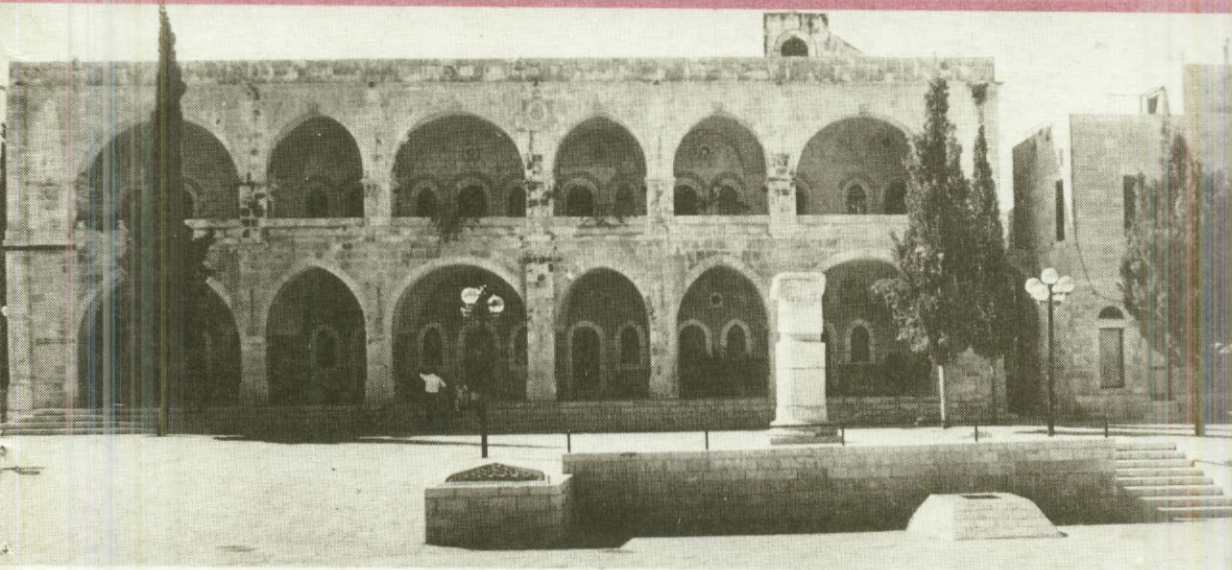


דור לדור
DOR Le DOR
Our Biblical Heritage



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REVISIONIST INTELLECTUAL HISTORY AND THE BIBLE

BY RICHARD A. FREUND

The study of the Bible is complicated by many obstacles, not the least of which is the language and its interpretation. Yet the language of the Bible and its interpretation is precisely that which makes Bible study interesting and difficult. One would think that with the thousands of people and years involved in Bible interpretation throughout the ages, Bible study would be easy to approach. The opposite is the case, even for the most advanced student.

One question which emerges in modern Biblical study is "original" or "original context" versus "interpreted" meaning. Since the Bible serves as more than *just* a book written for a temporal setting, but rather is seen as a guide to Divine cause and effect, sometimes "original meaning" or the "original context" of the Bible as a document of record of an ancient near eastern setting is subjugated to a later "interpreted meaning". "Interpreted meaning" may in some cases help illumine the "original meaning or context" but in other cases an original, near eastern setting or context may be obscured. In this article, we will limit ourselves to a few examples of "interpreted meaning" or as we shall call them: Revisionist Intellectual History (RIH), and attempt to contrast them with their "original" context and intellectual setting.

Revisionist Intellectual History (RIH) occurs when a reality, historical or intellectual setting of a seminal idea or text changes (because of changing influences or new physical location) and an attempt is made by later interpreters of this idea or text to bring the original idea or text into accordance with a new reality, historical or intellectual setting.¹ The importance of such a process cannot be underestimated, since through such "re-interpretations" of a seminal idea or text,

1. So, for example, Edward Bernstein, in his work, *Evolutionary Socialism* tried to bring 19th century Marxist doctrines into accordance with changing late 19th century / early 20th reality of Socialism / Capitalism.

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the inherent authority (and sometimes antiquity) of the idea or text is maintained while at the same time this inherent authority is given added credence to a later idea which is viewed as acceptable but which lacks authority (and sometimes antiquity). The inherent structure or form of the text or idea is therefore used as the basis for interpretation (thus preserving the text or idea for future generations) while at the same time the acceptable interpretation is given greater force. The text or idea becomes a pretext or platform for launching acceptable interpretations which may be foreign to or unimagined by the original authors or context. Bible study is complicated and made more interesting by the existence of RIH. The following are a number of examples and their analysis.

The first example of RIH that we shall investigate concerns the notorious "rebellious son" of Deuteronomy 21:18-21. The rebellious son is condemned to death by "the elders of the city" and is stoned according to the Biblical account. This law has an ancient Near Eastern parallel in the Code of Hammurabi.² The implications of this law appear to be similar between the Bible and other Ancient Near Eastern codes.³ Early Tannaitic-Rabbinic sources devote tens of pages to explaining, fine-tuning, defining and clearly limiting the possibility of capricious application of this law. Attempts are made to limit the law until it is almost effectively eliminated. So, for example, the Rabbis looked for ways of defining the concept of "rebellious" (using rules developed by different schools of rabbinic interpretation⁴) to mean "a glutton and a drunkard"⁵ This definition apparently ignores the Deuteronomic definition of rebellious as a son "*who will not listen to the voice of his father and the voice of his mother*" (Deut. 21:18). This general rule is revised in the Mishna and in Tannaitic literature to reflect a completely different criterion. This new criterion of "glutton and drunkard" is then expanded systematically to prevent the possibility of it occurring. So, the rabbis further

2. Pritchard, J.B., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts to the Old Testament*, Princeton University Press, 1969, pp. laws 168-9.

3. Powis Smith, J.M., *The Origins and the History of Hebrew Law*, Chicago University Press, 1931, kpp. 50ff.

4. Linguistic comparison (*gezerah shavah*) — listed as one of the 13 methods used by the tannaitic school of Rabbi Yishmael; attached opening to Sifra (Torat Kohanim) on Leviticus (linguistic comparison with Proverbs 23:20).

5. Mishna, Sanhedrin 8:1.

define “glutton and drunkard” in terms of impossibly large quantities of food and drink,⁶ eaten under difficult conditions,⁷ and during relatively specific time constraints⁸ and limited to a rather short period of the “son’s” life.⁹ Despite meticulous and detailed attempts to “interpret” or revise the “rebellious son” into oblivion,¹⁰ other rabbis felt it necessary to take the final radical revisionist position. Rabbi Shimon, for example, clearly states:¹¹ “the rebellious son never was and never will be”. This radical revisionist position, however, was not shared by his colleagues; so Rabbi Yonathan states: “...I saw him (the “rebellious son”) and sat on his grave.”

From this example and the following example, one sees that the tendency of the rabbis was to revise Biblical law in light of changing ethical standards. Radical revisionism of Biblical texts usually reflects a great “gap” between the ethical setting of the Bible and its ancient Near Eastern context and the new setting of Judaism in a different historical period. Such examples of radical revisionism are reflected in the *Takanat Prozbol* by Hillel and Rabbi Yohanan’s abrogation of the “trial of ordeal” of the *Sotah*. In both cases, the gap between the ethical or historical setting of the Bible and the ethical and historical setting of the rabbis made outright abrogation or radical revisionism a necessity. In the case of the *Prozbol*, for example, the change from the agricultural setting of Deuteronomy 15 to the setting of the commercial world of Hillel necessitated this change.¹² In the case of the *Sotah* or “errant wife”, of Numbers 5:11–31, the changing view of woman in the ancient Near East and in the rabbinical evaluation of woman and the relationship of man to woman in general caused the need for this change.¹³

6. Mishna Sanhedrin 8:2, Babylonian Talmud 70a-b.

7. Mishna Sanhedrin 8:3, BT 71a.

8. BT Sanhedrin 68b–69a.

9. Ibid., 71b.

10. Mishna, Sanhedrin 8:4; Rabbi Yehuda states that the mother and father must be equal in height, appearance and voice! — ET Sanhedrin 71a.

11. Ibid.

12. Mishna Sheviit 10:3–4; See the explanation of H. Albeck on this Mishna in his Mishna commentary and in the “Additions” page 383. Also, BT Gitin 36b.

13. Compare the ritual of ANE in Pritchard, ANET, page 166, law 2 and page 171, law 132 with Numbers 5:11–13; See Mishna Sotah 9:9 for the apparent reason for the abrogation of the law.

This changing rabbinical view of woman, for example, also expressed itself in the radical revisionist tendency of “removing” woman from positions that the Bible clearly sanctions. In Judges 4:4-5 it is stated: *Devorah, a prophet, the wife of Lapidot, judged Israel at that time... and the Children of Israel came up to her for judgement.*

It would appear that in the ancient Near East the position of a woman or man as *Kahin* or judge was acceptable.¹⁴ This role, however, appears to be unacceptable to later revisionist rabbinical interpreters. In the later rabbinic legal system, women were not fit to judge or witness.¹⁵ The reasoning for this is not clearly stated in the places where their disqualification is mentioned.¹⁶ More important is the fact that *all* talmudic interpreters selectively “forgot” or revised the Biblical text of Judges 4:4-5. Not until the Medieval Tosafot commentators¹⁷ is there a mention made to the obvious lapse of the Talmudic sources. The Tosafot, however, clearly show us revisionist intellectual history by developing three different methods for bringing the Biblical reality into accordance with the rabbinical reality. They state: a) that Devorah did not actually judge (even though the biblical text clearly states: “judged Israel”... “and the Children of Israel came up to her for judgement”), but rather taught others to judge; b) Women may judge but may not witness (at least bringing half of the statement into accordance with their reality); c) that Devorah may have been *de facto* a judge for the people despite her *de jure* disqualification. This same changing reality and revisionist attitude concerning women apparently led to the rabbinic disqualification of women as Jewish sovereigns¹⁸ despite the fact that Josephus clearly states that women were accepted as Jewish sovereigns in an early historical setting.¹⁹

While the aforementioned types of revisionist reflect ethical gaps of large

14. See in *Encyclopedia Mikra'it*, Mosad Bialik, 1950, Vol. 2, article: DEVORAH, page 584; see for the definition of the judge: Albright, S.P., *From Stone Age to Christianity*. John Hopkins Press, 1940, pp. 216–218.

15. So, for example: Mishna Niddah 6:4, Shevuot 4:1; BT Shevuot 30a; Maimonides, *Mishneh-Torah*. Hilchot Edut 9:2.

16. See, for example, Shevuot 30a.

17. Tosafot Niddah 50a, s.v. “kol hakasher”.

18. Sifrei — Devarim, ed. Finkelstein, Tosafot Shevuot 29b, s.v. “shevuat”, page 208, 157.

19. Salime-Alexandra; *Antiquities XII*, 15–16.

proportions, other revisionist tendencies are apparent in rabbinic interpretation and other Jewish sources as philosophical and theological considerations in the non-Jewish world began to affect Judaism. One finds, for example, a "simple" law of damages from Exodus 21:22–23 transformed by revisionist considerations into a debate among Jewish sources as to the ethnicity of abortion. One reads (from the Hebrew Masoretic text): *When men strive together and hurt a woman with child so that there is a miscarriage, and yet no harm follows, the one who hurt shall be fined according as the woman's husband shall lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life...*

This law in both its context in the Bible and in the reality of the ancient Near Eastern codes²⁰ shows that the damage caused to the woman was evaluated and paid and if, however, the woman died, Lex Talionis was applied. Though the Tannaitic commentary, *Mechilta* on Exodus and the classical 12th century commentator, Rashi agree²¹ that the context of this section is clearly the damage to the woman, apparently, revisionism was already at work in the different translations and interpretations present in Jewish-Hellenistic works. The Septuaginta translates this section:

22: *When men strive together and hurt a woman with child so that the woman miscarry an unformed child, he shall pay according to the husband's account. 23: If the child is formed, he shall give life for life...*

Accordingly, it seems that the LXX translator went out of his way to translate according to the new philosophical categories and considerations of Hellenistic society.²² This new influence or category concerning the definition of human life and its evaluation is present in the writings of Philo,²³ Josephus²⁴, and rabbinic views that link foeticide with homicide.²⁵ Ultimately, the development of the

20. Pritchard, J.B., *ANNET*, p. 175, laws 195–214; also: *Festschrift zu Herman Cohens 70 Geburtstag* B. Cassirer, 1912, pp. 627 ff.

21. So Rashi to Exodus 21:22–23: basing himself on the *Mechilta*.

22. For an entire analysis of the problem see: Freund, R.A., "The Ethics of Abortion in Hellenistic Judaism", *HELIOS*, New Series, Vol. 10. 2, (Fall, 1983) pp. 125–139.

23. Philo, *De Vita Mosis*.

24. Josephus, *Antiquities* IV.33.287; also *Contra Apionem* II.24.202.

25. Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 57b.

foetus according to Greek categories²⁶ of *human versus other forms of life* affected the entire Jewish concept of abortion.²⁷ The importance of new philosophical categories and considerations and their influence upon revisionist interpretation is crucial. The newly imposed category and its implications, sometimes far beyond the actual words of the text, influence the reader that the words have no meaning except in light of the imposed category.

So, for example, when one reads the words in Genesis 1:1: *In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*, Rabbinic interpreters from the earliest period are concerned with (among other issues in this chapter) whether God created the world "out of nothing" (*creatio ex nihilo*) or if God had some type of primordial "matter" or substance which He used in creating the heavens and the earth. The Biblical text states only that "God created the heavens and the earth." The question is, therefore, why is there so much interest as to whether God created without help or using some pre-existent matter? Was this an original question or concern, or do we have another example of a superimposed category? In *Bereshit Rabbah*, for example, the Rabbis are apparently divided as to whether God created "ex nihilo" or from some pre-existent substance (and just how many!).²⁸ Jewish-Hellenistic sources appear to take one or the other position. Maccabees²⁹ and the Slavonic version of Enoch state³⁰ that God created "ex nihilo" while the Wisdom of Solomon and Philo hold differing views as to the "matter" used³¹ in creation and its continued existence.³² These Hellenistic positions as well as the later rabbinic opinions appear to be reading the text of Genesis as a point-counter-point debate of Greek concepts of Physics and

26. Plutarch, *De Placitis Philosophorum* 5.15.

27. So, for example, Rashi's view in BT Sanhedrin 72b s.v. "his head has come forth" views the foetus as "not complete human life". while Maimonides, *Mishne Torah*, Laws of Murder, 1.9 compares the foetus as a "person", "in pursuit of (the mother) to kill her".

28. In *Genesis Rabbah*: Views as to "pre-existent matter": 1:5: "Tohu and Bohu"; 1:4: "Six things preceded the creation of the world" (a different list is given in 1.8), while in *Genesis Rabbah* 1.3 appears the idea that God "alone" created the world!

29. II Maccabees 7.28.

30. Slavonic version of Enoch 24.2.

31. Wisdom of Solomon 11.17: "...out of unformed matter".

32. Philo, *On the Creation*, 61.170-5: "...Who made His work like Himself in its uniqueness, Who used up for the creation of the whole all the material that exists".

Metaphysics.³³ The fact that these Hellenistic texts seem to use standard Greek expressions of Greek physics and metaphysics immediately raises the problem of RIH. The question is, therefore: Has Greek physics and metaphysics had such an impact upon Jewish thought that they have totally revised the "original" context of the Bible?

The ancient Near Eastern parallels to the Biblical creation apparently lack any concept remotely similar to the later Greek categories of "ex nihilo" and "pre-existent matter" as they appear in the Greek studies of physics and metaphysics.³⁴ The apparent lack of categories in the "original" context did not stop the revisionists from imposing these categories not only upon Biblical interpretation but also influencing translations of Biblical texts. In the Aramaic "Palestinian" Targum to the Pentateuch it reads:³⁵ "In the beginning with Wisdom the Lord perfected the Heavens and the Earth".

Here, again, the idea that God created the Heavens and the Earth³⁶ with the help of some "pre-existent substance" (Wisdom) apparently had been influenced by the Greek categories of physical versus metaphysical creation. This same type of influence can be seen in the Greek translation attributed to Aquila.³⁷ The

33. Philo, for example, apparently accepts Plato (*Timaeus* 32c–33b) and Aristotle (*De Caelo* 1.8); See H.A. Wolfson, *Philo*, pp.300–305.

34. So, for example, the Akkadian Creation Epic, the Epic of Gilgamesh and the Egyptian Creation myths of Atum present a purely physical creation couched in sometimes overly descriptive physical terms: Pritchard, ANRT, pp. 3–4 ff, 60 ff, 501 ff; see also: Heidel, A., *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels*, pp. 81 ff.

35. Codex Vatican, (Neofiti 1) Makor Publishing, 1970. See the translation of Martin McNamara and Michael Maher in the critical edition of A.D. Macho (*Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas*, 1968, page 497).

36–37. See *Origenis Hexaplorum*, F. Fields ed., Clarendon Press, Vol. I, page 7, note 3 where Aquila's translation reads: "In the beginning God created WITH (*SUN*) the Heavens and with (*SUN*) the Earth". The translation uses the Greek preposition *SUN* paralleling the Hebrew direct object indicator *ET*, and then follows the preposition with a noun in the accusative case. The Greek preposition, *SUN*, however, in Greek is not usually followed by an accusative noun form and usually has the meaning "with". See Liddel-Scott dictionary s.v. *SUN*—, C; where this usage is classified as "peculiar".

Greek categories³⁸ of thought which influenced this RIH example are evident in early Christianity³⁹ and in Islam⁴⁰. Medieval Judaism⁴¹ went so far as to create a “credo” from this revisionist view. This leads us to the conclusion that revisionist intellectual historical tendencies can have crucial impact not only upon Judaism but other religions derived from the Bible and Judaism.

38. See, for example, Basil of Caesarea, *Aversus Eunomius* 1.4; Tatian, *Oratio Adversus Graecos*

39. Augustine, *Confessions* 12.7.

40. Koran, Sura, 21.30, 41.9–12. For analysis of the question see: Wensinck, A.J., *The Muslim Creed*, Introduction, and especially pp. 188–197 (Fikh Akbar II, article 5).

41. Crescas, *Or Adonai*, III Intro., sections 1–4. Maimonides, Introduction to 10th chapter, Mishna Sanhedrin.



The Victory Song of Deborah (Judges 11:34–40), by Gustave Doré

THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS

BY DAVID FAIMAN

INTRODUCTION

Two major problems present themselves in any attempt to unravel the route of the Exodus from Egypt as recounted in the Bible. First is the inescapable fact that the route passed through desert regions that were, and have remained, largely unpopulated. Consequently it is entirely possible that there was no uninterrupted local tradition that could preserve the names of many, or even most, of the stations.

Secondly, the Bible does not make clear to us what the actual route was, in the sense that more than a single account is given. Moreover, in the various accounts, different names sometimes appear and the order of several of the stations is unclear. This apparent textual ambiguity manifests itself in the following way.

The story of the Exodus is first given, or rather begun, in Ex.13:17, where we are told the events that occurred between the setting out from the land of Egypt and the arrival, in Ex.9:1, at Mount Sinai. Then follows a lengthy break in the narrative, until Num.10:33, when we learn of the events that happened from the time the Israelites left Mount Sinai until their arrival at the plains of Moab, in Num.22:1.

The second account is a terse listing of all the stations, in Num. 33, but here many new names are introduced.

A third, even more complicating, recapitulation of the route occurs in Deut.1–2 in which most of the Num. 33 names are omitted. In addition, some new ones are introduced but with little indication of their location relative to the places we had already been told of.

Finally, a fraction of the itinerary is listed in Deut. 10:6-7, in which some previously familiar names are distorted and in which we are given a completely different name for the place where Aaron died.

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In the light of these two major problems – the geographical and the textual – it is clear that any attempt to draw a route map of the Exodus can never be any more than mere speculation. Whatever route may once have been taken by our ancestors on their historic journey home is now irrevocably lost.

And yet the subject continues to be a source of fascination to Jews and Gentiles alike [1,2]. An enormous literature has been written on the various hypotheses regarding the route and doubtless many more books will appear. Indeed one might well wonder whether the urge to write such books might not, one day, form the subject of an interesting psychological study!

The purpose of the present essay is therefore not to present yet another hypothesis regarding the route itself, but rather, a certain logical approach to the problem of attempting to unravel the lost route. This new approach (which is remarkably absent in the existent literature) would aim at producing what one might refer to as a totally self-consistent route. “Totally self-consistent” is here taken to indicate a route that does not contradict *any* statement that appears in the Bible, or any fact, geographical, geological, botanical, etc., that modern knowledge of the region may reveal.

One might well question the value of such a totally self-consistent route in the light of our earlier insistence that the true route is irrevocably lost. The answer to such a question is no easy matter. Perhaps it too will reside in that yet unwritten psychological study on why people concern themselves with such matters. Or, perhaps it is a matter of parsimony; one at least among all the hypothesized routes ought to be totally self-consistent, if only for pedagogical reasons.

TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL APPROACHES

One can classify all such studies hitherto performed into two groups: “traditional” and “non-traditional”.

Traditional approaches discuss the route within the fundamental Jewish framework that the Bible contains no contradictions, only difficulties (for us). For example, if Num. 33:38 says that Aaron died on Hor Hahar and Deut. 10:6 says it happened at Moserah, then the traditional approach would attempt to reconcile these two statements, one way or another. Unfortunately, the traditional approach to the route of the Exodus ceased to be an intensive area of study many centuries ago. Furthermore the supreme exponents of this approach had no first hand knowledge of the geographical location involved and no maps to aid them.

The non-traditional approach, by contrast, regards the Bible as a collection of traditions written down at different times by different people and worked together by some editor or editors into a patchwork of, often, contradictory statements. Adherents to this doctrine attempt to identify what each considers to be the authentic part of the text and to use this to build theories without fear that the latter might be at variance with other statements in the Bible. Contemporary knowledge, philological, archaeological, etc., is available to back up these theories. The emphasis here is that the theory (a hypothesized route for the Exodus, for example) should not be at variance with any established piece of modern knowledge. The unfortunate problem with this approach is that "modern knowledge" has a long history of change and as each so-called scientific fact crumbles, there is a danger that so too will any theory which has attached itself thereto.

What appears to be absent, at least as regards ideas relating to the route of the Exodus, is an attempt to use the traditional approach — which at the very least is logically consistent — and to supplement it with the wealth of reliable knowledge (maps, etc.) that was not available to the great scholars of old.

Again it should be emphasized that this is only some kind of intellectual exercise. Should a totally self-consistent route emerge, it would still retain the status of mere speculation. However, Ibn Ezra disagreed with Rashi and yet Jewish scholarship progressed as a result of the labours of both. Palmer disagreed with Bartlet but modern archaeology owes much to both travellers. So perhaps it might not be an idle hope to expect that a totally self-consistent route for the Exodus would lead to a certain measure of enlightenment.

The methodology to be illustrated below may be likened to the following analogy. Suppose one were to try and reconstruct a London underground train map out of references to railway stations, occurring in various contemporary novels. Some stories would mention certain stations while omitting others. By reading enough novels one might be able to piece together a complete map of all the train stations. Ultimately, one would be in the situation of having to compare this composite map with an actual street map of London. Imagine, however, that the only street map available were from a 16th century print! Many names would only be barely recognizable and most would be absent. Yet in this analogy the

time span is a mere 400 years and we are talking about a continuously populated region.

With these motivating comments in mind let us now proceed to see how this kind of methodology might apply to the stations associated with the itinerary fragment in Deut.10:6-7, and what kind of new directions might evolve.

ובני ישראל נסעו מבארת בני יעקן מוסרה שם מת אהרן ויקבר שם ויכהן אלעזר בנו תחתיו. משם נסעו הגדגדה ומן הגדגדה יטבתה ארץ נחלי מים.

The Israelites journeyed from Be'erot Bene Ya'akan to Moserah, There Aaron died and was buried, Eleazar his son succeeding him as priest. From there they journeyed to Gudgodah, And from Gudgodah to Yotvatah, a land of brooks of water.

1. THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME KADESH BARNEA

Kadesh Barnea is an excellent example where the Bible and modern knowledge come together so as to leave little room for doubt as to its general location. In Num. 34:3-5 we are told that the southern boundary of Israel is an arc, extending from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, which passes via Kadesh Barnea. Furthermore archaeology in the region of 'Ein Qadeis and 'Ein el el Gudeivat presents ample evidence of Iron Age Israelite-type building structures [3], indicating the great importance of this oasis region, at least in Solomonic times. Indeed the only remaining problems pertain to what kind of archaeological remains one should expect to find which would typify the nomadic existence of the Israelites in the time of Moses, and whether one particular spring is referred to when the Bible uses the name Kadesh, for example (Gen. 14:7) **ויבאו אל עין קדש**. They came to the Spring of Judgement, which is Kadesh. or several springs.

Regarding this question, we may be guided by Ibn Ezra who, wishing to reconcile the statement in Deut. 10:6, that the Israelites travelled from Be'erot Bene Ya'akan to Moserah where Aaron died, with the previous two statements in the book of Numbers, that they travelled from Kadesh to Hor Hahar on the same occasion, simply equates Be'erot Bene Ya'akan with Kadesh (and Moserah with Hor Hahr – but more on this matter below).

Now, encouraged by our modern knowledge that the Kadesh region really does contain several springs, let us probe somewhat more deeply into Ibn Ezra's insight. For a place that occupied such a central position in the history of the

forty-years wandering (Deut. 1:46). *ותשבו בקדש ימים רבים כימים אשר ישבתם* *Many a day were the days you stayed at Kadesh*; the name Be'erot Bene Ya'akan is awkwardly long. It would have been natural to shorten it to Bene Ya'akan, a name we find in the itinerary at Num. 33:31. But this is also very long. Might it not perhaps have been further shortened to "Bene Ya"? Remarkably, if one opens the Septuagint at Num. 33:31, at the place which the Hebrew Bible calls Bene Ya'akan, one finds that the Jews who made the Greek translation wrote *Bavaia*. This indicates that there was a Jewish tradition for calling the place Bene Ya. Lastly one may speculate that Bene Ya became Barnea as a result of a possible philological relationship between the Hebrew "ben" and Aramaic "bar" or, perhaps, merely via an "intrusive R" in what must surely have been one of the most oft-mouthed names in all the 40 years of wandering.

2. THE LOCATION OF HOR HAHAR

Returning now to Ibn Ezra's other identification, namely of the names Hor Hahar (Num. 20:28 and 33:38 and also Deut. 32:50) and Moserah (Deut. 10:6), one notices that the main north-south route through the Kadesh Barnea region — the so-called Darb el Ghazza — crosses a wadi called "Mizeira" in Arabic, about 16 miles south of "Ein Qadeis". The similarity between this name and the Hebrew Moserah takes on an intriguing aspect if one considers two rather remarkable features of the mountain, at the foot of which Wadi Mizeira originates: Gebel 'Araif en Naqa.

In the first place, if any mountain in the region of the Negev Highlands stands out in prominence, even at a considerable distance, it must surely be 'Araif en Nāqa. For although not quite the highest peak in the region, it is by far the most "mountain-like". For example, the slightly taller peaks, Ramon, Loz, 'Araif and Saggi, are actually table mountains, and not at all apparent as peaks per se unless one stands close to them. By comparison, 'Araif en Nāqa (the name of which means "she-camel's hump") stands out like a prominent dome in the plane of Kadesh. Indeed, as one stands on the high plateau of Har Saggi and gazes westward across the Sinai peninsula, two of the most prominent sights are the green oasis of Kadesh Barnea, in the distance slightly to one's right and Gebel 'Araif en Nāqa, slightly to one's left. In fact, already in 1844 Trumbull [4] suggested identifying this mountain with Hor Hahar.

Secondly, the summit of Gebel 'Araif en Nāqa contains several tumuli [5]. Graves of this kind are found in many parts of Israel and have been dated, via their contents, back to the Bronze Age. This indicates that even in the days of Aaron there was already an ancient tradition for burying people on this mountain.

One thus sees that here too, by combining the traditional Jewish insistence that the Torah contains no contradictions, with modern knowledge that was not available to scholars of old (in this case, geographical, geomorphological and archaeological respectively), one arrives at an interesting hypothesis regarding the possible location of a lost biblical site.

3. THE LOCATION OF GUDGODAH

The next station en route, according to Deut. 10:7 was Gudgodah, a place that is not mentioned in the first telling of the story. Indeed, all we learn from Num. 21:4 is that the Israelites journeyed from Hor Hahar in the direction of the Red Sea, and no further place is named until they reached Ovot. (Num. 21:10).
 ויסעו מהר ההר דרך ים סוף לסבב את ארץ אדום *They journeyed from Hor Hahar, via the Red Sea, so as to by-pass the Land of Edom.*

The itinerary in Num. 33:41-43 does fill in some extra details between Hor Hahar and Ovot but omits mentioning Gudgodah at this point.

The story in Deut. 1-2 does not even mention the episode at Hor Hahar, but implies some kind of circulatory movement back and forth between Elat and Kadesh for many years: ונפן ונסע המדברה דרך ים סוף כאשר דבר ה' אלי ונסבב את הר שיעיר ימים רבים *We turned and journeyed into the wilderness via the Red Sea, as the Lord told me, And for many a day we encircled Mt. Seir.* (But more on this later).

It would thus seem that the general geographical direction of north to south that has emerged from our discussion of Kadesh Barnea and Hor Hahar is in accord with the other biblical passages and that, as such, it is reasonable to continue along the Darb el Ghazza in our quest for Gudgodah. It turns out that we need not look far, for as Simons [6] noticed, about 20 miles to the south of Gebel 'Araif en Nāqa the road crosses a wadi named "Khadākhid" in Arabic.

4. THE LOCATION OF YOTVAH

From Wadi Khadākhid onwards there is a problem. The Darb el Ghazza continues on and emerges at the Red Sea about 2 miles to the north of a place

named “Taba” in Arabic. There is indeed a well at this site but it is hard to think of the place as “a land with brooks of water”.

An alternative “Taba”, located in the vicinity of present-day Kibbutz Yotvata, is indeed a land with brooks of water, as witnessed by the agricultural success of the kibbutzim in this area. If this is the station referred to in the Bible as Yotvah, then it could have been reached via a camel track, marked on pre-1948 maps, which went south-east from the cistern called Thamilat Suweilima at the end of Wadi Khadākhid, to the hills overlooking Taba.

POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS

The above four examples indicate how, by assuming that the biblical text is non contradictory, one can shed some new light on the possible significance of various geographical locations. This point is strikingly made in the cases of Kadesh / Be’erot Bene Ya’akan and Hor Hahar / Moserah, but less so for Godgodah and Yotvah. One may notice, however, that the name of each place appears to have been preserved by the Arabic tradition:

- Kadesh = ‘Ein Qadeis
- Moserah = Wadi Mizeira
- Gudgodah = Wadi Khadākhid
- Yotvah = Taba,

and that each location is separated from its predecessor by about 20 miles – the amount of distance one might expect scouts to cover in a day or two before reporting back that the water situation would render camping a viable proposition at the next station.

Someone interested in the possibility of discovering the lost route might find a satisfying amount of self-consistency here, far more indeed than were one simply to try and identify biblical names with a random collection of Arabic place names – as has been tried, for example, in Saudi Arabia [7].

ANOTHER ‘ARAD?

The following speculation, in contrast with what has been discussed above, is on very shaky ground in that it is based only on the need to solve a biblical puzzle and possible Arabic cognate.

Of all biblical sites which have been revealed by archaeology, ‘Arad must surely be reckoned among the most secure [8]. But its very location, west of the Dead Sea, presents a most perplexing problem for the route of the Exodus. The

difficulty lies in the fact that, at the end of the period of mourning for Aaron, the king of 'Arad made war on the Israelites and, after some initial success, lost. The result was that the Israelites captured all of his cities (Num .21:3). But 'Arad is in the Land of Israel – Moses would have entered the Promised Land!

One should emphasize that this puzzle exists no matter where one tries to locate Hor Hahar. Our identification of this mountain, however, being to the south of Kadesh, may present a key to the solution of this puzzle. Suppose there were another 'Arad, nearby Hor Hahar, whose king objected to the Israelite's use of his precious water resources, or to their violation of his ancient burial site, of whatever is meant by "Atarim" in (Num .21:1): *כי בא ישראל דרך האתרים*:..... that Israel had come via the Atarim. If the Israelites had defeated him while on their way from Kadesh southward, it would have been natural for them to continue on their way to the Red Sea and they would not have prematurely reached their ultimate destination.

This speculation might not be too far fetched for two reasons. First, many place names in the Bible apply to more than a single location. Kadesh is but one example, its "twin" being in Galilee. Secondly, about 12 miles to the north-east of our Hor Hahar is a mountain pass named, in Arabic, Naqb 'Arod. The region between Gebel 'Areif en Nāqa and Naqb 'Arod contains several of the sparse water cisterns in the area and these might well have been a bone of contention between any king of 'Arod and a horde of thirsty strangers.

WHERE IS HORMAH?

If there was indeed another 'Arad in the vicinity of Kadesh, then this would help unify the fact that the area in which the cities of the king of 'Arad were located was renamed Hormah (Num. 21:1,3): *ויקרא שם המקום חרמה ויחרם אתהם: ואח עריהם* *He [Israel] annihilated them and their cities and named the place Hormah.* – the same place at which the Israelites were defeated at the time of the twelve spies episode (Num. 14:45): *ויורד העמלקי והכנעני ויכוּם ויכתוּם עד חרמה: ויצא האמרי ויכתו אתכם בשעיר עד חרמה*:..... *The Amalekites and Canaanites swooped down... smiting and pursuing them as far as Hormah. And (Deut. 1:44):... ויצא האמרי ויכתו אתכם בשעיר עד חרמה* – *The Amorites set out... Pursuing you, in Seir, as far as Hormah.*

Unfortunately, the only other occasions on which the Bible mentions Hormah, it forms part of a list of places, offering little indication as to its location – other

than that it was part of the inheritance of the tribe of Judah, near the border with Edom (e.g. Josh. 15).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The intention of the present paper, as was stressed in its introduction, is to indicate a methodology for researching the biblical route of the Exodus. This methodology is to search for a "totally self-consistent route" in the sense that it should neither contradict any statement in the Bible nor any fact revealed by modern knowledge. The task is clearly enormous and it is by no means certain that such a route can be deduced. However, this is really the only logically consistent way of attempting to identify places mentioned in the Bible with actual geographical locations — an endeavour that seems to have enjoyed a wide measure of popularity from time immemorial unto the present day.

By taking the four places mentioned in the Deut. 10:6-7 fragment as illustration, one is able to see the way this method works and the interesting implications it has outside the field of biblical studies.

For example, at present, archaeology has no way of recognizing artifacts that might date from the time of the Exodus. The present methodology presents a not unreasonable case that Hor Hahar was Gebel 'Areif en Nāqa. If this is so, then among all the Bronze Age tumuli at its summit there might be one single grave that is identifiably different. But perhaps a contribution of this kind to archaeological knowledge, were it to occur, would pale into insignificance compared to its significance as history.

Archaeological investigation in the vicinity of Naqb 'Arod (known today as Ma'aleh 'Arod) might also lead to some interesting discoveries related to this period.

For the present time the main point has been and the author will resist the temptation to discuss, in any detail, the other stations on the route. It suffices to emphasize that the long itinerary listed in Num. 33 should, in the light of the above identifications, now be viewed as more of a circulatory rather than a linear list.

Thus, the section from Midbar Sinai to Khashmonah (Quseima?) would roughly correspond to the eleven-day, in length, part of the route, from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea, mentioned in Deut. 1,2: **אחד עשר יום מארבע דרך הר שעיר עד קדש**

ברנע *It took eleven days from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea, via the Mt. Seir road.* At this time, i.e. during the second year of the Exodus, the twelve spies episode would have occurred, and the following six listed stations (Moserot = Moserah, Bene Ya'akan = Kadesh, Khor Hagidgad = Gudgodah, Yotvah, Avron, Etzion Gever and back to Kadesh) would correspond to the main camp sites during the ensuing 38 years of circulatory wandering indicated in Deut. 2:1 ("...for many a day we encircled Mt. Seir").

After this final visit to Kadesh, in the 40th year, on which occasion Miriam died, there followed one last arc southwards – the one discussed in our detailed examples above – and then a journey up the 'Arava valley, via Punon (Feinan) into Transjordan, ending at the plains of Moab (Deut. 2:8): **ההר**: רב לכם שב את ההר ... הזה פנו לכם צפונה... ונעבר מאת אחינו בני עשו הישבים בשעיר מדרך הערבה מאילת ומעצין גבר ונפן ונעבר דרך מדבר מואב. *You have encircled this mountain long enough: Turn northwards... We passed by our brothers, the Esavites who inhabit Seir, via the Arava road, from Elat and Etzion Gever, Then we turned and passed by way of the Wilderness of Moab.*

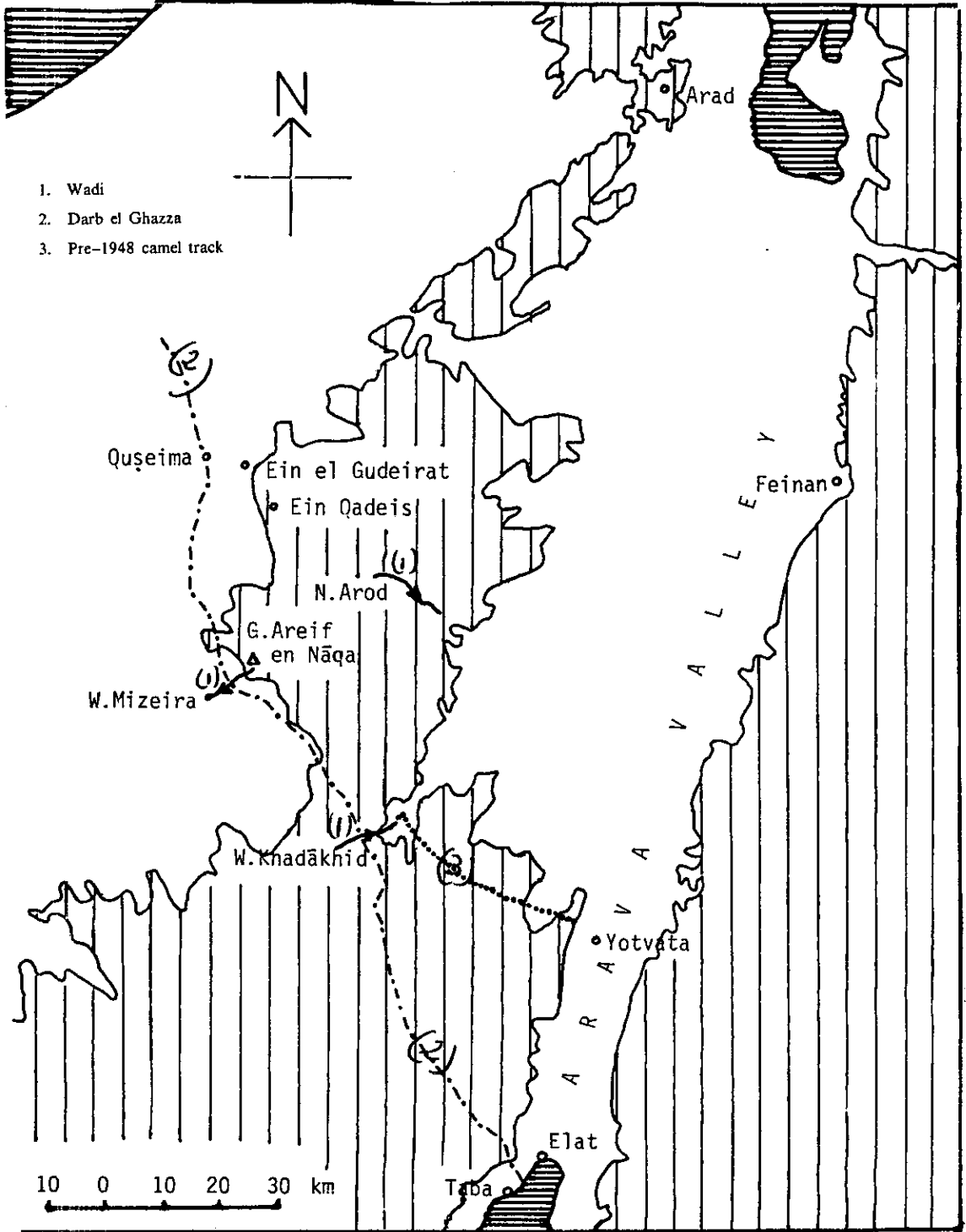
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS



IS BEHEMOTH ALSO JEWISH?

BY DAVID WOLFERS

The identity of "Behemoth", the main character of the fortieth chapter of the Book of Job, has been a perennial source of dispute. Two fundamental theories have clashed since time immemorial — one that "he" is a mythological animal, the other that he is a real one¹. While the proponents of each theory have been successful in marshalling arguments against the other, they have enjoyed far less success in defending their own. There is no antecedent example, in Hebrew or other Middle Eastern literature, of a mythological animal with Behemoth's name or characteristics. Pope's attempt² to equate him with the "ferocious bullock" of Ugaritic myth and the "bull of heaven" of Sumero-Akkadian lore remains entirely unsupported speculation. The search for a "real" animal which corresponds to Behemoth, while it has in recent years settled upon the hippopotamus³, has always been embarrassed by the contradictory characteristics of the beast as described — a tail like a cedar-tree (v.17), eating grass like the cattle (i.e. ruminant) (v.15), receiving something from the mountains (v.20), and having some sort of truck with the River Jordan (where neither hippopotami nor elephants have been in the last half million years) (v.23).

One fallacy which has compromised the search for Behemoth's identity has been the quite unjustified assumption that Behemoth and Leviathan (described in Job, Chapters 40 and 41) are of the same nature. It is upon this assumption that the Rabbinic fantasies of the two monsters as destined to provide food for the righteous on the Day of Judgement⁴ are based. It is important, however, not to

1 For a summary, if somewhat partisan, account of the dispute, see R. Gordis, *The Book of Job* (Jewish Theological Seminary of America, NY, 1978) pp. 569-572.

2 M. Pope, *Job*, (Doubleday & Co., 1973) pp. 320-322.

3 First proposed by Bochart in "*Hieroicoicon*" in 1663.

4 Baba Bathra, 74b.

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allow the examination of the Job text to be influenced by later legend. If anything, the search for the identity of Leviathan has been more seriously compromised by this assumption than the problem of Behemoth. For were it not for the link with the land animal, there would be little dispute that Leviathan is a derivative of what he is elsewhere in Middle Eastern mythology, a sea-monster with characteristics of Lotan, Shalyat, Tiamat, Yam-Nahar, Rahab, Tannin, Tehom, etc.

A second error which has kept the true nature of Behemoth from sight is one which recurs in many sections of the Book of Job, that is the failure to take context into account; the failure to recognize that each chapter of the book (with the possible exception of Chapter 6) encloses only a single theme; that the short discreet passages which seem to dart from subject to subject within one chapter are in fact linked in the logical development of that one theme.

The third, and perhaps least understandable source of error, has been the failure to take into proper account extra-Jobian biblical references.

The introduction of Behemoth into God's instruction of Job follows a dramatic challenge phrased as follows:

*Will you indeed annul My judgement?
 Will you condemn Me, that you may be found right?
 But have you an arm like God's?
 And can you thunder with a voice like His?
 Deck yourself in majesty and grandeur
 And in splendour and glory be clad.
 Scatter abroad the fury of your wrath;
 Expose every one that is proud and bring them low;
 Expose every one that is proud and abase them,
 And crush the wicked beneath them;
 Bury them in the dust together;
 Swathe their faces in darkness --
 Then shall even I extol you
 For your right hand has brought you victory!(40:8-14)*

and then comes:

*Just look: Behemoth which I created with you
 Eats grass like the cattle. (40:15).*

On the face of it this seems one of the most startling *nonsequiturs* in literature, and irrelevance so extreme as to be offensive, but if we are conditioned to expect continuity within the speeches of the book, we cannot accept such a judgement easily. It is indeed a stylistic characteristic of the Book of Job that the speakers pose questions, and then answer them themselves. 4:6, 6:5,6, 6:11-13, 6:22,23, 7:1, 7:12, 8:3, 8:11, 9:2, 9:14, 9:29, 11:2, 11:10, 13:7-9, 15:2,3, 15:8-13, 18:4, 19:22, 21:17, 21:22, 22:2-4, 22:5, 24:1, 25:4, 26:4, 27:8, 28:12,20, 31:2, 33:13, 35:6,7, are examples of such questions, and their multitude demonstrates how characteristic of the author of Job is this device. As a preliminary hypothesis, then, we should examine the possibility that v.15 *answers* the questions posed in v.9.

The word Behemoth, parsed as a masculine singular word, occurs twice in the Bible other than in this passage, in Psalm 73 verse 22, where it is "defined" by parallel as "brutish and ignorant", and once in Is. 30:6 in the phrase בהמות נגב – "The Beast of the Negev." This phrase is an example of a rare and, I believe, hitherto unrecognized biblical figure of speech which I should term "synthetic parallel", where one writer coins a phrase which forms a parallel with a phrase used by another in an essentially identical context⁵. It is apparent that בהמות נגב is the echo of Amos 4:1, פרות הבשן – "Kine of Bashan". Amos is castigating the people of the northern Kingdom; Isaiah those of the southern. Behemoth in the Isaiah passage is later explained in these terms, "כי עם מרי הוא, בנים כחשים בנים לא-אבו שמוע תורה ה'". "For it is a rebellious people, Lying children, Children that refuse to hear the teaching of the Lord". The use of the pronoun הוא in this sentence relates the description back to Behemoth (v.9).

Thus, in biblical usage, the intensive plural Behemoth when applied to an individual means "brutish and ignorant", and it is used by Isaiah as a derogatory term for the people of Judah. In this usage it is clear that Behemoth is neither mythological nor "real", but essentially symbolic as an animal, and displays the

5 A most valuable example is the parallel between Isaiah 57:8 and Ezekiel 16:31. Both prophets are describing the harlotries of the people with false gods. Isaiah writes "Behind the doors and the posts hast thou set up thy זיכרון" and Ezekiel "Thou buildest thy נב in the head of every way". These two otherwise unknown terms for objects of deviant worship, the first intimate and small, the second public and large, are united in Job 13:12 which can only be understood by reference to these two passages and the synthetic parallel between them.

proper sense of the intensive plural as the quintessence of the characteristics of the root, “beastliness”, or “beast-hood”.

Understanding the word Behemoth in Job 40:15 in either of the above senses, the verse emerges as indeed an answer to the questions, “Have you an arm like God’s and can you thunder with a voice like His?”. The answer is that tied by God’s *fiat* to a Behemoth, Job has not the unalloyed divine characteristics required to “expose the proud and stamp down the wicked under them”. If we see Job as simply a man, representative of all mankind perhaps, then Behemoth becomes the base animal side of human nature which God created *with* the spiritual man. If however we see in Job the representative Jew⁶, then Behemoth is, exactly as in Isaiah, the people of Judah with whom God *saddled* Job.

Let us now examine the remainder of the description of Behemoth, and determine how well it accords with this interpretation.

v.15: “Eats grass like the cattle”, which is to say “chews the cud”, a natural expression for indolence and lack of energy. The one biblical parallel is in the Book of Daniel⁷, where it is Nebuchadnezzar who, on taking leave of his senses, goes out into the fields to live with the beasts and “eat grass as the oxen”.

v.16: “His strength is in his loins” — that is to say his energies are concentrated on his basest animal instincts, the reproductive function (perhaps, see below, understood metaphorically), “and his vigour is in בטנו שרירי”. The word שריר, from the root שרר, “to be firm”, and in modern Hebrew is understood as “muscle”, does not occur in this form elsewhere in the Bible. However, in the Song of Solomon (7:3) שרר apparently means, if the anatomical progression is straightforward, the pudenda. This, together with the strong suggestion of the parallel, requires the translation “and his vigour in the private parts of his body”.

v.17: פחדו ישרגו כמו ארז גידי פחדו ישרגו is very difficult. It has been the practice for at least a thousand years to treat both יהפץ and פחדו as though they were not Hebrew but Arabic words⁸, but as each word occurs more than 100 times in the Hebrew Bible, this practice is very difficult to justify. The first line might well

6 See D. Wolfers, “Is Job after all a Jew?” *Dor Le Dor*, XIV, I, Fall, 1985.

7 Daniel 4:29.

8 יהפץ from the Arabic *hafasa* “to lower or depress”, which in truth does not fit the phrase “like a cedar-tree” at all and contributes nothing to our picture of the “beast”; פחדו from the Arabic *afhadh*, “thighs” or from the Aramaic פחדין, “testicles”.

simply echo with exaggeration the sentiment of the previous verse with "He relishes his "tail" which is like a cedar-tree", with "tail" as it so often is, a phallic equivalent.

The second line simply states "His sinews of fear are intertwined." Although many scholars, reading with the Q'ere פחדו as פחדיו, render this "The sinews of his thighs are intertwined" and interpret it as a tribute to vast strength; the "intertwining of sinews" is actually another way of describing paralysis! A sinew is rather like a steering rope attached to a rudder. The intertwining of such ropes would make guidance and response impossible. This I suggest is what is meant here. "His sinews of fear are intertwined" — he does not respond to situations of danger as he ought. This reading has the sterling merit of translating פחדו exactly as written, and as a good Hebrew word. It is possible also to find a sense of the first line of the verse which parallels this reading — *He relishes his end, like a cedar-tree*, taking advantage of a minor secondary meaning of זנב (Isaiah 7:4), and personifying the cedar-tree which ends up as decorative woodwork in temples and palaces.

v.18: *His bones are ingots of brass; his skeleton, castiron* is not the tribute to vast and ponderous strength which it seems, but a reference, characteristically chiasitic⁹, to Isaiah 48:4: *Because I know that thou art obstinate, and thy neck an iron sinew and thy brow brass.* Cf. also Jer. 6:28: *They are brass and iron; they all of them deal corruptly.* The metallic simile thus implies obstinacy, unresponsiveness and corruption.

v.19: הוא ראשיה דרכיאל העשו יגש חרבו: *He was the first-fruit of the ways of God* cannot refer either to a mythological animal nor to a hippopotamus. It is the people of Israel — cf. Jer. 2:3: *Israel is the Lord's hallowed portion, His first-fruits of the increase: All that devour him shall be held guilty, Evil shall come upon them, saith the Lord.* יגש is in the jussive mood, so that second line properly reads *Let his Maker bring His sword* i.e., in this context — *Well might his Maker bring His sword* (to punish him) or *Needs must his Maker bring His sword* (to

⁹ This phenomenon of the reversal of the order of parallel members in intrabiblical quotation has been remarked apparently independently by M. Seidel in מקבילות בין ספר ישעיה ל ספר תהלים (1956), p.150 and P.C. Bentjes, "Inverted Quotations in the Bible: A neglected stylistic pattern", Biblica 63/4, (1982) pp. 506-523.

protect him). The explanatory v.20 makes the second version, which also accords better with Jeremiah's pronouncement, seem the more likely.

v.20: *For the בול of the mountains sustain him, and the whole menagerie of wild beasts preys¹⁰ there.* The second stich shows why Israel (Judah) is in need of God's protection; it is exposed to wild beasts because of something which takes it to the mountains where they "sport". The word בול is usually assumed to be a corruption of יבול, "produce". It occurs elsewhere only twice in the Bible, Isaiah 44:19 where it is likewise assumed to be corrupt in the phrase בול-עץ, and in I Kings 6:38 where it is the Canaanite name of the 8th month. In other Semitic languages the word simply means "god" in such combinations as ירחבול and וכדבול – "Moongod", "God of gifts", etc. The name of a month is always likely to correspond to the name of a god so that it seems the word has much the same meaning in Hebrew as in the cognate languages. בול-עץ then is a tree-god as the context in Isaiah indicates, and בול הרים collectively mountain-gods. By deviantly worshipping mountain-gods rather than the Lord, Judah has exposed himself to mortal danger, but because he is the Lord's first-fruits, God will still move to defend him.

v.21: תחח צאלים ישכב; תחח בסתר קנה ובעה. v.21: brings us back to the sexual metaphor of v.16, and that to Jer. 3:36: *Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel did? She went up upon every high mountain and under every leafy tree, and there played the harlot. We should translate "He prostitutes himself to the trees, concealed in reed and fen", i.e. furtively.*

v.22: *The lotus-trees screen him as his defence, the willows of the brook guard him round about* a sarcastic verse demonstrating how the worship of false gods has left the nation unprotected. The syntactical form of the first line is unusual, and corresponds precisely to this version...

v.23: הן יעשק נהר לא יחפו יבטח / כייגיח ירדן אל-פיהו: A crucial verse which brings the metaphor and allegory close to the light of day. "A river" cannot "oppress", "deal tyrannically" or "extort", the meanings of עשק¹¹. The נהר of Isaiah 8:7, however, can.

¹⁰ For a discussion of the meaning of שחק in a similar context, see M. Weiss, "The Bible form Within", (Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 1984) pp. 78-93.

¹¹ BDB Lexicon.

*Forasmuch as this people hath refused
 The waters of Shiloah that go softly,
 And rejoiceth with Rezin and Remaliah's son;
 Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them
 The waters of נהר, mighty and many,
 Even the King of Assyria and all his glory;
 And he shall come up over all his channels
 And go over all his banks;
 And he shall sweep through Judah
 Overflowing as he passes through.*

נהר's extortions do not worry this Behemoth of a people, however, for they are confident. Why? — because the Jordan will gush forth at their command. If נהר is the King of Assyria and all his glory, then the Jordan can be none other than the king of Judah and his forces. Quite simply, then, they believe that they can match the Assyrians militarily — their sinews of fear are indeed paralysed!

This verse begins the bridge which leads into the description of Leviathan, for נהר and לריתן are mythologically equivalent¹².

v.24: The last in the description of Behemoth is exceedingly obscure. The first line probably means "In his opinion he can cope with it", and there is a great temptation to split במוקשים into two words, to read the second line, במוקשים, ינקב־אף "By stubborn-ness he will puncture wrath!".

In the remainder of the chapter God taunts Job with his impotence in respect of Leviathan, and this is still in answer to his question whether Job has the arm and voice of God. It is apparent that "the proud", Behemoth, and the people of Judah are on one side in this profoundly allegorical passage, and that "the wicked", Leviathan, and the Assyrians are on the other. There is a fluidity between the components of each grouping and Job himself merges into and out of the character of Behemoth as God's speech progresses.

The chapter ends with the warning to Job-Judah: "Lay but your hand on him (Leviathan-Assyria)! Remember the battle! Do no more!" The battle which Job

12 The equivalence of Nahar and Yam is explicit in the Ugaritic poems of Baal and Anath (Pritchard, "Ancient Near Eastern Texts", (Oxford, 1969), pp. 129ff.), while the equivalence of Yam and the "crooked serpent" Lotan = Leviathan, is established from the same source, p. 137.

is enjoined to remember can be none other than that fought between God and Yam = Leviathan (i.e. Marduk and Tiamat¹³) at the time of creation, a battle to which God has already referred before in Chapter 38 vv. 8–10. But Behemoth makes one further brief appearance in the first verse of the next chapter:

הן-תחלתו נכזבה הגם אל-מראיו יטל? לא-אכזר כי יעורנו?
 Still referring to Leviathan's titanic lost battle with God this verse asks:

If his (Leviathan's) hopes were disappointed

Must he also be cast down at the sight of him, (Behemoth)?

Not vengeful when he (Behemoth) arouses him (Leviathan)?

In other words, don't imagine that because I was able to defeat him in battle that your degenerate people will be able to do likewise. His spirit is not yet broken.

There is no more of Behemoth in the Book of Job; the remainder of God's speech goes on to assert His ultimate control over Leviathan and his role as God's agent and scourge. Job is answered, by the exposure of the sins of his people, by God's assurance that at the right time He will bring His sword to Judah's aid, and by the assertion in 41:4¹⁴ that He is *not deaf to the boasting and vainglory* of Leviathan = Assyria.

Behemoth, then, like Job, is Jewish. Indeed he is the Jewish people in all their imperfection and weakness.

13 Akkadian Creation Epic, Pritchard, *op.cit.*, pp. 60-72.

14 Compare with Isaiah 37:28,29, addressed to Sennacherib: "I know thy sitting down, and thy going out, and thy coming in, And thy raging against Me...".

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SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS IN THE BIBLE

A PSYCHODYNAMIC DIMENSION

BY ADINA KATZOFF

The struggle for identity and role function seems to be universal and apparently eternal. Man's search for his place under the sun takes him onto different directions and the battles for identity seem to take place in different arenas at different times. In the past generation the limelight on the conflicts was placed intergenerationally, that is between the young and their elders. Today these intergenerational conflicts, which we called the "generation gap", have been overshadowed, and the limelight shifted to another arena where the battle of the genders is taking place. The focus is on women's rights. The much talked about "generation gap" of a generation ago is no longer where the action is.

In the biblical mode, this struggle for identity, for role function, for ideals, seems to be taking place in the peer group, among the siblings. Indeed, from a psychological point of view there seems to be sufficient evidence pointing to the sibling interaction as constituting a major formative influence on the development of one's personality. Prominent in the psychoanalytic thinking is the postulate that the sibling relationship can be almost as influential as the relationship with parents.

For our discussion here, I have culled twelve sets of siblings from the Pentateuch and I propose to examine their interaction in light of the psychological dimensions.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAME OF REFERENCE:

The following may be considered to be a condensed, schematic frame of reference for understanding or assessing the psychodynamics in sibling relationships.

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1. *Tasks to be Achieved*

Sibling relationships serve as the major arena for the development of:

- a) self identity through the process of individualization and differentiation;
- b) it is said to facilitate the development of a prototype relationship with the peer group in later years, i.e. with school mates, colleagues, fellow workers and spouse (just as the parent-child relationship serves as a prototype for later relationships with authority figures such as teachers, bosses, etc.).

2. *Characteristic Interaction*

Sibling relationships are characterized by:

- a) rivalry for parents' approval, competitiveness in achievement and jealousy;
- b) loyalty — primarily to the family system vis-a-vis the outside world;
- c) group power — as a sub group within the family system as well as outside the family, and sometimes this power is wielded even against the parental couple;
- d) in large families, the sibling system may split into sub groups and coalitions.

3. *Assignment of Role Function*

Members of the sibling group are most frequently assigned role functions such as: the leader, the pet, the fool, the brain, the clown or what is popularly called the scape goat.

4. *Parents' Intervention**

Projections, encouragement and or even interference serve to heighten or lessen this psychodynamic process.

5. *The Process of Humanization*

The assumption is that, as negative as some of these aspects may be seen to be in themselves, this process including the rivalry, jealousy and the hostile aggressive struggles for identity and role function, are necessary in order to facilitate: a) the development of the coping mechanism for future peer relationships; b) obtaining some homeostasis in self esteem and the capacity for striving for achievements; c) it provides a learning opportunity to refine and curb

*Intervention: Influence of parents, whether overt or covert.

natural drives and thus humanize relationships with others. The end product is to become more humanized in interpersonal interaction.

Let us now turn to the twelve sets of siblings culled from the Five Books of Moses and examine their interaction in light of the above psychological frame of reference.

BROTHERS' INTERACTION IN THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVES

Cain and Abel

This most dramatic of presentations in the Bible, the narrative of Cain and Abel, has called forth many commentaries and moral lessons up to our day. It certainly reflects rivalrous hostile relations between brothers and the extreme to which it can lead, — fratricide! If we read the text carefully, we may see that the censure and punishment meted out to Cain was not for his rivalry or competitiveness with his brother, nor for his questioning of his responsibility as his brother's keeper, but for the act of murder, fratricide: *Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground* (Genesis 4:10).

This brotherly interaction differs from most other instances in the Bible in that the rivalry, jealousy and competitiveness a) goes to the most extreme degree — murder and b) it lacks any reflection of parental intervention.

Isaac and Ishmael

In contrast to the previous brotherly diad, we have here a relatively placid relationship. It does include, however, the following components of the sibling relationship: a) the struggle to preserve an identity, cultural continuity and the need to facilitate individualization and differentiation; b) the struggle is brought to a head by a parent's intervention (see Genesis 21: 9–13); c) we see no evidence in the Bible of punishment or censure of anyone for the ousting of one sibling. As a matter of fact, both the "chosen" brother and the ousted brother are promised God's blessings.

Jacob and Esau

These two brothers are presented as different from each other from birth. Their competitive behavior is described already with the birth process; each wanting to come out first. However, they seem to have negotiated their rivalry and

competition by mutually agreed-upon barter. It almost looked amiable except for the parental intervention, which like in the case of Isaac and Ishmael, heightened the struggle for achieving the role function. It reached a point of deceit on the one hand and almost murderous acts on the other hand. Both the heightening of the struggle for the role function as well as the avoidance of the possible murderous revenge was then negotiated by parental intervention (Genesis 25:19–34 and 27:1–46).

This narrative contains the following elements:

- a) Rivalry and competitiveness for the coveted role function;
- b) Parents' intervention;
- c) No punishment or censure for the hostile aggressive relationships nor for the deceit which was part of it.

Joseph and his Brothers

Only those components which are relevant to our discussion will be pointed out here (Genesis ch. 37):

- a) This is the model of the large family sibling system which has its own sub groupings and coalitions. It also presents the power group model, namely, a group of brothers wielding power over another group of brothers and over the parents. They are united as a group against the sibling Joseph, united in their deceit against their father and united when in trouble with the outside world (in Egypt and in Schechem).
- b) Their hostile aggressive acts against the one sibling (Joseph) are not as a scapegoat but rather as the one who was presuming to assume the leadership role.
- c) The father's influence is reflected first by his showing favoritism with the one brother (giving Joseph the coat of many colours). He thus heightens the struggle within the sibling group.
- d) This narrative as well as the narrative of Jacob and Esau does seem to reflect the growing recognition on the part of the brothers for the need to curb their hostile instincts and develop more refined or humanized interaction in gaining objectives in their relationship with each other.

We see this in Jacob's planning of his meeting with Esau (Genesis 32 and 33) and in the case of the brothers of Joseph in their modified behavior regarding

their interpersonal behavior within the sibship system (37:26–31).

Again the acts of hostility toward a brother is not punished nor censored.

Moses and Aaron

The relationship between Moses and Aaron may be said to be an exception to the usual pattern as presented in the biblical narratives. But then Moses is considered in the Bible an exceptional person.

a) There seems to be no overt or covert struggle for supremacy between the two brothers; b) no expressed jealousy; c) no apparent hostile acts against each other.

Although the Bible describes Moses as the most humble of all men and describes Aaron as the pursuer of peace, we may nonetheless dare speculate if in fact the harmonious and complementary relationship we see between these two brothers might have still been the same had their relationship been left to their own making and with the usual parental intervention. What is referred to here, is the fact that, as the text reads, it was a higher authority (God's) which "forced" Moses to function in tandem with his brother Aaron. It was that authority, not Moses, who said; *Aaron your brother will be your spokesman* and from then on, every move of Moses in relation to his brother Aaron was directed from above. In fact we may wish to raise the question whether Moses belonged to Aaron's sibling system since Moses was raised in the Royal Palace and not at home with his siblings. In that case the interaction of siblings as presented in the psychological framework would not apply to him. It would also explain their unusual relationship.

In all of the above mentioned Biblical narratives the interactive mode, with the exception of Moses, seems to be:

1. Brothers fighting for their individual identity and role function.
2. Parents or authority figures intervening by setting the stage: projections, encouragement or counselling the rivaling brothers.
3. The struggle between brothers and the rivalrous feelings seem to be not only condoned but are seen as a natural process for self actualization.

If we compare this Biblical mode of male sibling's interaction with the psychological frame of reference we may observe that there is much congruance between the two.

SISTER—BROTHER RELATIONSHIPS

While there are indeed fewer narratives relating to sister-brother interaction in the Bible, these relationships are present. They may not be as dramatized but they are vivid and vital.

Rebecca and Laban

When we think of Laban, we perceive an unsavoury character. But when we observe him in his sibling relationship to his sister Rebecca, we do find a difference. In contrast to his scheming and wheeling-dealing in his various other roles, as the text reads, he is a devoted, concerned and caring brother to his sister. Rebecca in her own right is presented as a responsive human being at the well with the stranger Eliezer (Gen. 24:17–26). She seems to enjoy a relationship with her family as a person with her own identity and wishes. She is accustomed to speak for herself and make her own decisions (Gen. 24:56–58).

In this narrative of a sister-brother relationship, we do not find the usual rivalrous, hostile aggressive behavior. We should also note that in this sister-brother interaction which is devoid of hostile rivalry, there is also no reflection of condescending or patronizing interaction towards the sister (that is, in the text itself).

Dina and her Brothers

We know less about Dina than about the brothers. What we see in this sibling interaction is a demonstration of:

a) the sibling loyalty; b) the aggressive acts are against the outside world to protect what they seem to perceive as the family identity.

We should note that while their actions in themselves are scandalous, they are motivated by a positive feeling toward their sibling sister (Gen. 34:1–31).

Miriam and Moses

As the older sister in the family Miriam is cast in a protecting, nurturing role in relation to her little brother Moses who was in danger. She watches over him, finds for him a nursemaid and speaks on his behalf with much resourcefulness (Exodus 2:1–10). So too, as they grow up, she takes pride in *his* glory. When Moses succeeds to cross the Red Sea, she comes in with song and dance, sharing

joyously in her brother's achievements (15:20–21).

There seems to be no apparent struggle on her part in the text for her own achievement, no apparent rivalry. Nor does she seem to have been compensated or specifically rewarded for her selflessness and complete dedication to her sibling.

That this model of concern and mutuality was considered to be the prototype role of a female sibling is evidenced by the fact that when Miriam and Aaron dared to express hostility towards their brother Moses (Numbers 12:1–16), she was immediately punished, censured out of camp, a punishment not meted out to anyone else — not to Aaron nor to anyone else having committed an act leading to criticism, i.e. Sara criticizing Hagar and Ishmael, or the brothers' behavior toward Joseph, etc.

It does therefore seem to appear that in the biblical text hostility between brother and brother is condoned and even prevailing, Hostility from brother to sister is not evident while hostile or negative behavior from a sister to a brother is not only not condoned but severely punished.

SISTER RELATIONSHIPS

Although there are scant references in the Biblical text to sisterly relationships, we may nonetheless obtain a pattern of interaction between sisters. These relationships not only reflect much less hostile, competitive or rivalrous behavior but also infer an ability on the part of the female sibling to work through problems by reaching more mutually agreed upon solutions.

The Daughters of Lot

The setting is a very degenerate culture — Sodom and Gemora. But the two sisters, in the throes of family annihilation, strive to maintain their father's identity in a remarkably strife-free interaction. There is no evidence of rivalry or competition. On the contrary, as primitive as their behavior may have been, it is characterized by mutuality and sharing. It certainly does not fit the pattern of sibling rivalry over identity and the struggle for differentiation (Genesis 19:30–38).

Rachel and Leah

Rachel and Leah are put into an almost impossible situation by their father Laban, who substituted Leah in place of her sister in the nuptial bed.

Rachel, who shared a common husband with her sister Leah, heard that her nephew Reuben found "dudaim" (love mandrakes) in the field and gave them to his mother. Rachel went to her sister and said: *Please give me some of your son's mandrakes*, whereupon Leah responded; *Was it not enough for you to take away my husband that you would also take my son's mandrakes!* Rachel then made an offer to her sister; *Let our husband lie with you tonight, in return for your son's mandrakes.*

When Jacob came home from the field that evening, the Biblical narrative continues, Leah went out to meet him and said: *You are to sleep with me for I have traded you with my son's mandrakes and he lay with her that night* (Genesis 30:14–17).

The acrimony of rivalry is not as evident here as in the brotherly relationships, even amidst their longing for Jacob's love and attention.

The Daughters of Zlophehad

There is the case of the five daughters of Zlophehad who after their father's death and there being no sons, were faced with the loss of their family possessions since females were not eligible to inherit their father's property. Whereupon they joined together, organized their case, brought their petition before Moses and the chieftains in such a reasonable, rational, convincing manner that the case was ruled in their favour. Women could now legitimately take possession of the family inheritance (Numbers 27:1–11) in instances where there were no male inheritors. It was a big step forward, a harbinger of the campaign for women's rights.

SUMMARY

The twelve cases of well known sibling relationships culled here from the Torah seem to reflect a distinct pattern of sibling interaction. There furthermore appears to be a differential treatment of the brother to brother interaction as compared to that of the sisterly interaction.

Whereas the pattern of the male sibling interaction in the biblical narratives

seems to be most congruent with the psychological schema which was presented above in nearly all its aspects, not so in the cases of the sisterly interaction.

As presented in the biblical text, sisterly relationships seem to be devoid of strife and hostile competitiveness, rather it appears that they resolve conflicts on a more humanized level.

Is there an implied message in this differential treatment of sibling relationships? May we infer that "brotherly love" comes harder to male siblings than sisterly love comes to women?



Moses in the floating crib, (Exodus 2:3-), by Gustave Doré

ISRAELITES AND ALIENS — VI

THE STORY OF JOSEPH AND ASSENATH

BY MAX M. ROTHSCHILD

I should like to conclude the brief series of "Israelites and Aliens" with the description of a short story, called by different names, and unfortunately little known. This is the lovely romance of "Joseph and Assenath", also called "The Confessions of Assenath" which at one time was one of the favorite "short stories" of antiquity and the middle ages, but which fell into disregard later on. It could be called a Midrash on the marriage of Joseph to Assenath or Ossnath, daughter of Poti Phera, the priest of On (Gen. 41:45), obviously a mixed marriage as we would call it today. Assenath, who had been given to Joseph by Pharaoh, is mentioned only three times in the Tanakh, twice in this chapter 41 of Genesis (v.v. 45 and 50), and once in 46:20, as the mother of the two sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Menasseh.

The story has all the makings of an idyllic tale: the young Joseph seeing the lovely young maiden, 18 years of age, on one of his "official" trips through the land of Egypt, when he organized the collection of grain during the seven good years. Assenath, so the story goes, was "handsome as Rebekkah and beautiful as Rachel". As is the case in ancient and medieval stories of this type, there were many young men who fought for the hand of this beauty. But Assenath refused all suitors and hid herself in a secret chamber, one of many, located within a tower. She and her maidens were surrounded by gold, silver and precious stones, each in her separate room. All the time, Assenath worshiped Egyptian gods and sacrificed to them.

In preparation for a festive meal to honor the visit of Joseph to the city of On, the parents of Assenath are trying to "arrange" a match between their daughter and the powerful vice-roy of Egypt. It is interesting to follow the description of the conversation between father and daughter: "And Poti Phera said to her: behold, Joseph the all-powerful man will come to us today, and he is the one who

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rules over all of Egypt, and Pharaoh has set him as a ruler over all of our land, and he provides for the entire country, and he will save us from the famine which is about to come over us. And Joseph is a *God fearing* and a wise man, and just as you yourself, he is in a state of virginity to this very day — come now, my daughter, and let me give you unto him for a wife, and you will be his bride, and he will be your bridegroom forever”.

But Assenath answered her father as follows: “Why does my Lord and father speak thus to me, and express his wish to give me as a handmaiden to a stranger, a refugee and a bought servant?” “Isn’t this the shepherd from the land of Canaan who became lost at one time? Isn’t this the one who slept with the wife of his former master and his master threw him into the darkest dungeon, and Pharaoh let him out of the dungeon for he solved his dream? No — I want to marry a real prince, the first-born son of a king, one who shall be king afterwards over all the land...”

Whereupon during Joseph’s visit and as should be expected, Assenath peered through a tiny window in her tower and beheld... Joseph, and from here on we have a charming love story of the type we find f.i. in the “Arabian nights” and other well-known novels of antiquity — with one exception: Assenath prays to the “God of Joseph”, converts to his faith, and after a number of difficulties with representatives of Hebrew tribes, troubles-to-be-overcome quite in the style of early romantic tales, the lovers “live happily ever after”.

A series of slightly different versions of this jewel of a story were preserved in different languages (Dutch, French, and medieval English) before the text itself was published in the late 19th century. The story used to be found in collections of pious edification, and even some versions of the Bible, f.i. the Armenian commentators of the 12th and 13th century counted it among the Apocrypha.

Palestinian Jewry seems not to have known the story in the form where Assenath joins the Jewish faith. In a number of Midrashim, she is rather described as the daughter of Dinah who was brought to Egypt by an angel or... an eagle!

Scholars today are of the opinion that the little work is of Jewish origin. As such, it shows a number of characteristics which we shall enumerate here, because they do have a bearing on the question of the relationship between Israelites and Aliens. All are agreed that the little novel originated in the

Hellenistic period, and it is against this background that we have to see it.

There is, first and foremost, no mention of a cloister-like retreat from the world, no celebration of celibacy, or poverty. Assenath joins the Jewish fold as an individual, not as the member of a group of would-be converts (such as could be found among the older Essenes). Here are a few fragments of the prayer of Assenath after she had seen the beautiful young man and fallen in love with him: "Where shall I hide, and where shall I flee to, after having spoken evil of Joseph, the son of God, since I have spoken so badly about him?" "And now, O God of Joseph, have mercy upon me, because I, yes I, have spoken evil words in error". "I am foolish and forward in my ways that I have spurned him at first, and I have said bad things about him, and I knew not that Joseph is a son of God".

Joseph, upon first beholding Assenath through the window, wants Poti Phera removed out of his sight, lest a scene similar to the one with Potiphar's wife, as told in the Biblical story, would develop. This would be against his "fear of God". Joseph, after all, is described as a young man of such beauty that he feared being imposed upon "by all the women and daughters of the leaders and nobles of Egypt."

When the union between the two lovers finally takes place, we have a series of prayers to the "God of Israel", "the living God", and so forth, quite in the style of biblical Psalms. It is said in these prayers over and over again that Assenath is leaving the gods whom she has served thus far, and that she will cling only to the "living God" from here on. She makes a long, personal confession of her sins (without the assistance of any religious official or intermediary), all in the style of Psalms. This is the reason why the book has sometimes been called "The Confessions of Assenath". And when Assenath eventually, before joining her beloved Joseph, is being initiated by him into the sacred faith, she wears a white garment. There was no sacrificial meal held to celebrate the occasion.

One of the main motifs seems to be the "Bread of Life". We no longer know the exact meaning of this, but since nowhere in the story is there a reference to such Jewish ceremonies as Pesach, or the sacrificial lamb, we cannot find any contact with a historical-religious event. In addition, we find no mention of a Messiah, nor any eschatological expectation. Perhaps the readers of the time were able to understand a particular "hint" in the episode of the "Bread of Life", or in the honeycomb which Assenath received from heaven. One of the Jewish

characteristics of the story is precisely the fact that Assenath's conversion to Judaism is described as a Jewish procedure. The occasion is celebrated by a communal meal, and we read that the Jews said their prayers and blessings both before and after they ate. The non-Jews are described as bringing sacrifices in their own temple to their "mute and dumb" gods.

Joseph was not permitted to kiss Assenath. This presupposes the acceptance of a formal, thoroughly regulated Jewish way of life by the time of the story's setting. There are, of course, a number of parallels between certain motifs in the story and certain legends in rabbinic literature. But thus far, no such parallels have been found with any non-Hebraic works of antiquity. The story of the honeycomb, f.i., has its parallels in the many midrashim on the heavenly "mannah" sent to the Children of Israel in the desert (Exodus Rabbah).

Of importance is the fact that the book is written against an idyllic background of a good relationship between Jews and non-Jews. When we see the son of Pharaoh in the beginning of the story contest for the hand of Assenath, only to be turned away in favor of Joseph, we are looking in vain for an anti-Jewish sentiment.

In general then, there was no formal ceremony of Assenath's reception into Judaism, we do not hear of any particular Mitzvot she was subjected to, nor is there any mention of Assenath's ritual uncleanness before her conversion.

Scholars believe that the story was written at about the first half of the first century C.E. It has always been claimed that that period — following upon Emperor Hadrian's anti-Jewish measures, f.i. his prohibition of circumcision — marks a decline in Jewish literary productivity. The Apocrypha had by and large been completed. Whatever Jewish missionary activity had existed prior to that period, had apparently come to a halt after the abortive revolt in the time of Emperor Trajan. And if these hypotheses are indeed correct, we have then in the story of "Joseph and Assenath" a real gem, not only in terms of a lovely romance, but in a much wider sense a document of the Jewish attitude towards non-Jews during an era which saw, on the one hand, the disappointment of Jewish messianic hopes, and on the other, the beginning of an increasingly enterprising Christian missionary activity. Nowhere in our little tale is Joseph described as a "Messiah" who would bring salvation to the young maiden and her folk. Nowhere is the story told in a way that would leave the door open to an

allegoric explanation, or a symbolic meaning of the events. Assenath, the beautiful young girl, consumed with love for Joseph the Jew, is the central point of the story, and her role as bride and eventual convert leaves little room for allegorical interpretation.



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BIBLE AND SCIENCE – A SYMPOSIUM

Mr. Berkowitz sent us the following thought provoking article about evolution and creation. This evoked additional comments by our associate and assistant editors which we print here after this piece.

EVOLUTION'S FATEFUL IMPLICATION

BY ALBERT BERKOWITZ

There are many amongst us who take for granted that “evolution is a fact like apples falling out of trees”. Yet science can no more prove its hypotheses about these things than creationists can prove Genesis. Science cannot verify by experiment the idea that a universe born from mindless matter, having no purpose and no life, transformed itself into one that did. Belief in it is based on a faith as much religiously pursued by evolutionists as the faith some have in Divine Creation. Thus we are dealing with two “mythologies”, religious and scientific.

As a teacher of biology, I present in class several of the “evidences of evolution”. One points to the remarkable similarity of bone structure among such seemingly disparate organs as the arm of a human, the wing of a bird and the flipper of a whale. X-rays reveal that the latter possesses five finger bones, and even though whales have no neck, in that area they have seven flattened bones corresponding to the seven cervical vertebrae in humans and other vertebrates. Different species having such similar structures might be related to a common but distant ancestor.

Then again, this situation could affirm the creationist view that similar structures are often the work of the same Architect. Thus the striking resemblance of the Verrazano Bridge to the Whitestone need not mean anything other than that they were designed by the same planner.

Perhaps, an even better analogy are the works of Pablo Picasso.

Albert Berkowitz, B.S., M.Ed., has taught biology and related sciences for the past thirty years in New York City secondary schools. An army veteran, married, he has three sons. He regards evolutionists as devoid of humility, citing the Talmudic sage who likened them to clay vessels refuting the potter who made them.

This analogy attempts to reconcile certain evidences of evolution with a purposeful Creator. For example, “Blue Boy” is quite disparate from “Guernicke”; one is a traditional style, the other surrealist. Moreover, scientific dating methods would reveal they came into existence decades apart. They appear quite unrelated and distinct.

Yet would not X-rays and chemical analysis further reveal that the brush strokes and pigments were remarkably similar? Such concealed similarities would indicate that these works are indeed related to a “common ancestor” – Picasso – whose creative talents flowed in widely divergent styles.

Thus when blood samples reveal almost identical plasma proteins in monkeys and humans, evolutionists seize upon it to refute Divine Creation. I see it as the material evidence that links man and monkey to the same Architect.

Perhaps living things have undergone change, (i.e., evolution) the way Picasso’s works evolved – by design and purpose: from a basic stock of biochemicals God assembled. But they were capable of procreating descendents with variations attuned to changing environments; so when God rested, DNA did not. It was as if Picasso’s works begot other masterpieces without the master breathing on them.

Claiming this a far-fetched analogy, that inanimate matter cannot reproduce itself, is not to know that that is exactly how evolutionists explain how life began.

According to the heterotroph hypothesis, gases of Earth’s primitive atmosphere combined and washed down to form warm soupy seas where, by absorbing heat, lightning and cosmic radiation, they produced organic molecules, some of which eventually formed, by accident, DNA, deoxyribonucleic acid, the basic material of genes, which control the development of all life forms. Experiments attempting to verify this by simulating reactions of the primitive atmosphere have turned up amino acids and other organic ingredients. This is akin to accidentally forming some of the words of Hamlet. But even the experimenter, Sidney Fox, admits that “the pre-biochemical distance from... amino acids to the origin of life... must be quite large”.

Yet why should living things have undergone change? Here is where the Bible’s account of destroyed worlds comes in. Does not the Torah allude to changes in the world’s physiography following the Flood? If it does, then Genesis and Evolution can be parallel explanations, except that the latter, bound by self-

imposed limitations of “verifiable evidence”, refuses to take the leap-of reason, not faith-to an ultimate Creator. Instead, and here is the paradox: it does take the leap of faith into a purposeless dynamism whose many gods it calls Natural Phenomena.

What is most damaging to young minds is what evolution implies: There is no ultimate purpose to life; man is beholden to no higher authority than man (shades of Auschwitz!); life is absurd, so let’s remold this “sorry scheme of things entire closer to the heart’s desire” — but to whose heart? I suggest, to the heart whose spirit is inscribed on a bell in Philadelphia: *Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof* (Leviticus 25:10).

Yes, we have two mythologies competing for our childrens’ minds; one that transcends the mundane, another that quantifies it; one awesome, inspiring and uplifting, delineating man’s good and evil inclinations, the other sterile and purposeless, fostering shifting codes of morality, deadening youth’s spiritual need to seek meaning in life. Is there any wonder all manner of cults are having a field day recruiting them? Isn’t it pathetic to watch zealous fans of the New York Jets sit in the pouring rain behind banners proclaiming “We believe” and “Todd is God?” Isn’t that the “disastrous” solution to an educational problem of defying the word of science while denying (and often denigrating as superstition) the word of God?

Would it be so “disastrous” to maintain the aura and majesty of our universe by complementing the Big Bang theory with “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth?” Or to compare the heterotroph hypothesis with *And God said, Let the waters bring forth... the moving creatures that hath life...?* Or the interdependence between the earliest living forms and their environment with *...and God saw that it was good?* Even Einstein claimed: “The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science”. Perhaps Darwin himself said it best: “There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers having been originally breathed by the creator into a few forms or into one... from so simple a beginning... it is most beautiful and most wonderful!”

THE HOW, WHAT AND WHY OF CREATION

BY CHAIM ABRAMOWITZ

It is unfortunate that most people assume that creationism and evolutionism are two conflicting mythologies, each endeavoring, in its own way, to tell us how the world originated and how it became the world as we know it today. Acting on this assumption (of two conflicting mythologies), one is obliged to accept either mythology and brand the other as untrue. Evolutionists, therefore, treat the biblical account as pure fiction; or, if they are religious, look for the divine message and disregard the factual details. Creationists on the other hand, accept the biblical account as divine revelation and the absolute truth, and to them, evolution is merely unproven theory. Many are therefore urging that both accounts be taught in our schools. In doing so they are defeating their own purpose. Placing the word of God which is based on faith on an equal but alternate plane with the word of science which claims to be based on fact, in a scientifically-minded world, is disastrous to religion.

The story that the world was created with each animal and plant exactly as it is today, in precisely six twenty-four hour days, is accepted by the modern child or adult with a shrug, or a smile, as if to say: "Do you expect me to believe that?" Explaining each "day" as an "era" on the basis of the phrase from Psalms: "For a thousand years is like a day in Your eyes"; does not explain anything. Everywhere else in Genesis **ד** is treated as an actual day and there is no reason to assume that **ד** in chapter one means something else. Also, changes in structure of the world because of earthquakes or volcanic eruptions cannot be described by the Talmudic phrase "that God created worlds and destroyed them". We see changes being made over long periods of time, changes in shapes in and out of the sea, but not "destroyed" or created. We see various breeds of dogs developing, from the tiny pekingese to the large Saint Bernard, as well as new fruits developed by nature or by human ingenuity. It is difficult to reconcile this with the idea that everything was created originally in the present form.

I think that if we examine the motivation behind both "mythologies" we shall

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find that the truth lies with each, and that there is no conflict between them. God has given Man the ability to think and reason and to discover things for himself. Through the scientific and experimental approach, Man aims to uncover the secrets of the universe and to reconstruct the events of the past. God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden לעבדה ולשמרה – to work it and to take care of it, but he had to learn through reasoning and experimentation how to do it. The *how* and *what* of things is left for man, but the *why* is for God to reveal to man.

The aim of the biblical stories is to teach morality and proper human behavior, and not history. As an example: In the long period between Adam and Noah, only the Cain and Abel incident is mentioned because of its intrinsic moral value. Though undoubtedly many historically important events occurred with Adam's and Noah's descendents, only two or three seemingly minor events, in addition to the flood, are mentioned and it is up to us to find their moral significance. That the Bible is not history is further evidenced by the fact that no mention is made of what happened to Adam during the years after the birth of his third son, or of Noah during the 600 years before and the 300 years after the flood, or to Abraham during the first seventy-five years and the last years of his life. Through the stories and their details, there is a moral and spiritual lesson that can be revealed. But if revelation is true, then the story, the vehicle of revelation, needs also to be true, unless there is specific mention or implication that it is allegorical. The genius of the Bible is that it was able to reveal its message to people of every generation in the light of the scientific knowledge or belief of the time without distorting the truth. Since the Torah has no punctuation or vocalization, let us end each period of creation with the words: "And God saw that it was good", and begin the next paragraph with: "And it was evening and it was morning (one) day, And God said..." then there is no reason to assume that the time between "one day" and "a second day" consists of only twenty-four hours. It may be an unnamed number of years¹.

Let us teach science as science and the Bible as revelation and we shall find that each presents us with a different aspect of the truth. Science may fathom the *what* and the *how*, and in the Bible we look for the *who* and the *why*.

1. See my detailed discussion of Genesis Chapter one and two in "Dor le Dor" Volumes X:1, X:2.

THE MYSTERY OF BEING

BY SHIMON BAKON

A great Rabbi once stated: the man of faith has no questions, the man without faith has no answers. This is an oversimplification; for our world is full of disturbing questions that do not permit even the man of simple faith to acquiesce, and which force the man without faith to attempt to offer some satisfactory answers. Modern man is in an awesome predicament. If he has no faith, he is faced by a world that has lost its meaning, a world where, due to a soulless mechanization, our lives have lost purpose and direction. Not only loss of purpose but also deterioration of moral principles is the heritage of “scientism” – namely science raised to the level of religion, particularly if allied to philosophical atheism.

W.T. Stace has expressed it as follows:¹ “Along with the ruin of the religious vision there went the ruin of moral principles and indeed of all values... If our moral values do not proceed from outside us in the nature of the universe... then they must be our own invention. Thus it came to be believed that moral rules must be merely an expression of our likes and dislikes, but likes and dislikes are notoriously variable. What pleases one man, people or culture displeases another. Thus therefore, morals are wholly relative... This is the inevitable consequence of the doctrine of ethical relativity, which in turn is the inevitable consequence of believing in a purposeless world”.

Yet it is an inescapable fact that modern man lives in an environment largely created and controlled by science. Contemplating his attitude to science and religion, he faces a number of alternatives:

He can view both as mutually hostile disciplines and choose one and deny the other, or he may view them as two separate entities, ignoring one or the other. (In some instances he may even pursue a life both as a scientist and a religious person, but following two routes that do not touch each other). He may be aware of mutually conflicting claims and consider it a challenge to bridge them and find

¹ *Man Against Darkness* – The Atlantic Monthly, Vol 182. No. 3, p. 55, as quoted by Simon Greenberg: *Foundations of a Faith* (p. 146).

a synthesis between them, as was attempted in previous times and different context by Saadiah Gaon and by Maimonides. There is still another alternative, favored by the writer of this article, wherein man will attempt to comprehend the universe and the position of man in it from two entirely legitimate standpoints, the religious and the scientific. In this way he will find many points of contact while fully realizing that the starting and end points for both are different. It is a recognition of two aspects of the human psyche viewing our universe, man included.

It must be noted that in the last few centuries there has occurred a gradual change in the relationship between science and religion, as symbolized in the lives and thinking of three giants of the scientific world. Galileo was forced to recant his great scientific findings before an all powerful Church. La Place, a few centuries later, when allegedly asked by Napoleon about the position of God in his theory, boastfully answered: "J'ai ne besoin de cette hypothese" — I am in no need for "this hypothesis". Arthur Compton, contemporary Nobel prize winner, asserted that there are few scientific men today who will defend an atheistic attitude. There has come about without doubt an accommodation between religion and science. What has brought about this change?.

THE PARADOX OF SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

Strange as it may sound, the farther the barriers of the unknown are pushed back by the fantastic progress of science, the greater stands out the Mystery of Being. The almost unbelievable penetration into the microcosmos reveals ever deeper mysteries. The relatively simple structure of the atom and forces within it, as known in the late 1930's have given way to growing numbers of intricate building blocks and a greater variety of forces binding them. It is increasingly understood that the picture we have of what is going on within this infinitesimal realm is merely a mathematical construct of relationship obtaining between the various building blocks and energies. We know that they exist without grasping their true nature. The new theories of the Expanding Universe have put the assumption of limitless space and limitless time into question. The phenomenon of a rapidly, yet symmetrically expanding Universe strongly indicates a point before in time, where it all began. What happened before that point in time is beyond the scientists' understanding. Thus the "certainties" of the "eternity" of

matter and the “infinity” of space and time are no longer “certainties” and no longer need to pose difficulties to religious thinkers to reconcile them with the infinite God Who created the Universe in Time. In addition, the new discoveries in the awesome expanses of the cosmos of quasars, black holes and other “singularities” have added to the puzzles confronting the scientist. In fact, he is now beset by the serious question whether, indeed, he has reached the *limits* of possible understanding and knowledge of cosmogony and other mysteries of the Universe.

Nor is it different within the realm of life. How did it begin? How did blind matter organize itself into living wholes, and these wholes into systems, all of them performing meaningful functions co-ordinated to maintain and perpetuate life? The cell, the smallest unit of life, once considered a random collection of chemical compounds, is now viewed with awe as a structure of overwhelming complexity, where the inter-relationship of its component parts must be seen as a marvel of synchronization, staggering our imagination.

To sum up, the optimism of previous centuries, viewing the Universe as an intelligible machine whose laws and workings can be fully comprehended by the human mind, has given way to a respectful assessment of a Universe full of mysteries and to a more modest assessment of human capability to comprehend them.

TWO PATHS TO TRUTH

It has been claimed that the Bible with its pre-occupation with man, his conduct and his future, is alienated from nature. Nothing can be further from the truth. The many biblical passages, from the majestic beginnings where the cosmos together with man are portrayed as the purposeful creation of the Creator, the Psalms, especially the 104th, so much admired by the eminent scientist Alexander von Humbold who saw within it “the Universe, the heavens, the earth drawn with a few grand strokes”, the loving care shown to animals and plants, all this attests to a deep appreciation of nature.

However it is biblical monotheism that is most relevant to our topic. For a non-negotiable monotheism has far reaching consequences for a true understanding of the relation obtaining between religion and science. It almost requires that we view human nature as being basically one, though he may

pursue many paths of interests. Having been endowed by His Creator with an inquisitive mind, he is fully justified, as a scientist, in trying to find underlying laws and order behind the plethora of phenomena impinging upon his senses. The same man may also be troubled by “existence” and its problems, may attempt to seek meaning behind it, seek ultimate answers to questions of beginnings, ends and purposes. Both pursuits are legitimate, both filling a deep need of the human psyche.

He may step out on a starlit night and, looking at the sky and overcome by contemplation of the magnificence of the sight, he may be driven to the realization of a wise Creator behind it. He may realize his own smallness standing in awe before the mystery of creation. This is how Isaiah put it (40:26): *Lift up your eyes on high and behold who created these.* שאו מרום עיניכם וראו מי ברא אלה ברא אלה. This is the way of the Psalmist who rhapsodizes: *Bless the Lord my Soul. O Lord my God, Thou art very great. Thou art clothed with glory and majesty...* ברכי נפשי את ה'. ה' אלהי גדלת מאד. הוד והדר לבשת... ..

And this is the way of Maimonides. In his Mishne Torah² he raises the question: How is one to love God? He answers: “At the moment when man contemplates His deeds and His wonderful creation he immediately loves God.” בשעה שיתבונן האדם במעשיו וברואיו הנפלאים, מיד הוא אוהב את ה'...

Thus he implies that in order to truly love God, one has to engage in contemplation of His marvellous works in nature³.

The scientist observes the stars, and also he is overcome by wonderment, but he brings to his observations different questions and different tools. He will be concerned with finding laws, relationships and principles. He will ask, what is the chemical constitution of the stars; what is their luminosity, distances, etc. Equipped with the gift of calculation, and capable of creating the necessary tools to assist in his research, he will succeed in unravelling and solving problem after problem.

THE MIRACLE OF ORDER AND CORRESPONDENCE

The same monotheism that requires the basic unity of human nature also

2 משנה תורה, ספר מדע, פרק ב'.

3 Here we may have the source of the “amor-dei” of Spinoza.

posits a fundamental unity in the Universe that can be found in laws. When the Psalmist (148) declares:

<i>Praise ye the Lord from heavens,</i>	הללו את ה' מן השמים
<i>Praise Him in the heights...</i>	הללוהו במרומים
<i>Let them praise the name of the Lord</i>	יהללו את שם ה'
<i>For He commanded and they were created</i>	כי הוא צוה ונבראו
<i>He also established them for ever and ever</i>	ויעמידם לעד לעולם
<i>He is creating an order that shall never change.</i>	חק נתן ולא יעבור

Thus he expresses his wonderment about the order and the permanence existing in the firmament. He has, in essence, repeated God's promise (Gen. 8:22):

<i>While the earth remaineth,</i>	עוד כל ימי חורף
<i>Seed time and harvest,</i>	זרע וקציר וקר וחם
<i>And cold and heat, and summer and winter,</i>	וקיץ וחורף
<i>And day and night shall not cease.</i>	ויום ולילה לא ישבתו

This feeling of wonderment, when contemplating nature, is shared by one of the greatest modern scientist-philosophers, Einstein⁴. He once admitted: "I cannot free myself from the feeling of wonder, when I contemplate the laws of nature. The very existence of these laws is a wonderful sight. How can I logically explain the fact that a stone is attracted and falls upon the earth... and falls in accordance with fixed laws of falling objects". We take for granted the miracle of the correspondence between thoughts and things, the harmony between the resources of which our mind disposes and the profound relations which are concealed behind natural phenomena. But DeBroglie⁵, one of the great pioneers of nuclear physics, as well as other great scientists, have suggested that the great progress of science was precisely due to that remarkable "agreement". From a truly religious standpoint one can assert that the same God Who created the Universe, has also endowed man with that special intelligence to comprehend the laws that underlie it. More than that, if biblical man has, by virtue of his special status as partner with God in completing creation, a divine mandate of intelligent control, for *מלאו את הארץ וכבשוה*, how can he fulfill this mandate without the ability to comprehend his environment?

4 Jacob Klatzkin – *Collected Works – Conversations with Einstein*.

5 De Broglie, *Physics and Microphysics* pp. 208–209

Perhaps of greatest significance for an understanding of monotheism and science is that there should be nothing in the truths of science, keeping properly within its limits, that is in conflict with truths revealed by God. In other words, nature, its facts and laws being manifestations of God's power, should never have been considered by a truly religious person as a threat to religion itself.

PARTING OF WAYS

Science and religion in general, and the Bible in particular, can be on a course of collision only if:

- a. Science becomes dogmatic atheism, invoking randomness and chance as being the driving force behind natural phenomena and existence as it unfolds.
- b. Religion chooses a faith that insists, *credo quia absurdum est* — “I believe, because it is absurd”, namely because it is contrary to reason.
- c. The Bible is considered a scientific treatise rather than what it really is, a record of God meeting man; or if the Bible is read too literally.

Apart from these extreme cases of necessary conflict, there is wide room for convergence as we have seen. Thus a man of science may be deeply religious, and a religious man may be a great scientist. Yet, essentially each pursues his own chosen path.

Maimonides states: “It is incumbent upon us to love⁶ The Lord” *ואהבת את ה' ואת ה' תירא* ... How do we love and fear Him? The Rambam's answer to the first part of the question was given earlier in this article, but for Maimonides the second part is inextricably tied in with the first. For, as man contemplates His marvelous works, loving and admiring God's wisdom, he immediately recoils in fear and awe, realizing his smallness:

And when man considers this matter he immediately recoils, he is seized by fear, realizing that he is a small creature *וכמחשב בדברים האלה מיד הוא נרתע לאחוריו ויירא ויפחד וידע שהוא בריה קטנה.*

Thus for the religious man a sense of being a mere creature follows from the realization of God's Presence behind Creation. Here, with inimitable brevity and clarity Maimonides has set down the essence of religion, particularly man's relationship to God. Man discovers Him in the Universe, which is His

⁶ Deut. 6:4–13.

manifestation. And, in discovering Him he is seized by an awareness of his own insignificance, while at the same time being acknowledged as the crown of His creation.

Science has chosen a different path, though the point of departure is the same as that of religion. The scientist wonders, as we have noted before, about the many phenomena surrounding him; but is engaged in a quest for objective facts and of laws underlying the phenomena, seeking a causal, natural explanation for them. Thus an earthquake means one thing to a prophet and another thing to a modern scientist. Obviously the man of religion relies on faith and devotion, while the man of science, on experiment and verification. Yet, both assume an order in the Universe. The one believes that this order and harmony is the result of One Creator, while the other is simply interested that such an order exists, and proceeds to seek and find more and more unifying laws underlying two or more seemingly different phenomena⁷.

This parting of ways is brought into even sharper focus when we consider the biblical view of God as One revealing Himself. For in doing so to man, and especially to Israel, special spiritual dimensions are added to life. Man has assumed obligations מצוות, where the most mundane act turns into a holy deed. He now lives in a world of values and direction, in pursuance of a heterogeneous goals. He is obsessed by the question: What must he do, by what values must he live, to fulfill his divine mandate as God's partner in Creation.

But, more than everything else, all or almost all of the Bible becomes a record of a mutual relation between God and Israel. It is a spiritual drama that begins with the Covenant, establishing Promises and Obligations. It is a history of a special kind, registering profound disappointments, regrets and returns, attempts at closing the distance between man and God. It is a drama invested with deep meaning, moving Israel and mankind forward to a more hopeful future. It is redemptive history.

Obviously in such a biblical scheme there is little room for science, whose norms are not applicable to living Scripture.

⁷ Thus Maxwell's great achievement was finding of laws unifying the phenomena of electricity, magnetic forces and light. And Einstein, in the latter part of his life, was engaged, though unsuccessfully, to find unifying laws for Relativity and Quanta.

BOOK REVIEW

BY SOL LIPTZIN

ANCIENT JUDAISM: Biblical Criticism from Max Weber to the Present, By Irving M. Zeitlin, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1984, pp. 314.

Zeitlin, Professor of Sociology at the University of Toronto, stands under the influence of Max Weber, who analyzed religious phenomena from a sociological viewpoint. Since Weber's studies on Ancient Judaism appeared from 1917 to 1919, biblical criticism has been enriched by theologians, anthropologists, archeologists and folklorists. Zeitlin, on the whole, still agrees with Weber's insights but seeks to modify some conclusions on the basis of the many new discoveries of the past two generations. He is sceptical about the critical theories propounded by German Christian scholars, such as Albrecht Alt, Martin Noth and Gerhard von Rad, and is more sympathetic to the views of William F. Albright, Umberto Cassuto and Yeheskel Kaufmann.

In the opening chapter on "The Nature of Polytheism", he defines the characteristics of polytheism and seeks to prove that, while these characteristics apply to all Asiatic religions, including that of the Canaanites, none of these characteristics apply to the Hebrew religion ever since its beginnings. The Israelites were unique in espousing a monotheistic faith.

Zeitlin demolishes the views of the radical theologians that the Hebrew religion developed from the absorption of Canaanite ways as a result of centuries of interaction and assimilation to these early inhabitants of the land west of the Jordan and that polytheism was dominant among the Hebrew masses, though not among the elite, until the Babylonian exile. He rather traces the emergence of the Hebrew faith back to patriarchal days, when Abraham set out on his wanderings from Mesopotamia. It was for religious reasons that Abraham turned his back on the wealthy and advanced culture into which he was born.

Abraham's monotheism, retained by Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and the descendants

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of the tribes who went down to Egypt, survived the generations of enslavement and inspired their liberation and exodus from Egypt under the leadership of Moses. Only to a minor degree was the Hebrew religion influenced by the Egyptians or by the Canaanites after the crossing of the Jordan. The narratives of *Genesis* and *Exodus* are not fictions. They reveal the perceptions that the Israelites had about themselves, their past, their moral aspirations, and their relations to other peoples. Zeitlin holds that these narratives are rooted in actual historic experiences and were retained for centuries in the memories of the various tribes until they were finally recorded in writing.

In Egypt the Hebraic tribes were united primarily by their common faith. Their monotheism distinguished them from the rest of the population. In addition, the servile and ignominious status to which they were reduced by oppressive Pharaohs imparted to them a sense of common destiny that made it possible for Moses to transform them into an organized, disciplined people. Their slave experience in Egypt led to their extreme sensitivity to justice and to their acceptance of the Mosaic laws which protected the weak from the power of the strong. Morality and justice were thereafter to be the ideals of the liberated masses. The Covenant at Sinai was made with the entire people and not with an elite social stratum. All the people accepted ethical monotheism as their faith and the Ten Commandments as their way of life before they initiated the conquest of Canaan.

This conquest under the military leadership of Joshua and the charismatic Judges who succeeded him was not completed until the rise of the monarchy under Saul and David. The Israelites did not infiltrate into Canaan tribe by tribe and generation after generation, as scholars such as Alt and Noth have maintained. They conquered the land. The narratives in *Joshua* and *Judges* have been confirmed by archeological investigations by William F. Albright, G.E. Wright and Yigal Yadin.

Zeitlin accepts the traditional view that the Philistine danger was the major external impetus that led to the rise of the monarchy. It was David who eliminated the Philistine danger and consolidated the monarchy with Jerusalem as its eternal capital. Saul's wars were entirely defensive, whereas David, by subduing Philistia, Moab, Edom and Aram, established an empire, which he then handed down to Solomon. Under Solomon, traditional freedoms were curtailed.

Social equality and democracy declined. He introduced forced labor, compulsory military service and an onerous system of taxation. He was a typical oriental despot. He created a centralized bureaucratic state. Although the Hebraic kingdom reached the height of its grandeur during his reign, the inner social tensions and the burdens he imposed tore it apart immediately after his death.

Zeitlin faithfully follows the biblical texts that deal with the kingdoms of Israel and Judah but he emphasizes the religious and social developments, especially the concern for morality, justice and righteousness, on the part of the Prophets whose influence was profound.

When Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 B.C.E., its exiled inhabitants remained an organized community in Babylon. They experienced cultural and linguistic assimilation but never succumbed to the polytheism of their neighbors. Though Temple, cult, and monarchy no longer existed, they created exilic religious institutions, primarily the Synagogue, and remained a uniquely religious community.

Zeitlin's argument throughout his carefully documented study is that ethical monotheism accompanied the Jewish people from its Patriarchal origin until the present day. Therein he differs from Weber who held that the Classical Prophets were the real founders of the monotheistic idea, while the rest of the Jewish nation remained steeped in polytheism. In other respects, Zeitlin finds Weber's essays on Ancient Judaism sound, enlightening, fruitful and inspiring.

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(LETTERS TO THE EDITOR; Continued from page 262)

with a completely different meaning. Mr. Weinberg wants to change the letters and use this verb in the Kal, even though the Tenach itself does not do so.

But far more damaging to his case is the second flaw. The word כּוֹפֵר in the sense of unbeliever appears only in *post-Biblical* Hebrew, never in the Tenach.

We should not mutilate the Biblical text to make it conform to our own fancies.

Tovia Shahr
London, England

KNOW WHAT TO ANSWER

BY JOSHUA J. ADLER

PART I

With so many young Jews being exposed to Evangelical Christians and other Bible-quoting missionary groups – especially at colleges – “Dor le Dor” feels that it would be a service to our readers to feature a series of articles dealing with answers to misleading interpretations of the Hebrew Scriptures as propounded by the writers of the New Testament. We trust that our readers will find this information useful and forward it to those who they feel should “Know What To Answer”.

For centuries Christian missionaries have been trying to get Jews to read the “New Testament” which, the missionaries claim, is both a perfect work inspired by God and a fulfillment of the earlier Hebrew Scriptures which they call the “Old” Testament. However, upon examination of these claims, we learn that the “New Testament” is far from being a perfect work and betrays glaring variations construed from the Hebrew Bible. Just two obvious deviations are found in the Book of Acts, 7:15, where it states that the Patriarch Jacob was buried in Shechem, rather than in Hebron. Furthermore, in the same Chapter, it mentions that Jacob went down to Egypt with 75 souls rather than 70 as is clearly written in *our* (Hebrew) Scripture (Genesis 46:27).

There are also many mistranslations of Hebrew words such as the “New Testament” mistranslation of “Virgin” instead of “young woman” (“*almah*”) in order to “prove” that Isaiah (7:14) predicted a “virgin” birth of someone 700 years later. Or, the misunderstanding of the verse from the prophet Zechariah: (9:9) “Behold the King cometh sitting upon an ass, a colt the foal of an ass” (King James Translation). The “New Testament” writer, who seems *not* to have known the Biblical style called “parallelism” tries to prove that Jesus fulfilled all

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of the prophecies of the Jewish Scripture. He therefore depicts Jesus as riding into town on two different animals! Thus, we read in Matthew 21:2 where Jesus tells his disciples to “go and find an ass *and* a colt, and bring *them* to him (v. 7). The disciples then put their garments upon *them* and sat Jesus upon *them*”.

Whoever wrote the previous verse could not have been a good student of our Scriptures, let alone a Divinely-inspired author.

Believers in the “New Testament” as God’s last word and truth also claim that all the basic beliefs of Christianity are already found in the earlier Hebrew Bible.

For example, the Christian “New Testament” claims that the Hebrew Scriptures teach us that since the time of Adam all men inherit *his* original sin and that atonement can only be made through faith in a sacrificial lamb (the God-Man) Jesus. They quote the story of Adam and Eve as found in Genesis Chapter Two, yet they fail to point out that nowhere does it say that Adam’s sin is inherited by his children. It only says: “in the day that *thou* eatest of it *thou* shalt surely die”. Jewish interpreters have always pointed out that even this warning was not meant literally but was merely a threat. “On that day you will begin to die” is perhaps a good interpretation of the phrase. Also, the general Biblical ethos runs against the Christian “Testament” idea that children are punished for the sins of their fathers (See Deut. 24:16). A notable exception seems to be in the verse in Exodus 20:3 where it says that children do suffer for the misdeeds of their fathers, but then only to the third and fourth generation “for them that hate me”. Thus a limitation is put on this seemingly harsh statement that it only applies to those who continue to walk the evil paths of their fathers and fail to repent.

Another Jewish Biblical text cited by Christians to prove that all men are born sinners and therefore need Christian-style salvation is Eccles. 7:20, “*For there is not a righteous man on earth that does good and sins not*”. However, if we examine this text carefully, the interpretation is quite different. We find that the text *does not* state that all men are essentially wicked and sinners, but only that even righteous people are not always good and occasionally sin. In any manner in which one looks at the verse we must conclude that there is a vast difference between what Ecclesiastes is saying and the idea of original and inherited sin.

On the same theme, Christians often cite the verse of Psalms 5:7 where David says: “*I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me*” (King

James Version). There are several Jewish interpretations of this verse which indicate that what David is saying is that man has an inclination to sin from the very beginning of life. A similar thought is already expressed in Genesis 8:21 – “*For the inclination of man is towards evil from his youth*”. (Note that it does not say conception or birth).

Also, David may simply be speaking in hyperbole about himself after his wicked deed in having Uriah killed and marrying his widow, Bathsheba. Furthermore, even if one is tempted to go along with this Christian interpretation of the verse – namely, that he already was a sinner from birth – we see here that David does not seek forgiveness from some intermediary, but turns directly to God to grant him atonement. God forgave sin long before Jesus’ appearance and there is no evidence from Hebrew Scripture that God needs an intermediary when it comes to forgiving sinners such as the “New Testament” claims.

Christians contend also that there can be no forgiveness of sin without a sacrifice according to Biblical religion. They further claim that since the destruction of the Temple and the sacrificial system, Jews no longer have a means of atonement, as it says in Leviticus 17:11 – “*For it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul*”.

What the Christians don’t realize (or choose not to realize) is that there are different kinds of sacrifices, including meal offerings listed in the Torah and not only meat offerings. Secondly, our Bible makes a distinction between an intentional sin and an inadvertent one, and to the surprise of many readers, one is required to bring a sacrifice *mainly* for sins committed without intent rather than for intentional sins. The reason why Christians want to stress the idea of blood sacrifice is to prove to us that Jesus was the blood sacrifice who now replaces the Temple sacrifices. (Christians also forget that there were about 40 years during which Temple sacrifices still continued *after* the crucifixion. And that there is no such thing as a human atonement sacrifice, in Judaism). They – the Christians – also claim that Jesus was the sacrificial lamb of Passover whose blood was shed for the purpose of forgiving sins. Yet, as we know, the Passover lamb has nothing to do with forgiveness of sins but with the story of the liberation from Egypt.

Another Christian concept which they claim comes from our Bible, is the word “salvation” (“*yeshua*” or “*geula*” in Hebrew) which they say refers to the state of the soul after death in Heaven. Yet, this type of salvation which is basic to

Christianity is to be found nowhere in the Hebrew Scriptures. Whenever the word *yeshua* is used in our Holy writings it usually refers to personal or national deliverance from some enemy. The same is true of the Hebrew word for "Messiah" (*"Mashiach"*) to which Christians give an entirely different meaning and function than what the word "Messiah" means in *our* Bible. If one goes through every reference to this word in our Bible, it nowhere suggests that it is the function of the Jewish Messiah to get a person into Heaven. In Biblical Judaism the Messiah's function is strictly a this-worldly one which is to bring "*Geula*" and "*Yeshua*" (Salvation) to the people of Israel and restore them to their homeland where they will live in freedom and tranquility under the laws of God.

— * — * — * — * —

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4 ISSUES OF DOR LE DOR!

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SON OR DAUGHTER GOING OFF TO COLLEGE ?

KEEP YOUR COLLEGE SON OR DAUGHTER IN TOUCH WITH

OUR BIBLICAL HERITAGE

WORDS OF TORAH

Samson Raphael Hirsch's Commentary on the Torah (Pentateuch), translated into English by his grandson Isaac Levy

SELECTED AND ARRANGED BY *JOSEPH HALPERN*

On Genesis 7:4: The difference between אֲנִי and אֲנֹכִי especially when spoken by God. אֲנֹכִי is always used in cases where the "I" does not place itself harshly against a person or being, where it designates a ruling of God in which His love and grace is revealed. Although you see Me now bringing death and destruction over the whole human and animal world, nevertheless I am still the same "אֲנֹכִי" who embraces everything, bears, keeps and cares for everything, and even this harshest treatment has only the happiness and well-being of the whole as its purpose.

On Genesis 9:6: Behind the judicial punishments ordained by the Torah, there is neither the idea of deterrence nor of retaliation. In most crimes against property, even for robbery, no punishment at all, not even a fine (קנס) but only restitution (חטלומין) was incurred, definitely refute any idea that legal punishments are based on the principle of deterrence. Just as little is the jus talionis (retaliation) to be deduced from the "eye for an eye" etc. of the Jewish Law. Tradition teaches that thereby only a calculated amount of money is imposed, and at the same time points out how the taking of this legal canon literally in the sense of "an eye for an eye" would be morally impossible for any idea of equity (e.g. if a one-eyed man were to put out the eye of an ordinary two-eyed man etc.). In "an eye for an eye" what is expressed is rather the great principle which underlies the whole of Jewish penal laws, viz. *A man can only expect and demand such rights as he is ready to grant to others.*

OUR DEEPEST CONDOLENCES

TO REVEREND JOSEPH HALPERN

ON THE PASSING OF HIS WIFE

E V A

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

Dr. Manfred R. Lehrman's most interesting article on "Scribal Peculiarities in the Sefer Torah" (Spring 1986), calls for additional information. I quote his sentence: "I should also mention that I recently visited a warehouse in London, where about 1500 Sifre Torah had been accumulated, which had been given by the Czechoslovak Government to a Jewish organisation in England." The simple fact is that the "warehouse" is a specially constructed scroll room in the Westminster Synagogue, London; and the "Jewish organisation" is that same Synagogue — a Reform Synagogue.

The story of the rescue of 1500 Sifre Torah from post-Holocaust Czechoslovakia, and the enormous amount of work and finance involved in documentation, repair, distribution and maintainance — all carried out through the auspices of the Westminster Reform Synagogue — is an important and fascinating story which deserves to be acknowledged without pettiness.

*Rabbi Dr. Chaim Pearl
Jerusalem*

Dear Sir,

I should like to comment on the letter from Alfred Weinberg in your Winter 1985/6 issue.

Mr. Weinberg proposes deleting the letter "yud" in the word כפירים in Psalm 34, verse 11, and reading it as כפרים, that is, "unbelievers" instead of "young lions".

This suggestion contains two major flaws which invalidate your correspondent's recommendation, and a glance at two basic works of reference, namely a Biblical concordance and Ben Yehudah's dictionary, would have revealed that his proposition is untenable.

Firstly, although the verb כפר is fairly common in the Tenach, it is used in the Pi'el, Pu'al and once in the Hitpa'el conjugations. Its use in the Kal, in Genesis 6:14, although having the same three letters in the root, is as a different verb

(Continued on page 256)

עשה תורתך קבע

TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

May-June 1986

איר תשמ"ו

Haftarah: Isaiah 66	שבת	10	א	הפטרה: ישעיהו ס"ו
S II Kings 19		11	ב	מלכים ב' י"ט
M II Kings 20		12	ג	מלכים ב' כ'
T II Kings 21-22		13	ד	מלכים ב' כ"א-כ"ב
W Isaiah 10:32-11:12		14	ה	יום העצמאות ישעיהו י"לב-י"א, יב
Th II Kings 23		15	ו	יום העצמאות מלכים ב' כ"ג
F Leviticus 21-24		16	ז	אמר
Haftarah: Ezekial 44:15-24	שבת	17	ח	הפטרה: יחזקאל מ"ד, טו"כד
S II Kings 24		18	ט	מלכים ב' כ"ד
M II Kings 25		19	י	מלכים ב' כ"ה
T Isaiah 1		20	יא	ישעיהו א'
W Isaiah 2		21	יב	ישעיהו ב'
Th Isaiah 3		22	יג	ישעיהו ג'
F Leviticus 25		23	יד	כהר
Haftarah: Jeremiah 32:1-27	שבת	24	טו	הפטרה: ירמיה, ל"ב, אי"ז
S Isaiah 4		25	טז	ישעיהו ד'
M Isaiah 5		26	יז	ישעיהו ה'
T Isaiah 6		27	יח	ישעיהו ו'
W Isaiah 7		28	יט	ישעיהו ז'
Th Isaiah 8		29	כ	ישעיהו ח'
F Leviticus 26-27		30	כא	בהקתו
Haftarah: Jeremiah 16:19-17:14	שבת	31	כב	הפטרה: ירמיהו ט"ז, יט"ז, י"ז
June				
S II Isaiah 9		1	כג	ישעיהו ט'
M II Isaiah 10		2	כד	ישעיהו י'
T II Isaiah 11		3	כה	ישעיהו י"א
W II Isaiah 12		4	כו	ישעיהו י"ב
Th II Isaiah 13		5	כז	יום ירושלים ישעיהו י"ג
F Numbers 1-4:24		6	כח	במדבר
Haftarah: I Samuel 20:18-42	שבת	7	כט	הפטרה: שמואל א' כ', יח"ב

June-July 1986

סיון תשמ"ו

S	Isaiah 14	ישעיהו י"ד	8	א
M	Isaiah 15	ישעיהו ט"ו	9	ב
T	Ruth 1	רות א'	10	ג
W	Ruth 2	רות ב'	11	ד
Th	Ruth 3-4	רות ג'ד'	12	ה
F	Shavuot: Exodus 19-20	שבועות: שמות י"טכ'	13	ו
	Haftarah: Ezekiel 1: שבת	הפטרה: יחזקאל א'		
	Shavuot* Deuteronomy 14:16-16:17	שבועות* דברים י"ד, ט"ז, י"ז	14	ז
	Haftarah: Habakuk 2:20-3	הפטרה: חבקוק ב' כ"ג'		
S	Isaiah 16	ישעיהו ט"ז	15	ח
M	Isaiah 17	ישעיהו י"ח	16	ט
T	Isaiah 18	ישעיהו י"ח	17	י
W	Isaiah 19	ישעיהו י"ט	18	יא
Th	Isaiah 20	ישעיהו כ'	19	יב
F	Numbers 4:21-7**	נשא**	20	יג
	Haftarah: Judges 13:2-25** שבת	הפטרה: שופטים י"ג, כ"ה**	21	יד
S	Isaiah 21	ישעיהו כ"א	22	טו
M	Isaiah 22	ישעיהו כ"ב	23	טז
T	Isaiah 23	ישעיהו כ"ג	24	יז
W	Isaiah 24	ישעיהו כ"ד	25	יח
Th	Isaiah 25	ישעיהו כ"ה	26	יט
F	Numbers 8-12**	בהעלותך**	27	כ
	Haftarah: Zechariah 2:14-4:7** שבת	הפטרה: זכריה ב', י"ד, ז'	28	כא
S	Isaiah 26	ישעיהו כ"ז	29	כב
M	Isaiah 27	ישעיהו כ"ז	30	כג
		July		
T	Isaiah 28	ישעיהו כ"ח	1	כד
W	Isaiah 29	ישעיהו כ"ט	2	כה
Th	Isaiah 30	ישעיהו ל'	3	כו
F	Numbers 13-15	שלח**	4	כז
	Haftarah: Joshua 2:1-24 שבת	הפטרה: יהושע ב', א-כד	5	כח
S	Isaiah 31	ישעיהו ל"א	6	כט
M	Isaiah 32	ישעיהו ל"ב	7	ל

*Only in the Diaspora

*רק בחוץ לארץ

**In Israel the Sidrah of the following week .בישראל הסדרה של השבוע הבא.

July-August 1986

תמוז תשמ"ו

T	Isaiah 33	ישעיהו ל"ג	8	א
W	Isaiah 34	ישעיהו ל"ד	9	ב
Th	Isaiah 35	ישעיהו ל"ה	10	ג
F	Numbers 16-18*	קרח*	11	ד
שבת	Haftarah I Samuel 11:14-12:22	הפטרה: שמואל א י"א, יד"י"ב, כב	12	ה
S	Isaiah 36	ישעיהו ל"ו	13	ו
M	Isaiah 37	ישעיהו ל"ז	14	ז
T	Isaiah 38	ישעיהו ל"ח	15	ח
W	Isaiah 39	ישעיהו ל"ט	16	ט
Th	Isaiah 40	ישעיהו מ'	17	י
F	Numbers 19-25:9**	חוקת־בלק**	18	יא
שבת	Haftarah: Micah 5:6-6:8	הפטרה: מיכה ה', ו"ו, ח	19	יב
S	Isaiah 41	ישעיהו מ"א	20	יג
M	Isaiah 42	ישעיהו מ"ב	21	יד
T	Isaiah 43	ישעיהו מ"ג	22	טו
W	Isaiah 44	ישעיהו מ"ד	23	טז
Th	Isaiah 45	ישעיהו מ"ה	24	יז
F	Numbers 25:10-30:1	פינחס	25	יח
שבת	Haftarah: I Kings 18:46-19:21	הפטרה: מלכים א י"ח, מ"ו"ז"ט, כא	26	יט
S	Isaiah 46	ישעיהו מ"ו	27	כ
M	Isaiah 47	ישעיהו מ"ז	28	כא
T	Isaiah 48	ישעיהו מ"ח	29	כב
W	Isaiah 49	ישעיהו מ"ט	30	כג
Th	Isaiah 50	ישעיהו נ'	31	כד
August				
F	Numbers 30:2-36	מטוס ומטעי	1	כה
שבת	Haftarah: Jeremiah 2:4-28	הפטרה: ירמיהו ב', ד"כח	2	כו
S	Isaiah 51	ישעיהו נ"א	3	כז
M	Isaiah 52	ישעיהו נ"ב	4	כח
T	Isaiah 53	ישעיהו נ"ג	5	כט

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