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דפוס רפאל חיים הכהן בע"מ, ירושלים



We mourn the loss of
RABBI SOLOMON D. GOLDFARB
Assistant Editor of Dor le-Dor

RABBI SOLOMON D. GOLDFARB שליט"א

IN MEMORIAM

The late Rabbi Solomon D. Goldfarb was born in a small town in Galicia in 1902. There, in his early youth, he attended the traditional Cheder and then continued his Jewish studies through his teens in the local Bet Midrash, imbibing deeply of the classical sources of Jewish learning. At the age of seventeen, he came to the United States. Here, he took up secular studies for the first time. Knowing no English, he yet managed to complete his High School course in the space of a year and a half. He then enrolled in the College of the City of New York from which institution he received his Bachelor's degree. Simultaneously, he attended Yeshiva University, then known as Yeshivat Rabbenu Yitzchak Elchanan. He then entered the Jewish Theological Seminary and was ordained in 1932.

He enjoyed a long and distinguished career in the Rabbinate. His last pulpit prior to retirement was that of Temple Israel of Long Beach, N.Y. which congregation he served for twenty-five years. He and his wife, who survives him, came on Aliyah in 1973 and took up residence in Jerusalem where he lived until his passing on the 12th of Adar Rishon, 5736 (February 12, 1976).

These biographical data of his life, however, serve as the merest framework for his striking personality and his dedicated, creative life. Rabbi Goldfarb possessed an inexhaustible fund of good humor and high spirits. These were the reflection of something deep and central in his life—a profound faith in life as the gift of a loving God. It is no wonder that always he sought to uncover and highlight the good and the noble in his fellowman and in his people. One of his literary projects in which he was engaged at the time of his passing, was to clip news-items from the press that revealed the generous, noble and self-sacrificial aspects of life in Israel.

His love for Eretz Yisrael was matched only by his love of Hebrew and Hebrew literature, the latter from the Bible down to contemporary writings. Actually, it was the passion of his life. A prolific writer in Hebrew, his articles in the Hebrew daily and periodical press, both here and abroad run into the hundreds. For years, he published a widely read column in the American-Hebrew weekly, Hadoar, on the Torah portion of the week that made the Bible relevant to the current Jewish situation and its problems. He published several volumes of sermons in both Hebrew and English.

Death found him in the midst of his literary and scholarly work in Jerusalem, the city he loved beyond words. His colleagues and innumerable friends will cherish his luminous memory. In the fullest sense of the phrase, he was a Dover Tov L'Amo—"one who spoke good of his people" (Esther 10:3). May his memory be for a blessing.

JACOB'S LOVE FOR RACHEL

BY SOLOMON D. GOLDFARB

As the original version of the following article was being processed for publication in the Beth Mikra, the Hebrew quarterly of the World Jewish Bible Society, its author, Rabbi Goldfarb, was taken from us. We publish this, the last of his many contributions, in loving tribute to his memory.

Love stories between man and wife are not a popular topic in our ancient literature, and certainly not in the Bible. Descriptions of a strong and prolonged love between a man and a young woman, accompanied by jealousy and hatred and their consequences, so common in world literature, are not found in the Bible. We are indeed told of the love of Michal for David, but after one daring act on the part of Michal, the love came to an end. The love of Amnon for Tamar cannot be taken into account as it was a mad passion, improper from all aspects. In the "Song of Songs" love in many of its aspects is described in depth and beauty, but it is an imaginative description of love, not a real love which existed between real people.

However, there is a complete story of love between a man and his wife, and this is the love of Jacob for Rachel. Even if the Bible scholars find in this narrative wider historical meanings, yet, the love story, the love of Jacob for Rachel, is compelling and charming by itself.

Love begins at first sight when Jacob sees Rachel at the well, and is continued through all his life, filling every significant event with meaning.

"And when Jacob saw Rachel... and Jacob kissed Rachel." We do not find in the entire Bible a man kissing a woman (excluding a mother or sister). The Orientals were never accustomed to it. The Rabbis sensed it, and ask, "Why did Jacob weep? For he saw people whisper one to another because he kissed her, wondering what does he intend to do, bring back immorality?" (Genesis Raba, 70). It seems that the Bible wanted to emphasize in this story the special motive of love. Examine the fact that after the Bible tells that Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah, it adds, "And the Lord saw that Leah was hated," namely, not only did Jacob love Rachel more than Leah but he despised the older sister as a result of his deep love for Rachel.

Psychology teaches that obligatory attachment to a hated wife deepens the hatred sevenfold. Jacob went through the forced marriage to Leah, contrived by Laban through guile. But just as those years which he labored to win the hand of

JACOB AND RACHEL by Abel Pann, "And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept" (Genesis 29:11).

Abel Pann



Rachel "because of his love for her" seemed to him as a few days, so the years he was compelled to add to his service only intensified his dislike of Leah.

The Bible testifies that Leah felt in the depth of her being the hatred on the part of her husband, "for the Lord saw my affliction, for from now my husband will love me." There is not a greater affliction and suffering than the one caused to a wife who knows very well that her husband's attachment is perfunctory, and that her function is only to bear children. The hope of Leah that with the birth of the first-born son, "my husband will love me", was not realized. Also, when her second son was born, she again expresses her frustration: "For the Lord heard that I am hated." The name that she gave her third son (Levi), proves that she did not succeed in bringing her husband closer to her. There was no room in Jacob's heart for Leah, for his love for Rachel was boundless.

Leah was jealous of Rachel because of Jacob's love for her. Conversely, Rachel was jealous of Leah because she was blessed with children. When Rachel asks of Leah her mandrakes, which Reuben found in the field and brought to his mother, Leah replies, "Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband and wouldst thou take away my son's mandrakes?" This is a cry of jealousy and vindictiveness. And if we accept the idea that mandrakes are a factor in arousing man's sexual desires, this outburst between the competing sisters becomes even clearer. This becomes evident in the verse, "And she said (Leah to Jacob), 'thou must come unto me, for surely I hired you with my son's mandrakes,' and he lay with her that night." Was there in this deal enough to improve Jacob's relationship to Leah? Marital relations, bought by mandrakes, may be sufficient for child bearing, but adds no love for a hated wife.

On all occasions Jacob prefers Rachel to Leah: "And he sent for Rachel and Leah" (Gen. 30:4). "And Rachel and Leah answered and said..." (Gen. 31:14). Rachel always comes before Leah. The Bible emphasizes his preference for Rachel. When he prepares himself for the dangerous encounter with Esau, he places the maidservants in front and Leah and her children afterwards, but Rachel and Joseph at the end. The Midrash comments: "The last one is preferred," and we may add, the last is the more beloved. Rashi comments: "In all the cases, the mothers advanced before the children, but in the case of Rachel, Joseph preceded his mother, saying, 'My mother is a beautiful woman and the wicked Esau may fix his eyes on her. I shall stand in front of her, and prevent him from fixing his eyes on her.'" The meaning of the Bible is clear, that it was Jacob who planned and arranged the order of presentation to his brother Esau, and what the Midrash mentions about Joseph's noble intention is to be understood as referring to Jacob, namely, that he tried to shield Rachel, his most beloved one, before his suspectedly lustful brother.

After Rachel's death, Jacob's unforgetting love for her was transmitted into a

special fondness for her elder son, Joseph, again arousing envy and recrimination, this time leveled by the brothers against Joseph.

"And Israel loved Joseph more than all his children." On this verse the Rabbis comment that "his image was like his father's." The interpretation becomes clearer if we read: "His image was like his mother's," and for many reasons: It is customary that a person loves his son or daughter because they remind him of someone who is beloved; as the Yiddish idiom goes, "She is the image of my mother," or "he looks just as my grandfather." There is no instance of a man of whom it would be said that he loved someone because his image "was like himself."

In the Bible itself we find a similarity between the looks of Rachel and Joseph. It is written that "Rachel was beautiful and fair to look upon." The very same idiom is employed in the description of Joseph. It can be inferred that the image of Joseph reflected the image of Rachel, his mother.

From the day of the death of his only beloved, he transferred his love to her first-born son. Jacob entrusted Joseph into the hands of the children of Bilha, the maidservant of Rachel. It is of interest to note that Rashi in his commentary on this verse says: "Joseph was accustomed to be with the children of Bilha because his brothers were insulting them and he (Joseph) was befriending them." Rashi omits the words "with the children of Zilpa," which the Biblical verse mentions. The question arises, if the brothers were insulting the children of the maid servants, why does Rashi mention only the children of Bilha? Doesn't logic compel us to explain the development of the relationship differently? Joseph was accustomed to be with the children of Bilha (and not with the children of Zilpa) because of the love of Jacob for Rachel. He wished that her son should be friendly with the children of Bilha, the maidservant and friend of Rachel (the successor of Rachel after her death, according to the Tractate Shabbat 55b). We can deduce that the brothers did not insult the children of the maidservant, but only Joseph (the orphan of his mother who was the beloved of Jacob). It was the children of Bilha who befriended Joseph and protected him against the scorn of the children of Leah. Accordingly, only the children of Bilha (and not of Zilpa) were faithful and suited to protect Rachel's son.

"And his brothers saw that their father loved him above all the brothers, and they hated him" (Gen. 37:4). What should the son do in such a dilemma, being loved by the father and hated by the brothers? Psychology teaches that a lad finding himself in difficulties, tends to find release in fantasies and dreams. The dreams do him good while life is hurting him. Sure enough, in actuality the brothers are in control. However, in dreamland, he, the despised by his brothers, is in control of everything, and all bow to him.

"And his brothers were jealous of him" (Gen. 37:11). The children displayed the behavior of their mother. Just as Leah was jealous of Rachel because of the love Jacob showed her, so the children of Leah were jealous of Joseph because of his dreams. And just as Jacob kept his exclusive love for Rachel, so too did he nourish the hope of a glorious future for Joseph.

"And his father kept the matter" (Gen. 37:11). The Midrash comments: "He took a pen and wrote down the exact day and the exact hour and in which place it occurred" (Genesis Raba, 84). Only in Rachel's son could he (Jacob) find comfort in her death; only he (Joseph) could compensate for the absence of Rachel.

Now we reach the climax of the story, the selling of Joseph. Who are the brothers, singled out by the Bible, in this nefarious act? They are Reuben and Judah; Reuben is the eldest of the twelve sons. According to the "Sefer Hayashar", the kingdom was given to Judah, which means that Judah was considered the head of the brothers ("The scepter will not depart from Judah"). And the "big" sons of Leah settle the Joseph affair according to their judgement. They do save his life but they sell him as a slave to the Ishmaelites—the climax of contempt and the finale of their old jealousy and hatred. Thus they plan to remove Joseph, the favored son, from his father, and to erase the memory of Rachel from their father's heart.

What is the meaning of Jacob's concern for the life of Benjamin after Joseph was taken from him but the transformation of the love for Rachel (the mother of Benjamin) to Benjamin, her younger son. Even Judah admits that his (Benjamin's) soul is bound up with his soul (Jacob's). The deep love for Benjamin stems from the original love.

Also in Egypt, Joseph plays the central role in the dramatic story. Joseph, the son of Rachel is the ruler, and Judah, the son of Leah, is the pleader. Jacob bows on his sick bed to Joseph. To him, Jacob accords two portions (Menashe and Ephraim).

In Jacob's last moments, his life story passes before his eyes. He is reminded of Rachel. "And when I came from Padan, Rachel died unto me" (Gen. 48:7). The Rabbis interpret that "a wife dies only for her husband," as it is said, "She died unto me" (Sanhedrin 22b). "She died by me": In his great love for her, she died on his lap. This is inferred from the word *עלי* which means literally "on me" (Nachal Kedumim in the name of Rabbi Ephraim). This tragic event, the death of his beloved wife, just as the event at the well, was never erased from his heart till his last breath: "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by the well."



MOSES AT THE BURNING BUSH by Domenico Fetti (1589-1624)

MOSES AND THE BURNING BUSH

BY ANDRE NEHER

Lt. Yishay Ron fell near the Suez Canal in the War of Attrition in September 1970. After the first thirty days of mourning – שלושים – the parents established a bi-weekly Bible study group at their home – in memory of Yishay – which has been meeting consistently. A book was published emanating from this study group – הגות במקרא. מבחר מחוך עיוני החוג לתנ"ך לזכר ישי רון – consisting of lectures given by Biblical scholars, with a foreword by David Ben Gurion, then president of the Israel Society for Biblical Research.

The following article, our second offering from this volume, (the first, by Aram Ron, appeared in Dor le-Dor, Fall 1975) was given originally as a lecture by Professor Neher at the study circle.

MOSES AT THE BURNING BUSH

I shall address my comments to two chapters of Exodus, 3 and 4, the incident of the Burning Bush. Let us consider the following verses:

Now Moses was keeping the flock of Jethro his father-in-law the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the farthest end of wilderness, and came to the mountain of God, to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said: I will turn aside now, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called out to him out of the midst of the bush, and said: "Moses, Moses." And he said: "Here am I." And He said: "Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Moreover He said: "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God (3:1-3).

THE PHENOMENON OF PROPHECY

This is the first part of the story, the unfolding of God's revelation to Moses. What is of particular interest to us is the nature of this Revelation, in which God appears to Moses in the midst of a "bush that burns in fire, and the bush is not consumed." The very fact of a burning bush already characterizes God's revela-

Dr. Neher, now residing in Jerusalem; was Professor and Head of the Department of Hebrew Language and Literature at the University of Strassburg and Visiting Professor at the University of Tel Aviv. He has written many books on Bible and Jewish philosophy, among them: *Amos – A Contribution to the Study of Prophecy*, *Notes on Ecclesiastes*, *Moses and the Jewish Calling*, *Jeremiah*, *The Prophetic Existence* and *The Biblical History of the People of Israel*. His most recent book is *The of Silence of God in the Bible and Auschwitz*.

tion; but it is the paradoxical element of the bush not being consumed by the fire, which attracts the special attention of Moses. On continuing the reading of the story, we encounter the scene of man's elevation to prophecy, perhaps the most dramatic in the entire range of the Bible. God had revealed Himself to Adam, and spoke to him. He also revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and spoke to them. But these enter the history of Man, the history of the Bible and our Jewish history as Patriarchs, not as prophets. But here, for the first time we encounter the phenomenon of Prophecy. God appears to Moses and calls upon him to be His messenger, to be His prophet. What again surprises us is, that Moses, the man, refuses to undertake this assignment to be God's messenger. Let us consider the following verses:

And the Lord said: "I have surely seen the affliction of My people that are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters for I know their pains. And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them out of that land unto a good land and large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. And now, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto Me. Moreover I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt (3:7-10)."

MOSES EVADES THE BURDEN OF PROPHECY

This is a direct command. But unlike Isaiah, who responded upon being called by God to be His prophet with "Here am I, send me," Moses evades the burden of prophecy with the following words: "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" (3:11).

Moses' first objection is met with, "And He said: 'Certainly I will be with thee'" (3:12).

God's answer is clear. He desires to strengthen Moses, who is humble, with the assurance that he would not be alone. There is no cause for fear, for God would be with him.

Moses then presents his second objection: "Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them: The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me: What is His name? What shall I say unto them? (3:13). God's reply is:

I Am that I Am and He said: thus shall you say unto the children of Israel: I Am hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses: Thus shalt thou say unto the children of

Israel: The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you; this is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generation. Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them: The Lord, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob hath appeared unto me, saying: I have surely remembered you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt. And I have said: I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. And they shall hearken to thy voice. And thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him: The Lord, the God of the Hebrew, hath met with us. And now let us go, we pray thee, three days journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.

And I know that the king of Egypt will not give you leave to go except by a mighty hand.

And I will put forth My hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof. And after that he will let you go" (3:14-22).

This reply concerns not only Moses but the entire people of Israel. Furthermore, this address is not a mere reiteration of God's first address to Moses, concerning the content of the mission. It adds significant details which warn of forthcoming difficulties and frustrations. But of the final results there cannot be any doubt. Moses has been appointed by God to bring forth the children of Israel from Egypt.

But again Moses evades this mission with the objection: "But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice; for they will say: The Lord hath not appeared unto thee" (4:1).

Moses' first objection referred to himself, the man-messenger. He did not consider himself worthy to be a prophet and to bring forth the children of Israel. The second objection concerned God: what is the name of God Who sent me? The third objection referred to the children of Israel, who will not listen to Moses. In his fourth refusal, known to us from the continuation of the story, Moses protests: "Behold, the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me, how then shall Paraoh hear me, a man of impeded speech" (6:12). His final objection is: "Oh Lord, send, I pray Thee, by the hand of him whom Thou wilt send" (4:13).

PROPHET MUST ACCEPT GOD'S MISSION

This is an absurd objection. No reason is given. If God has chosen this man Moses to be His prophet, and this man responds thusly, it clearly expresses his wish to refuse the assignment. "Send whom you wish to send" is a clear indication that Moses has run out of logical argument. He simply does not wish to undertake the burden of prophecy; and thus we stand before the paradoxical nature of this entire dialogue: God seeks a man, and this man refuses Him. God

searches for a prophet, and this man Moses does not wish to undertake the burden of prophecy. After all the arguments, man remains defeated. Moses is forced to accept the mission against his will. Yet, some remarks are in place.

First, the action of Moses serves as an example to all prophets after him. All will imitate him, and will not accept God's assignment immediately. The prophetic books are replete with impressive attitudes of this sort. God calls on Jeremiah and he replies. "But Lord my God, I am merely a youth." Ezekiel, on being elevated to prophet-hood, responds with utter silence. He does not argue, as Moses did. But his silence is witness to the fact that he does not relish his call to prophecy. The best known example of outright refusal is the story of Jonah. In the end, God finds all these men and prophecy is, so to speak, forced upon Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Jonah. Second, there is in this dialogue at the Burning Bush a most profound meaning. The reasons for Moses' refusal to accept prophecy can easily be understood. He is already eighty years old, has lived a most stormy life, a fugitive from Egypt. At this stage of his life, Moses has reached what we would be wont to call, his age of retirement; he deserves to live out his life peacefully; he does not wish to return to Egypt, where he had suffered so much, to speak to Pharaoh and to get the release of the Israelites.

THE DEEP MYSTERY IN MOSES' REFUSAL

All that is understood by us; and, yet when all has been said, there still remains a deep mystery in his refusal: through his evasion the short way to redemption was turned into a long and arduous one. Let us for a moment consider how matters would have been, had Moses not hesitated. The scenario would have been as follows: Moses sees the bush burning which is not consumed; God calls upon him, and Moses accepts immediately. Had matters been thusly, the redemption from Egypt would have occurred in a different manner, and certainly much faster. Moses, in refusing God five times, turned the road to redemption not only from Egypt, but to the End of Days, into a long drawn process. It should be understood that this dialogue, in which God, as it were, searches for man and commands him, and this man refuses, is not a dialogue in the plain sense. It is not a matter of exchange of words; it is indeed a spiritual wrestling between God and man, and conversely, between man and God.

The Midrash senses in the words uttered in this dialogue some reciprocal bitterness. In Shemot Rabbah 6:4 we read:

The Lord said to Moses: Many times did I appear to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as El Shaddai, and did not make myself known to them as Hashem as I did to you, yet they did not speculate about my attributes.

And the Midrash brings details concerning the readiness of the patriarchs to accept without hesitation every command of the Lord:

I told Abraham to walk the whole length and breadth of the land since I have given it to him, but when the time came to bury Sarah, he had to wait till he purchased some land. Yet he did not question Me. I had said to Isaac to sojourn in this land, because "to you and your seed I have given it." But he could not even get water when the shepherds of Gerar fought the shepherds of Isaac, yet he did not question Me. I had said to Jacob: "The land that you lie on, to you I have given it," but when he wanted a place in which to pitch a tent, he had to pay 100 kashitas; yet he did not question Me nor did he speculate about My attributes, nor ask Me for My name as you did.

Thus the Midrash elaborates how God complains about Moses' hesitation. But it seizes upon a very fine point in the language used in ch. 3:16 and discerns in it a subtle complaint on the part of Moses. In v. 6 we read:

"And He said: I am the God of *your father*, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

However, later in verse 16 we read:

"Go and gather the elders of Israel and say unto them: the Lord, God of your fathers, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has appeared to me."

When Moses heard that God had not mentioned "God of *your father*" as He had previously, (v. 6) he complained, in the words of Midrash, Shemot Rabba, ch. 3:1—8:

"Said Rabbi Joshua the Priest, son of Nehemia: At the hour when the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to Moses, he was new to prophecy. Said the Holy One, blessed be He: If I reveal Myself in a loud voice, I will confuse him; if in a quiet voice, he might feel contempt for it. What did He do? He appeared in the voice of his father Amram. He (Moses) then asked: What does my father wish? Said the Holy One, blessed be he: I am not your father, but the God of your father. I have done so to entice you, and so that you will not be afraid."

Moses rejoiced and said: Behold, my father is counted together with the Patriarchs, and, being mentioned first, he is the greatest."

But when, after repeated refusals, God addresses Himself to Moses simply as the God of your fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not mentioning anymore "God of your father," Moses complains in the words of the Midrash:

"Master of the Universe are there then sinners in the grave?" He said, "No." Then Moses said: "In the past you mentioned Your name together with my father, and now you have removed him!"

TENSION BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

This is no simple dialogue. There is tension between God and man, and neither is satisfied with the proceedings of the dialogue. The Midrash throws a significant light on the underlying dissatisfaction contained in the dialogue, with the following words:

The Eternal said: "At first I employed words of enticement; however from now on, only straight words of truth do I speak to you."

This means that, contrary to our first thought that God's second address merely added details to the first, we now learn through the incisive insight of the Midrash that the two addresses of God to Moses are not complementary, but are opposed in nature: In the first God entices Moses, and he refuses; in the second address, He now speaks bold words of truth.

The first address represents a vision of God, seeing to the farthest end, of final universal redemption, an inducement to man to be part of this vision and to assist in its fulfillment. After repeated refusals, God understood that Moses had not grasped His vision. From this point on He reveals before Him history in all its ugliness, in all its truth and in all its harsh reality. Put differently: The short, eschatological road to redemption was now turned into a long and arduous road of history. God had envisioned the redemption from Egypt to be the final and the messianic one of the Acharit HaYamim. But now, after Moses' refusal to go along, it became clear to God, that one has to proceed by the long and difficult road of history.

HINTS OF MESSIANIC REDEMPTION

Let us return to the verses in which God responds to Moses' argument: "Who am I, that I shall go to Pharaoh, and that I shall bring forth the children of Israel from Egypt?" with: "I shall be with you. And this shall be the sign that I am sending you: when you bring forth the people from Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain" (3:12).

In this particular verse one can discern two indications of messianic redemption as envisaged by Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and all the prophets.

The statement, "You shall serve God on this mountain," presents an incisive turning point, perhaps even a revolution, for the history of man. On this mountain, upon which will occur the Revelation of the giving of Torah and the Ten Commandments, the children of Israel will "worship." The root word עָבַד which to this point in Scriptures was used in its concrete and material sense of "hard labor," assumes for the first time a spiritual meaning, "service of the heart." The slave labors all day, and his labors are harsh. Particularly the first chapters of Exodus are replete with hard labor enforced on the children of Israel in Egypt. And

now, for the first time we find a different meaning for עבד. In the social context of man's control over his fellowman, the slave serves his master with hard labor. But, in the spiritual sense, man utilizes his freedom of choice, serving God through prayers and sacrifices. Truly, we have before us a significant metamorphosis in עבד, from labor to spiritual service.

This metamorphosis hints toward the Acharit HaYamim, the Latter Days. In days to come, man will arrive at a point where he will turn implements of war into tools of peaceful pursuits.

MY PEOPLE, THY PEOPLE, THE PEOPLE

There is an additional hint of messianic redemption, contained in this verse. God says: "When you bring forth the *people* from Egypt, you will serve God on this mountain." And this is the sign that God sends Moses. The author of "Shne Luchot Habrit," the Shelah, suggest a most remarkable interpretation on the reference to עַם—people. He points out that throughout the entire dialogue, either *My* people or *Thy* people is mentioned, except in this verse, where *the* people is cited. The Shelah proposes most daringly that not the people of Israel but the people of Egypt is meant by it. God hints at the messianic era, the Exodus of the Egyptian people from Egypt. Not the Hebrews alone shall go forth from slavery, but with them all the unfortunate people who, like the Hebrews, are shackled in chains. God envisions the day when the Egyptians themselves will come (voluntarily) to a realization that they are to fulfil God's command by freeing all slaves. Thus both the Egyptians and the Israelites together will serve God on Mount Horev. Moses' refusal turned God's vision of final redemption into a prosaic drudgery of history, the "path of truth," as interpreted by the Midrash. As we read God's second address to Moses, we can perceive that it is not a more detailed reiteration of His first address. The statement, "And I know that the king of Egypt will not give you leave to go, except by a mighty hand" (3:10) is indicative that, contrary to the first plan contained in God's first address to Moses in which the Exodus from Egypt should have been realized by a voluntary act of Pharaoh, God now, by the regrettable refusal on the part of Moses, as it were, is forced to enter history by violent acts of His mighty hand, namely plagues, war, etc.

We now realize that we are not merely dealing with a metamorphosis from a short to the long road to redemption, but with a veritable revolution, necessitating the long term historical process, with all the difficulties and pitfalls attending it, for its achievement.

PEACE BETWEEN THE FIRE AND THE PLANT

There is another dimension to the symbolism of the "burning bush which is not consumed." It is a plain fact that God's Presence could have been represented by

the Burning Bush. But that it is not being consumed symbolizes the fact that God's Presence is not merely static, but dynamic; that it is not only for the hour but that it is unceasing, for all eternity. And it is again a Midrash — from the Pirke Rabbi Eliezer — which comes in support of this symbolism. He sees in it a sign of messianic peace. God appeared to Moses neither in dreams, nor in Cherubim, as He had afterwards to Ezekiel or Isaiah, but in a flame of fire, from the midst of a bush. The fire was burning the plant of the bush, but did not consume it; but neither did the plant extinguish the fire. This indicates that there was peace between the fire and the plant, neither eliminating the other. Yet, in spite of peace reigning between the two, there is still the element of endurance and patience, symbolized by the Bush which burns with fire and is not consumed. Even Peace proceeds along the road of history. It is not a matter achievable in a moment, neither a gift from heaven. It can be achieved only by effort and sacrifice.

NEITHER GOD NOR MAN IS EXEMPT FROM FACING HISTORY

There is yet another lesson to be derived from the episode of the Burning Bush and the dialogue between God and man that ensued. When, after all the arguments, Moses accepts the mission, God is forced to enter into the processes of history, the path in which we still proceed. Perhaps it is this that God wished to convey to Moses, when He revealed Himself in the midst of a burning bush and then engaged in a dialogue. The failure of God's magnificent vision was foreseen. But this very same failure had to be recorded by history, to teach that man is not exempt from full participation in the difficulties of history. Man cannot say to God: Do Your thing and we are exempt; and neither can God demand of man: You do your thing and I am exempt. Both, God and man, have a part together, each being accountable to the other, accepting tasks imposed by history in reciprocal responsibility.

NO EASY AND FAST SOLUTION

I should like to conclude with yet another interpretation. This is suggested by a story, "The Burnt Offering," appearing in a book authored by the German Protestant Albert Goes, dealing with Jewish suffering during the Shoah. The story relates a factual experience of the author. Right after the war he noticed a curious inscription on a newly opened butcher shop in one of the devastated towns in Germany: "And the Bush was Burning with Fire and was not Consumed." Upon inquiry he found that the wife of the butcher, terribly upset by the suffering of the Jews, had exposed herself to a bombing raid by the British, in the hope that she would die and thus be accepted by God as a sacrifice for the sins of the Germans committed on Jews. Wounded in this raid but remaining alive, she

had promised to help Jews after the war. She thus understood her experience in terms of the verse inscribed on the butcher shop. She had initially sought a fast solution to the disquieting spectacle of the Holocaust. But God, in not accepting such easy and fast solution, pointed to a long path of conscience. No person has a right to say: now my conscience is clean; or: I have reached the point where I can clear my conscience by short and drastic means. This woman, then, had come through insight into this particular verse to the realization that she had had to accept the difficult road of a troubled conscience in a struggle for the betterment and the final redemption of this world.

Perhaps the main point of the chapter of the Burning Bush is that God has invited man to such a life long task and struggle.

Translated from the Hebrew by Shimon Bakon

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THE HEBRAIC MOTIFS OF JUDGES 13-16 RELEVANT TO JOHN MILTON'S *SAMSON AGONISTES*

BY MARTA BERL SHAPIRO

PART III

This is the last of a three-part article on the Hebraic motifs of Judges 13-16 which inspired John Milton to write "Samson Agonistes." The article is based upon one chapter of a doctoral dissertation on "Samson Agonistes and the Hebraic Tradition."

It is the view of "Oral" tradition that Samson was a faithful judge and a righteous deliverer of his people,¹ despite fact that the Book of Judges clearly in-

1. These are some of the Talmudic comments upon Samson's better qualities as he fulfills the role of *Nazir-Shophet*:

*R. Johanan also said: Samson judged Israel in the same manner as their Father in heaven; as it is said, Dan shall judge his people as One [Gen. 49:16, the One being God]. R. Johanan also said: Samson was called by the name of the Holy One, blessed be He; as it is said, For the Lord God is a sun and a shield [Psalm 84:12]. The word for sun is *shemesh* which is the basis of Samson's name, Shimshon. According to this argument, [his name] may not be erased. [as it is forbidden to erase the Divine Name]. The intention is that [his name] was typical of the name of the Holy One, blessed be He [the word *sun* is not God's Name but a simile], as the Holy One, blessed be He shields the whole world, so Samson shielded Israel during his generation.*

'And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart.' How did she know this? [He had previously told her several falsehoods, so how did she know that he had now spoken the truth? R. Hanin said in the name of Rab: Words of truth are recognisable. Abaye said: She knew that this righteous man would not utter the Divine Name in vain; when he exclaimed, I have been a Nazirite unto God, (Judg. 16:17,) she said, "Now he has certainly spoken the truth."

And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray Thee and strengthen me, I pray Thee, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes [Judg. 16:18]. Rab said: Samson spoke before the Holy One, blessed be He, "Sovereign of the Universe, remember on my behalf the twenty years I judged Israel, and never did I order anyone to carry my staff from one place to another."

The Talmud, Tractate "Sotah," pp. 9b-10a.

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forms us that Samson does not control his emotions, that he involves himself with prostitutes and immoral women and takes tremendous sexual license, and that he breaks the injunction of the Covenant concerning mixed marriages.² He certainly violates the commandment to honor one's parents, for Manoah is appalled that Samson should marry a woman from among "the uncircumcised Philistines" (Judges 14:3). And Samson's reply is simply: "Get her for me, for she pleaseth me well" (Judges 14:3).³ Recounting these facts about Samson, the narrator of the Book of Judges speaks in a neutral manner, and indicts none of these actions nor any of Samson's deeds of personal revenge. Even the fact that the strong man of Dan, the possessor of *Ruach Ha-Shem* and slaughterer of Philistines "hip and thigh," proves a weakling in the face of a raging thirst, is not commented upon derogatorily. These misdeeds of Samson are considered simply as stains upon his character or as small sins and therefore overlooked in punishment.⁴ The lack of explicit verbal opprobrium for Samson's early misdeeds indicates that they are not accountable as a betrayal of God's Covenant; Samson is accounted loyal because Samson still keeps his Nazirite vow.

Ruach Ha-Shem "came mightily" upon Samson from time to time despite his misdeeds; but when his hair was shorn, then *Ruach Ha-Shem* departed from him. The hair of the *Nazir* is an outward sign of his consecration to God and in and of itself is sacred. Therefore, when Samson's passion forces him to succumb to Delilah's wiles and to reveal to her his secret and to place himself in a situation where his sacred Nazirite hair can be shorn, this is accounted to him as if he of-

2. See the Old Testament attitude and injunctions in Genesis 26:34-35, 27:46; Exodus 34:14-16; and Deuteronomy 7:3.

3. In *Samson Agonistes*, the chorus of Hebrew men diplomatically question Samson:

If oft have heard men wonder
Why thou shouldst wed *Philistian* women rather
Than of thine own Tribe fairer, or as fair.
At least of thy own Nation, and as nobl (ll. 215-228).

Samson replies by acknowledging his parents' displeasure at his marriage to the Timna woman for "they knew not / That what I motion'd was of God" (221-222). In addition, he confesses that now he knows that his marriage to Dalila (Milton's spelling of Delilah) was without Divine guidance and a willing misapplication of his *Ruah Ha-Shem*. John Milton, *Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New York: Odyssey Press 1957). Further references to Milton's poetry are to this edition and will be referred to as *Complete Poems*.

4. The school of Rabbi Ismael taught the following "Oral" tradition: "I will not search Jerusalem with the light of a torch which gives much light, but only with the light of a lamp, the light of which is much smaller, so that great wrongdoing will be found out but petty wrongdoing will not be found out" (*The Talmud*, Tractate "Pesahim," pp. 7b-8a).

fers a sacrifice to the false god of the Philistines; it is as if he declares open rebellion against God. Giving in to Delilah⁵ is a forgetting of God, and with this action Samson jettisons his Covenantal relationship, and Samson is held personally responsible for this action. The Philistines could not overcome Samson, but he overcame himself. This is his failure. With the loss of the symbol of the Naziriteship, he loses both his spiritual and his physical strength. The "Oral" tradition is explicit concerning Samson's weakness and sin, that his greatest flaw was his sexual lust and his passion for Philistine women:

And the child grew, and the Lord blessed (Judg. 13:24.) Wherewith did He bless him? Rab Judah said in the name of Rab: With his physique which was like that of other men but his manly strength was like a fast-flowing stream. [The point underlying this piece of Rabbinic hyperbole is that it was through Samson's inordinate passion for Philistine women that he came in contact with their people and brought about Israel's release from their power.]

Our Rabbis have taught: Samson rebelled [against God] through his eyes, as it is said, *And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me, because she is pleasing in my eyes* [Judg. 14:31], therefore the Philistines put out his eyes, as it is said, *And the Philistines laid hold on him and put out his eyes* [Judg. 16:21]. But it is not so; for behold it is written, *But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the Lord* [Judg. 14:4]. When he went [to choose a wife] he nevertheless followed his own inclinations [and not the will of God].

But God clave the hollow place that is in Lehi [Judg. 15:19]. R. Isaac of the School of R. Ammi said: He [Samson] lusted for what was unclean-Philistine women; therefore, his life was made dependent upon an unclean thing [the ass' jawbone] (*lehi*) out of which he drank in his thirst.

The beginning of his [Samson's degeneration] was in Gaza, as it is written, *And Samson went to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, etc.* [Judg. 16:21]; therefore he received his punishment in Gaza, as it is written, *And they brought him down to Gaza* [Judg. 16:21]. But behold it is written, *And Samson went down to Timnah* [Judg. 14:1]. Nevertheless the beginning of his degeneration occurred in Gaza. He lawfully married the woman in Timnah but not the woman in Gaza.⁶

But it is not only Samson's sexual lust and passion for Philistine women that led him to the severe violation of the Covenant. It is neglect to acknowledge

5. Compare Judges 16:16 with Milton's words:

She surceas'd not day nor night
To storm me over-watch't, and wearied out,
At time when men seek most repose and rest,
I yielded, and unlocked her all my heart.

Complete Poems, 11. 404-407.

6. *The Talmud*, Tractate "Sotah," pp. 9b-10a.



SAMSON AND DELILAH by Van Dyke (1620)

God's help in the accomplishment of his many extra-human feats.⁷ He takes for granted all of his *marvelous* accomplishments although they are the direct consequence of *Ruach Ha-Shem*. No public or private declarations are made of his debt to God. It is not that Samson is unaware of his special gift or unknowledgeable of its source; it is his sinful pride in his strength which prevents his giving thanks to God. His excessive need for revenge, the inability to placate his vindictive spirit and to halt the chain reaction of each act of vengeance is another indication of sinful pride. It is a pride that has been hurt, a hurt that cannot be assuaged except by more revenges.⁸ Samson also suffers from extravagant self-confidence and because he has never been punished by God, he comes to believe that God will never be angry with him. His immoderate self-assurance in his relationship with Delilah⁹ is another indication of sinful pride. He feels he can amuse himself with Delilah and successfully parry her feminine onslaughts aimed at learning his Nazirite secret. But his state of sinful pride blinds him to self-knowledge and he underestimates his mental and physical resistance to Delilah's wiles.¹⁰ Even upon waking from his sleep after the shearing of his hair, he does not say: "God will empower me to go out as at other times before and shake

7. It is Manoa who chastises Samson for this: "O ever failing trust / In mortal strength!" (11. 348-349). Later Samson acknowledges responsibility for this sin (11. 529-532, *Complete Poems*).

8. Samson is an imperfect man, and he demands revenge. This does not imply Old Testament approval; it is simply Old Testament awareness and acceptance of the human being as imperfect.

9. The Judges text does not specify whether the relationship of Delilah to Samson was that of wife or mistress. However, in *Samson Agonistes* it is clear that Delilah was neither a harlot nor a concubine, but Milton establishes her as a legitimate wife (11. 725-750, 882-885, 1008-1009, *Complete Poems*). Here Milton is in full agreement with Kimchi who says that the women Samson married in Timnah, Gaza, and Nahal Sorek, he converted to Judaism and with Ralbag who states that not only did Samson marry Delilah but that he converted her before taking her as a wife (see *Mikraot Gedolot*, Judges 16:4). Both Kimchi and Ralbag are cited by Milton in his prose. See *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, The Works of John Milton*, ed. Frank Allen Patterson and others, 18 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931-1942), III, 488 (hereafter referred to as *Works*).

10. Note the words of Milton's Samson:

Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport
Her importunity, each time perceiving
How openly, and with what impudence
She purpos'd to betray me, and (which was worse
Than undissembli'd hate) with what contempt;
She sought to make me Traitor to myself; 1.396-401, *Complete Poems*.

myself." Instead he deludes himself and says: "I will with my own power go out as at other times before, and shake myself" (Judges 16:20). Old Testament-Hebraic tradition considers sinful pride as tantamount to apostasy, as a breaking of the Covenant:

R. Johanan said in the name of R. Simeon b. Yohai: Every man in whom is haughtiness of spirit is as though he worships idols; it is written here, *Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord* [Prov. 16:5], and it is written elsewhere, *Thou shalt not bring an abomination into thine house* [Deut. 7:26]. R. Johanan himself said: He is as though he had denied the fundamental principle; [viz., the existence of God], as it is said, *Thine heart be lifted up and thou forget the Lord thy God* [Deut. 8:14].¹¹

It is Josephus who explicitly accuses Samson of sinful pride:

Yet Samson, unduly proud of this feat, smiting a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass or any of his other marvelous supernatural feats, did not say that it was God's assistance that had brought it to pass, but ascribed the issue to his own valour, boasting of having with a jawbone prostrated some of his enemies and put the rest to rout through the terror that he inspired.¹² Samson at their summons was led to the banquet, that they might mock at him over their cups. And he, deeming it direr than all his ills to be unable to be avenged of such insults, induced the boy who led him by the hand ... to conduct him close to the columns.¹³

There are two occasions when Samson does acknowledge his debt to God. The first acknowledgment is given grudgingly at Ramath-Lechi when he was seized with a raging thirst; Samson begins by attributing all to God but goes on to demand haughtily that God slake his thirst. The second occasion is his final prayer at the Dagon festival. This prayer is also a declaration of his faith in the eternal nature of God's Covenant for if Samson has lost his special Nazirite relationship with God, he has not lost God. It is not a perfect prayer or a perfect acknowledgement of his debt to God, mixed as it is with a desire for personal vengeance:

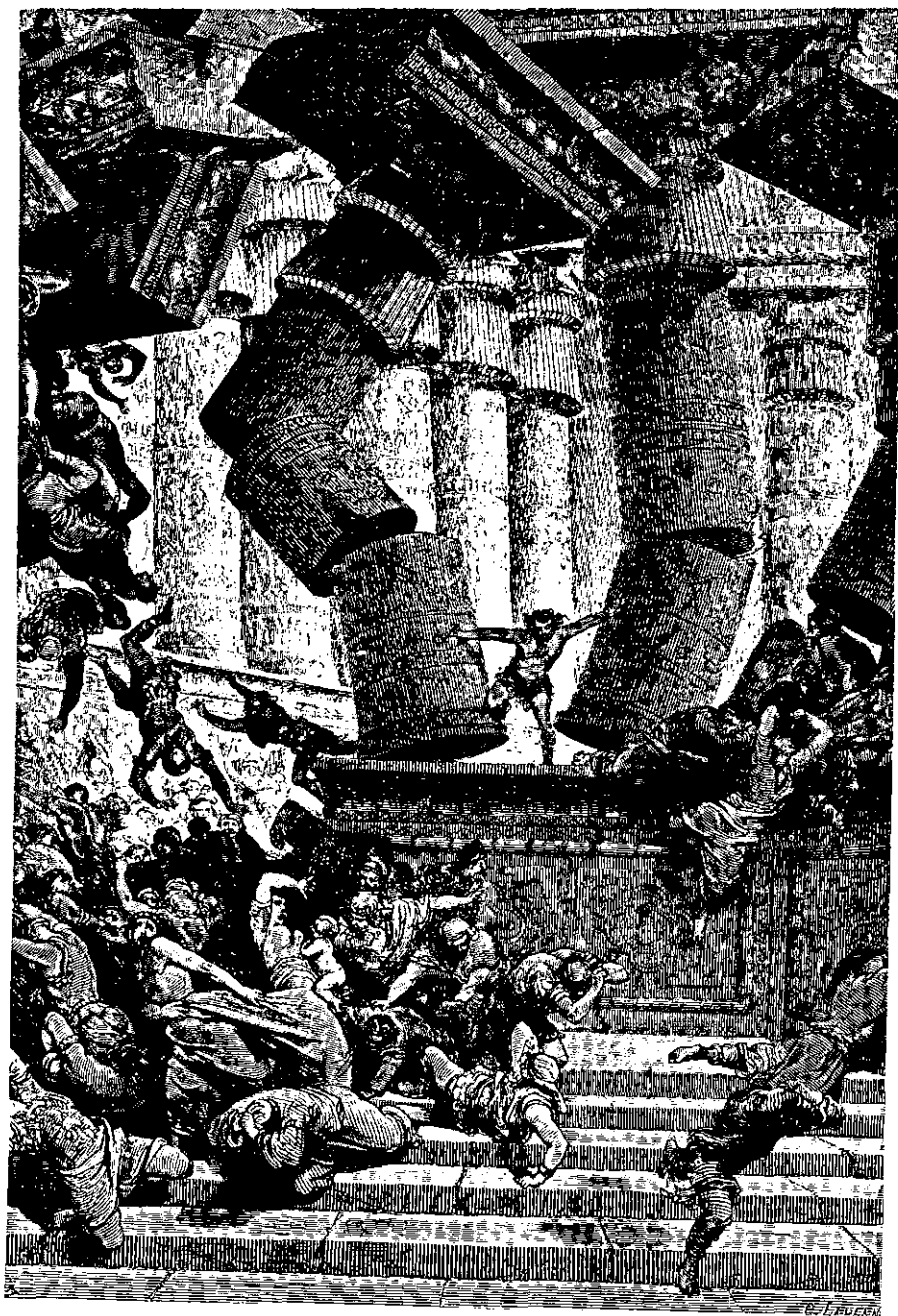
O LORD God, remember me I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I May be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes (Judges 16-28).¹⁴

11. *The Talmud*, Tractate "Sotah," pp. 4b-5a. Words in brackets are explanatory notes in the text.

12. Flavius Josephus, *The Life and Works of Flavius Josephus*, trans. William Whiston (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1957), Vol. V, p. 137.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

14. Although Milton does echo the incident of this prayer in his drama, he does not specify the words of the prayer; he merely reports the fact of the prayer (11. 1635-1638, *Complete Poems*).



LET ME DIE WITH THE PHILISTINES (Judges 16:30) by V. Doré

Samson is not a perfect man; he is merely creatural man. The conclusion of Judges (13-16) indicates that it is through this creatural man that God's providential plan is effected. God uses Samson's desire for revenge to bring about a triumph for Himself and a tragic triumph for Samson as *Eved Ha-Shem*.

In *Samson Agonistes*, John Milton differs from the Judges text in a number of ways, beginning with his utilization of the Greek dramatic form which presents all of the drama's actions in one day. This one day in *Samson Agonistes* depicts the last hours of Samson's life, and we see him as a blind, fettered Philistine prisoner who despairs of ever accomplishing God's mission, not as the lusty young man of Judges who enjoys the here and now and confidently expects to fulfill God's providential plan. Milton's Samson spends this last day of his life in fulfilling the requirements of *Teshuvah*,¹⁵ and undergoing a religious experience. The dialogue of Milton's drama by virtue of its Greek dramatic form and because of his other innovations permits Milton to reveal the character of Samson in greater depth than does the Judges text. For example, Milton's innovation of the meetings and confrontations with the Chorus, Manoa, Dalila, Harapha,¹⁶ and the Philistine Officer¹⁶ serve a dual purpose in that they are integral to the delineation of Samson's character and to his fulfillment of *Teshuvah*. But all the while that Milton has been dramatizing these innovations, he has simultaneously adhered closely to the story in Judges 13-16 and to Old Testament theology. It is this faithfulness to the spirit of the Old Testament that gives credence to his dramatic story and makes it almost seem that which Milton would have liked to believe, a work inspired by God.

15. Milton's drama opens with Samson's punishment already in effect and Samson beginning the process of *Teshuvah* with his reluctance to rest on the holiday of Dagon (11. 12-15); this was followed by his first acceptance of personal responsibility for violation of the Covenant (1.46), the confession that he had been guilty of *Chillul Ha-Shem* (11. 449-450), trust in God's discomfiture of Dagon (11. 455-571), rejection of Dalilah — the occasion of his sin (11. 930-935), and finally the renewal of his Covental constitutional edge: "My trust is in the living God" (1.1141, *Complete Poems*). It has been the confrontation of Samson with the comforters-tempters which permit him independently to initiate and complete his *Teshuvah*. See also 11.564-565 where Samson revises his pattern of concern until he makes a final proper revision in his sequence of concern (11. 1424-1425) and is a true *Baal Teshuvah*.

16. Both of these characters are not found in the Judges text. Harapha is based upon Goliath and other Old Testament giants. Milton has accurately coined his name, for Harapha can be linked to רפא (*ra-fah*) "giant" and to the Hebraic root רפה (*ra-fah*) "weakening"—becoming without strength—going from living to dying. This, as is Milton's coinage of "Abdiel" in *Paradise Lost*, is more evidence of Milton's erudition in the Hebrew language.

BIBLICAL SOURCES RELATING TO PRAYER

BY HYMAN ROUTTENBERG

Part VI

Judaism teaches us that one should pray not only for himself but for his fellowman as well. Thus Rabbah said in the name of Rav: If one is in a position to pray on behalf of his fellow and does not do so, he is called a sinner, as it says, "Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" (I Samuel 12:23).

Berakhot 12b

אמר רבה משמיה דרב: כל שאפשר לו לבקש רחמים על חברו ואינו מבקש נקרא חוטא שנאמר "גם אנכי חלילה לי מחטא לה' מחדל להתפלל בעד-כם" (שמואל א' י"ב, כג). ברכות י"ב:

On the other hand, taught the Rabbis, one who solicits mercy for his fellowman while he himself is in need of the same thing, will be answered first. Whence do we derive this? Raba asked of Rabbah b. Mari. The latter replied: As it is written, "And the Lord changed the fortune of Job when he prayed for his friends" (ob 42, 10).

Baba Kama 92a.

אמר ליה רבא לרבה בר מרי: מנא הא מילתא דאמר רבנן כל המבקש רחמים על חברו והוא צריך לאותו דבר, הוא נענה תחילה? אמר ליה, דכתיב "וה' שב את שבות איוב בהתפללו בעד רעהו" (איוב מ"ב, י'). בבא קמא צ"ב.

R. Eleazar said: Prayer is more efficacious than offerings, as it says, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me" (Isaiah 1:11), and this is followed by "And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you; Yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear" (Ibid. 1, 15).*

Berakhot 32b.

אמר ר' אלעזר: גדולה תפילה יותר מן הקרבנות שנאמר: "למה לי רוב זבחיכם יאמר ה' (ישעיה א', יא). וכתיב "ובפרשכם כפיכם אעלים עיני מכם, גם כי תרבו תפלה אינני שומע" (שם א', טו).

* Rashi explains: If prayer were not more efficacious, why add, "And when ye spread forth your hands," seeing that even sacrifices are not acceptable. Since the spreading of hands is mentioned after sacrifice, it must be regarded as more efficacious.

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R. Hiyya b. Ashi said in the name of Rav: A person whose mind is not at ease must not pray, since it is said, "He who is in distress shall give no decisions."* R. Hanina did not pray on a day when he was agitated. It is written, he said, "He who is in distress shall give no decisions."

Eruvin 65a עירובין ס"ה.

* Rashi states that Scriptures has no such verse. Rabbenu Tam attempts to trace it to Job 36:19 – rending שועך as "thy prayer."

Rav Judah said in the name of Samuel: To enjoy anything of this world without a benediction is like making personal use of things consecrated to heaven, since it says, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof" (Ps. 24:1). R. Levi contrasted two texts. It is written, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," and it is also written, "The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, but the earth hath He given to the children of men" (Ps. 115:16). There is no contradiction: in the one case it is before a blessing has been said, in the other case after a blessing has been said.

Berakhot 35a.

The Mishnah states: If three persons have eaten together, it is their duty to invite one another to say grace. The Gemara asks: Whence is this derived? R. Asi says: Because Scripture says, "O magnify ye the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together" (Ps. 34:4). R. Abbahu derives it from here: "When I (one) proclaim the name of the Lord, ascribe ye (two) greatness unto our God" (Deut. 32:3).

Berakhot 45a

אמר רב חייא בר אשי אמר רב: כל שאין דעתו מיושבת עליו אל יתפלל משום שנאמר: "בצר אל יורה". ר' חנינא ביומא דרתח לא מצלי; אמר: "בצר אל יורה" כתיב.

אמר רב יהודה אמר שמואל: כל הנהנה מן העולם הזה בלא ברכה כאילו נהנה מקדשי שמים שנאמר: "לה' הארץ ומלואה" וכתיב "השמים שמים לה' והארץ נתן לבני אדם" (תהלים קט"ו, טז); לא קשיא, כאן קודם ברכה, כאן לאחר ברכה. ברכות ל"ה.

משנה: שלשה שאכלו כאחד חייבין לזמן. גמרא: מה"מ? אמר רב אסי: דאמר קרא "גדלו לה' אתי ונרוממה שמו יחדיו" (תהלים ל"ד, ד). רבי אבהו אמר מהכי: "כי שם ה' אקרא הבו גדל לאלהינו" (דברים ל"ב, ג). ברכות מ"ה.

R. Joshua b. Levi says: Though a man has recited the Shema in the synagogue, it is a religious act to recite it again upon his bed. R. Assi says: Which verse may be cited in support? "Tremble and sin not; commune with your own heart upon your bed and be still, Selah" (Ps. 4:5). R. Nahman, however, says: If he is a scholar, then it is not necessary. Abaye says: Even a scholar should recite one verse of supplication, as for instance: "Into Thy hand I commit my spirit; Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, Thou God of truth" (Ps. 31:6).

Berakhot 4b : ברכות ד'

אמר ר' יהושע בן לוי: אע"פ שקרא אדם ק"ש בבית הכנסת, מצוה לקרותו על מטתו. אמר רב אסי: מאי קרא, "רגזו ואל חטטאו, אמרו בלבבכם על משי-ככם ודומו סלה" (תהלים ד', ה). אמר רב נחמן: אם תלמיד חכם הוא, אין צריך. אמר אביי: אף תלמיד חכם מיבעי ליה למימר חד פסוקא דרחמי כגון "בידך אפקיד רוחי פדיתה אותי ה' אל אמתי" (תהלים ל"א, ו).

The sages set up high moral and educational standards for the Reader who officiates at the religious services. Our Rabbis taught: When they stand up to pray, although there may be present an elder and a scholar, they place before the Ark as Reader only a man conversant with the prayers. R. Judah says: One having a large family and has no means of support, whose youth was unblemished, who is meek and is acceptable to the people, who is skilled in chanting, who has a pleasant voice and possesses a thorough knowledge of the Torah, the Prophets and the Hagiographa, of the Midrash, Halachot and Aggadot and of all the Benedictions... Whose youth was unblemished: Abaye said: This is one against whom no evil reputation had gone forth in his youth. "My heritage is become unto Me as a lion in the forest; she hath uttered her voice against Me; therefore have I hated her" (Jer. 12:8). What is the meaning of "She hath uttered her voice against me?" This refers to an unfit person who steps down before the Ark to act as Reader.

Taanit 16a-b.

תנו רבנן: עמדו בחפלה אע"פ שיש שם זקן וחכם אין מורידין לפני התיבה אלא אדם הרגיל. איזהו רגיל? ר' יהודה אומר: מטופל ואין לו ופרקו נאָה ושפל ברך ומרצה לעם ויש לו נעימה וקולו ערב ובקי לקרות בתורה ובנביאים ובכתובים ולשנות במדרש בהלכות ובאגדות ובקי בכל הברכות... ופרקו נאה: אמר אביי זה שלא יצא עליו שם רע בישרותו. והיתה לי נחלתי כאריה ביער נתנה עלי בקולה על כן שנאתיה "ירמיה י"ב, ח); מאי "נתנה עלי קולה"? אמר רב: זה שליח צבור שיויר לפני התיבה שאינו הגון. ענינת ט"ו.

QUIZ ON THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

PREPARED BY HAIM HALPERN

When this issue of Dor le-Dor reaches you, will be into the book of Isaiah in your Bible reading cycle. The following quiz concentrates *entirely* on the early chapters in the Book of Isaiah (Chap. 1-12). This has the effect of making the quiz much simpler and we hope more meaningful, since it concentrates on fewer phases of the career and literature of Isaiah.

1. Isaiah speaks of God bringing "over Mt. Zion" visions similar to those seen during the Exodus from Egypt. What are these sights?
2. The prophet refers to more than a dozen foreign lands and peoples in his writings. How many in this part of the book (1-12) can you name?
3. Where do we learn that Isaiah had a very low opinion of some of the "daughters of Zion"?
4. Why does Isaiah use the parable of "The Vineyard of my Friend" (Chap. 5)?
5. Which colors does Isaiah use to represent sinfulness and innocence?
6. What are the main characteristics of the utopian Era as Isaiah conceived it?
7. Which popular modern Israeli dance derives from a verse in Isaiah?
8. Which phrase from the Book of Isaiah occupies a very prominent place in Jewish liturgy?
9. How does Isaiah use his son as a sign of Judea's impending disaster?
10. Where do we read of an alliance between Syria (Aram) and Israel against Jerusalem? How does Isaiah describe these allies?
11. Who will give Judea a "shave" according to Isaiah's prediction?
12. Invaders have usually attacked Jerusalem from the north. Where in the Book of Isaiah is this northern approach actually outlined step by step?
13. In his description of the ideal king in 9:5, a child rules. Where does Isaiah speak of child rulership in derogatory terms?
14. What name will be given to a child as a sign to King Ahaz that Judea's attacker will be defeated?
15. Who is referred to as a boastful ax and saw?
16. Despite his dire predictions for the future Isaiah always offered hope that a remnant will survive. What sign did he present for this thought?
17. The U.N. has recently attempted to besmirch and distort the meaning of "Zionism." Can you recall some phrases from Isaiah using the term "Zion"?

ANSWERS TO THE BIBLE QUIZ

1. The cloud of smoke by day and the flaming fire by night (4:5).
2. Lebanon (2:13); Tarshish (2:16); Aram (Chap. 7, etc.); Assyria (many times, especially in Chaps. 7 and 8); Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar and Hamath are all mentioned in 11:11; Phillistines, Edom, Moab and Amon in 11:14.
3. 3:12 and 16ff.
4. Probably as an attention-getting device and to drive his message home more graphically.
5. Red is equivalent to sin, probably relating it to blood.
White stands for innocence (1:18; see also v. 15).
6. In Chap. 2 Isaiah describes the Temple Mount in Jerusalem as the focal point of all nations who will express the desire to learn God's ways and walk in them. "The Torah shall go forth from Zion" and weapons shall be converted to tools of peace. Some of the words from this section are inscribed on the wall across from the United Nations complex in New York City.
In Chap. 11 the prophet speaks of a descendant of David imbued with divine spirit and wisdom. He will be just and righteous. Beasts of prey will become peaceful. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord..."
7. The Mayim Dance is based on 12:3. "With joy shall you draw waters from the wells of salvation."
8. The key sentence in the Kedushah: Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh... (6:3).
9. He names him Maher-shalal-hash-baz (8:3).
10. In 7:1-4. The prophet calls them "two smoldering stumps of firewood."
11. God will use the Assyrian king as a razor to "shave... the head and the hair of the feet and... the beard" (7:20).
12. Chap. 10:28-32 describes the swift advance of the Assyrian army through northern towns and villages towards Jerusalem.
13. In 3:4 he declares: "I will make children their princes and babes shall rule over them."
14. Immanuel, meaning "God is with us" (7:14).
15. The Assyrian invader in 10:15.
16. Another son is named Shear Yashuv (7:3). See also the promises in 10:19-22 and 11:11-12.
17. 1:27 - "Zion shall be redeemed with justice."
2:3 - "Out of Zion shall go forth the Torah."
10:24 - "My people that dwells in Zion, be not afraid of Asshur."

THE FAMILY CORNER

THE BOOK OF BEMIDBAR – NUMBERS

BY PHILIP L. LIPIS AND LOUIS KATZOFF

With this issue we conclude the three-year cycle of our Family Corner, aiming to build up an atmosphere of Torah discussion within the family. Our cycle was developed as follows: questions and answers on the Sidra of the week for very young children, during the year 5734 (1973–4); questions and answers suitable for children eight to fourteen, during 5735 (1974–5); and comments and ideas for further thought, focused upon the interest of youth and adults, during the current year 5736 (1975–6).

The three year cycle should be saved for future reference or study. If you are missing any of the issues of Dor le-Dor, please write to us, and we shall be happy to furnish you copies in accordance with our dwindling supply of back copies.

Transliterated names of Sidrot, persons and places follow the spelling of the new Koren edition of the Tenakh.

BEMIDBAR

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 241–250

May 29, 1976

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 568–580

1. On page 572 in the Hertz edition, you will see a diagram of the Israelite encampment during their sojourn in the desert. In the form of a quadrangle, the tribes were lined up three apiece at each side of the four sides, each section carrying the name of its leading tribe. In the center was the Tabernacle, surrounded on the four sides by a protecting cordon of the Levitical families, which in turn were protected by the twelve tribes around the perimeter.

Balaam, the heathen sorcerer who came to curse the Israelites but stayed to bless, spoke in rapturous praise, in words which today form the opening sentence of every synagogue service, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, thy tabernacles, O Israel." What did Balaam behold that precipitated this idyllic outburst? He saw from the top of Mount Peor the beautifully structured encampment of the Israelites in the valley below and beheld the disciplined orderliness of their community.

2. In Ch. 2:17, we read that "as they encamped, so they marched, each in position by their standards." In what formation did they march? There are two opinions in the Talmud. One sage states that the formation of the march was in the shape of a square as it was in their encampment, substantiating it through a quote from our verse. Another says that they were strung out in one long line,

with the tribe of Dan at the end of the line, basing it on the verse, "Then, as the rear guard of all the divisions, the standard of the division of Dan would set out, according to their hosts" (Numbers 10:25).

3. Rashi's comment on the first verse reveals the love of God for Israel:

"Because of God's predilection for His people does He take their census so often. He counted them when they went out of Egypt, again when many fell at the event of the Golden Calf and now when He is about to rest his Shechina upon the Sanctuary which is to soon be dedicated."

Said Rabbi Samuel son of Nachmani in the name of Rabbi Jonathan:

"He who teaches his friend's son Torah, it were as though he were his father, for it is written, "And these are the generations of Aaron and Moses (Numbers 3:1); and since the verse recounts the names of the children of Aaron only, the verse teaches us that Moses, their teacher, is accounted as their father."

Sanhedrin 19b

NASO

June 12, 1976 (June 5 in Israel)

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 250—260

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 586—601

A note is in place at this point for the difference in the dates for the reading of the Sidra of Naso in the Golah and in Israel. As you probably know, the festival of Shavuot is celebrated only one day in Israel, but on two successive days in the Golah. Thus, Shavuot this year was observed in Israel only on Friday, June 4, with its special holiday Torah reading, while in the sequence of the Sidrot, Naso was read on the following day, the Sabbath. On the other hand, since the Saturday of June 5 was still Shavuot in the Golah, the holiday Torah portion was read there, leaving the Sidra of Naso for the following week, June 12. This discrepancy will continue for one month, until July 10, when the Sidrot will be synchronized. On that date, Huqqat and Balaq will be read in the Golah while only Balaq will be read in Israel.

Q. In Ch. 5:6—7 we find the following: "When a man or woman commits any wrong toward a fellow-man, thus breaking faith with the Lord, and that person realizes his guilt, then he shall confess the wrong that he has done. He shall make restitution in the principal amount and add one fifth to it, giving it to him toward whom he is guilty." What specific wrongs are alluded to in these verses?

A. See Leviticus Ch. 5:21—22, applying to cases which would not bring the offender within the jurisdiction of the police or the courts, but are offenses against God because they bring hurt to their fellowman. These offenses included misappropriation of property, such as:

a) Deposit: He denies that any article had been deposited with him.

b) Pledge: The owner has no receipt to show that he had given an article as a

pledge or pawn for a loan he had contracted and now the creditor denies receiving the pledge.

c) Robbery: Any legal pretext by which one is deprived of what rightfully belongs to him.

d) Oppression: Denying any money due, such as wages, on the claim that they were already paid.

e) Lost Article: Keeping an identifiable article that was found, refraining from locating its rightful owner.

NOTE: When a man, guilty of any of these wrongs by swearing falsely, wishes to make amends because of an awakened conscience, he makes a free confession of his sin and makes restitution by adding a fifth to the principal sum.

Q. Chapter 6 deals with the laws of the Nazirite who takes upon himself an austere form of living. The Nazirite vow includes three prohibitions: not to drink wine or liquor, not to cut his hair and not to touch a dead body. What Biblical personalities took upon themselves one or another of these vows?

A. a) *Samson who let his hair grow, but did not abstain from wine or contact with dead bodies.*

b) *The prophet Samuel who, as a child, was consecrated by his mother unto God, and "there shall be no razor come upon his head" (I Samuel 1:11).*

c) *The whole house of the Rechabites abstained from the drinking of wine in loyalty to the simple ways of their founder, Jonadav ben Rechav.*

NOTE: *The rare cases of Nazirite vows cited above reveal that the institution was not widespread during Biblical days. It seemed to have flourished to a greater extent in the period of the Second Temple. The Mishna and Talmud devote an entire tractate to the laws of the Nazirite which would indicate that ascetically inclined Jews adhered to these vows. The general impression from the Talmud, however, is that the institution is looked upon with disdain. Many sages disapproved of any forms of asceticism as foreign to Judaism. Eventually, the Nazirite disappeared completely from the Jewish community.*

BEHA'ALOTEKHA

June 19, 1976 (June 12 in Israel)

The Torah (J.P.S Edition) pp. 260-269

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 605-619

Q. Compare the murmurings of the Israelites in Chapter 11 with those we read about in Exodus Chapters 15, 16 and 17.

A. In Exodus we find the Israelites complaining about the lack of water, then of hunger, and then again of thirst. In our Sidra, we see the Israelites craving gluttonously for meat, disgusted with the manna which they had as their daily fare.

Q. How did Moses react to these separate crises?

A. In Exodus we find Moses reacting on a higher level of tolerance. God seems more impatient with the Israelites than Moses. At one time Moses is scared (not despondent) when he cries out to God, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me."

In our Sidra, we find Moses worn down by these recurring complaints. Completely distressed, he cries out to God: "Why have you dealt ill with Your servant, and why have I not enjoyed Your favor, that You have laid the burden of all this people upon me? Did I conceive all this people, did I bear them, that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom as a nurse carries an infant' to the land that You have promised on oath to their fathers. Where am I to get meat to give to all this people, when they whine before me and say, 'Give us meat to eat!' I cannot carry all this people by myself, for it is too much for me. If You would deal thus with me, kill me rather, I beg You, and let me see no more of my wretchedness!" (Numbers Ch. 11:11-15).

And when God scornfully promises meat aplenty Moses even expresses scepticism whether his large multitude could be supplied with sufficient meat, provoking the reply, "Is there a limit to God's power?"

To bolster Moses' morale, God instructs him to gather seventy of Israel's elders who will from here on share the burden of the people with him.

Q. Moses was a great man, but humble. His humility is attested by the verse near the end of the Sidra, "Now Moses was a very humble man, more so than any other man on earth" (Ch. 12:3). Where was his humility manifested?

A. When Moses gathered the seventy elders, the spirit rested upon them and they began to prophesy, but not for long. However, two men, Eldad and Medad continued to prophesy, whereupon Joshua importuned Moses to restrain them. The retort of Moses has a majestic quality: "Are you wrought up on my account? Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put His spirit upon them" (Ch. 11:29).

SHELAḤ

June 26, 1976 (June 19 in Israel)

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 269-277

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 623-634

HISTORIC BACKGROUND:

The Israelites had been out of Egypt a short time and were encamped at Kadesh, on the eastern extremity of Sinai Peninsula. They had already received the Ten Commandments and were on their way toward the Promised Land. According to some scholars, the Israelites confronted the king of Arad, in the heart

of the Negev, and won a victory over him. Moses deemed the time propitious for the conquest of the land to be undertaken. But first, he was in need of intelligence reports on the strengths and weaknesses of the inhabitants of Canaan. Twelve men were sent to explore the land. They all returned with a glowing report of the fruitfulness of the land, but the majority report of the ten demoralized the Israelites against the possibility of conquest. The most characteristic sign of their self-depreciation is evident in the verse, "All the people that we saw in it are men of great size; and we looked like grasshoppers to ourselves, and so we must have looked to them" (13:32—33)

There was near mutiny in the camp. Some started a movement to head back to Egypt. When the initial shock was over, God declared that the entire generation was doomed to die in the desert, save Joshua and Caleb, and that the entry into the Promised Land would have to wait for a period of forty years.

Moses, the Leader:

The humility and faithfulness of Moses as a leader shine through the fateful period of crisis and mutiny. At the moment of Israelite ingratitude, God is ready to destroy the people and to make of Moses and his seed a greater and mightier nation. In an unsurpassed example of self-denial, Moses refuses a glorious future for himself, but instead pleads to God to spare His people out of regard for His own honor. The eloquent plea of Moses is found in the verses Ch. 14:13—19.

Historical Sequel:

After suffering a crushing defeat when the Israelites, against the advice of Moses, defiantly tried to storm the hill country of the Amalekites and of the Canaanites, they withdrew from the part of the Negev which they had conquered earlier and retreated into the Sinai Peninsula. There they stayed for thirty eight years near the oasis of Kadesh. When they ventured forth again, they no longer dared to proceed directly into Canaan. Instead, they went the long way around, moving around the southern end of the Dead Sea, came up the eastern side of the Jordan and entered the land from the eastern approach, as recounted in the Book of Joshua.

QORAH

July 3, 1976 (June 26 in Israel)

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 277—283

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 639—648

Contrast in Reactions of Moses in Two Crises:

In the previous Sidra, Shelah, we read about the crisis precipitated by the ten spies who brought back a demoralizing report of their chances to conquer the Promised Land. We find Moses reacting despondently and God angrily. How would we compare the repercussions of the respective crises recounted in the two Sidrot?

When the Israelites murmured against Moses and Aaron in their demoralized state of mind at the report of the spies, we find the two leaders "falling on their faces" (14:5), overwhelmed by despondency and shame. When God furiously declares His desire to destroy His people and to construct a new nation through Moses and his seed, the leader regains his composure and forthwith pleads before God to spare His people and to forgive them.

In our Sidra, too, Moses falls upon his face (16:4) but it seems that it is less in despair than in indignation. Moses' anger is evident when he turns to God and says, "Pay no regard to their presentation" (16:15). His leadership had been challenged, and a showdown was inevitable. Only God would show where the mantle of leadership was placed. His anger is levelled however only at the leaders of mutiny, for when God is again ready to punish the entire people, Moses and Aaron "fall upon their faces" and implore Him, "Source of the breath of all flesh! When one man sins, will you be wrathful with the whole community?" (16:22). Q These Hebrew words,—*Talit Shekulo Tekhalet*—טלית שכלו חכלת—which mean literally, a Tallit that is entirely made of blue," have become the popular expression for the "holier-than-thou" hypocrite. How did this originate?

A. From a Midrashic elaboration of Qorah's confrontation with Moses.

Qorah began by attempting to make Moses appear ridiculous in the eyes of the people. He had garments made entirely of blue wool for his two hundred and fifty men; and, thus arrayed, he and his company appeared before Moses and asked him whether these garments required fringes. Moses answered, "Yes." Qorah replied, "The blue wool of which the entire garments is made does not make it ritually correct; yet, according to your direction, four threads would!" (Hertz's foreword to the Sidra, p. 638)

HUQQAT—BALAQ

July 10, 1976 (Huqqat on July 3 and Balag on July 10 in Israel)

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 283—297

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 652—682

Edom in Jewish History

1. In the Sidra we find the Israelites taking a very circuitous route to reach Canaan, the Promised Land. At the end of the forty year sojourn in the desert, the Israelites are again on the move, intending to flank Canaan and reach it from across the Jordan from the east. In order to get to their destination, they needed to pass through the territories of Edom, Moab and Sihon. They appealed to their kinsmen, the Edomites, who were descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob, to permit them passage through their land (20:14—21), but they were unalterably

repudiated. This refusal forced the Israelites to make a greater circle around Edom which increased the difficulties of the journey. Who were the Edomites in history?

2. Edom occupied the Negev area south of the Dead Sea, contiguous to the territory of Judah. It extended as far south as our present Elath and east into present Jordan. Archeology has as yet found nothing of the Edomite period. What we know of it is from historical sources of the countries around it.

3. During the Israelites' settlement period in Canaan, as well as during the monarchy, we find a number of warlike confrontations of Judah with Edom, and during most of the period the latter remained under the control of Judah.

4. During the Hasmonean period, the Idumeans, formerly Edom, were forced into conversion, the only such compulsory conversion recorded in Jewish history. Eventually, an Idumean came to rule over all of Palestine and the Jews. Antipater founded the Idumean dynasty, and he was followed by Herod, whose reign was one of terror for the Jews.

5. In Talmudic times the name Edom was used as a disguised synonym for Roman imperialism and harsh subjugation. In the Middle Ages, the term Edom became the concealed substitute for Christians and the Church as the result of Jewish persecution.

PINEHAS

July 17, 1976

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 297—307

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 686—698

Q. Why would the Bible single out Pinehas for praise when he took the law into his own hands and slew Zimri and Cozbi (as related at the end of the previous Sidra and then continued at the beginning of this Sidra)?

A. Zimri, a prince of the tribe of Simeon, and Cozbi, the daughter of a Midianite nobleman, committed a shameless sexual act in the sight of Moses and all Israel. Their flaunted action was a cynical manifestation of their disregard for law and common decency, a consequence of a plan adopted by the Midianites, on the advice of their prophet Balaam, to entice the Israelites into their ways of idolatry and immorality. By his decisive action Pinehas halted the moral plague that threatened to destroy the character of Israel. He was, therefore, rewarded by being granted "the covenant of peace" for his righteous zeal and fearless action.

Q. The first case of women's rights is recorded in this Sidra. What was the occasion?

A. (Ch. 27:1—11). The question of inheritance in a family of daughters only.

Q. What is the origin of the term Semicha (meaning "ordination")?

A. *Lay thine hand upon him* (Ch. 27:18). A symbolic action to show the transference of his authority to Joshua. From this Hebrew word is derived the noun *Semicha*, the act of admission in the Talmudic age to the rights and duties of a Rabbi—ordination. In modern times, when ordination in the olden sense has lapsed the certificate of admission to the Rabbinate is still called *Semicha*, as well as by the more general designation *Hattarath Horaah* — permission to render decisions on ritual question.

MATTOT—MAS'E

July 24, 1976

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 307—320

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 702—724

City Planning and the Levitical Cities:

(a) Forty-eight cities were to be set aside for the Levites to dwell therein. It will be recalled that the land of Canaan was apportioned to the twelve tribes, exclusive of the tribe of Levi. The Levites and the Kohanim within the tribe served the Sanctuary, and were supported by the tithes (*Maaser* and *Teruma*) given by the Israelite farmers. The Levites thus became urban dwellers primarily. In addition to their dwellings within the cities, the Levites were granted suburban pasture land for their cattle.

(b) Six cities from among the forty-eight were designated as cities of refuge, three on each side of the Jordan. These served as places of asylum to shelter the accidental homicide. Levitical cities were chosen because they were regarded as having a sacred character and thus would not be invaded by any family or tribe seeking vengeance.

Cities of Refuge and Homicide:

(a) The asylum for refuge was applicable only in the case of involuntary manslaughter. In primitive society, if someone was murdered, it was the duty of his family to "redeem" the family honor by avenging his death. The Biblical legislation took the decision of the guilt or innocence of the slayer out of the hands of the avenging family and placed it within the jurisdiction of an impartial tribunal. Thus, a slayer was protected from mob rule until he stood "before the congregation for judgment" (35:12, 24).

(b) The law of refuge was applicable for both the Israelite and the non-Israelite resident alien. All men, regardless of national origin, were safe before the law.

(c) Unlike some shrines in ancient Greece and Rome which, by giving asylum to murderers, were schools of crime, the cities of refuge could only secure the

safety of persons committing unintentional homicide. The willful murderer did not find "sanctuary" in the city of refuge.

(d) In the case of the accidental homicide, the accused found refuge in these cities by staying there until the death of the high priest. The asylum, in this instance, is not only a place of protection, but of expiation. According to the Talmud, the condemned man must not leave the city of refuge under any circumstances since the consciousness of having taken a human life, though accidentally, must never be out of the mind of the taker of life.

(e) The death of the high priest would be equivalent today to amnesty granted when a new king or president takes over the leadership of the country.

THE BOOK OF DEVARIM – DEUTERONOMY

DEVARIM (Shabbat Hazon)

July 31, 1976

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp.323–330

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 736–749

Q. Was Israel truly a "land flowing with milk and honey"?

A. Yes, indeed. Even the timid and demoralizing spies conceded that (see Chapter 1:25). The neglect of the centuries turned it into a disease ridden land, and made its soil derelict. The restoration of the State of Israel in our day, and the reclamation of the soil together with the reconquest of the Negev, have proved that soil and climate were good and favorable for cultivation, and the land was capable of sustaining a far greater population than was dreamed of in the days when Britain was the Mandatory Power.

Q. Why didn't Israel make war against Edom, Ammon and Moab?

A. These were kindred people. Besides, and more important, see Hertz p. 743 footnote 5.

Q. What was the justification for engaging the Amorites and Bashanites in battle?

A. See Chapter 2:31–37 and Chapter 3:1–11. See also Hertz p. 833, footnote entitled, "Banning the Cabaabites." What is your opinion?

Q. On what basis did the two and a half tribes (Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh) get their inheritance on the eastern side of the Jordan River?

A. See Hertz on Chapter 3:12–22, pp. 748–9. Did these tribes keep faith?

Q. It has been said that monotheism is an intolerant religion because it has no sympathy for those who believe in other gods. Is that true?

A. Read Hertz's essay on Religious Tolerance, page 759.

Q. Is it not clear from chapter 4:6 that the statutes of Moses are original and not borrowed?

A. Absolutely. As S.D. Luzzato points out in his commentary, had Moses borrowed his laws from the Egyptians (as Egyptologists like James Breasted insisted right up to modern days) or from the Babylonians (as Assyriologists like Frank Delitzsch insisted also right up to the present) then surely the contemporaries of Moses would have known this better than we. How, then, could Moses be so foolish and so brazen as to pull off such a deception and expect the nations of the earth to praise Israel as a wise and understanding people? Would not the contrary have been the case? Would not the world look with scorn and contempt upon a people that takes over the laws of others and then tries to pass them off as their own as original with them? The certainty which Moses asserts that the laws from God were sure to win the admiration of the nations is convincing proof that with them, something new came into the world.

Q. If idol worship is so offensive to God, why would He drive His people from their land when it would only mean they would be forced to bend the knee to foreign gods to survive?

A. There is a world of difference between serving other and false gods out of *choice* or out of *compulsion*. When our people went into exile and were forced to bow down to idols, they found this so repellent that it helped cure them of this base habit. So when they returned to rebuild their national life during the second commonwealth, idolatry disappeared from their society, and a theocratic state was built in which God's law became the paramount law of the land.

Questions for discussion:

1) Moses' stress on remembrance recalls the aphorism of the Ba'al Shem Tov – "Remembrance is the secret of the Redemption." What does this mean to you? Compare it with statement of George Santayana that "those who forget history are condemned to repeat it."

2) Is remembrance the same as total recall or selective recall? What is the difference?

3) Why are amnesia victims the most sorrowful ones in society? Is there any connection between self-forgetting and self hatred?

4) There are two methods that are generally used to restore memory to amnesia victims. One is the method of "shock therapy." The other is the method of "recall through familiar associations." How does this apply to those who lost the memory of their Jewish origins and destiny?

RE'E

August 21, 1976

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 347-356

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 799-818

Q. Does Chapter 11:26-29 mean that man has absolute freedom of will?

A. No. Man is severely limited in many areas. He can choose neither his parents, his body, his color, his intellectual, spiritual artistic gifts, nor the society into which he is born and raised early in life. He is limited by the physical laws and social forces that govern his life. The world can drown a man, burn him, frustrate his hopes and dash his dreams. So there are many, many ways in which a person is conditioned. But in the area of moral freedom, then no matter how strong and overwhelming the world may be, he is sovereign. He can do good and shun evil, if that is what he wants to do; he can choose truth over falsehood, compassion over cruelty, beauty over ugliness, honor over shame, speak or remain silent.

When a child is born, says the Talmud, the angel appointed over birth takes the impregnated seed, and, placing it before the throne of the Almighty, asks, "The child that will come from this seed, will it be rich or poor, strong or weak, male or female, tall or short?" But it never asks: "Will it be righteous or wicked?" God Himself cannot answer that since the choice lies with the unborn embryo.

A modern writer who was an agnostic all his life nevertheless put the thought the same way in an idiom moderns can grasp. He wrote, "Consciousness in itself is a quality distinguishing men from dead matter. If they have one thing different from dead matter, why not have another, free will? By free will I mean that they do not, for example, obey the first law of motion, or, at least, that the direction, in which the energy they contain, is employed depends not entirely on external circumstances. Moreover, it seems impossible to imagine that man, the great man, with his reason, his knowledge of the universe, and his ideas of right and wrong; man, with his emotions, his love and hate, and his religion, that this man should be a mere perishable chemical compound, whose character and his influence for

good or evil, depend solely and entirely on the particular motions of the molecules of the brain, and that all the greatest men have been great by reason of some one molecule hitting upon or against some other a little oftener than in other men. Does not this seem utterly incredible and must not one be mad who believes in such absurdity?" (Autobiography of Bertrand Russell, pp. 63–64).

SHOFETIM

August 28, 1976

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 356–363

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 820–835

Q. What is the difference between a priest and a prophet?

A. See the essay by Ahad Ha'am in his "Selected Essays," translated and edited by Leon Simon, entitled "Priest and Prophet," pp. 125–138. Also the Essay on "Moses" in the same book, pp. 306–329.

Q. What are the required qualities for a true prophet?

A. Moses Maimonides in his "Guide of the Perplexed" section 2, Chapter 36, lays down three criteria:

- 1) A highly developed rational faculty.
- 2) A high standard of moral perfection.
- 3) A highly perfected imagination.

KI-TEZE

September 4, 1976

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 363–370

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 840–857

Q. Was capital punishment practiced in Biblical days?

A. Yes. Offenders were put to death in one of four ways — stoning, burning, by the sword, and strangulation. However, by the time of the Second Commonwealth, the accused were surrounded with so many protective safeguards in the Law, that it became extremely difficult to get a conviction. The Talmud states that if once in seven years a court sentenced a man to die, it was a murderous court. Others said that even when judges acted thusly once in seventy years, it was a murderous court. The spirit and thrust of Judaism have been against the application of capital punishment. In modern Israel, capital punishment is forbidden except in the one instance when someone is convicted of having been party in the attempt to destroy the Jewish people during the days of Hitler.

The Torah (J.P.S. Edition) pp. 370—379

Hertz Pentateuch pp. 859—873

Q. Israel was driven from the Holy Land twice; once in 586 B.C.E. at the hands of the Babylonians; and once in 70 C.E. at the hand of the Romans. Were both instances a sign of the sinfulness of the people for which exile came as a punishment?

A. This is the classic view of the Tradition. Because the people could see that the calamities that came upon them in the sixth century B.C.E. were due to their moral shortcomings, and not to the superior might of their enemies, they could regard the Assyrians and Babylonians as tools in the hands of God, brought to smite them for their sins. But when the enemy's historic purpose would be over, he would disappear and the children of Israel, cleansed of their sin, would be restored. Thus the conqueror had his own evil purposes, to pillage, plunder and subdue. At the same time without knowing it, he was in the hands of God, who was using him for His higher purposes of purification, so that His people, grown penitent, would be restored. See Jeremiah, Chapter 2:13 and Chapter 9:11—15 for the indictment of the people. See also Isaiah Chapter 10:5-19 for a glowing description of the enemies of Israel being but a tool of God's wrath who will one day have to pay for their cruel treatment of God's people. Jeremiah states the nature of Israel's sin in the 6th Century B.C.E. The Talmud states that in the First Century C.E., it was causeless, internal hatred.

How shall the tragedy of European Jewry in the 20th Century be viewed? Was Hitler "the rod of God's wrath?" Then it means imputing a terrible sinfulness to the victims not warranted by the historic facts, and a cruelty of God not consistent with His mercifulness. Shall we reject the traditional explanation for Jewish suffering? Then we play into the hands of Hitler, and acknowledge the victory of his evil intentions over one-third of our people. Perhaps the way out of this moral dilemma is to state that man is free to wreak mischief as well as to do good. And when great, enormous power in a technological society is wedded to ultimate evil, the mischief that can be done is without parallel in history. God can use even the most diabolic intentions of men and most hideous deeds to turn them eventually to some higher purpose He has for man. Thus out of the tragedy in Europe came the birth of Israel. That does not mean that we are to thank God for Hitler. It means that we can thank God who can salvage some good from the worst of evils.

Q. What is the great lesson in the sublime words in Chapter 30:11—14?

A. In the search for truth, a man must not look to the heavens, nor in far off places. He is to use his reason and walk by its light, and he must never extinguish it.

The Talmud relates a beautiful story to illustrate this (Baba Maziah 59b): A dispute broke out between Rabbi Eliezer and the members of the Academy headed by Rabbi Joshua. Rabbi Eliezer was all alone against the others. A stubborn man, he held firmly to his position. Pointing to the carob tree just outside the Academy, he exclaimed, "If the law is on my side, let the carob tree be uprooted from its place." Scarcely had the word left his mouth than a noise was heard from without. When the sages looked out, they saw the tree lying 100 feet away from its former place with its roots exposed. But they refused to accept the testimony of the tree. Rabbi Eliezer persisted and said, "If the law is as I say, let waters flowing down from the mountain tops reverse their courses." When they did, the members of the Academy again refused to pay heed. Rabbi Eliezer went on, "Let the walls of this Academy cave in and thus support my position." When the walls began to fall in Rabbi Joshua rose to his feet and shouted angrily, "Halt! What business have you in the discussions and disputes of scholars?" Whereupon, says the Talmud, the walls remained curved. Out of respect to Rabbi Eliezer they didn't straighten out, and out of respect to Rabbi Joshua they didn't fall in.

Finally, in desperation, Rabbi Eliezer turned heavenward and cried out, "Oh Heavenly Voice, speak Thou out in my favor." Suddenly, a Heavenly Voice could be heard loud and clear, "Rabbi Eliezer is right. The law is exactly as he has stated it." Undeterred and unintimidated, Rabbi Joshua rose on his feet and pointing a finger towards heaven, said, quoting the verse in Deuteronomy, 'The Law is not in heaven,' "it has already been given to man at Sinai, and man is endowed with reason to arrive at truth through the use of it. Not even a Heavenly Voice can contravene reason." Later, continues the Talmud, when Elijah reported to God what had happened on earth, and about the rebelliousness of the sages against a Heavenly Voice, God smiled and said, "My sons have conquered me, my sons have conquered me." Such is the supremacy of reason as taught in Judaism.

Q. Chapter 32:18 states: "Of the Rock that begot thee thou wast unmindful, and didst forget God that bore thee." The question was once asked, "Why the repetition?" Naturally if one is unmindful he will forget. Is there any significance in such repetition when the Bible is known for its economy of language?

A. The Dubner Maggid once answered this by means of a parable. A man was once plagued by many creditors and they made life miserable for him. He consulted a friend of his and asked him what to do to get rid of them. His wise friend said, "Pretend you are sick, and they will stop bothering you." He did so, and sure enough they stopped coming around. After several weeks when the debtor did not seem to be getting better, the creditors began pressing him all over again. He summoned his friend and asked him what to do now. "Make believe," advised his friend, "that as a result of your illness you lost your voice, and you can't talk." "Capital idea," he said, and straightaway he did just that. And it worked.

Now it happened that the friend was also a creditor. When all the others were dispersed, he came to his "sick" friend and demanded payment. But the "sick man" pretended he couldn't talk, and pointed to his throat that he had lost his voice. "Don't start that business with me," said the friend. "Are you trying to use against me the very counsel I gave you with which to get rid of your other creditors?" In the same way, God speaks to man and says, "I gave you the power to forget. Were it not for the fact that you can forget your troubles, defeats, misfortunes and disasters, you couldn't possibly survive. And now you try to use the power of forgetting to forget Me?"

Q. Scripture states the Law came to Moses from God at Sinai. We reaffirm that every time the Torah is raised in the synagogue following the weekly reading. How do we know that Moses wasn't the author of the Torah but that he imputed it to God in order to give it more authority?

Some suggested thoughts: There are doctrines in the Pentateuch that simply could not have been arrived at through reason or intuition. The supreme worth and dignity of man are not the product of logic. Reason and logic can be used, and have been so used, to justify and defend the degradation and oppression of man by man. Not even the classic Greek thinkers who reached heights of reason and logic, never exceeded by later generations, could picture the ideal society

without the institution of slavery and the concomitant degradation of man (See Plato's "Republic"). Reason could not bring men to a vision of a perfected society without human bondage. Unshakable optimism which Scriptures communicates, is not a child of reason that can just as easily persuade him of incurable pessimism (witness Schopenhauer and the modern secular existentialists and determinists — Camus, Derrematt and others). There are other great ideas and concepts that have gone into the shaping of civilized society that had to have had their origin in a source beyond the heart and mind of man.

Furthermore, how can anyone even suggest that Moses and the later prophets were either deceivers or self-deluded leaders? The teachings they let loose on the world have successfully withstood the test of time and the attacks of critics. They have been validated by history while theories and systems of thought of human origin have either slept away the centuries under the sands of antiquity or have had their day and have passed into history.

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TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

With these pages we are continuing the second triennial Bible reading calendar, beginning with the first chapter of Joshua and concluding with the Book of Chronicles at the end of the third year. The sequence of the daily chapters is interrupted in order to allow for the readings connected with the Sidra of the Week and the holidays.

May 1976				May—June 1976			
אייר תשלי				סיון תשלי			
S	1	שבת ראש חודש	א קדושים	Su	30	Isaiah 28	א
Su	2	Isaiah 8	ב	M	31	Isaiah 29	ב
M	3	Isaiah 9	ג	T	1	Isaiah 30	ג
T	4	Isaiah 10	ד	W	2	Isaiah 31	ד
W	5	Isaiah 11	ה יום העצמאות	Th	3	ערב שבועות	ה
Th	6	Isaiah 12	ו	F	4	שבועות	ו
F	7	אמור	ז	Sa	5	שבועות	ז
Sa	8	אמור	ח	Su	6	Isaiah 32	ח
Su	9	Isaiah 13	ט	M	7	Isaiah 33	ט
M	10	Isaiah 14	י	T	8	Isaiah 34	י
T	11	Isaiah 15	יא	W	9	Isaiah 35	יא
W	12	Isaiah 16	יב	Th	10	Isaiah 36	יב
Th	13	Isaiah 17	יג	F	11	נשא	יג
F	14	בהר	יד	Sa	12	נשא	יד
Sa	15	בהר	טו	Su	13	Isaiah 37	טו
Su	16	Isaiah 18	טז	M	14	Isaiah 38	טז
M	17	Isaiah 19	יז	T	15	Isaiah 39	יז
T	18	Isaiah 20	יח ליל בעומר	W	16	Isaiah 40	יח
W	19	Isaiah 21	יט	Th	17	Isaiah 41	יט
Th	20	Isaiah 22	כ	F	18	בהעלתך	כ
F	21	בחקתי	כא	Sa	19	בהעלתך	כא
Sa	22	בחקתי	כב	Su	20	Isaiah 42	כב
Su	23	Isaiah 23	כג	M	21	Isaiah 43	כג
M	24	Isaiah 24	כד	T	22	Isaiah 44	כד
T	25	Isaiah 25	כה	W	23	Isaiah 45	כה
W	26	Isaiah 26	כו	Th	24	Isaiah 46	כו
Th	27	Isaiah 27	כז	F	25	שלח לך	כז
F	28	במדבר	כח יום ירושלים	Sa	26	שלח לך	כח
Sa	29	במדבר	כט	Su	27	Isaiah 47	כט
				M	28	Isaiah 48	ל

TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

June—July 1976			תמוז תשל"ו	July—Aug 1976			מנחם אב תשל"ו
T	29	Isaiah 49	א	W	28	Jeremiah 4	א
W	30	Isaiah 50	ב	Th	29	Jeremiah 5	ב
Th	1	Isaiah 51	ג	F	30	דברים	ג
F	2	קרח	ד	Sa	31	שבת חזון דברים	ד
Sa	3	קרח	ה	Su	1	Jeremiah 6	ה
Su	4	Isaiah 52	ו	M	2	Jeremiah 7	ו
M	5	Isaiah 53	ז	T	3	Jeremiah 8	ז
T	6	Isaiah 54	ח	W	4	Jeremiah 9	ח
W	7	Isaiah 55	ט	Th	5	מגילת איכה צום תשעה באב	ט
Th	8	Isaiah 56	י	F	6	ואחחוק	י
F	9	חקת - בלק	יא	Sa	7	שבת נחמו ואחחוק	יא
Sa	10	חקת - בלק	יב	Su	8	Jeremiah 10	יב
Su	11	Isaiah 57	יג	M	9	Jeremiah 11	יג
M	12	Isaiah 58	יד	T	10	Jeremiah 12	יד
T	13	Isaiah 59	טו	W	11	Jeremiah 13	טו
W	14	Isaiah 60	טז	Th	12	Jeremiah 14	טז
Th	15	Isaiah 61	יז צום י"ז בתמוז	F	13	עקב	יז
F	16	פינחס	יח	Sa	14	עקב	יח
Sa	17	פינחס	יט	Su	15	Jeremiah 15	יט
Su	18	Isaiah 62	כ	M	16	Jeremiah 16	כ
M	19	Isaiah 63	כא	T	17	Jeremiah 17	כא
T	20	Isaiah 64	כב	W	18	Jeremiah 18	כב
W	21	Isaiah 65	כג	Th	19	Jeremiah 19	כג
Th	22	Isaiah 66	כד	F	20	ראה	כד
F	23	מטות - מסעי	כה	Sa	21	ראה	כה
Sa	24	מטות - מסעי	כו	Su	22	Jeremiah 20	כו
Su	25	Jeremiah 1	כז	M	23	Jeremiah 21	כז
M	26	Jeremiah 2	כח	T	24	Jeremiah 22	כח
T	27	Jeremiah 3	כט	W	25	Jeremiah 23	כט
				Th	26	Jeremiah 24	ל

TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

Aug—Sept 1976			אלול תשל"ו	Sept—Oct 1976			תשרי תשל"ו
F	27	שופטים	א	Sa	25	ראש השנה	א
Sa	28	שופטים	ב	Su	26	ראש השנה	ב
Su	29	Jeremiah 25	ג	M	27	Jeremiah 45	ג צום גדליה
M	30	Jeremiah 26	ד	T	28	Jeremiah 46	ד
T	31	Jeremiah 27	ה	W	29	Jeremiah 47	ה
W	1	Jeremiah 28	ו	Th	30	Jeremiah 48	ו
Th	2	Jeremiah 29	ז	F	1	האוינו	ז
F	3	כי תצא	ח	Sa	2	האוינו שבת שובה	ח
Sa	4	כי תצא	ט	Su	3	ערב יום כפור	ט
Su	5	Jeremiah 30	י	M	4	יום כפור	י
M	6	Jeremiah 31	יא	T	5	Jeremiah 49	יא
T	7	Jeremiah 32	יב	W	6	Jeremiah 50	יב
W	8	Jeremiah 33	יג	Th	7	Jeremiah 51	יג
Th	9	Jeremiah 34	יד	F	8	ערב סכות	יד
F	10	כי תבוא	טו	Sa	9	סכות	טו
Sa	11	כי תבוא	טז	Su	10	סכות	טז
Su	12	Jeremiah 35	יז	M	11	חול המועד סכות	יז
M	13	Jeremiah 36	יח	T	12	חול המועד סכות	יח
T	14	Jeremiah 37	יט	W	13	חול המועד סכות	יט
W	15	Jeremiah 38	כ	Th	14	חול המועד סכות	כ
Th	16	Jeremiah 39	כא	F	15	הושענא רבה	כא
F	17	נצבים - וילך	כב	Sa	16	שמיני עצרת	כב
Sa	18	נצבים - וילך	כג	Su	17	שמחת תורה	כג
Su	19	Jeremiah 40	כד	M	18	Jeremiah 52	כד
M	20	Jeremiah 41	כה	T	19	Ezekiel 1	כה
T	21	Jeremiah 42	כו	W	20	Ezekiel 2	כו
W	22	Jeremiah 43	כז	Th	21	Ezekiel 3	כז
Th	23	Jeremiah 44	כח	F	22	בראשית	כח
F	24	ערב ראש השנה	כט	Sa	23	בראשית	כט
				Su	24	Ezekiel 4	ל

עשה תורתך קבע

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דור לדור

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