasmoneans and Judah = Essenes), for they viewed the Scriptures as divine disclosures to be interpreted like dreams by the *Maskil*.² The Essene teacher was called *Maskil*, a title so frequently mentioned in Daniel. The former like the latter claimed to have received divine insight. The Pharisaic doctrine of resurrection and future reward and punishment is already expressed in Daniel 12:2, 3, 13.

APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE

Religious movements were deeply influenced by the angelology (patrons of nations, the archangel Michael and Gabriel), the historiosophy (four kingdoms and the community of the holy ones) and the chronosophy (seventy weeks and three and a half years) of Daniel. The apocalyptic form introduced in Daniel indeed dominated the visionary's interpretative expression of subsequent rabbinic works. Following the destruction of the Second Temple, apocalypses appeared (such as Fourth Ezra, the Syriac Baruch and the New Testament Book of Revelation) and the visions of Daniel were interpreted in view of the catastrophe. For Daniel offered from beyond the human realm a disclosure of historical changes marked by tribulation and upheaval. His vision required angelic interpretation. This encouraged others to seek a further visionary or auditory interpretation in the face of catastrophic changes. Daniel's apocalypse as a cognitive response to change and crisis bred apocalypses in later critical times.

Daniel's pseudonymic character points to the phenomenon of the coalescence in the visionary's experience. Daniel of the days of Antiochus IV coalesces with Daniel of the Persian period, who again is one with the Judean deportee in the days of Nebuchadnezzar. The latter assumes the personality of Joseph, the king's interpreter of dreams in exile, and adopts the name of hoary wise man of the ancient Near East (Ezek 14:14 and the Ugaritic tale of Aqhat). The same phenomenon is indicated in the later apocalyptic works. They assume the

2. A. Finkel, "The Peshet of Dreams and Scriptures", *Revue de Qumran* 4 (1963), pp. 357–370.

personality of Daniel and adopt the names of biblical figures. They, like Daniel, achieve pietistic ecstasy through a vigil of prayer and fasting while reflecting on the Scriptures or on questions of theodicy. They receive mythological, individual images from a symbolic realm that need to be projected on the historical human plane, punctually in time and collectively in meaning. They seek guidance from an *angelus revelator* in translating a dream-consciousness into a historical awareness. These manifestations of symbols and the interpretations of events were rooted in a biblical religious system that governed the lives of the apocalyptists.

In Daniel 7, for example, the symbolic vision consists of four individual beasts and an individual man. Their projection on the historical world bespeaks collective nations as beastly empires and a community of holy ones as a human kingdom. The beast points to war, destruction and conquest in an aggressive history where the strongest dominates. The beast emerges from the sea, the chaotic great deep. In the biblical tradition it represents the stage prior to the appearance of God's light. The beastly empires did not confess a faith in the biblical God. The human form in contrast appears on the clouds and represents a holy community, the biblical model (Ex 19:6). The individual images in succession portray a sequence in time. As projected on the historical plane the sequence relates to the succession of empires. For the later apocalyptists and their interpreters, the projection shifts from empire to empire. The fourth beast becomes Rome for the period of the destruction of the Second Temple.

Apocalypse, however, embraces not only historiosophy and eschatology but also theosophy (the disclosure of the heavenly palaces and God's throne) and cosmosophy (the disclosure of the works of creation). Theosophic and cosmosophic revelations appear during the Hasmonean period as Enochic works.³ The former relates to the tannaitic Work of the Merkabah (the divine chariot in view of Ezek. 1) and the latter of the Work of Creation (in relation to Gen. 1). These traditions were transmitted and developed alongside the historiosophic apocalypse. The tannaitic commentary to Daniel 2:21, 22 suggests a similar association.

3. See J.T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch: Fragments of Qumran Cave 4*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.

“He (God) gives wisdom to the wise”, that is Joseph the righteous. “And knowledge to those who have understanding”, that is Daniel. “He reveals the deep”, that is the deep dimension of the Merkabah. “And the hidden”, that is the Work of Creation. “He knows what is in the darkness”, that is the punishment due to the wicked in Gehenna. “And the light dwells with Him”, that is the reward due to the righteous in the future (*Seder Olam Rabba* 30, the end).

Daniel’s historiosophic apocalypse seems to have emerged in Hasidean circles.⁴ They supported the Maccabean revolt and gave rise to Essenism and Pharisaism. These movements promoted an eschatological view of life as expressed by an apocalyptic consciousness, even though they differed in its realization. This points to the significance of Daniel’s composition for the Jewish community. On the one hand, it reflected the views of the Hasideans, the pietists of pre-Maccabean days. Their total commitment to God even in death paved the way for religious and political independence, and earthly opportunity for messianic fulfillment. On the other hand, it deepened the *heilsgeschichtlich* dimension of Jewish existence, for Daniel offered a universal history of redemption in which those who serve God and uphold the covenant play a central role, both in exile and in their land. Daniel extends the limits of the earlier Prophetic views of history. He also bridges the religious concerns of the Diaspora Jewry with those who lived in Judea. This is clearly reflected in the composition of the book, which shifts from the heroic tales of Jewish martyrs in exile to the visions of a Judean who is concerned about the historical events affecting his land and the Temple.

DANIEL 1 TO 6

The book of Daniel is a collection in two parts. The first part (chs. 1–6) consists of tales about Judean deportees (1, 3, 6) and accounts of Babylonian kings’ dreams and actions (2, 4, 5). The Judeans, who were in the service of the king, remain steadfast in their faith in God and in their religious practice. They are rewarded following their ultimate trials by fire or in a lion’s den. In the service

4. Louis Hartman and Alexander Di Lella, *The Book of Daniel* (Anchor Bible), Garden City: Doubleday, 1978, pp. 43–45.

of the king they become eunuchs and their reward is not gained through bio-social means (Is 56:4, 5). Their example comes to encourage the Diaspora Jews to reject idolatry and not to seek only material rewards. It teaches that true adherence to God even unto death reaps perpetual reward. Daniel advances the notion of "serving the Master without receiving reward", which was formulated by Antigonos (Mishnah *Avot* 1:3). His teaching reflected the Hasidean position, which is said to have resulted in the Pharisaic-Sadducean schism (*Avot de R. Nathan* I,5). Significantly Daniel promotes a service of God in prayer with no sacrifices. The exilic experience gave rise to the synagogue in place of the Temple. Eventually both institutions existed side by side in Judea, as the archeological evidence suggest.

These first chapters of Daniel address both the Jews in exile and those in Jerusalem by promoting liturgical life (6:11) and the pursuit of righteous deeds (4:24). This also became the distinctive response of Judaism after the destruction of the Second Temple (*Avot de R. Nathan* I,4; II,8). The tannaitic tradition maintains that such a development is reflected in the example of Daniel.

We find that Daniel pursued works of lovingkindness. What were these works of lovingkindness which Daniel pursued? If you wish to say that he brought sacrifices in Babylonia, it is already stated: "Beware lest you offer your sacrifices in every place that you please" (Deut 12:13, 14). What then were the works of lovingkindness that Daniel pursued? He prepares the bride (for the wedding), accompanies the dead and gives alms to the poor. He prays three times daily and his prayer is received in favor, as it states in Daniel 6:11 (ibid. I,4; cf. Tosefta *Berakhot* 3:8).

The performance of righteousness is charity (so the parallelism in Dan 4:24), whereas the examples *imitatio Dei* are called works of lovingkindness (see Pal. Targum to Gen 35:9 and Deut 34:6). These two forms of praxis (righteousness and lovingkindness) along with the verbal form of prayer, mark the religious life of the Hasideans from the days of Daniel to tannaitic times.⁵ These forms were incorporated into the life of the Essenes and the rabbis apart from the Temple and its cult.

5. See Adolph Buechler, *Types of Jewish Palestinian Piety*, New York: Ktav, 1968 (reprint).

The first part of Daniel reflects a religious consciousness that worship is due to God alone. It therefore relates the kings' dreams and actions as a theological demonstration: All human power, as life itself, is dependent on God's will. The sin of the Babylonian rulers lies in their arrogance of self-aggrandizement (so Is 14:4–23). Thus, confession of the living God as an act of humility is attributed to the king (3:31–33; 4:31, 32). This is demonstrated by the example of Nabonidus' departure from the royal city to Teiman in the Arabian desert.⁶ The tale of the king's debasement begins and ends with the confession, and his name is transcribed as Nebuchadnezzar, the earthly cosmocrator of the Babylonians (*Esther Rabba* to 1:9). The example of Nabonidus is contrasted with that of his son and co-regent Belshazzar. The latter's arrogant action, according to Daniel, led to the fall of the Babylonian empire. The confession by a gentile also betrays the Jewish proselytizing efforts among the idolators in Diaspora. This development is mentioned in Isaiah 56:4. The exilic community assumes a pedagogic role in God's name, as preached by Deutero-Isaiah (a light unto nations and a witness-people). Jewish proselytism continued throughout the Second Temple period (*Esther* 8:17). The first chapters of Daniel again advance the practice of exilic Jewry as it was also maintained by the Judean community.

The king's confession consists of an acceptance of divine judgment (4:34 = Ps 111:7) and the recognition of God's omnipotence (3:33; 4:31 = Ps 145:13). The latter appears in a psalmic Hallel (Bab. Talmud *Shabbat* 118b; *Berakhot* 4b), which was chanted responsively by the community. The Qumran Psalm scroll,⁷ preserves the antiphonal doxology: "Blessed be his name for ever and ever." This was the practice in the Temple (*Mishnah Yoma* 3:8) and Daniel records the doxology in Aramaic (2:20). Significantly the Egyptian Hallel (Ps 115) is associated in the rabbinic tradition with the martyrological confession of the

6. J.T. Milik, "'Prière de Nabonide' et autres écrits d'un cycle de Daniel, fragments de Qumran 4", *Revue Biblique* 63 (1956), pp. 407–415. A translation may be found in G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, Penguin Books, 1975, p. 229.

7. James A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11. Discoveries in the Judean Desert IV*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965, p. 66.

Three Youths. The apocryphal addition to Daniel records a different song of praise by the Youths, with the doxology: "Be praised and highly exalted for ever."

DANIEL 7 TO 12

The liturgical background to Daniel is clearly marked in the second part of his work (chs. 7–12). This part consists of two visions and their interpretation (7, 8) and two auditions (9:22–27; 10:11–12:4), separated by an account of Daniel's prayer (9:4–19). The prayer opens with an address to God (so Deut 10:17; Jer 32:18; Neh 9:32 and the Amidah) and an appeal to a theopathic love expressed in a covenantal relationship (so Deut 7:9; Neh 9:32). It continues with a confession of sins and the acceptance of divine judgment in light of the Mosaic Admonition (Dan 9:11–13 points to Deut 29:20 in light of ch. 28). It concludes with intercessory supplication, lamenting the desecration of the Temple.

The pollution of the Temple by Antiochus IV, with the introduction of the desolating sacrilege (the statue of Zeus Olympios) in the place of daily sacrifices, was a severe religious crisis. This resulted in a deep lament experience for Daniel (9:2, 3) which was expressed in action (a period of fasting and acts of mourning), reflection on the Scriptures and prayer. The agonizing situation produced a dialectical response. On the one hand, Daniel accepts the divine judgment in view of the Admonition tradition. "The Lord our God is righteous in all the works which he has done" (9:14). On the other hand, Daniel ponders why the omnipotent God does not intervene in light of the prophetic promise. "Seventy years are to be completed for the desolation of Jerusalem" (9:2 = Jer 25:12). The rabbinic tradition notes that in Daniel's address to God, the appellation "Mighty One" is missing. For "Daniel raised the question: Foreigners have subjugated his sons, where are his mighty acts?" (Bab. Talmud *Yoma* 69b).

Daniel also mourns for three weeks during the month of the pilgrimage festival of Passover (10:2–4). He abstains from partaking in the wine, the meat and the bread, the chosen items for the festival. For the celebration of the drama of redemption has turned into a period for lament and mourning. Passover time was charged with great religious expectations in the life of Israel. The redemptive event of the past shaped the destiny and the eschatological orientation of the biblical society. The deep sense of salvation in history, which Daniel has shared,

gives rise to serious disturbing questions in the face of national religious crisis. Daniel does not question the existence of God but seeks guidance from the providential Presence. He has entered into a period of lament. Lament expresses the completeness of grief and despair that results from the sense of God's silence in the history of his people. It also gives rise to the plenitude of faith and hope as reflected in the inner yearning for a return of God's presence.

SOURCE OF WIDER VISION

This polarity in the experience of lament produces an apocalyptic consciousness that recognizes the enduring presence of God in a heavenly realm. It widens the perimeters of salvation in history to universal proportions, for it views the history of mankind from a divine plane. Salvation is not limited to a particular time nor a particular promise that was fulfilled in the past. God's presence on the earthly plane remains elusive.⁸ The scheme of divine salvation encompasses the totality of human history. God's presence is durative in the heavenly realm, but on earth he is manifested punctually. The insight gained by Daniel has greatly influenced the biblically oriented people who in later critical times faced similar agonizing questions.

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8. See Samuel Terrien, *The Elusive Presence: Toward a New Biblical Theology*, New York: Harper and Row, 1978.



ABRAHAM AND ATLANTIS

BY JOSEPH HECKELMAN

The major problem posed by Stuart A. West in "The Original Palestinians"* is that of the Torah references to Philistines before the period of the Judges (starting about 1200 BCE). Since there is no hard archeological evidence for such earlier settlement, the text is deemed unreliable, with the conclusion that such references must be anachronistic, that they were added by much later (Maccabean!) editors who were ignorant of the true facts.

The purpose of this communication is to offer an alternate reading of the evidence. Our reading includes archeological evidence, and concludes that there were indeed earlier Philistines in Canaan; that the Torah references to them are accurate, and that there is no need to postulate a much later editorial committee which took major liberties with the text.

Textual omission of the Philistines: It is correctly pointed out that three major lists of inhabitants of the land of Canaan make no mention of Philistines: Genesis 15:18–21 (God to Abram in the Covenant between the parts); Exodus 3:8 (God to Moses at the burning bush); Deut. 7:1–2 (Moses to the Israelites shortly before his death). Since one ought to assume that a presumed editorial committee working some 2000 years ago would have been made up of individuals who are neither less intelligent than we are nor less aware of textual inconsistencies – surely in the course of tidying up the text, they ought to have added Philistines to these key listings! Failure to do so strongly suggests that such a committee did not exist: Rather that, in this respect at least, the text has been passed on to us in its original form.

What *is* suggested by the omission of Philistines from these lists of Canaanite

* Dor le Dor X:4, Summer 1982.

While in the American pulpit, Dr. Joseph Heckelman served as Adjunct Professor of Jewish History at the University of Hartford. He is rabbi of Kehillat Shalva (Safed), the Galilee's first M'sorati (Conservative-style) Congregation. His lecturing here includes Tel Hai College and Everyman's University.

regulars, is simply that the patriarchal Philistines were not old time established residents of Canaan, but were a local, probably transitory, phenomenon. This would also be consistent with lack of mention of Philistines in Egyptian texts earlier than the period of the Judges.

Thus far we have not proven anything – we have simply reopened the possibility that a local group in the area of the city-state of Gerar was of Philistine – that is, Cretan – origin during the period of Abraham. It is indeed possible for such a thing to have taken place, even if no reassuring scraps of pottery have as yet turned up in that small place from that brief period.

Before proceeding with our major argument, one other detail: Much is made of the minor Biblical “error” (Genesis 10) of listing the Philistines and Cretans as descended from Ham (that is, Egypt), instead of being descended from Yafet (that is, Greece). However since modern scholars are not in universal agreement as to whether the Cretans gave birth to Greek civilization, or the other way around – perhaps we can be tolerant of a document which suggests that way, way back the earliest Cretans – whose home after all is north of Egypt as well as south of Greece and Turkey – may have come from Egypt. (See below for the account of how knowledge of a crucial early event in the history of Crete came to us via an Egyptian tradition).

In fairness to Stuart West, he does tell us that “some Bible scholars” do view the Philistines in Genesis as “part of an earlier migration of Sea Peoples who arrived in Canaan before Abraham and settled the Negev . . .” But he dismisses this argument; I should like to argue for it forcefully – using our ultimate cornerstone, *archeological evidence*.

The Greek poet, Solon, lived some 2500 years ago. For part of his life he was exiled and spent time in Egypt. Plato, two centuries later, quoted Solon as having brought back from Egypt the story of the volcanic destruction of Atlantis. Extensive archeological work during the past generation has established the strong likelihood that the Atlantis legend is an embellishment of the volcanic destruction of the Island of Santorini in the vicinity of 1400–1500 BCE.

Santorini sits roughly equi-distant from the Greek mainland, the Turkish mainland and the Island of Crete. Its eruption appears to have been tremendous, resulting in a layer of tephra (volcanic grit) as much as ten centimeters thick on many Aegean Islands, including much of Crete. This made agriculture

impossible in those places.

One immediate result was a major exodus from Crete (and other affected Dodecanese Islands), very likely in all directions that did not prove impossibly inhospitable. In this period Minoan civilization rapidly spread much further north in the Greek mainland. And — it is inconceivable that some landings should not have been made along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, with some participants proceeding to settle some distance from that coast. The historicity of Abimelech, the Philistine King of Gerar, is totally consistent with this picture.

It is particularly striking that this event which so strongly affected the island of Crete should have originally been preserved in an *Egyptian* and not a Greek tradition.

In terms of relating this event to Israelite history, Lear** makes the 'Velikovsky error': He sees the events of the Exodus from Egypt as virtually cosmic in scope and so he ties the Exodus to the volcanic destruction of Santorini (Velikovsky earlier linked the Exodus to a postulated passing of a planetary body close to Earth with resulting tremendous tides and other major physical dislocations).

One reason for rejecting this linkage is that the Torah does not assert that the events of the Exodus are meant to impress the entire world. Instead, it is emphasized that these are, as it were, internal events intended primarily to teach the Pharaoh of Egypt a memorable lesson. Thus, to the external eye, what happened in connection with the Exodus in general and at the Sea in particular, is relatively prosaic. The Song of the Sea in poetic form delineates the enormous internal emotional impact of the experience of the Israelites who lived through it. In this respect it is accurate, but as an external photographic depiction -- which it is not meant to be — it would be highly exaggerated.

There remains a loose end. If indeed the first wave of Cretans did come to the land of Canaan somewhere around 1400–1500 BCE, how could Abraham have found them if he lived 1900 or 1700, or 1600 BCE?

My suggestion is that a proper understanding of the text leads to the dating of Abraham not earlier than the 15th century BCE — exactly consistent with the first Cretan diaspora.

** For the story in detail see Lear, John: "The Volcano That Shaped the Western World", *Saturday Review*, New York, Nov. 5, 1966, pp. 57–66.

The key is to be found in the 15th chapter of Genesis. There, the Covenant mutually binding the Lord and Abram is ratified by means of a ritual then used in the Middle and Near East to establish the firmest, most absolute contractual agreements — physical passage between the separated parts of sacrificial animals. In the course of the encounter, part of the future is revealed. In verse 13, Abram is told that he should know for a certainty that his descendants will be oppressed strangers in a land that is not theirs for a period of “four *mayot* (מאות) years”. Then, after some words of reassurance, verse 16 begins “And the fourth *dor* (דור) will return here . . .”

Regarding this, one must assume that verses 13 and 16 mean to convey the same thing: That is, that “*mayot*” (plural of “*maya*”) and “*dor*” are equivalent terms here. In modern Hebrew, *maya* means *hundred* and *dor* means generation. As a result the conventional understanding has been that since obviously *maya* is *hundred* today, then *dor*, generation must then have meant 100 years. This also is perhaps consistent with the indicated patriarchal life spans.

Only it isn't so. Thus when the period of the Judges is given as four *maya* years, *maya* cannot mean 100. 400 years is an impossibility, since the era of the Judges extended only about 200 years (roughly from 1200 BCE to 1000 BCE). What we really know about *maya* in the Hexateuch is that we don't know exactly what it meant. On the other hand, Exodus 6:13–26 carefully spells out the genealogy of Moses, clearly showing that it is indeed the fourth generation that leaves Egypt.*** Now, three or four normal generations add up to about 100 years. Following this approach and taking the Torah very seriously, we should expect that the time of Israelite sojourning in Egypt was on the order of 100 years, since a normal generation is on the order of 20 to 30 years (the number 40 seems to have more symbolic than literal weight).

Let us work backwards. As there is a bit of ‘plus or minus’ on dates, we will use round numbers. Since Joshua conquers (and abandons) the Philistine pentapolis, his invasion must have come before the second wave of Sea Peoples landed on the Syrian coast and proceeded south to occupy Ashdod, Ashkelon,

*** Beginning with Jacob's son Levi, there follow Khat, Amram and the siblings Miriam, Aaron and Moses. On the siblings mother's side it is one generation less, since Yocheved is a daughter of Levi.

Ekron, Gat and Gaza. This, in turn, followed close on the heels of the Egyptian defeat of the invading Sea Peoples' armada – which took place early in the 12th century BCE.

The Sinai-Wilderness period bridging from the Exodus to Joshua's conquest was one generation. Whether one likes 40 years, or prefers a bit less, we arrive at about 1225–1230 for the Exodus. This would make Merneptah the Pharaoh of the Exodus. And we know that Merneptah is the author of the Israel stele that claims that Israel is destroyed – appropriate public relations to balance an episode of Egyptian defeat by Israel (at the crossing of the Sea).

Ramses II thus is the Pharaoh of the Oppression – an identification which has wide acceptance. But who is the Pharaoh of the Exodus – that of Joseph?

The requirement for the Pharaoh of the Exodus is that there be some radical difference between him and his successors; it would also be re-enforcing if there were some special theologically shared area with Joseph. Both of these requirements are met by Akh-en-aton, the Pharaoh of the Tel-el-Amarna letters. This monolatrous Pharaoh worshipped the sun as the chief god, was theologically an Egyptian radical – and his reign was followed by a strong religious reaction, including a sharp return to conventional Egyptian theology. And when did he rule? Approximately 100 years before the Exodus!

It is my strong suggestion that the above discussion liberate us from literal commitment to years as they appear to be stated in the text of Genesis; that, instead, our focus be of conventional generations, with normal overlapping and a bit of special longevity. Therefore, if Jacob is an old man in the late 14th century (close to 1300), we would expect the period of Abraham to be in the vicinity of 1450–1400. Thus, Abraham could indeed have had contact with Philistines driven from the Island of Crete by the volcanic explosion of Santorini in the 15th century BCE.

By taking both the Torah and archeology quite seriously we have found mutual reinforcement in the matter of Abraham's Philistine friends. As a twin bonus, we have also:

(1) liberated ourselves from bondage to those presumed re-writing committees which are so readily and unnecessarily invoked as soon as there seems to be a textual problem;

(2) suggested a novel, rational dating for the patriarchs.

THE LAWS OF MARRIAGE

BIBLICAL SOURCES – PART II

BY HYMAN ROUTTENBERG

The custom of the bride and groom celebrating for seven days following the wedding is derived from Judges 14:12, "And Samson said unto them: 'Let me now put forth a riddle unto you; if ye can declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of raiment.'"

Pirke R. Eliezer, ch. 16

The Sage Raba stated: Come and see how precious is a good wife and how baneful is a bad wife. 'How precious is a good wife' for it is written "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a great good". (Prov. 18:22)... 'How baneful is a bad wife,' for it is written, "And I find more bitter than death the woman" (Eccles 7:26).

Yebamoth 63b

He whose first wife has died is viewed as much as if the destruction of the Temple had taken place in his days, as it is written, (Ezek. 24:16) "So of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke"... And further

Dr. Routtenberg, ordained rabbi from Yeshiva University, Ph.D. degree from Boston University, had a distinguished career in the U.S. rabbinate before retiring in Israel. He is the author of *Amos of Tekoa* in which he explored the rabbinic interpretations of the prophet.

ויאמר להם שמשון אחודה
נא לכם חידה, אם הגד תגידו
אותה לי שבעת ימי המשחה
ומצאתם ונתתי לכם שלשים
סדינים ושלשים חלפת
בגדים. (שופטים י"ד, י"ב).
פרקי דר' אליעזר

ואמר רבא כמה טובה אשה
טובה וכמה רעה אשה רעה;
כמה טובה אשה טובה
דכתיב "מצא אשה מצא
טוב" (משלי י"ח, כ"ב)...
כמה רעה אשה רעה דכתיב
"ומוצא אני מר ממות את
האשה" (קהלת ז', כ"ו).
יבמות ס"ג, ע"ב.

כל אדם שמתה אשתו
ראשונה כאילו חרב בית
המקדש בימיו שנאמר "בן
אדם הנני לוקח ממך את
מחמד עיניך במגפה..."

it is written, "Behold I will profane my Sanctuary, the pride of your power, the desire of your eyes." (Thus likening the death of one's wife, whom the Rabbis regarded as the principal factor in guarding the sanctity of the home, to the destruction of the Sanctuary.)

Sanhedrin 22a

R. Alexandri said: The world is darkened for him whose wife has died in his days (i.e. predeceased him), as it is written, "The light shall be dark because of his tent (used metaphorically for wife) and his lamp over him shall be put out" (Job 18:6).

Ibid.

R. Samuel b. Nahman said: All things can be replaced, except the wife of one's youth, as it is written, "And a wife of one's youth, can she be rejected?" (Isa. 54:6).

Ibid.

A. Tanna taught: The death of a man is felt by none but his wife; and that of a woman is felt by none but her husband. Regarding the former it is said: "And Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died" (Ruth 1:3 — showing that the loss was chiefly hers). And regarding the latter it is written: "And as for me, when I came from Padan, Rachel died unto me" (Gen. 48:7).

Sanhedrin 22b

הנני מחלל את מקדשי גאון
עזכם מחמד עיניכם ומחמל
נפשכם" (יחזקאל כ"ד,
ט"ז-כ"א).

סנהדרין כ"ב, ע"א.

אמר אלכסנדר: כל אדם
שמחה אשתו בימיו עולם
חשך בעדו שנאמר "אור
חשך באהלו נרו עליו
ידעך" (איוב י"ח, ו).

סנהדרין כ"ב, ע"א.

אמר ר' שמואל בר נחמן:
לכל איש תמורה חוץ מאשת
נעורים שנאמר "ואשת
נעורים כי תמאס" (ישעיה
נ"ד, ו).

סנהדרין כ"ב, ע"א.

תנא: אין איש מת אלא
לאשתו ואין אשה מתה אלא
לבעלה. אין איש מת אלא
לאשתו שנאמר: "וימת
אלימלך איש נעמי" (רות
א', ג) ואין אשה מתה אלא
לבעלה שנאמר: "ואני
בבואי מפרן מתה עלי רחל"
(בראשית מ"ח, ז).

סנהדרין כ"ב, ע"ב.

R. Helbo said: One must always observe the honor due to his wife, because blessings rest on a man's home only on account of his wife, for it is written, "And he treated Abram well for her sake" (Gen. 12:16). And thus did Raba say to the townspeople of Mahuza: Honor your wives that ye may be enriched.

Baba Mezia 59a

A man is forbidden to compel his wife to the marital obligation, since it is said in Scripture, "And he that hasteth with his feet (allusion to marital intercourse) sinneth" (Prov. 19:2).

Erubin 100b

R. Samuel b. R. Isaac said: When Resh Lakish began to expound the subject of Sotah,* he spoke thus: They only pair a woman with a man according to his deeds, as it is said, "For the sceptre of wickedness shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous" (Ps. 125:3). It is as difficult to pair them as was the division of the Red Sea, as it is said, "God setteth the solitary in families: He bringeth out the prisoners into prosperity" (Ps. 68:7).**

Sotha 2a

אמר ר' חלבו: לעולם יהא אדם זהיר בכבוד אשתו שאין ברכה מצויה בתוך ביתו של אדם אלא בשביל אשתו שנאמר "ולאברם הטיב בעבורה" (בראשית י"ב, ט"ז).

בבא מציעא נ"ט, ע"א.

אמר רבי אסי: אסור לאדם שיכוף אשתו לדבר מצוה שנאמר "ואף כרגלים חוטא" (משלי י"ט, ב).

עירובין ק' ע"ב.

רבי שמואל בר רבי יצחק אומר: אין מזווגין לו לאדם אשה אלא לפי מעשיו שנאמר "כי לא ינוח שבט הרשע על גורל הצדיקים" (תהלים קכ"ה, ג).

סוטה ב' ע"א.

וקשין לזווגן כקריעת ים סוף שנאמר "אלקים מושיב יחידים ביתה, מוציא אסירים בכושרות" (תהלים ס"ח, ז).

שם

* A woman who is suspected of unfaithfulness.

** The first clause refers to marriage-making, the second to the release of prisoners. Therefore the two are declared identical as regards difficulty.

“The L-d grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband” (Ruth 1:9). We learn from this verse that only in the house of her husband will a woman find contentment.

Ruth Rabba 2, 15

“Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine” (Ps. 128:3). When she is modest even “in the innermost chambers of thy house” (ibid), then will “Thy children be like olive plants” (ibid). Thus you find that Scripture tells of Sarah – “And they said unto him: Where is Sarah thy wife?” And he said: “Behold, in the tent.” And he said: I will certainly return unto thee . . . and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son” (Gen. 18:9-10).

The Midrash on Psalms, 128, 3

The words “Two are better than one” (Eccles. 4:9) are to be read in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere: “Whoso findeth a wife findeth a great good” (Prov. 18:22). Yet in still another place Scripture is saying, “I find more bitter than death the woman” (Eccles. 7:26). What Scripture means, however, is that if she is a good wife, there is no end to her goodness, but if she is a bad wife, there is no end to her badness. Hence “Whoso findeth a wife findeth a great good.”

The Midrash on Psalms, 59,2

“יתן ה' לכם ומצאן מנוחה.
אשה בית אישה (רות א', ט)
מכאן שאין קורת רוח לאשה
אלא בבית בעלה.
רות רבה ב', ט"ו.

“אשתך כגפן פוריה”
(תהלים רכ"ח, ג). אימתי
“אשתך כגפן פוריה”
כשהיא צנועה “בירכתי
ביתך” (שם). אז “בניך
כשתילי זיתים” (שם). וכן
אתה מוצא בשרה “ויאמר
הנה באהל, ויאמר שוב
אשוב אליך” (בראשית י"ח,
ט-י).

“טובים השנים מן האחד”
(קהלת ד', ט), זהו שאמר
הכתוב: “מצא אשה מצא
טוב” (משלי י"ח, כ"ב)
וכאן כתיב “ומוצא אני מר
ממות את האשה” (קהלת ז',
כ"ו), אלא אם היא אשה
טובה אין סוף לטובתה אם
היא אשה רעה אין סוף
לרעתה, הוי “מצא אשה
מצא טוב”.

מדרש תהלים נ"ט, ב.

A man is commanded concerning the duty of propagation but not a woman. However, R. Johanan b. Beraka said: Concerning both of them (Adam and Eve, i.e., man and woman) it is said, "And God blessed them; and God said unto them: 'Be fruitful, and multiply' (Gen. 1:28).

Yebamoth 65b

האיש מצווה על פריה ורביה אבל לא האשה. ר' יוחנן בן ברוקה אומר על שניהם הוא אומר "ויברך אותם אליהם, ויאמר להם אלקים פרו ורבו" (בראשית א', כ"ח).
יבמות ס"ה, ע"ב.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Exile of the Word: From the Silence of the Bible to the Silence of Auschwitz by André Neher (Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America), xiii + 246 pp. \$17.95.

Reviewed by Gabriel Sivan

Hailed as "the author's most personal book and his outstanding literary achievement," *The Exile of the Word* (*L'Exil de la Parole*), which gained the 1978 Remembrance Award in Israel, should enhance André Neher's reputation as a powerful and lucid expositor of the Holocaust's theological implications, now that this work is available in English. The translator, David Maisel, who also lives in Jerusalem, has not only managed to preserve the flow and flavor of the original French, but has also succeeded in producing a text which, idiomatically, might well have been the *editio princeps*.

As Maisel notes in his preface, *The Exile of the Word* is "a journey of spiritual exploration fired with a zestful spirit of adventure," passing from Biblical exegesis and quirks of Hebrew grammar to delightfully poetic passages, conversational remarks and, at times, the realm of mysticism. Though a religiously observant Jew, André Neher makes unhesitatingly free use of his (largely Midrashic) source material and defers to nobody. "While he examines the Holocaust experience in the light of Judaism, he also questions the Bible in view of the Holocaust. Does the Bible stand up to it, he wonders, and is the Bible still valid after Auschwitz?"

To find out why God chose to remain

silent while six million of His *Am Segulah* were being machine-gunned, buried alive, gassed and incinerated by the demons of 20th-century paganism, Neher undertakes a thorough analysis of God's and man's silence in the Bible. "Silence," he points out, "is one of the principal actors in the vast biblical drama." It can be glimpsed in the speechless hallelujahs of Nature (Psalm 19:2-4) and in the *kol demamah dakkah* ("thin voice of silence" rather than "still small voice") which follows the raging whirlwind, earthquake and conflagration (I Kings 19:12).

André Neher's impressive breadth of culture, in world literature, art and music as well as in Jewish lore, permeates *The Exile of the Word*. Compressed within its pages is a richness of thought and expression, a virtually unending stream of rewarding and illuminating insights.

Abraham, who symbolizes energy and hope, who voluntarily ends his dialogue with God after the *Akedah* (the final agonizing test on Mount Moriah), leads Neher to the misrepresentation of biblical Messianism and Judaism in Christian typology. Concrete expression was given to the contrast between "the proud clear-sightedness of the Church" and "the humiliated blindness and, let us add, deafness of the Synagogue." Yet more than one Christian "has been struck by

the fascinating beauty of the Synagoga," when viewing those two famous statues in Strasbourg Cathedral, where the "rejected" woman, poignantly blindfolded, appears to be "pursuing some interior dream whose silence is more arresting than the eloquent and speaking look of the Ecclesia."

While Abraham "walks before" *El Olam*, the God of the Future, whose purpose is hidden and unknowable, while Moses and Jeremiah believe that He made a mistake in choosing them, and while Jonah and Ezekiel take refuge from Him in silence, Job brings us to the ultimate scene of "concentrational" horror, separated from the outside world by circles of Night and Fog (to quote the Nazi jargon). Neher insists that "this gulf between Auschwitz and the world... should never be forgotten when we mention Hiroshima, Dresden or Coventry in the same breath as Auschwitz," for there is simply no comparison. In those other places of devastation "events were clamorous, and the cry of suffering immediately reached out and gripped the entire world." At Auschwitz, however, "everything unfolded, was fulfilled and accomplished for weeks, months and years on end in absolute silence, away from and out of the main-stream of history."

The Holocaust marked a total collapse of humanity, beyond all comparison or repair, yet from it the Jewish people has managed to extract hope "like a springtime risen from the ruins." Judaism, rooted firmly in this world, awaits Redemption not through the

mystery of Faith and Grace but through the fulfillment of Torah by man: even the Messiah, when he comes, will be a mortal Redeemer. The work, the *mitzvah*, is what matters and since Sinai, Neher declares, human society "has held in its hands the silent keys of its own fortunes."

Auschwitz is therefore "a Divine aggression" which we are called upon to recognize and challenge. Job, multiplied six millionfold, betrayed both by God and by man, has no business to give up his revolt against such manifest and monstrous injustice.

How, then, should the faithful react to this betrayal? Perhaps by acts of defiance, the stubborn adherence to or symbolic flouting of precepts when death is imminent, by continuing the struggle to the bitter end or else as a protesting survivor; but never by meek acquiescence, by granting the final word to Evil. For "belief or nonbelief in God can have no meaning in the context of this 'challenge of silence': what matters is belief or nonbelief in man."

The Jewish martyr saw a purpose in his doomed struggle against the Gestapo torturer. It was his triumph over death, "and the resurgence of the State of Israel can, in this dialectical sense, be seen as the fruit of the Night of Auschwitz."

"Yes," says Neher, "all *may* be; all is possible. Nothing is too horrible to appear in the world and in history, nor too sublime to be manifested in the human consciousness and in acts. The universe is the infinite field of the possible." Theologically speaking, man

vanquishes the Messiah: "*Aharit ha-yamim*, the biblical term denoting the end of days, is not, in its true significance, the end-point of history but the morrow of that end."

The Exile of the Word is a magnificent *tour de force* which will shake the reader, whatever his or her religious position may be, out of many pedestrian beliefs and preconceptions. The dialogue,

interspersed with silent passages, is eternal. In the case of both separation and meeting, the past and the future, a door opens. Neher's conclusion is that silence, in the Bible, "is the threshold of this door through which all is parted and everything meets."

(Abstract of a review which appeared in *The Jerusalem Post*.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Congratulations on the Fall no. (XI:1) of *Dor-le-Dor*. Many people have told me how much they liked it. There are 2 comments I should like to make:

I. Reuben Efron's article, *Military Intelligence in the Bible, Part IV*: p. 51: "as if they had a premonition that they were meeting for the last time"; p. 52: "never to see each other again". But they did meet again. In I Samuel 23:14-18, we read: *While David was living in the festnesses of the wilderness of Ziph, in the hill-country, Saul searched for him day after day, but God did not put him into his power. David well knew that Saul had come out to seek his life: and while he was a Horesh in the wilderness of Ziph, Saul's son Jonathan came to him there and gave him fresh courage in God's name: 'Do not be afraid,' he said; 'my father's hand shall not touch you; you will become king of Israel and I shall hold rank after you; and my father knows it.' The two of them made a solemn compact before the Lord; then*

David remained in Horesh and Jonathan went home.

II. Your article, *Mesopotamia and Israel*. I like your point about "a static Egyptian as against a dynamic Mesopotamia civilisation. (pl.cf.) You mention "the making of clay bricks which became "stones" through the process of burning" (p. 29).

My son, Prof. Haim Halpern, quotes this comment of Rabbi Berlin of Volozhin: The Bible never mentions anything unnecessarily. Every word is important. Why then does it stress the burning of the bricks to become stones. His answer is that when Abraham was still only a lad the Mesopotamians had already built brick-kilns, so that the Midrashic story that Abraham was cast into a fiery furnace for defying Nimrod is most plausible.

Joseph Halpern
Ramat Gan, Israel

In the "Spring-1982" volume, the article by Chaim Abramowitz clarifying Chapter 2 of Genesis is very enlightening.

The additional words and the notes supplied by Mr. Abramowitz frees the entire chapter from all ambiguity. It then corresponds so exactly to the interpretations of most of our Sages.

This was always troublesome to me and to others I consulted. We sincerely appreciate Mr. Abramowitz's clarifying explanation.

Abraham Lieberman
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Halperin,

I have read with considerable interest your informative article on "Absalom" in the Autumn issue of "Dor le Dor". Allow me to add a few comments to clarify even more Achitophel's advice.

When he says in II Samuel, 16:21/22 —" .. go in unto thy father's concubines ..", this was of course the established practice amongst Eastern heir-apparents to assert their right of succession. May I refer to the following commentaries in this respect:

Hertz, Genesis 35:22 (Reuben); Hertz, Leviticus 18:8; Soncino, II Samuel, 3:7; Soncino, II Samuel, 12:8; Soncino, II Samuel, 16:21/22

Interesting is also the reference to the "tent upon the top of the house", which appears to be the bridal tent or canopy, wherein he would formally complete the acquisition of the concubines.

I should be grateful to have your views, please.

With many thanks, and kind regards,
Walter Sharman
England

JEREMIAH INFLUENCES ISRAELI POLITICS

(N. BEN YITSHAK in Maariv)

When Golda Meir's name was suggested as Prime Minister following the death of Levi Eshkol a double problem was created. Will the Agudat Yisrael which has supported the government up to now also support a woman Prime Minister? And will Golda be willing to assume, at her age, these new responsibilities?

At a meeting of the Aguda Council the matter was discussed at length. Opposition finally melted away when Jacob Brand ex-editor of the Aguda newspaper 'Shearim' quoted a verse from Jeremiah 31:21:

כי ברא ד' חדשה בארץ, נקבה תבוסס גבי

For the Lord has created a new thing in the earth: A woman shall court a man.

When Mapai leadership heard about that verse they seized upon the first half to convince Golda

עד מתי תחמקי הבת השובבה

How long will you turn away, O you backsliding daughter.

עשה תורתך קבע

TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

MARCH-APRIL 1983

ניסן תשמ"ג

T	I Kings 9	מלכים א ט	15	א
W	I Kings 10	מלכים א י	16	ב
Th	I Kings 11	מלכים א יא	17	ג
F	Leviticus 1-5	ויקרא	18	ד
שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 43:21-44:23	הפטרה: ישעיה מ"ג, כא-מ"ד, כג	19	ה
S	I Kings 12	מלכים א יב	20	ו
M	I Kings 13	מלכים א יג	21	ז
T	I Kings 14	מלכים א יד	22	ח
W	I Kings 15	מלכים א טו	23	ט
Th	I Kings 16	מלכים טז	24	י
F	Leviticus 6-8	צו	25	יא
Sa	Haftarah Malachi 3:4-24	הפטרה: מלאכי ג', ד-כד	26	יב
S	Song of Songs 1-2	שיר השירים	27	יג
M	Song of Songs 3-4	ערב פסח שיר השירים	28	יד
T	Exodus 12:21-51	פסח	29	טו
	Haftarah Joshua 5:2-6:1	הפטרה: יהושע ה', ב-ו, א		
W	Leviticus 22:26-23:44	פסח (רק בחוץ לארץ)	30	טז
	Haftarah II Kings 23:1-25	הפטרה מלכים ב		
Th	Song of Songs 5-6	חול המועד שיר השירים	31	יז
April				
F	Exodus 33:12-34:26	חול המועד	1	יח
שבת	Haftarah Exekiel 37:1-4	הפטרה: יחזקאל ל"ז, א-ד	2	יט
S	Song of Songs 7-8	חול המועד שיר השירים	3	כ
M	Exodus 13:17-15:26	פסח	4	כא
	Haftarah II Samuel 22	הפטרה שמואל ב כ"ב		
T	Deuteronomy 14:22-15:17	פסח (רק בחוץ לארץ)	5	כב
	Haftarah Isaiah 10:32-12:6	ישעיה י', לב-י"ב, ו		
W	I Kings 17	מלכים א יז	6	כג
Th	I Kings 18	מלכים א יח	7	כד
F	Leviticus 9-11	שמיני	8	כה
שבת	Haftarah II Samuel 6:1-7:17	הפטרה: שמואל ב ו', א-ד, יז	9	כו
S	I Kings 19	יום השואה מלכים א יט	10	כז
M	I Kings 20	מלכים א כ	11	כח
T	I Kings 21	מלכים א כא	12	כט
W	I Kings 22	מלכים א כב	13	ל

APRIL-MAY 1983

איר תשמ"ג

Th	II Kings 1	מלכים ב א	14	א
F	Leviticus 12-15	החזריע-מצורע	15	ב
שכח	Haftarah: II Kings 7:3-20	הפטרה: מלכים ב ו', ג-כ	16	ג
S	II Kings 2	מלכים ב ב	17	ד
M	Isaiah 10:32-11:12	יום העצמאות ישעיה י' לב-י"א, יב	18	ה
T	II Kings 3	מלכים ב ג	19	ו
W	II Kings 4	מלכים ב ד	20	ז
Th	II Kings 5	מלכים ב ה	21	ח
F	Leviticus 16-20	אחרי מות קדושים	22	ט
שכח	Haftarah: Amos 9:7-15	הפטרה: עמוס ט', ז-טו	23	י
S	II Kings 6	מלכים ב ו	24	יא
M	II Kings 7	מלכים ב ז	25	יב
T	II Kings 8	מלכים ב ח	26	יג
W	II Kings 9	מלכים ב ט	27	יד
Th	II Kings 10	מלכים ב י	28	טו
F	Leviticus 21-24	אמר	29	טז
שבת	Haftarah: Ezekiel 44:15-24	הפטרה: יחזקאל מ"ד, טו-כד	30	יז
May				
S	II Kings 11	מלכים ב יא	1	יח
M	II Kings 12	מלכים ב יב	2	יט
T	II Kings 13	מלכים ב יג	3	כ
W	II Kings 14	מלכים ב יד	4	כא
Th	II Kings 15	מלכים ב טו	5	כב
F	Leviticus 25-27	בחר-בחקתי	6	כג
שכח	Haftarah: Jeremia 16:19-17:14	הפטרה: ירמיה ט"ז, ט-י"ז, יד	7	כד
S	II Kings 16	מלכים ב טז	8	כה
M	II Kings 17	מלכים ב יז	9	כו
T	II Kings 18	מלכים ב יח	10	כז
W	II Kings 19	יום ירושלים מלכים ב יט	11	כח
Th	II Kings 20	מלכים ב כ	12	כט

MAY-JUNE 1983

סימן תשמ"ג

F	Numbers 1-4:20	במדבר	13	א
שבת	Haftarah Hosea 2:1-22	הפטרה: הושע ב', א-כב	14	ב
S	Ruth 1	רות א	15	ג
M	Ruth 2	רות ב	16	ד
T	Ruth 3-4	ערב שבתות רות ג-ד	17	ה
W	Exodus 19-20	שבתות	18	ו
	Haftarah Ezekiel 1	הפטרה יחזקאל א'		
Th	Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17*	שבתות*	19	ז
	Haftarah Habakkuk 2:20-3	הפטרה חבקוק ב', כ-ג'		
F	Numbers 4:21-7	נשא	20	ח
שבת	Haftarah Judges 13:2-25	הפטרה שופטים י"ג, ב-כה	21	ט
S	II Kings 21	מלכים ב כא	22	י
M	II Kings 22	מלכים ב כב	23	יא
T	II Kings 23	מלכים ב כג	24	יב
W	II Kings 24	מלכים ב כד	25	יג
Th	II Kings 25	מלכים ב כה	26	יד
F	Numbers 8-12	בהעלתך	27	טו
שבת	Haftarah Zechariah 2:14-4:7	הפטרה זכריה ב', יד-ד', ז	28	טז
S	Isaiah 1	ישעיה א	29	יז
M	Isaiah 2	ישעיה ב	30	יח
T	Isaiah 3	ישעיה ג	31	יט
		June		
W	Isaiah 4	ישעיה ד	1	כ
Th	Isaiah 5	ישעיה ה	2	כא
F	Numbers 13-15	שלח	3	כב
שבת	Haftarah Joshua 2:1-24	הפטרה יהושע ב', א-כד	4	כג
S	Isaiah 6	ישעיה ו	5	כד
M	Isaiah 7	ישעיה ז	6	כה
T	Isaiah 8	ישעיה ח	7	כו
W	Isaiah 9	ישעיה ט	8	כז
Th	Isaiah 10	ישעיה י	9	כח
F	Numbers 16-18	קרח	10	כט
שבת	Haftarah Isaiah 66	הפטרה ישעיה ס"ו	11	ל

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* רק בחוץ לארץ

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Jewish Community

א' בניסן ממשיכים מ' שבת מ"ט

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OUR BIBLICAL HERITAGE

Vol. XI, No. 3

Spring 1983

MOSES – THE TRAGEDY OF HIS PERSONAL LIFE	<i>Louis I. Rabinowitz</i>	141
ESTHER'S PLAN TO SAVE THE JEWS	<i>Nathan Aviezer</i>	153
A GUIDE TO ISAIAH	<i>Chaim Pearl</i>	159
FOR THE SAKE OF MY NAME	<i>Yitzhak Glucksman</i>	169
THE HEBREW ELEMENT IN EVERYDAY ENGLISH – I, II	<i>Gabriel Sivan</i>	176
THE BOOK OF DANIEL ITS SIGNIFICANCE AND MEANING	<i>Asher Finkel</i>	181
ABRAHAM AND ATLANTIS	<i>Joseph Heckelman</i>	189
THE LAWS OF MARRIAGE BIBLICAL SOURCES – II	<i>Hyman Routtenberg</i>	194
BOOK REVIEW	<i>Gabriel Sivan</i>	199
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR		201
TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR		203

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