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WHERE WAS THE MOUNTAIN OF GOD?

BY DAVID FAIMAN

INTRODUCTION

According to I Kings 19 the prophet Elijah visited Mt. Sinai. Presumably his knowledge of the Torah together with familiarity with the terrain enabled him to find his way. Josephus too, writing nearly a millenium later, appears to have known the whereabouts of this mountain which he refers to, in *Contra Apionem* 2, 25, as being "between Egypt and Arabia." But thereafter, with the onset of the diaspora, knowledge of the exact whereabouts of Mt. Sinai appears to have been lost.

Following early Christian tradition, nineteenth century explorers sought it in the south of the Sinai peninsula. Burckhardt,[1] for example, thought that Gebel Serbal was the biblical Mt. Sinai, but Robinson[2] preferred Gebel Musa.

In the present century speculation has ranged further afield. Wiegand[3] suggested, that Mt. Sinai was in the north of the peninsula at Gebel Yi'allaq whereas Jarvis[4] preferred the nearby Gebel Halal. More recently Har-El[5] has proposed a central Sinai location, identifying the biblical Mt. Sinai with Gebel Sinn Bishr.

There have also been proposals which remove Mt. Sinai from the Sinai peninsula entirely! Two suggestions for locations in Transjordan came from Beke[6] who argued for Gebel Baggir, and from Nielsen[7] who placed it at Petra. There are even proposed locations in Saudi Arabia. Musil,[8] for example, having suggested Se'ib al harob, and Koenig[9] the far-flung Hala'l Bedr. Mt. Sinai has also been located in Israel — Anati[10] having recently suggested that the mountain of God is Har Karkom in the Negev.

The reason why modern scholars cannot agree on the location of Mt. Sinai — and the above selection of examples is by no means complete — is that they make no attempt to comply with all the information the Bible offers regarding its

Professor Faiman was born in London and now teaches physics at Ben Gurion University of the Negev. For the last decade he has lived in Sde Boker where his principal research is in solar energy.

whereabouts. Instead they allow themselves the freedom to choose the particular biblical verses which suit their theories and ignore or reject the rest.

The purpose of the present paper is to show that by carefully considering all of the biblical texts which refer to Mt. Sinai, and by making the, nowadays, not very fashionable assumption that they all refer to the same place, one can in fact deduce its whereabouts with a remarkable degree of precision. In order to demonstrate this assertion let us look systematically at the various biblical verses as they have come down to us.

THE EXODUS TEXT

The expression "The mountain of God" occurs for the first time in Ex. 3:1, where, in the celebrated episode of the burning bush the text informs us that this mountain was located at a place named "Horeb."

He came to the Mountain of God at Horeb. ויבא אל־הר האלהים חרבה

Furthermore, Ex.3:12 makes it clear that this was to be the very mountain that would figure so prominently in the future history of the Israelites:

When you lead the people out of Egypt	בהוציאך את־העם ממצרים
you shall worship God	תעבדון את־האלהים
on this mountain.	על ההר הזה

This point is important since several modern scholars seem to think that Mt. Sinai and Mt. Horeb were two distinct mountains —a possibility which is unlikely if the verse just cited refers to the forthcoming theophany at Mount Sinai. Ex. 3:18 indicates that this mountain was a three-day journey from Egypt:

...When you come...	
to the king of Egypt you should say...	...ובאת... אל מלך מצרים
And now let us travel a three-day (distance)	ואמרתם אליו נלכה־נא דרך
into the desert,	שלשת ימים במדבר
so that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God.	ונזבחה לה' אלהינו

Now Egypt covered a large area so we cannot be sure from where to start measuring the three day journey. The geographic picture is, however, clarified somewhat further in Ex. 4:19 and in Ex. 4:27 which, together, indicate that the mountain of God lay on the route from Egypt to Midian:

The Lord said to Moses in Midian,	ויאמר ה' אל־משה במדין
'Go back to Egypt'...	לך שב מצרים...
The Lord said to Aaron,	ויאמר ה' אל־אהרן
'Go into the desert, towards Moses'	לך לקראת משה המרברה
So he went and met him at the mountain of God...	וילך ויפגשהו בהר האלהים

We thus see that quite a clear picture emerges in these two early chapters from the book of Exodus. The mountain of God was located at a place called Horeb which was a three-day journey along the road from Egypt to Midian.

One can, however, obtain more information about the location of the mountain of God from the biblical books of Numbers and Deuteronomy provided, as we stated at the start, that one assumes that Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy are, in spite of their differing literary styles, consistent in their geographical understanding of the location of this mountain.

THE DEUTERONOMY TEXT

We shall take Deuteronomy next because, in its characteristically terse style the light it sheds on our problem is most simply stated. According to Deut. 1:2 the distance from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea was an eleven-day journey:

It is eleven days (distance) from Horeb,	אחד עשר יום מחרב
Via the road to the Seir highlands,	דרך הר־שעיר
to Kadesh Barnea.	עד קדש ברנע

Now Kadesh Barnea was almost certainly somewhere in the vicinity of the relatively fertile area embracing the present-day oases of 'Ein el Quseima, 'Ein Qudeirat and 'Ein qadeis. Indeed, this author has previously suggested the possibility[11] that all the springs and wells in this vicinity constituted the original באדת בני־יעקן mentioned in Deut. 10:6, and that this long name was eventually shortened to ברנע. However, since there can be no strictly linear relationship between distance and time in a mountainous terrain, the three days from Egypt and the eleven days from Kadesh Barnea are not quite sufficient to provide a pair of accurate map coordinates for the mountain of God — although they go a long way towards fulfilling that criterion. In order to approach that goal we must turn our attention to the multitude of information provided by the book of Numbers.

THE NUMBERS TEXT

After residing almost a full year at Horeb, the Israelites finally set out again on their journey to the Promised Land. Their destination was Kadesh Barnea, as implied by Num. 10:12:

The Israelites set out on their travels	ויסעו בני־ישראל למסעיהם
from the wilderness of Sinai,	ממדבר סיני
and the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran	וישכן הענן במדבר פארן

It should be clear that Midbar Sinai is an alternative name for the Horeb region, but perhaps it is less obvious that the wilderness of Paran is, in similar manner, an alternative name for the Kadesh Barnea region. This fact we learn at the return of the twelve spies in Num. 13:26:

They came to Moses and Aaron	ויבאו אל־משה ואל־אהרן
and to the entire assembly of the Israelites,	ואל־כל־עדת בני־ישראל
to the wilderness of Paran at Kadesh	אל־מרבר פארן קדשה

Num. 10:12 should not, of course, be understood to imply that the Israelites went from Sinai to Paran in a single journey. This is clear two chapters later where, after the episodes of the punishment by fire at Taberah, the fatal quail poisoning at Kibroth Hataavah and Miriam's leprosy at Hazeroth, Num. 12:16 reminds us, once again, of their intended destination:

Afterwards the people journeyed from Hazeroth	ואחר נסעו העם מחצרות
and encamped in the wilderness of Paran.	ויחנו במדבר פארן

Moreover, if this is not clear enough, the lengthy itinerary in Num. 33 – listing many camp sites between Sinai and Kadesh – makes it abundantly clear that the Horeb to Paran trip was not made in a single hop.

Several difficult issues are, in fact, associated with the Num. 33 itinerary but these will be addressed in a separate paper since our purpose at this stage lies elsewhere: namely to draw attention to the fact that a definite direction is implied for the section of the route between Horeb/Sinai and Kadesh/Paran.

In order to understand this point, close attention must be paid to the camping instructions given in Num. 2 and to the marching instructions issued in the same chapter (and repeated again in Num. 10). Camped to the east of the tabernacle

were the tribes of Judah, Issachar and Zebulun. To its south lay the camps of Reuben, Simeon and Gad. West of the tabernacle lay the camps of Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin. Lastly, the tribes of Dan Asher and Naphtali camped to its north.

Now first to march were the eastern tribes. Then the tabernacle was taken down and carried forward by the Gershonites and the Merarites. Next to march were the southern tribes followed by the sanctuary itself carried by the Kohathites.

At this stage it is clear that only an eastward direction is possible for the overall progress. On the one hand the eastern tribes could in principle have marched northwards or southwards. But since only the eastward direction was open to the tabernacle this was the only direction that the eastern tribes could take if they were to preserve the formation insisted upon in Num. 2:34:

As they camped, according to their standards	כן־חנו לדגליהם
So too did they march.	וכן נסעו

For simplicity we may picture the eastern tribes moving one square to the east, as it were, on a chess board. They are followed behind by the tabernacle. Then the southern tribes move one square eastward. The centre square is then vacated by the sanctuary moving to join the tabernacle, but reoecupied by the western tribes as the latter keep pace. Finally the northern tribes move one square to the east, thus completing the formation. (See Figure 1).

To the extent that the Bible mentions only the four eardinal directions, it is clear from the above discussion that when the Israelites set out from Midbar Sinai they were traveling in an "easterly" direction. The implication here is that the mountain of God presumably lay somewhere to the "west" of Kadesh Barnea. In faet this is apparent from the Exodus texts quoted earlier, but it is satisfying to see that similar geography is implied by these two biblical books even though they employ sueh different narrative styles from each other.

COMPASS POINTS IN THE BIBLE

From the Hebrew names for the four cardinal directions: צפונה for northwards, תימנה for southwards, קדמה or מזרחה for eastwards, and ימה for

westwards, only one indicates any kind of absolute method for determining direction, namely, מזרחה, where the sun rises.

Now the sun only rises in a true compass easterly direction on the two equinox days. In summer it rises north of true east and in winter, south of due east. At latitudes of around 30 degrees N – i.e. those of the southern Negev and Sinai peninsula, the sun rises close to 30 degrees north of compass east in mid-summer and sets, some 14 hours later a similar number of degrees to the north of compass west. In mid-winter there are only 10 hours of daylight, and sunrise and sunset are about 30 degrees to the south of east and west. respectively.

If we knew the date the Israelites set out from the wilderness of Sinai we could in principle calculate the direction of sunrise and thereby arrive at a good central value for this direction. The word "central" is used since we must not forget that "east" in the Bible might reasonably mean any direction lying between north-east and south-east since only the cardinal directions are explicitly named.

But we do know the date! According to Num. 10:11 it was the 20th day of the 2nd month of the 2nd year. This date is linked, moreover, to a remarkable natural phenomenon that occurred a few days later – namely, the appearance of an enormous quantity of quail, as stated in Num. 11:31:

A wind went forh from the Lord	ורוח נסע מאת ה׳
and swept in quails from the sea,	ויגז שלוים מן־הים
and showered (them) on the camp	ויטש על־המחנה
about a day's distance (in radius)	כדרך יום כה וכדרך יום כה
in all directions around the camp.	סביבות המחנה

This is in fact the second time that the Bible (see Ex. 16:1, 13) reports quail as appearing at this time of year.

They journeyed from Elim	ויסעו מאילם-
and the entire assembly of the Israelites arrived	ויבאו כל־עדת בני־ישראל
at the wilderness of Sin,	אל־מדבר־סין
which is between Elim, and Sinai,	אשר בין־אילם ובין סיני
on the fifteenth day of the second month	בחמשה עשר יום לחדש השני
after their setting out from the land of Egypt...	...לצאתם מארץ מצרים
In the evening it happened that quail took flight.	ויהי בערב ותעל השלו

Now if these were modern times, the 15th day of the second Hebrew month would coincide with the average secular date of May 10th – there being an uncertainty of about 15 days on either side of this date, depending upon where in the 19-year cycle (with which the Hebrew and secular calendars oscillate about each other) we happen to be. Furthermore, since the lunar calendar has only 354 days, the departure from Sinai that second year would have been on May 4th with the quails appearing a few days later.

But we are talking about events reputed to have occurred more than three millenia ago. So we must be concerned as to whether there may have been a gradual shift of the Hebrew relative to the secular calendar. Remarkably, however, the Bible provides us with such a check, for quail migration patterns have been extensively studied in modern times.[12]

There is a spring migration northwards from Africa to Europe which passes over the Sinai peninsula from March to mid-May, peaking in April. The return journey in autumn produces large concentrations of these birds along the north Sinai coast between late August and October, the peak being in mid-September.

We thus see that the "May" appearances of quail reported in the Bible – keeping in mind the 15-day overall uncertainty referred to above – are consistent with the spring migration pattern observed in our present epoch. This means either that there has been no shift in the Hebrew calendar, relative to the secular calendar, since the time of the Exodus, or that it occurred over a period of many years. In either event this allows us confidently to calculate the direction of sunrise in Sinai on that distant "May 4," using modern astronomical algorithms.[13]

If we take 'Ein Qadeis as representing the southern-most part of the Kadesh Barnea region, then calculations indicate that sunrise on May 4th over 'Ein Qadeis would appear to any observer standing on a line which joins 'Ein Qadeis to the Giddi Pass. The 15 day uncertainty associated with the oscillation of the Hebrew and secular calendars amounts to a variation of "east" by about 5 degrees. This could shift the Giddi Pass end of this line slightly southward – to the Mitla Pass. (See Figure 2).

CONCLUSIONS

If we take all of the above textual evidence together, we observe that a totally self-consistent interpretation is possible and that the most probable location for

the mountain of God – under this assumption of total consistency – must be somewhere in the vicinity of the Giddi Pass.

We observe that this pass is:

(a) near one of the main routes from Egypt to Arabia (Midian) – consistent with Ex. 4.

(b) about 3 days journey from the Bitter Lakes (at about 22 km/day) – consistent with Ex. 3.

(c) about 11 days journey from 'Ein Qadeis (at about 13 km/day) – consistent with Deut. 1.

(d) "west" (according to sunrise) of 'Ein Qadeis – consistent with Num. 2 and 10.

We have used the term "most probable" in a statistical sense since the "east" we have calculated is only a central value. Larger than the relatively minor 5 degrees shift associated with the 15 day ealendarial uncertainty referred to above is the larger 45 degrees license we must allow the Bible in its refusal to specify directions more accurately than by the four cardinal points. Thus "eastwards" could have meant north-eastwards or south-eastwards or anything in between.

However, a south-western line from 'Ein-Qadeis (reckoning east according to sunrise) passes north of all the south-peninsula mountains. This means that none of the many peaks in that area, e.g. Gebel Musa, etc., can easily be regarded as requiring an "eastward" journey to Kadesh (Num. 2 and 10). They are also neither close to the Egypt-Midian road (Ex. 4) nor three days journey from Egypt (Ex. 3).

At the other extreme, a north-western line from 'Ein Qadeis would embrace Gebel Helal which, following Jarvis, several contempory scholars consider to have been the mountain of God. But this peak is barely 2 day's journey from Kadesh Barnea, thus it would not be consistent with the Deut. 1 description. It is also so near to the Mediterranean Sea that it would be difficult to understand the quail phenomena unless the Hebrew year has become six months out of phase with the solar calendar – which we have demonstrated to be not the case.

Thirdly, all candidate peaks to the east or south-east of Kadesh Barnea, such as Har Karkom in the Negev, or the various mountains in Transjordan and Arabia that have been proposed as the mountain of God, are similarly difficult to reconcile with the "eastward" march to Kadesh implied by Num. 2 and 10 – let alone the three day's distanee from Egypt of Ex. 3.

Indeed, of all the candidate peaks that have been proposed in the literature as being the "true" mountain of God, only one may be considered as being tolerably consistent with all of the biblical specifications discussed above, namely, Gebel Sinn Bishr. Naturally, we cannot rule out the possibility that Mt. Sinai may be some other peak that no scholar has yet happened to lay claim to – for example, Gebel el Giddi itself! Of all the published claims Har-El's provides the closest fit to the biblical descriptions.

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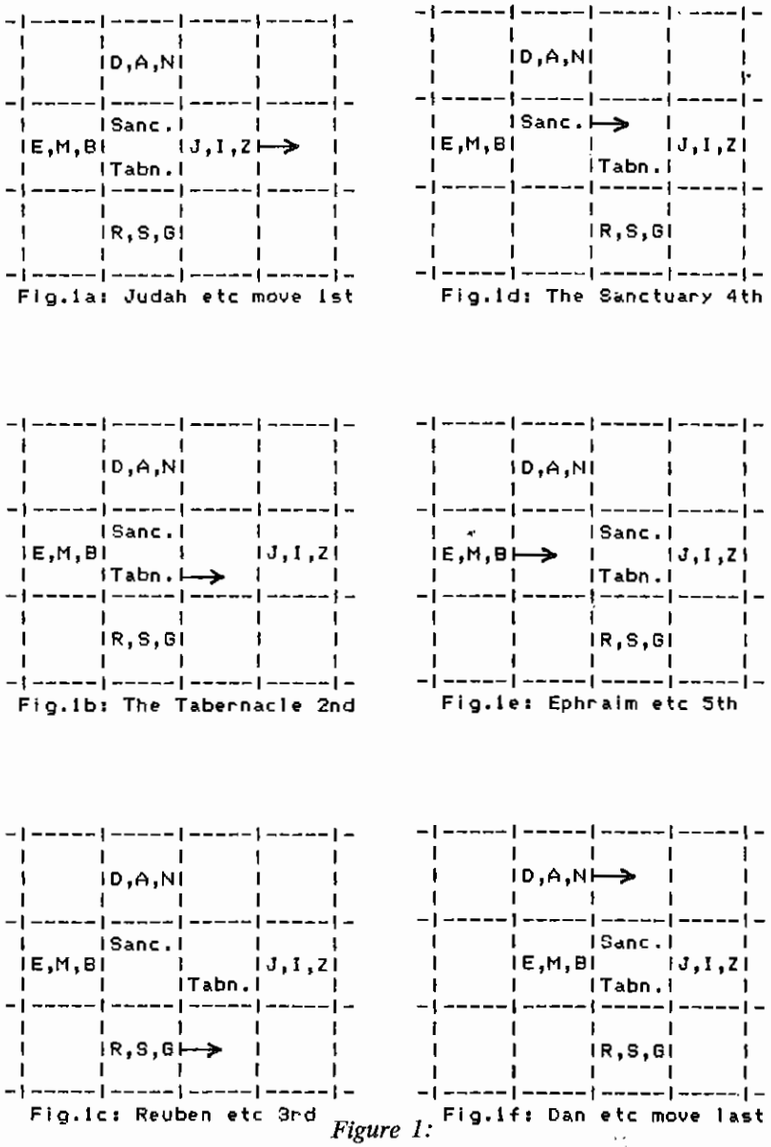

Figure 1:

As they camped... so too did they march. Of the Bible's 4 cardinal directions only eastwards complies with Num. 2:34.

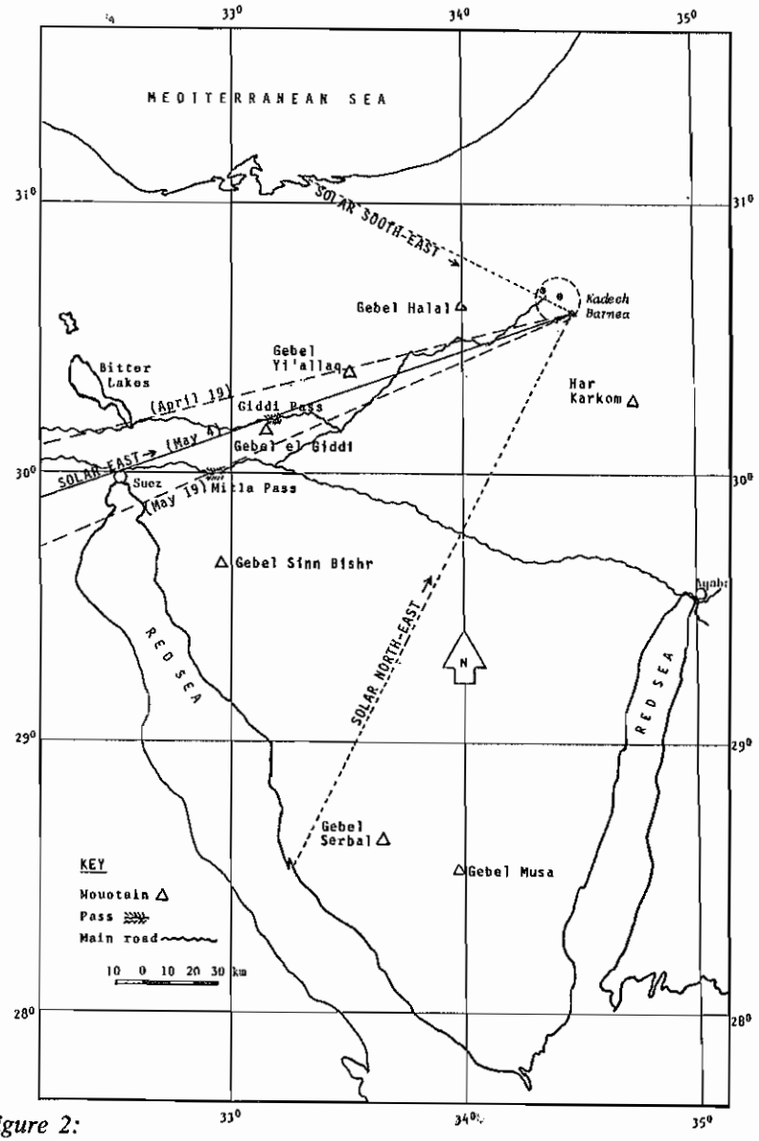

Figure 2:

Map of the Sinai peninsula, showing the difference between geographic east (grid lines) and solar "east" on May 4th (the author's estimated date for the departure from Mt. Sinai).

JACOB'S LIMP

BY DAVID E. FASS

A limp, a handicap. Is this something to highlight? Not just anyone's limp, either, but a Patriarch's limp, Jacob's limp. A wound caused by a man-messenger-angel of God with whom he wrestled that night on the banks of the river Jabbok (Gen. 32:23–33). This hobbling is memorialized for all time at the dinner tables of Israel: *That is why the children of Israel to this day do not eat the thigh muscle that is on the socket of the hip, since Jacob's hip socket was wrenched at the thigh muscle* (Gen. 32:33).[1]

Tradition greatly extends and expands the prohibition to include not simply the thigh muscle, but the entire region through which the sciatic nerve runs. This rule is in force both inside and outside of Israel, during the existence of the Temple and after its destruction, in regard to consecrated and unconsecrated animals, domesticated cattle and wild animals and applies to both the right and the left hip.[2] Not eating the forbidden nerve-sinew-tendon applies to the widest possible sphere of humanity. It is binding not only upon the Jews but upon all the offspring of Noah.[3]

Why? why this intensity of focus, this glorification of an imperfection and a weakness? There is more going on here than simply an etiological explanation of a somewhat distinctive gustatory regimen. As soon as we begin to look we find that there are depths of meaning beneath the surface, echoes and reverberations of other issues. Arthur Waskow remarks that "wrestling feels a lot like making love."[4] Our tradition speaks to the same point with the linguistic congruence

1 *Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text,* Philadelphia, Pa., The Jewish Publication Society, 1985. All further English quotes from the Bible, unless otherwise noted, are from the same source and are cited in the body of the text by chapter and verse.

2 *Mishnah Chulin,* 7:1.

3 *B. Tal. Chulin,* 90a, 100b.

4 Arthur I. Waskow, *Godwrestling,* New York, Schocken Books, 1978, p. 1.

David E. Fass is Rabbi of Temple Beth Sholom, New City, New York.

between "wrestle" and "dust." Both are formed from the same three root letters: א־ב־ק *alef, bet, kof, (avak).*[5] The standard etymology traces the connection between the two words to the dust that is kicked up when two people wrestle. The *Zohar* asserts that the dust kicked up by Jacob's opponent was sterile, barren ashes in which nothing could grow.[6] But a different source claims that all the gains made by Jacob's descendants, any success in the performance of *mitzvot,* industry, commerce, even war (presumably against enemies, not brothers), were due to the dust of the fruitful earth, kicked up at the Jabbok, that would grow seed if only it were watered.[7]

A SEXUAL WOUND?

How did Jacob move from the sterile ashes of a burning aggression in which nothing grows but pain, to the fertile dust that awaits the moisture of tenderness to sprout a loving garden of accomplishment? One of our legends sees in the dust an allusion to circumcision, in that dust was thrown over the wound, presumably to help it heal.[8] Can Jacob's sexuality be the key to our understanding of his triumph at the Jabbok? Is his wrestling an attempt to resolve an essentially sexual conflict? The thigh where Jacob is wounded, "is a seat of life and especially of procreative power..." in ancient Semitic[9] and Greek symbolism.[10] Gaster notes that in Greek mythology the god Dionysus, whose passion for orgiastic revelry is proverbial, "is said to have been born from the thigh of Zeus."[11]

Many Jewish sources in commentary and midrash present Jacob's wound as a sexual one. The angel's touch somehow injured those of Jacob's offspring who

5 See, for example, Rashi to Gen. 32:24.

6 *Zohar,* I, 170a, trans. by Harry Sperling and Mauriee Simon, London, The Soncino Press, Ltd., 1984.

7 *Shir Ha-Shirim Rabbah,* III, 6:2.

8 Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews,* Philadelphia, The Jewish Publieation Soeiety of Ameriea, 1968, vol. 6, pp. 131–132.

9 W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites,* New York, Schocken Books, 1972, p. 380, note 1.

10 Theodor H. Gaster, *Myth, Legend, and Custom in the Old Testament,* New York, Harper & Row, Publishers, 1975, p. 211.

11 *Ibid.*

would endure the Hadrianic persecution.[12] The Ladino anthology *Me'Am Lo'ez* insists that Jacob was hurt on the inner thigh next to the sex organ. His punishment was sexual because so was his trangression: marrying two sisters, which violates one of the Torah's commandments.[13] Elie Munk cites the *Zohar* to the effect that the area of Jacob's wound "constitutes the physical support for the genital organs," and that we refrain from eating this muscle because it makes us forget proper morality and engage in wantonness.[14] In a more general sense, the thigh joint "is an allusion to the region of circumcision."[15] Malbim on Gen. 32:26 notes that the site of the hip (or thigh) joint can never be separated from physicality because it plays a necessary part in the propagation of the species.[16] Similarly, we do not consume that area lest the lust and desire it represents become incorporated into us and corrupt our humanity.[17]

The Talmud asks: why is the place where Jacob was hit called the *gid ha-nasheh*? Because the sinew (or nerve) shriveled up, *nasha*, when it was hit. The same verb is used by Jeremiah (51:30) to refer to the desolation of Babylon, whose warriors... *stop fighting... their might is dried up (nashta), they become women.*[18] Rashi uses the same derivation.[19] Gaster notes that this may derive from the fact that the tendon in question shrinks up, shortens, when it is cut.[20] Hirsch is quite clear that *gid hânasheh,* "means the sinew of weakness, dependency, impotence..."[21] We might well ask, what sort of triumph is involved with a wound that seems to produce at least temporary impotence?

12 *Beraisheet Rabbah* 77:3, *Shir Ha-Shirim Rabbah* III, 6:3.

13 *The Torah Anthology, Me'Am Lo'ez,* trans. by Aryeh Kaplan, New York, Maznaim Publishing Corp., 1977, Vol. 3, pp. 134–135.

14 Elie Munk, *The Call of the Torah,* trans. by E. S. Maser, Jerusalem, Feldheim Publishers, 1980, Vol. 2, pp. 724–725. I am unable, however, to find the reference in the *Zohar* that Munk has in mind.

15 *Ibid.*

16 Malbim, *Commentary on the Toroh,* trans. by Zvi Faier, Israel, M. P. Press, Hillel Press, 1982, p. 99.

17 *Ibid., p. 104.*

18 *B. Chul.,* 91a.

19 Rashi to Gen. 32:32.

20 Gaster, *op. cit.,* pp. 210–211.

21 Samson Raphael Hirsch, *Horeb,* trans. by I. Grunfeld, London, The Soncino Press, 1962, p. 174.

The issue of circumcision is the key. Jacob, says the midrash, was born circumcized, perfect.[22] Freud claims that the operation of circumcision is an act of submission to the father.[23] The uncircumcized Jacob never submitted to his father, and Isaac made it clear he preferred his brother Esau, anyway (Gen. 25:28). It was his mother Rebekah with whom he had a close relationship.

JACOB THE DOMINATOR

The unsubmissive Jacob, a "perfect" specimen doted upon by his mother, a boy who never had to "pay his dues," grows up dominating others. He seeks, and receives, the birthright to which he had no right by birth order, by trading Esau some lentil stew (Gen. 25:29–34). With Rebekah's help he dominates both Isaac and Esau by tricking the blind, old man into giving him the deathbed blessing Isaac wanted to give his brother (Gen. 27:1–40). When Laban tries to trick Jacob out of his wages (the dark sheep and speckled and spotted goats), Jacob turns the tables and tricks Laban. Dominant again, Jacob leaves with his wives, children and much wealth in the form of flocks and herds (Gen.30:25–43).

At the Jabbok the issue arises again. Rashi notes that Jacob's statement to the angel, *I will not let you go unless you bless me* (Gen. 32:37) was actually a request for angelic (i.e., divine) affirmation of the blessings (i.e. dominance) Jacob received from Isaac and that Esau disputed.[24] One source attributes the hip wound to an ancient custom of carrying important documents tied there. Jacob was presumably carrying the birthright he got from Esau, and the being with whom he wrestled, who was (in this version, and some others) Esau's guardian angel, was trying to take it from him and rip it up.[25]

But as dominant as Jacob might have been, he is equally susceptible to being dominated and manipulated by others. It is his mother's idea that he seek his father's death-bed blessing. When he has reservations about Isaac actually falling for the ruse, it is Rebekah who silences him and gets him to proceed (Gen. 27:5–13). Whichever of the two versions we focus on, it is Rebekah's influence in both cases that causes Jacob to leave home (Gen. 29:16–30). Laban understands

22 *Ber. Rab.* 63:7, *Midrash Tehillim,* 9:7.

23 Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism,* New York, Vintage Books, 1939, p. 156.

24 Rashi to Gen. 32:27.

25 *Torah Anthology, op. cit.,* p. 135.

that Jacob can be dominated by playing on his attraction for women, and is able to keep him in his employ simply by the promise of a wife.[26]

If dominance equals power, then being dominated equals powerlessness, impotence. In Jacob's life, it is the dominance / domination polarity that is the source of much of his greatest unresolved conflict. Jacob's life history is replete with moments of trickery, ruse, and machination. He was familiar both with being dominated by others (Rebekah, Laban) for their purposes and with dominating others, (Esau, Isaac, Laban, Leah), for his. What is largely missing from his life is a solid sense of mastery based on his own accomplishments. Jacob "limps" from event to event on the unsteady foundation of a conflicted character.

Much of Jacob's conflict is made manifest in his sexual life. This can be seen in the *Zohar's* treatment of his remaining alone that night on the river bank. R. Eleazar warns that a man should not go out alone at night, especially when there is no moon and it is dark. It is then that the "evil serpent" and "he who rides on the serpent" come out employing all manner of ruses and seductions.[27] Lilith, the night-temptress, seduces those who are alone on a dark night to mate with her and produce demon spawn. Though "beloved by the Almighty," this is what happened to Jacob.[28]

Maimonides,[29] as well as Malbim,[30] suggests that at the Jabbok, Jacob wrestled with himself (though Malbim leaves open the possibility that he then wrestled with another being). Starting with this in mind, we can re-read the *Zohar's* information not as being about what was happening to Jacob, but as what was happening *within* Jacob. Within him there was a struggle, a sexual struggle. How is the serpent (the phallus) to be ridden (used)? Is it to be used to defile, to degrade, to dominate? These primitive impulses come to the fore when the light of consciousness is quiescent and one is alone, away from the civilizing, restraining structures of family and society. Alone and in the dark, Jacob wrestles with the darker side of his own being, a side that has all too often seen the light of day throughout his lifetime.

26 *Zohar.* op. cit., I, 160b–161a.

27 *Zohar,* op. cit., I, 169b.

28 *Ibid.*

29 Moses Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed,* trans. by M. Friedlander, second edition; New York, Dover Publications, 1956, II:42, pp. 236–238.

30 Malbim, *op. cit.,* pp. 97–98.

JACOB ROMANTIC

Throughout his activity as a married man the conflicts in Jacob's sexual development are most in evidence. When Jacob first meets Rachel he hardly acts the confident, mature lover. Instead, he impulsively kisses her, and cries (Gen. 29:11)! Then, he is so enamored of his beloved, so desirous of having her, that, like a romantic Knight of the Round Table, Jacob promises to work for seven years before consummation of the marriage. The text reinforces the child-like, fantasy world in which Jacob is living by declaring, *So Jacob served seven years for Rachel and they seemed to him but a few days because of his love for her* (Gen. 29:20). Lest we think that serving for seven years before receiving the bride was the standard occurrence, we are told that, after being given Leah instead of her younger sister, Rachel, Jacob promises another seven years of work and this time receives his second bride as soon as the week long celebration for the first is concluded (Gen. 29:27–28). What are we to think, other than that Jacob's desire for Rachel was a romantic infatuation? Her importance to him was precisely that she remain a distant love, unable to be attained.

Yet, as soon as Rachel did become available, there was trouble: *The Lord saw that Leah was unloved and opened her womb; but Rachel was barren* (Gen. 29:31). How sad to think of poor Jacob struggling (wrestling?) dutifully night after night on the marital bed with the unloved Leah, who conceived again and again, bearing him six sons and a daughter before her sister, the one that Jacob "loved" had any children at all!

We must ask: What sort of love was it that Jacob had for Rachel? Is it that she was barren, or is it that perhaps, with the object of his romantic infatuation, he was impotent? That possibility is certainly part of the story. Reuben, Leah's eldest, finds some mandrakes, and gives them to his mother. Rachel asks for them, promising that Leah can bed with Jacob that night by way of trade (Gen. 30:14–16). In folklore, the mandrake is both a cure for female sterility and an aphrodisiae for male impotence.[31] It could as easily be one as the other. It could have been the ease that Jacob's sexuality was so wrapped up in dominance and its attendant aggression that he functioned only with a woman he didn't love, yet failed with a woman for whom he had feelings of tenderness and concern. The

31 Gaster, *op. cit.,* p. 200.

medieval knight and the southern gentleman are but two examples of cultures in which this dichotomy was part of the norm, and love and sex were not to be found with the same person.

That this was Jacob's problem and not Rachel's is given further credence by the report of when she finally did have her first child. Leah bore him six sons, *at last, she bore him a daughter, and named her Dinah. Now God remembered Rachel; God heeded her and opened her womb. She conceived and bore a son* (Gen. 30:22–23).

Is the appearance of the first daughter the determining factor? It wouldn't have been for Rachel, but it might have been for Jacob. As long as he had sons, little clones of himself, the status quo was maintained. Perhaps his first daughter's birth helped him integrate some of the feminine, softer sides of his soul, aspects that previously were either locked away entirely in domination or given free reign in sobbing impotence. Only now is Jacob able to approach Rachel fully, as a man loving a woman. The results are what they often are: she conceives and gives birth.

Although Jacob has learned a loving potency that is not simply aggresive domination, all the old wounds are opened once again as he prepares for the reunion with Esau. The last time they had been anywhere near each other, twenty years ago at the time of Isaac's blessing, Rebekah had warned Jacob, *Your brother Esau is consoling himself by planning to kill you* (Gen. 27:42). Now his brother is in the vicinity, *he himself is coming... and there are four hundred men with him* (Gen. 32:7). Jacob is right to be afraid.

And so, that night, Jacob wrestled yet again. Would he be dominant, or dominated? Who would win the struggle? It is the wound he incurs that is actually the crucial part of the lesson. Jacob experiences a hurt, a sexual hurt. He allows himself to feel the pain and shame of what has been done to him and what he did so often to others.

JACOB'S INSIGHT

The English translation of Malbim's Torah commentary catches the flavor of this. The J.P.S. translation for Gen. 32:26 says that the angel *wrenched Jacob's hip at its socket...* While Malbim reads the same verse as, *penetrated into the joint of the thigh.*[32] Jacob grew by allowing himself to feel what it might be like to be sexually dominated, raped, penetrated, and thereby rejected such a path in his own future behavior. Whatever the outcome was to be, Jacob would meet his brother without ruse or guile, and, hopefully, with love.

The rain of tears does fall to water the dust. When Jacob and Esau finally meet, they embrace and weep (Gen. 33:4). These are not the tears of the child-man falling in love at the well, but of one who has wrestled with God and self, and has won a victory. The tears of relief, and also of pain at what this moment of reconciliation has cost. The limp is a hesitating walk, a fitting symbol of the mature consideration of alternatives. It is now his desire to dominate that has shrivelled up, been made impotent. The adult Jacob can no longer act on blind impulse, but must take care and not run to respond to life's demands.

According to Rashi, the limp, the overt symbol of the pain of Jacob's breakthrough, has healed by the time Jacob and Esau meet: *The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping on his hip* (Gen. 32:31). The sun rose to heal him.[33] It is the light of consciousness, of understanding, that helps us heal our psychic wounds. Having seen the light, Jacob comes whole and healed to the city of Shechem after parting from his brother in peace.[34]

32 Malbim, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

33 C.f. Rashi to Gen. 32:31.

34 C.f. Rashi to Gen. 33:18, *B. Shabb.*, 33b.

RESIDUAL MAGIC

Continued from page 259

jumbo. There was no presumption to invest the act with pretensions to controlling the forces of nature or compelling the divinity to man's will. On the contrary, the results which the rites were meant to achieve, were ascribed to God. In this way, these practices were of a different order. They were end results emanating from the Divine, performed by God; not by man employing magic.

JOT, TITTLE AND WAW
(Job 19:25)

BY DAVID WOLFERS

"Jot" is the Greek letter iota, translating the Hebrew letter yod, as the smallest letter in the alphabet. A "tittle" in this context is one of those curlicues to be found arising from the letters of the Torah like wisps of hair, which denote musical phrasing.

Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled. (Matt, 5:18).

The rebellious young teacher, Jesus of Nazareth, who made this impeccably orthodox Jewish statement, intended it to be understood as an example of the figure of speech, *synecdoche*, in which the part stands for the whole. That is to say, he intended that *inter alia, waws* should be included in the prohibition against the diminution of the Law.

"*Waw*" in Hebrew means a hook. The letter ו is accordingly shaped like a hook, and functions in the language as a hook, to join together (or paradoxically to join apart) words, phrases or sentences. It is a versatile little letter-word which most often means "and," but sometimes "but," "that," "while," "although," "seeing that," "as," "yea!" and many delicate refinements of these words. When attached to a verb and appropriately vocalized, "*waw*" has the strange power to influence its tense, and in certain types of inverted sentences "*waw*" serves a purely formal purpose of introducing the predicate. In both these last two cases, modern western languages can leave the word out in translation, though recognizing and adjusting to its influence. Grammarians have had a fine time with "*waw*," and recognize *waw copulativum, waw apodosis, waw concomitantiae, waw explicativum, waw consecutive*, and others.

In this article, we shall be looking at a variety of *waw* not officially recognized

Dr. Wolfers is a medical practitioner and demographer who, since his retirement in Jerusalem in 1976, has devoted his time to study and translation of the Book of Job. He is the author of numerous scientific articles and co-author of several books on aspects of the international population problem. At present he is assistant editor of Dor Le Dor.

by grammarians — *waw excommunicatum* — the *waw* that everyone wishes away, the most unpopular *waw* in the Bible. The passage is Job 19:23–27, and it contains four of these intrusive hooks, one each at the beginning of the lines of verses 25 and 26.

Job 19:25a is one of the best known lines in the Hebrew Bible. Its most familiar English version is *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. Surprisingly, however, the Hebrew is not: ידעתי כי חי־גאלי but: ואני ידעתי גאלי חי. There are three imporant differences, and one minor one. There is the prefixed ואני, comprising two apparently unnecessary additional words, and the absence of the more or less essential כי, and lastly the less than optimal word order of the final clause. Let us examine these four anomalies.

I KNOW ואני ידעתי

1. In the Bible there are innumerable examples of the verb "to know" followed by a sentence stating what is known. In every instance but two[1] the verb is followed by either כי, ש, (= that) or an equivalent. Its absence here is therefore a suspicious circumstance which should spur us to look for an alternative reading.

2. The duplication of the personal pronoun "I", i.e., in the verb as well as in the pronoun, is a fairly common device in Hebrew, and is found twenty odd times in the Book of Job. It is used, particularly in Job, for the specific purpose of pointing a contrast between the speaker and another subject, usually, the person addressed. In v. 27 of the present passage there is a clear example of this convention. The אני in this verse should therefore induce us to search the context for a source of contrast to the speaker.

3. The anathematized ו with which the sentence begins demands interpretation as a hook, joining the sentence to, or repelling it from, what preceded it.

4. If there is any significance in the less than graceful word order, it must be to reinforce the suspicion raised by the absent כי that even discounting the intrusive introductory two words, the sentence cannot actually mean *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. The gracelessness of the word-order is emphasized by the preceding אני ידעתי which also, though now quite naturally, gives precedence to the subject rather than the verb.

1 Isaiah 48:8 and Job 30:23.

Again the introductory *waw excommunicatum* indicates that the sentence is governed by the desideratives מי־יתן, so that the verse reads "And that in my flesh I should see God." I suggest a full and exact *parallelismus membrorum* between this line and 25a. אלוה, *God,* means the same as גאלי, *my Redeemer.* מבשרי, *in my flesh,* the same as חי, *living,* and אחזה, *that I might see,* as ירעתי, *that I might know.* In both verses Job is pleading to be granted the sight of God *while he is alive.* The חי is adjectival and relates to Job, not to the Redeemer. There is, however, an interesting complication to this interpretation, in its relation to the contrasting forms of immortality sought, as indicated by the reduplicated personal pronoun. In 14:13 Job expresses (also with the use of מי־יתן) a longing that God will "hide" him in the Underworld until His wrath is past, and then resurrect him. I suggest that this same desire is involved in the חי and מבשרי of this passage. Assuming that a restoration of his situation in his lifetime is out of the question, Job is asking to be resurrected in the flesh to meet God on a future occasion which will be specified in the two lines enclosed between the chiastic 19:25a and 19:26b.

VERSES 19:25b–26a

These two lines have posed an eternal puzzle, and there is a universal assumption that they have suffered some form of corruption. They read: ואחרון על עפר יקום: ואחר עורי נקפו־זאת. As we see, both are introduced by *waw excommunicatum,* and therefore must be read as wishes rather than statements. Now despite the presence of the form יקום על in the first line, there is no way in which this can be related to the levirate function of the redeemer. יקום על, however, has a wide spread of meanings, and is usually taken here as to "arise upon" or to "stand upon," or even (NJPSV) to "testify upon." אחרון also is hard to pin down, but surely has an apocalyptic significance in relation to the last day,[4] although it has been seen by some as simply "a successor." עפר,"dust" is a

4 There seems a close relationship between this passage of Job and Isaiah 30:8 in which the expression יום אחרון appears:

Now go, write it on a tablet,
Inscribe it for them in an archive,
That it may be until the last day
For ever and ever.

Isaiah 30 is also related to the description of Behemoth in Chapter 40 of Job, see D. Wolfers *op. cit.,* 1986.

metaphor either for mankind, or for the earth, with the former far more likely. Proceeding on the assumption that the wish being expressed in this passage is indeed the same as that in 14:13, so that its meaning should approximate "that His wrath may be past," we may essay either *And that the last thing* (or *His last) may be fulfilled upon the dust* – that God may finally cease laying about Him in His anger with mankind, or *and that the last Day may stand upon the earth.*

The great problem of the next line is the verbal form נקפו. This is the only example of the Pi'el of either of the two distinct verbs נקף. Furthermore, as a third person plural it lacks any plausible plural subject referent in the context, and should therefore be treated as a passive. A final difficulty is in determining its subject in the unique sentence formation of this line. This last problem can be solved only if we believe that the line is not corrupt. In that case its form is the same as such sentences as "After the main course, desert will be served," where both nouns are equally subjects of the verb, but with implied contrasting tenses – "has been – will be." This gives us (still with a *waw) and that after my body* (or *skin*), this *will be* נקף with a strong presumption that the verb implies some form of restoration or reconstitution after God's hostile activities have ceased or the last trump sounded. "*This*" is the code-name Job gave to his disasters in 12:9.

Although נקף with the sense of "going around" occurs in the Book of Job twice elsewhere (1:5 and 19:6), and in the alternative sense of "striking off" or "harvesting" only in Isaiah, almost all commentators see the latter as the meaning here, and relate it to the stripping of Job's skin or body, thereby driving themselves into a wall of contradiction with מבשרי in the next line. Let us examine the alternative. In the *Kal* conjugation נקף means to go around in a preordained order (Isaiah 29:1 – *Let the feasts go around*). In the *Hiphil* it commonly means to surround, or to make rounded, but in Job 1:5 means either "complete a circuit" or, more likely, "come around in due order."[5] There is thus in both the conjugations a sense of returning or recycling which has something in common both with redemption and resurrection. The unique *Pi'el* form in this

5 Job 1:5 describes Job's actions כי הקיפו ימי המשתה. It then states *thus did Job on each of the days.* The two expressions fit together only on the assumption that the first means "*when*" (or *as) the days of feasting came around*" There is on the other hand a clear contradiction between them if הקיפו is understood as signifying the end of a complete round of feasting.

verse ought to be related to the *Kal* sense of the verb, either intensified or made causative. It is perfectly consistent with Hebrew usage for the verb to have the sense "bring baek" – "bring round again," and as this is the sense which best fits the context, this speculation will be aceepted here to yield *And that after my body,* this *will be brought back."*

The remainder of the passage provides little difficulty, but emphatic confirmation of the correctness of the above reading. V. 27 amplifies Job's desire to see God *in my flesh* by asserting that he seeks this vision with his own physical organs of sight and, with the second reduplicated "I" of the passage, himself and no other. Believing that the occupation of the Land of Israel by Sennacherib is the background of the Book of Job, I take this emphasis on Job himself rather than a זר – a foreigner or foreign foe – as stipulating the restitution of sovereignty as part of Job's plea. The final line of the triplet verse reiterates the note of pleading which governs the whole passage, completing a frame which should leave no doubt that vv. 25 and 26 are desiderative: *(For this) do my reins perish in my bosom.*

The whole passage 19:23–27 now runs as follows:

23 *Would then that my words were written,*
Would that they were inscribed in an archive.
24 *With an iron pen and lead,*
Carved in the rock for ever!
25 *And me, that I might know my Redeemer alive*
And that His last might be fulfilled upon the dust.
26 *And that after my body,* this *might be brought back,*
And that in my flesh I might see God
27 *Whom I myself should see for myself,*
And my eyes behold, and no foreigner.
(For this) do my reins perish in my bosom.

THE TESTING OF ABRAHAM

BY JULIUS B. MOSTER

One of the most disturbing chapters in the Bible is Genesis 22 – the *Akedah,* the story of the Binding of Isaac. In this passage, God *put Abraham to the test.* He eommanded him to sacrifice his favored son, Isaac, as a burnt offering. Without question or hesitation, Abraham proceeded to carry out God's command. However, as he picked up the knife to kill Isaac, God stopped him. As a reward for passing the test, God blessed the Patriarch and promised him many descendants through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed – a slightly different version of the covenantal promise He had made to Abraham on several previous occasions.

The passage is upsetting, to put it mildly, for two reasons: First, Abraham appears to behave like a pagan; second, and even worse, the moral of the story seems to be, that to prove loyalty to God one should be willing to sacrifice his favorite son to Him.

Apologists have had a major problem with these implications. I will not go into the many interpretations used to explain them away, for, in fact, such excuses are not necessary. The image of a pagan-like Abraham is a misconception, falsely arrived at beeause of a failure to view the text in its proper perspective. Inadvertently, the *Akedah* story is usually isolated from the rest of the Abraham episode and treated as an independent unit, whereas, properly to understand it, it should be considered as an integral part of an ongoing theme.[1]

To better comprehend how the biblical author intended the *Akedah* to be construed, let us try to put ourselves in the shoes of an early Israelite audience. The latter did not read the Bible, rather they listened to it. Let us sit back and imagine ourselves listening to a biblical reader/expounder relate the story of the *Akedah*:

1 Sidney Breitbart, *The Akedah – A Test of God,* Dor Le Dor, Vol. XV:1 1986, pp. 19–28

Dr. Julius Moster has a Ph.D. in Biochemistry from Purdue University. He published articles in scientific journals before leaving that field. He recently retired from private business as the president of a successful corporation which he founded in 1959.

Before going to see how God put Abraham through a very severe test, let us first briefly review a previous episode. You will recall that God told Abraham to do what his wife, Sarah, had demanded, to send away his oldest son, Ishmael. At that time Abraham was living in Beer-sheba which was surrounded by a hostile desert. Expelling Ishmael was tantamount to sending the boy to his likely death. Abraham did send his son away but only after God had promised him that He would make a nation out of Ishmael. In order to be the ancestor of a nation, one must first live long enough to have at least one offspring. Ishmael, the child, had a long time to go before that would be realized. So God's promise, in essence, was an assurance that Ishmael would not die as the result of his expulsion by his father. Even so, Abraham was faced with a difficult decision. Could he trust God? Could he, realistically, expect the young child to survive the devastating desert? These were difficult questions. Logic said "no," God said "yes." Abraham sent his son away. By doing so, he demonstrated, not an unquestionable obedience of God's command, but rather a strong faith in God's promise. Because Abraham put his trust in God, he believed God's assurances that Ishmael would survive.

Although the text does not so specify, God had put Abraham to a test of faith, which the Patriarch passed readily.

But, as we shall soon see, that was only a preliminary event. In the *Akedah,* God is going to put Abraham to the real test. This time the potential victim is going to be the *"favored" son, Isaac, "whom you love,"* and this time, the conditions of the test are going to be much more severe. But let us not get ahead of ourselves, let us now listen to the story of the *Akedah.*

There is much evidence that points to Gen. 22 as being an integral part, in fact the climax, of an ongoing narrative. The chapter contains the last communication between God and Abraham. God's closing words are a confirmation of His promise of many descendants, a land of their own and conveyor of blessing to all nations, — a reaffirmation of the covenantal promise. God first speaks to Abraham in Gen. 12. These two chapters contain some interesting similarities:

12: God's *opening words* relate the *covenantal promise.*
22: God's *closing words* repeat the *covenantal promise.*

12: God commands Abraham to *go forth.* — לך לך
22: God commands Abraham to *go forth.* — לך לך

Abraham's destination is:

12: *the land that I will show you.*
22: *the heights that I will point out to you.*

"Go forth" is translated from the Hebrew *Lekh Lekha* לך לך. In all of the Bible, *Lekh Lekha* לך לך appears only in these two places. Gen. 12 & 22 contain other matching similarities.[2] Altogether, these are too numerous to be attributed to coincidence. What we have here is a compositional technique used to mark the beginning and end of a literary unit. What is the essence of this unit? Its major theme is God's covenant with Abraham. The narrative opens and closes with God's recitation of the covenantal promise, and in between, God repeats it at least six more times. When Abraham passes the test, what is his reward? Again, it is the covenantal promise. Genesis 12 through 22 could rightly be subtitled: "The Evolution of the Covenantal Relationship between God and Abraham." The climax of this evolution would obviously occur in the last chapter, the *Akedah* chapter. What is the climax? Throughout the narrative, God has groomed Abraham for an important role in His grand plan. Now He must determine if our hero qualifies for the task. The *Akedah* is God's final test of Abraham's worthiness to be a partner in the covenant.

The covenantal theme is not only prominent in the Abraham narrative, but also throughout the rest of the Bible. The word covenant means a contractual agreement. Inherently, it implies obligations on the part of all parties to the contract. God's commitment is always clearly stated in the form of elaborate promises. At first, these appear to be one-sided, the human party having to fulfill either no, or only a single, obligation, but as the narrative progresses, additional conditions are piled on. To understand the *Akedah,* we must know the essence of Abraham's full covenantal responsibilities. Or put in another way: Why was God testing Abraham?

God made elaborate promises to Abraham and did many wonderful things that should have built Abraham's belief and confidence in Him. Abraham, in response, made altars to God, evoked His name, took on the obligation of circumcision, and agreed to walk in the ways of God. But, did the Patriarch really believe that God would fulfill his covenantal promises?

2 Nahum M. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis,* New York, Shocken Books, 1970, pp. 160–161.

Prior to Chapters 21 and 22, Abraham's faith had a long way to go to attain the required goal of total belief in Him. In Chapter 15, after God promised to give to Abraham Canaan as a possession, Abraham had the audacity to ask God to take an oath on the promise. That was equivalent to our modern demand, "Put it in writing." To satisfy Abraham's skepticism, God did take a very dramatic oath. In the representation of smoke, He passed through the two halves of a split animal. The symbolism of this act seems to be that what happened to the animal will happen to the oath-taker, if the oath is broken. In Chapter 17, when God informed Abraham that he was going to have a son by Sarah, the Patriarch laughed. *Can a child be born to a man a hundred years old, or can Sarah bear a child at ninety?* But God did give Abraham and Sarah a son. Did these acts finally convince Abraham that God's promises could be completely relied on? To find out, God had to put Abraham through tests, first the warm up with Ishmael, and then the final one with Isaac. This brings us back to the *Akedah* story.

A key element in God's promise to Abraham was many descendants. Through which of Abraham's offsprings was this to be fulfilled? On three occasions God had specifically stated that it would be *only through Isaac* (17:19; 21; 21:13). At the time of the test, Isaac was a child. If Isaac were to die during the test, God could not possibly carry out His promise. If Abraham believed that Isaac was doomed by God's request, then he would have shown that he did not believe that God's promise would be realized. But Abraham's faith in God's covenantal promise stood the test against all possible doubt. He did not believe that God's command would bring on the disaster it portended, because if it did, it would contradict God's promise of many descendants through Isaac. Abraham had total faith in God's Word, and thus, he was well prepared to pass the test.

God made Abraham's final test very much more difficult than the preliminary one with Ishmael. In the latter, there was no long period to agonize about the correctness of the decision. Once it was made, Ishmael was swiftly sent away, and Abraham was not around as the drama of Ishmael's possible death unfolded. As regards the *Akedah* it was three long days to Mt. Moriah – plenty of time for him to think things over and change his mind. Furthermore, the constant presence of his beloved Isaac must have served as an unrelenting probe for Abraham to reconsider his decision. Unlike Ishmael's mother, Abraham could not run from the agonizing death scene; he, and he alone, was ordered to be the instrument of Isaac's demise.

How did Abraham hold up under all this pressure? Did he ever once lose faith in God and believe that Isaac was to die? The story line is interrupted at two points to reaffirm Abraham's unwaivering trust in God's promise. When Abraham said to his servants, *You stay here with the ass. The boy and I will go up there; we will worship and we will return to you* (22:5). Obviously, Abraham expected to return with a "living" Isaac *after the sacrifice.* Further, when Isaac asked his father, *Where is the sheep for the burnt offering*? Abraham replied, *God will see to the sheep for the burnt offering, my son.* To Isaac, this must have seemed somewhat ridiculous. God is going to give the sacrificer the sacrifice so that the sacrificer can give it back to God? Unbelievable! The word "sacrifice" implies giving up something of personal value. Abraham could have said that they would buy an animal from a passing shepherd. What we have here is a "Freudian slip," revealing Abraham's true inner belief that, under the circumstances, it was God's obligation to supply a substitute for Isaac.

Abraham passed the test with flying colors. The test did not prove that he was willing to sacrifice his son. It was not a test of "obedience." On the contrary, it was a test of "faith" in God's promise. Abraham believed that, in spite of the circumstances that portended otherwise, it was not possible for Isaac to die at that time, because of God's previous pledge. By believing God, the Patriarch proved that he was worthy to be His covenantal partner.

For those who are still skeptical about Abraham's actions, I will present one final important proof, and that is God's own perception of the test. In God's very words, Abraham passed the test '*because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your favored one.*' Note, the passiveness of the behavior that pleased God. The highlight of Abraham's performance was something that he did *not* do – he did not withhold his son. Why did God not refer to a more positive act, for example, "because you were willing to sacrifice your son," or "because you offered your son to Me as a burnt offering?" God was fully aware of the highly exceptional nature of the Patriarch's behavior and of the reason behind it. Abraham passed God's test – he did not withhold his son – because he had complete trust in God, because God's earlier promises led him to believe, without reservation, that Isaac's portending death could not take place.

Why did God choose Abraham? The Bible does not give us enough information to answer this question with assurance. God's original choice of Abraham should be looked upon as one step in a long selection process. Only

after the candidate passed the final test did God's covenantal promise become binding.

Viewed in this context, the test in the *Akedah* takes on great significance. It was a pivotal step in the establishment of the God–Israel relationship.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Some years back we sent a questionnaire to our readership asking about a "Chug Tanakh" in your community or congregation. We received encouraging replies and we listed them in Vol. IX, No. 4.

Our Editorial Board again encloses a questionnaire in the hope you will respond. The purpose of the listing is to unite such groups in a fellowship of the world Jewish Bible Center.

THANK YOU

DO YOU HAVE A BIBLE STUDY GROUP?

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FOR I AM GOD AND NOT MAN

BY SHIMON BAKON

There are many strands – religious, historical, and social, that went into the making of biblical Judaism. In most cases they became so intertwined that it is difficult to separate them, and sometimes one came into direct conflict with another. The establishment of monarchy is a typical example. A non-compromising theocracy was originally the main-stream of Hebraic tradition; and this found expression in a loose confederation of tribes, with a unifying national religious shrine. Only when threatened by some emergency did a charismatic leader arise, effeet an alliance with some contiguous tribes, and stave off the momentary danger. From a social and religious standpoint such government, or lack of it, brought about a much deplored anarchy where *each did what was right in his eyes*. When the rapid expansion of the Philistine hold on the land of Israel threatened the very existence of Jewish polity, Saul was crowned king by popular demand, but only after much hesitation on the part of Samuel. It should be noted that the theocratic concept of government was still powerful enough to prevent the establishment of "absolute monarchy."[1]

There is, however, the strange faet that from the authentic biblical coneept of God, two diametrically opposed views on one of His attributes stand side by side, one held by Samuel, and one by Hosea.

I Samuel 15:29	*Hosea 11:9*
The Lord has this day torn the Kingship of Israel away from you and has given it to another... Moreover, the Glory of Israel does not deceive nor change His mind	I have had a change of heart. *All My tenderness is stirred. I will not act on My wrath. Will not turn to destroy Ephraim.*
For He is not human	For I am God and not man.
that He should change His mind.	

1 The prophet Nathan's rebuke of David, in the matter of Bath-sheba, and that of Elijah regarding Ahab and the vineyard of Naboth are two typical examples.

Dr. Shimon Bakon is Editor of Dor Le Dor.

Is it in the nature of the Divine to be totally consistent with the attribute of justice and not "change His mind" once a final verdict was rendered? Or is it in keeping with His nature to be forgiving, set aside harsh justice, apply mercy, and permit man to repent? Saul's kingship is irretrievably lost, while for Ephraim, in spite of her stubborn sinfulness, God's "tenderness is stirred." In reference to Saul, the Glory of Israel does not "change His mind," while regarding Ephraim, He has had "a change of mind." For both instances the reason given is: *God is not man!*

FROM JUSTICE TO REWARD AND PUNISHMENT

Those steeped in the Jewish tradition who have been instilled with the possibility and desirability of atonement through repentance, viewing it as one of the cornerstones in the relationship of God and man, may be surprised by the manifestation of divine justice in the case of Saul, which does not allow for repentance, but metes out "reward and punishment" according to the deserts of the recipient. Yet it seems that during some part of the biblical period the concept of justice was quite dominant. Moreover, the centrality of divine justice in the context of biblical tradition had a two-fold effect. First, it marked a determined break with paganism.

When Abraham confronted God on the intended destruction of Sodom, he challenged Him by saying: השופט כל הארץ לא יעשה משפט? "Is it in keeping with Your justice to destroy the righteous together with the wicked?" Going one step further, he wished to save the entire city for the sake of a handful of righteous inhabitants. Abraham did not invoke God's attribute of mercy, since it was still within the realm of justice that Sodom should be spared for the sake of a righteous minority.

The concept of God as the *Judge of all the earth* marked a fundamental turning point away from paganism. Not only is He the One, uncreated Creator, but He rules the universe with unswerving justice. The capriciousness and arbitrariness of the many deities are swept away, and man, to whom the will of God has been made manifest, knows what to expect. Second, God cannot be bribed, nor can His decision be influenced by the machinations of man. This had a lasting and indelible effect on biblical and post-biblical theology. For, coupled with the Covenant, it led inexorably to the concept of reward and

punishment. Without it all the prophetic and historical books lose their meaning. The idea is essentially simple; living according to the terms of the covenant brings about consequences.

For our discussion here it is not relevant that the concept of reward and punishment, based on divine justice, came eventually into conflict with plain experience, nor how this problem was tackled and what attempts were made to reconcile the conflict. What is relevant here is that undeviating divine justice leads to the concept: *He will not change His mind.* In fact, if Samuel's prophetic denouncement of Saul is carefully analyzed, a magnificent summing up of this position will be discovered. What is more, Samuel's harsh verdict over Saul assumes a new dimension.

> *Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices*
> *as in hearkening to the voice of the Lord?...*
> *For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft*
> *and stubborness as idolatry and teraphim.* (I Sam. 15:22).

MERCY AND REPENTANCE

Together with the attribute of justice there co-existed the divine quality of mercy — the מדת הרחמים, an integral part of the thirteen attributes as stated in Exodus.[2] This attribute, which assumes willingness to mitigate uncompromising justice with mercy is based on the possibility of a divine change of mind, and is a central concept in the cluster of values surrounding the biblical concept of God. At first we do not encounter the need for repentance as the pre-condition of divine forgiveness. It is "intercession" on the part of personalities such as Moses or Samuel who, pleading with God on behalf of Israel, which brings about divine pardon. It is no coincidence that this fact has been noted by Jeremiah who states:

> *Though Moses and Samuel stand before Me*
> *Yet My mind could not be toward this people.*[3]

Eventually the necessity to "repent," together with God's attribute of mercy and His desire to be forgiving, became the other focal point in the reciprocal God — Israel relationship. The Bible is not a Greek book on logic, developing ideas along clearly defined categories. It is a record of the relationship between God

2 Exodus 34:6–7.
3 Jeremiah 15:1.

and man, together with reversals and seemingly conflicting values. Justice and mercy, though antithetical, live side by side in biblical literature. It is plausible that, depending on their preference, some prophets would emphasize one of these attributes even to the exclusion of the other.

It may come as a surprise that, as late as the final edition of the Book of Kings, the problem of an "irrevocable" divine decree should crop up again.

THE STRANGE CASE OF KING MANASSEH

On occasions, the historical accounts of the same event as given in Chronicles and historical books of the Bible, differ in a few details. However, on the life of King Manasseh, the contrast is pronounced. The Book of Kings, devoting a mere eighteen verses to this longest reigning monarch (55 years), has not one good word about him, placing him amongst the worst kings of Israel and Judea.

He is blamed for the introduction of crassest idol worship and for much bloodshed. In fact, he is accused of being the cause of the disaster that eventually overtook Jerusalem and the Temple. Following accolades accorded to his righteous grandson Josiah, – *and like unto him was there no king before him that turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and his might* – the following verse declares:

> *Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the fierceness of His great wrath, wherewith His anger was kindled against Judah because of all his provocations wherewith Manasseh had provoked Him.*[4]

Chronicles also does not spare Manasseh. In fact, the first nine verses are identical with those stated in Kings, but then follows a most significant deviation, which tells that captains of the host of the King of Assyria *took Manasseh with hooks, and bound him in fetters and carried him to Babylon.*[5] When, in his distress, Manasseh repented, God heard his supplication and brought him back to Jerusalem.

Is there a reason for two such different accounts concerning the same king? There is historical warrant for Manasseh being exiled. Cecil Roth[6] records that Manasseh was summoned to assist in the construction of a suburb of Nineveh,

4 II Kings 23:25–26.

5 II Chronicles 33:11.

6 Cecil Roth, *Short History of the Jewish People* p. 35.

and was retained there forcefully for some time as a prisoner of the state. We may assume that Manasseh, in a moment of deep frustration, may have experienced temporary regret for his total subservience to the Assyrian over-lord. He may also have felt pangs of contrition that this political dependence pervaded the religious and social realm as well, and that he had slavishly adopted the idolatrous beliefs and practices of Assyria, so foreign to the biblical tradition.

It is not only in the presentation of historical facts that the books of Kings and Chronicles differ, but also in the allocation of guilt for the disaster. The juxtaposition in Kings of the sinful Manasseh and his pious grandson, and the emphatic "notwithstanding" intends to convey that even a Josiah could not deflect or stay the divine decree of destruction brought about by the provocations of Manasseh. Chronicles, on the other hand, seems to clear Manasseh of such guilt. How then does Chronicles interpret the reason for the destruction?

> *And the Lord sent His messengers... because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place... But they mocked the messengers of God and despised His words... until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people – till there was no remedy –* עד לאין מרפא.[7]

Thus, according to this interpretation, God had compassion for His people up to the last moment, and did everything possible to induce them to repent, until the point of no return had been reached.

Perhaps a deeper reason for two different presentations of the same historical facts, and differing interpretations of the same historical events, may be the crisis of faith that gripped the people. During the fifty-five years of Manasseh's reign there was relative peace and prosperity. It is to this peace and prosperity that the Judeans referred when rebuked by Jeremiah for their worship of the "queen of heaven".

> *We shall continue to offer unto the queen of heaven, as we have done... for we had plenty of food, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we have left off to offer to the queen of heaven, we have lacked all things, and have been consumed by the sword and famine.*[8]

In other words, as long as they worshipped the queen of heaven, all was well, but

7 II Chronicles 36:15–16.

8 Jeremiah 44:17–18.

as soon as Josiah instituted his "infamous" Reformation, a disastrous deterioration of the political and economic situation set in.

How do biblical authors, steeped in the principle of reward and punishment שכר ועונש, reconcile this with the facts of hand? How does one explain the era of peace and prosperity during the reign of that arch-sinner Manasseh, and the decline that set in with Josiah, a true servant of the Lord?

The books of Kings and Chronicles, each in its way, attempted to answer these questions. The Book of Kings maintained that God, once having reached a decision, would not change His mind, – *for He is not man.* That decision, as we have seen, had become irreversible with Manasseh. Even the righteousness of Josiah could not change the course of destruction decreed over Jerusalem. The Book of Chronicles however maintained the opposite: God, *because He is not man,* He is merciful and forgiving and willing to change His mind (see Hosea, quoted before). Manasseh, because he repented, was thus awarded a long and peaceful reign. The intended חורבן – destruction — was stayed, *until there was no remedy.*

Jeremiah hews to a line between these two positions.

> *And I will cause (them) to be a horror among all the kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh... for what he did to Jerusalem. Thou has cast Me off... Therefore do I stretch out My hand against thee, and destroy thee. I am weary with repenting.* Jer. 15:4–6
>
> *For I have taken My peace from this people, even mercy and compassion.* Jer. 16:5

If these lines are carefully analyzed, one may draw the following conclusions. Manasseh has done irreparable damage by bringing the obscene practices of Assyrian idolatry to Jerusalem. Religious and moral decay has set in, which the short lived reformation of Josiah could not repair. God has shown mercy and compassion till then, but has now withdrawn it. He is *weary with repenting* — נלאיתי הנחם, and is now firm in His decision to destroy Jerusalem.

SYNTHESIS

Eventually the attributes of stern justice and compassion were merged in a happy synthesis, in which justice is tempered by loving-kindness. A Midrash,[9]

9 Midrash Rabbah 2:4.

commenting on the biblical verse אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם *These are the generations of heavens and earth when they were created* (Genesis 2:4), states: Thus said the Holy One: If I create the world by mercy alone, sin will abound. If by justice alone, how can the world endure? I will create it by the attributes of justice and mercy, and thus the world can exist.

REFLECTIONS ON SHAVUOTH

BY ABRAHAM H. GOTTESMAN

Shavuoth is an intriguing holiday that traditionally celebrates the giving of the Law. The Law giving is one of the greatest events in the history of the Jewish people. This extraordinary event marked the beginning of the Jewish people as a disciplined nation, providing it with a law and order, morals and ethics. It gave meaning and purpose to the infant nation. It would seem almost self-evident that such an event would be commemorated in a style worthy of its significance. Surpisingly, this is not the case. True, there are services in the synagogue during the day and an all-night study period. The synagogue is decorated with flowers, there is reading from the Book of Ruth, and the famous poem, the *Akdamut*, is chanted, but there are no special symbols as there are, say, on Passover: no distinctive rituals, no ritual to excite feelings of awe and reverence. The observances are generally unpretentious, and except in Reform Congregations when it is the occasion for the confirmation celebration, Shavuoth appears almost as a minor holiday.

While this is puzzling, even more remarkable is it that in the Bible the event of the giving of the Law is not even declared as a holiday. That event is referred to as *Yom Ha-Kahal*, the Day of Assembly (Deut. 9:10, 10:4). Why was it not declared in the Bible as a holiday?

In the Bible Shavuoth is described only as one of the three agricultural festivals, and the people celebrated the wheat harvest. To explain the different approaches of scriptural and rabbinic Judaism, we must go back to the year 70 C.E., the year of the destruction of the Temple. No longer could sacrifices be offered in the Temple of Jerusalem, and as a consequence, the pilgrimage festivals, which required sacrifices, could no longer be observed. Indeed, the entire religious worship, even the religion itself, was in jeopardy.

The rabbis expended profound thought and effort to remedy this situation. For

Dr. Abraham Gottesman is a graduate of N.Y. University, magna cum laude. He studied pediatrics and child psychiatry at the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas. He is a member of the American Psychoanalytic Association and practices psychoanalysis in Los Angeles.

example, the Temple sacrifices are replaced in importance by a whole series of non-sacrificial rituals. The shank bone is a reminder of the paschal lamb; the egg is a reminder of the festival sacrifice and the matzah becomes equal to, if not above, the sacrifice. The Bible states, *You shall eat the sacrifice with matzah and bitter herbs* – as an accompaniment, but in the Seder, at the very beginning of the story; the matzah is elevated and the *Ha Lachma Anya* is chanted. Further, the elevating of the matzah may gain in significance if one compares it to the showbread which will be discussed later. Moreover, in regard to Passover, even before the destruction of the Temple, the rabbis were vitally interested in the time of the giving of the Law. They felt that it was the *raison d'être* for the Exodus from Egypt: the Exodus was not complete without the giving of the Law. Passover was the beginning of freedom, but there was no true freedom until the moral law was proclaimed as Sinai. They called the day *Atzeret Shel Pesach*, the concluding day of Passover. After 70 C.E. with the agricultural aspect of the festival now doomed, Shavuoth became the holiday of the giving of the Law. The rabbis determined from the Bible that both the date of Shavuoth and the date of the giving of the Law were the same, the sixth of Sivan, so they proclaimed Shavuoth as the day of the Law-giving*.

In this manner, they created a new holiday with an old name. Parenthetically, outstanding rabbis such as Samson Raphael Hirsch hailed this creation of a new holiday as evidence that the Written Law, i.e. the Bible, which did not declare the event as a holiday, was dependent on the Oral Law of the rabbis in order to make the Written Law more completely understood.

The Written Law is considered as the foundation of Judaism, while the Oral Law is the superstructure built on the foundation of Written Law. People live

* The data for determining the dates is the following: For the giving of the Law, Exodus 19:1 *In the third month* (i.e. Sivan) *the children of Israel came to Mount Sinai.* The rabbis believed that this was the first day of Sivan. Moses went up the mountain on the second day; he came down on the third day, asking the people if they would accept God's commandments. He went up again on the fourth day, at which time he told the people to prepare for three days, and on the third day God would appear. Thus, the sixth of Sivan. For Shavuoth, the reference is Leviticus 23:15–21: *You shall count after the morrow of the Sabbath, fifty days.* The rabbis interpreted "morrow of the Sabbath" as the day after the first day of Passover, Sabbath meaning a day of rest, that is, the holiday of Passover, which occured on Nisan 15. Thus fifty days later was Sivan 6.

in the superstructure, i.e. their contemporary history, and the Oral Law reflects the changing circumstances of history.

Now it would appear that applying the name Shavuoth to a new holiday was an act of brilliant religious expediency, although there was no obvious connection between Shavuoth as an agricultural festival and Shavuoth as the giving of the Law. However, it is my premise that the connection is not just fortuitous, but that there are intimate links between the two holidays, both from an historical as well as from a contemporary point of view.

For example, the reading from the Book of Ruth links the story of the harvest (the time of the Omer) with the Torah commandment, to leave the gleanings of the field for the stranger, the orphaned, and the widowed. The point can be made that bread alone is no solution. Only after the giving of the Torah does true sustenance come into existence. As Moses says in Deuteronomy 8:3, *Man doth not live by bread only, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.*

To underscore my premise of the linkage between aspects of the holiday, let us consider a little further the agricultural festival of Shavuoth. Let us reach back to ancient Israel, when our ancestors tilled the soil, and trace the development of the religious practices of the agricultural holiday known as Shavuoth. This holiday celebrated the harvesting of wheat, which completed its ripening approximately fifty days after the earlier harvesting of barley, celebrated at the feast of unleavened bread. The religious celebration consisted of offering to God the choicest sheaves of the wheat, the grain on the stalks. Accompanied by prayers, the sheaves were "waved" before God. This ceremony imitated the waving motion of grain in the field and carried multiple symbolic meaning. It acknowledged the beauty of the landscape and the gentle motion of God's spirit in the wind that caused the waves. At the same time the people hoped that these winds would remain gentle to promote the ripening of the crops and that no harsh winds would destroy the crops.

This waving was no simple ritual of thanksgiving, but an offering to God of the choicest wheat, a renewal of the covenant with God, in which man acknowledges his dependence on God's beneficence. The covenant was that since God provides the land, the seeds, the sunshine and the rain, man provides the labor. The offering of the sheaves of wheat was considered a token payment to God for his part of the agreement. We may derive such understanding from Genesis, where

God plants a garden in Eden, and creates man to tend the garden. Further, in Exodus, we learn that God says that the first born of man and animal belong to Him. The choicest wheat was considered as "first fruits," almost as meaningful as the first born of man and animal. The first born of man was dedicated to the service of God, and the first born of animal was sacrificed on the altar, being totally consumed in the fire. The first fruits were placed near the altar and used as food for the priests.

The holiday gains in interest and significance as one traces the development of the ritual. First there was the offering of the sheaves of wheat, then followed the practice of offering only the choicest kernels of wheat, which were strained through seven sieves so that only kernels of uniform size were offered. Subsequently, the kernels were ground to meal, a portion of which was mixed with oil and frankincense and thrown on the altar for burning, similar to the animal sacrifices. Finally, the last stage was to make dough from the meal and bake it into two loaves, called the showbread, which was placed on the altar. The two breads were later baked in two pans of six sections each, making a total of twelve loaves, each representing one of the tribes of Israel.

This latter stage of baking the two loaves of bread might be considered a major step in the development of religious concepts. Wheat itself is the noblest of the grains. Physiologically it provides the highest quality of amino acids essential for optimal growth and nutrition. Its protein in the form of gluten enables it to trap gases and permits the dough to rise, which makes for a most pleasing leavened bread.

The discovery of these complex processes of converting raw natural grains into a cultured product, bread, may be considered as a major achievement of humankind.

The reason I have emphasized the production of wheat bread, the agricultural aspect of the ritual of Shavuoth, is that it can be understood to dovetail with the traditional understanding of Shavuoth as the giving of the Torah. For as men and women offer their best agricultural creation, bread, to God, so God in His infinite generosity offers man the Torah, the extraordinary intellectual and spiritual equivalent of bread.

Likening the Torah to food is a familiar concept, whether stated directly or indirectly, both in Scripture and the Talmud. We have already noted the text in Deuteronomy, 8:3. In Ezekiel 1, the prophet speaks of eating the scrolls of the

Torah, which taste like honey. The Torah has been likened to honey, even milk and honey, and since mother's milk, is sweet, milk and honey symbolically represent mother's milk, the first basic food of man. In the middle ages Hebrew teachers would dab a bit of honey on a slate on which Scripture was written, and the pupils were invited to taste the honey on the slate to demonstrate that learning Torah was like tasting honey.

Considering the Torah further as food, we turn to a psychological formulation. Everyone has observed the phenomenon of the infant's early ability to put his fingers in his mouth and suck on them. The child psychoanalyst Willy Hopfer interpreted this phenomenon as one of the first steps in what is known as ego integration, in which the child becomes aware of external reality and combines his inner needs with outer reality. Sucking the fingers relieves tension, and later the infant reaches out with his hands for objects to put in his mouth, a primitive perceptual organ which helps in his understanding of the object. It is a total intellectual concept of synthesis combining the perception of the object, the use of memory and judgment, and the motor activity of reaching out with the hands and putting the object in his mouth. With food as the object, this motion of hand to mouth is an early step towards self sufficiency and independence.

As bread satisfies hunger, provides pleasure, engenders feelings of self-esteem, it also frees him of anxiety and depression and helps in his physical growth and development. Similarly, the Torah as the source of mental and spiritual nourishment, offers him pleasure, increased self-esteem, freedom from anxiety and depression, and an opportunity for growth and maturation. Unlike food, the study of Torah is potentially endless. It is always available when it is sought after and makes life meaningful. But like food, which must be replenished daily, so it is with the study of the Torah. Perhaps this is why the giving of the Law was not mentioned in the Bible as a once-a-year celebration. It requires a daily renewal throughout the year. Through this dedication to the Torah, we commemorate the great festival of Shavuoth.

RESIDUAL MAGIC IN THE BIBLE

BY ERNEST NEUFELD

In freeing the people of Israel from bondage, God demonstrated to them and the Egyptians that it was He alone who was the instrument of Israel's deliverance; not Moses, and certainly not Pharaoh acting out of a change of heart. The Lord made clear that Moses was but a messenger, and that the magic arts of Egypt were powerless and futile in the face of His overwhelming and all-encompassing omnipotence.

God employed plagues to free His people. But with the exception of the fifth, murrain, they were not what could be considered supernatural plagues. All the plagues other than the tenth – the death of all first-born of Egypt – were within common experience – the Nile turning red (to blood) from soil sediment carried down to the delta at spring flood, so were the plagues of frogs, insect pests and hail. These were ordinary phenomena. What made them instrumentalities of the Divine was their scope, their scale and timing. None transcended the laws of nature. None, except the tenth, was a supernatural act. In this way God distinguished between His handiwork and the legerdemain of the magicians of Egypt. The successive visitations of calamitous natural disasters occurring at pre-stated, pre-proclaimed intervals, underscored the message that in each of these "plagues" of mega-proportions affecting everything and every Egyptian equally without regard to rank or situation, natural forces were brought to bear by the God of Israel. Even the tenth "plague" utilized a natural process of life – death. What was supernatural about it was, that unlike the others, it was used selectively among the Egyptians, directed against only the firstborn. That was its miracle.

BIBLE DISDAINS MAGIC

The cumulative impact of the nine scourges, climaxed by the tenth, finally brought home to Pharaoh the lesson he was so slow and reluctant to learn. These

Ernest Neufeld is retired after a career in journalism, law, and municipal government. His last position was Director of the N.Y.C. Council's Division of Finance staff.

were manifestations of God's untrammelled, unlimited and singular power over the forces of nature. The universe did not bend to man's will through his magic hocus-pocus. It obeyed only Gods laws. And if God did not contravene His own laws, how much less was man to pretend to altering their course through magic.

Magic and sorcery were abominations to God. Through magic man sought control over nature. He aspired to become a god, as Pharaoh fancied himself. The liberation of Israel from bondage would discredit at once the practice of magic and simultaneously reveal that the universe ordered by God responds only to Him and His laws and that man, as part of His creation, also must abide by those laws. Recognition of this meant the surrender of man's attempts through magic to control the forces affecting his life and recognition as well of his complete dependence on God's benevolence. In short, man was compelled to acknowledge the vanity of his pretensions to independence of the laws of nature established by God. The transition to full realization of all this was long and difficult. No wonder the Israelites succumbed to old ways and relapsed many times into the practiee of magic. Many survivals of these practices are to be found in the Bible.

The lessons imparted in Egypt seem clear. So too the strong biblical magic in the Bible performed, the Bible states, at the direction of the Lord Himself? If He disdained magic, how is it that He permitted its practice at least in these cases?

We may cite three examples. One is the fabrication of the brazen serpent (fiery serpent) by Moses while in the wilderness, to cure anyone bitten by a serpent, just by looking up at the shiny image (Num. 21:8–9). Another is the administration of the water of bitterness to the woman suspected by her husband of adultery (Num. 5:16–31). Still another is the consignment of the people's sins on the head of a goat and its expulsion into the wilderness (Lev. 16:10, 21, 22). Each is an example of sympathetic magic.

SYMPATHETIC AND CONTAGIOUS MAGIC

James G. Frazer viewed magic as based on two concepts, "First, that like produces like, or that an effect resembles its cause; and second, that things which have once been in contact with each other will continue to act upon each other at a distance after the physical contact has been severed." He called the first notion

the Law of Similarity and the second, the Law of Contact or Contagion. He further identified the first as "homeopathic magic" (or "imitative magic") and the second as "contagious magic." Both operate under the perception of relation through sympathy.[1] The magician sees the principles he applies, Frazer noted, as those regulating the phenomena of inanimate nature.

A well-known example of homoeopathic magic is the attempt to injure an enemy by destroying his effigy or burning the parings of his nails. This practice survives in civilized society in the burning of images of opponents, or flags, by demonstrators of all kinds of persuasions. Said Frazer:

> ...effigies are employed as a means of preventing or curing sickness; the demons of disease either mistake the effigies for living people or are persuaded or compelled to enter them, leaving the real men and women whole.[2]

He cites the ancient Hindu ceremony, based on homoeopathic magic, to cure jaundice by resort to the idea that yellow color can be banished to yellow creatures such as birds, and yellow things such as the sun. Further, a healthy red color can be restored "from a living, vigorous source, namely a red bull." Frazer relates that while the priest recited a magic spell to banish the yellow jaundice and replace it with healthy red, he gave the patient a potion of water mixed with the hair of a red bull. For good measure, he poured water over the back of the red bull and had the sick man drink of the run-off, further reinforcing the transfer by seating the patient on the bull and tying a piece of red skin to him.[3]

THE BRAZEN SERPENT; WATER OF BITTERNESS; SCAPEGOAT

The thought that like produces like is evident in the brazen serpent episode, though it is obscured by the absence of the intervention of a magician using incantations and exorcist acts. The illness induced by the serpents' bites is cured without human mediation and attributed directly to God. By looking at the effigy of the brazen serpent the bitten person transfers back to the source the cause of his affliction.

1 Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, vol. 1, The Macmillan Co., 1927, pp. 11–12.
2 *Ibid.* p. 492.
3 *Ibid.* p. 15–16.

In the case of the woman accused of adultery, the water of bitterness to be administered to her by the priest, involves the inscription by him of a curse on a scroll, its immersion in water to dissolve the ink, and the addition of dust from the floor of the sanctuary.

The potion utilizes the principle of sympathetic magic that like produces like. For if the woman is defiled by adultery, the unclean property of the dust, symbolizing death, induces the symptoms (swelling of the belly), indicative of her guilt. The curse which has infused the potion by means of the ink, also relies on sympathetic magic to effect the symptoms, and is based on the principle of contact, as in the case of the dust. The curse, written by the priest in the sanctury, and by association partaking of its holiness, operates in this respect as the dust from the floor. For two opposite associations appertain to each — the holy, and the taboo because of the danger of defilement.

Another example of magical practices recorded in the Bible concerns the consignment of sins to the goat to be banished to the wilderness. It is a clear case of contagious magic. The sinners are cleansed because the priest, placing his hands on the goat's head, confesses their sins and so transfers them to the goat. By its expulsion into the wilderness, the goat removes the sins outside the camp, that is, away from the community of Israel.

THE RED HEIFER

The red heifer rite, paradoxical because it acts both to cleanse and to defile, is an example of the magical form. It combines both homoeopathic and contagious elements of magic. Num. 19 gives directions for performing the rite as a means of purification for those defiled by contact with the dead. A red heifer is to be procured, slain and burned, its ashes mixed with that of cedar-wood, hyssop and "scarlet" in water, and sprinkled on the person to be cleansed. The defiled are thus cleansed. But all those who participate in the preparation of the mixture, are defiled.

Primitive religions identified the cow with fertility, life and birth. Frazer relates that in the Hindu religion defilement by contact with foreigners could be removed only by rebirth. It magically accomplished this by having the defiled person emerge, as in natural birth, from a golden reproduction of a cow or woman.[4] The

4 *Ibid.* p. 197.

Egyptians held the cow to be sacred and identified it with Isis, goddess of fertility, resurrection and magic. She was sometimes represented by the head of a cow.[5] From this we can infer that the red heifer rite was a symbolic enactment of rebirth — resurrection into an unsullied state.

The items of red color specified for the purifying mixture — the red heifer, cedar-wood and "scarlet" — symbolize blood, which to the primitive mind, is the repository of life.

Those who have a hand in preparing the water of purification become defiled, because they have been in contact with a dead body, the slaughtered cow. It is to be noted that the red heifer is not sacrificed. It is not consecrated to God. It is slain outside the camp or temple area, so it is just a dead animal. Therefore, under the principles of homoeopathic magic, all who come in contact with its preparation, and the priest who ministers at the rite, are defiled and themselves must be cleansed.

The cedar tree carries association with life and longevity. As the tree of God in ancient concepts, it suggests eternal life. The hyssop, in contrast with the lofty cedar, is a lowly plant, clinging precariously to life in rocky clefts and walls. So it, too, symbolizes endurance and life. The last ingredient, "scarlet," required for the purifying mixture, is referred to in the Hebrew as *sheni tolaath* (Lev. 14:4, 51–54; Num. 19:6) and literally translated, means "brightness of the worm," or worm crimson. The Encyclopaedia Judaica indicates the source as two species of the insect *Coccus ilices* that are found in Israel on the oak *Quercus ithahurenais*. The red color derived from the eggs of the insect furnishes another symbolic source of restorative life incorporated in the mixture.

CHANGING FROM THE DIVINE

Though such residual magic was incorporated into ancient Israelite rites, we discern in them preservation only of the outward forms. The operative means utilized in primitive magic have been discarded. Only the trappings of magical procedure were retained; no doubt as a concession to popular psychological need. But the rite was not accompanied by incantations, recitals of mumbo-

5 *Ibid.* p. 373.

Continued on page 229.

BOOK REVIEWS

BY SOL LIPTZIN

SEFER HA-AGGADAH, by *H.N. BIALIK AND Y.H. RAWNITZKY. Selected, translated and annotated by Chaim Pearl, Tel Aviv, Dvir Publishing House, 1988. Pages 302. 32 Shekels.*

The Hebrew collection by Bialik and Rawnitzky, tales, parables and anecdotes has become a classic since its first publication in 1910 and is now taught in many Israeli schools as a basic text of Jewish folklore. For scholars in the English-speaking world, it has been eclipsed by Louis Ginzberg's *Legends of the Jews* in seven volumes (1909–1938). The latter draws not only upon Talmudic and Midrashic sources but also upon Christian and Islamic lore. Both of these comprehensive works are of great value and for more than half a century have been a treasure house of information to theologians, students of comparative literature, researchers into the history of ideas and specialists in biblical interpretation. For the average layman, however, there has been a need for reducing the vast mass of material into a single English volume that would highlight the most significant items. This need has now been met by Chaim Pearl's selection and translation into impeccable English prose which, nevertheless, still retains much of the flavor of the original ancient sources, even as does the modernized Hebrew text of Bialik and Rawnitzky.

In making the selection, Chaim Pearl gave preference to those tales that illustrated a moral. As scholar, educator and rabbi, who has been active on three continents, he utilized his experience of several decades to stress primarily those aspects of biblical lore that could direct readers to a more ethical and spiritual existence. His annotations precede the translated text and clarify the lessons that

Sol Liptzin, Emeritus Professor of Comparative Literature at the City University of New York, is the author of eighteen volumes on world literature, including Germany's Stepchildren, The Jew in American Literature, A History of Yiddish Literature, and most recently, Biblical Themes in World Literature.

the narrative is designed to illustrate. The period covered is from the creation of the world until the destruction of the Second Temple.

In his introduction, Chaim Pearl remarks that, though the stories narrated by the rabbis may not be historically true, they are morally true. They are didactic. They cover half a millennium of imaginative, creative thinking by talmudic sages and an entire millennium of wise and occasionally witty observations in Midrashim. They do not include biblical interpretations of the millennium now coming to a close, a millennium that encompasses both the Golden Age of Sephardic Jewry as well as the creative thinking of Eastern European Jewry, oral traditions and literary treasures that still await sifting by authoritative learned institutes and reduction to managable proportions. When this task will have been accomplished, there will become available in easily digestible form an enduring record of the brooding, dreaming, imagining and feeling of the Jewish people before the Holocaust and its present ingathering on its ancient soil. Such a task should be undertaken soon, ere the centuries of spiritual treasures of the Eastern European cycle of Jewish history are distorted or fade from memory if the Yiddish language continues to decline as the linguistic medium in which simple folk and Hassidic followers sang their songs and handed down their tales of the natural and the supernatural, biblical elaborations and messianic hopes.

What Bialik and Rawnitzky have done for the aggadic sections of the Talmud and the Midrashim of ancient and medieval periods and what Chaim Pearl has done to make Bialik and Rawnitzky more attractive to English readers, Jewish and non-Jewish, adults and youths, needs to be done also for the folk treasures of the pre-Holoeaust centuries.

THE EPIC OF THE PATRIARCH, by RONALD S. HENDEL, Scholars Press, Atlanta, 1987, pp. 194.

This study, in the Harvard Semitic Monographs edited by Frank M. Cross, deals with the Jacob cycle and the narrative traditions of Canaan and Israel. The author's conclusions and new insights, whether accepted, modified or refuted, deserve to be more widely known.

The study is divided into three parts. The first part presents a survey of the interpretations of the Jacob stories from Herder to our day. The second part

treats the relationship of the Jacob cycle to Canaanite epics. The third part embeds the Jacob narratives within the tradition of ancient Israel and emphasizes the parallels between the lives of Jacob and Moses.

Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803), German critic and philosopher, teacher of Goethe and forerunner of Romanticism, maintained a lifelong interest in the Bible and left an indelible impress upon biblical scholarship. Under the influence of Rousseau, he idealized noble primitives and their creativity. He viewed the patriarchal stories as folktales handed down orally by herdsmen from generation to generation. These tales were simple and beautiful because they were products of a people close to nature and uncorrupted by culture.

A century after Herder, Julius Wellhausen (1844–1918) traced the patriarchal tales back to layers of literary sources and was followed by Hermann Gunkel (1862–1932), who analyzed in greater detail the various simple layers that, in his opinion, ultimately resulted in the complex story of Jacob.

The earliest layer depicted a roguish Jacob who beguiled a stupid Esau to sell the precious birthright for a bowl of pottage and who afterwards tricked Isaac into conferring upon him the blessing meant for Esau. A later continuation of this layer told of a reunion of the brothers, with Jacob as the weaker and Esau as the nobler figure.

Upon this first layer was superimposed the story of Jacob, the trickster, and his no less tricky father-in-law Laban. This humorous Jacob-Esau-Laban cycle of tales was gradually revised and was provided with a more lofty, religious tone.

The third layer consisted of narratives of cult places with which Jacob's name was associated: Beth-el, Mahanaim, Penuel and Schechem. These narratives were woven into a cycle by itinerant storytellers as stages of Jacob's journeys.

The final layer consisted of tales of Jacob's children, tribal legends which were added to the cycle after Jacob came to be regarded as the ancestor of the twelve tribes. All four layers were already completed in a very ancient period, but the identification of Jacob with Israel and Esau with Edom was added during the period of the early monarchy when Israel and Edom were contiguous neighbors and the united kingdom of David and Solomon had the upper hand.

Martin Noth (1902–1968) changed the sequence of Gunkel's strata by making the oldest layer the narratives of Jacob at the cult sites of Beth-el and Shechem. Noth also postulated an East Jordan tradition of Jacob instead of a West Jordan tradition.

Hendel concludes his survey of the modern interpreters with William F. Albright (1891–1971), whom he characterizes as the grand synthesizer of textual and archeological data. Albright argued on behalf of the historical validity of the Jacob narratives. He held that the mass of extra-biblical data which had accumulated during the past century supported the assumption that the biblical patriarchs were historical figures. Albright's conclusions were especially popular among Jewish researchers. But Hendel notes a developing critical attitude toward Albright's views by some of the most recent scholars. His own study stands under the influence of F. M. Cross, who explored Canaanite myths and their relation to the Bible.

Hendel, therefore, devotes the second part of his study to a comparison of the Jacob cycle with Canaanite epics from Ugarit, a comparison which was not possible before the discoveries of the 1930's. He holds that both the Ugarit and the Jacob tales drew upon a common narrative tradition, an oral tradition transmitted from village to village and from generation to generation, a tradition of short and long stories, inserted into common story patterns. Each teller of tales varied details but retained the traditional patterns. In this dissemination by word of mouth, the names of characters were at times changed to please different audiences. Literary composers later drew upon these oral sources and in the course of centuries the present extant biblical text emerged. This is the explanation for the many similarities and the specific differences between the biblical version and the recently discoverd West Semitic epics.

Again and again Hendel emphasizes that the multiformity of an oral tradition of many generations is the key to an understanding of the relations between the biblical cycle and the Ugarit epics, which he discusses at length. Moreover, even in the Bible itself, to which he limits himself in the third part of his study, he finds diverging and converging strands of an oral Israel narrative tradition of long standing upon which the written version drew.

For example, the story of Jacob's birth shows a design similar to the stories of the birth of Isaac, Joseph, Samson and Samuel, beginning in each case with the long barrenness of the mother and the divinely ordained origin of the child. The rivalry between Sarah and Hagar finds parallels in the rivalry of Rachel and Leah, Hannah and Peninnah. The contrast between Isaac and Ishmael is paralleled by the contrast between Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers. The narrative pattern of preferring the younger son to the older one crops up in the

stories of Isaae and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, Ephraim and Manasseh.

In the longest chapter of the monograph, Hendel illustrates the persistence of narrative patterns in ancient Israel by calling attention to common features in the lives of Jacob and Moses. These include their special birth, their youthful illicit or subversive deed, their flight as a result of this deed, God's promise to them at a sacred place, the incident at the well with the future wife, the commissioning by God at a sacred place, the return to the land of birth, the dangerous encounter with God, the meeting with a brother and the arrival home.

Hendel explains the similarities in the lives of these two heroes as also the result of a common pattern of oral story telling. The oral setting also accounts for the diversity of the individual episodes. The teller of tales had to adapt the traditional pattern to please audiences at different places and different times. In Hendel's words, "The Jacob story and the Moses story, it seems, were both performed in the oral tradition of early Israel, subject to the multiformity and conservatism of oral tradition as narrative art."

From a verse in *Judges* (5:1) we learn that the righteous deeds of heroes were recited to the accompaniment of cymbals between the watering holes. It is also likely that, at the festivals of Israel, talented story-tellers regaled audiences with the adventures of Jacob, Moses and other renowned heroes of long, long ago. When these oral tales were recorded, they became the written sources for the final sacred version.

Hendel's observations on the themes, motifs, specific details and structural composition of the Jacob cycle should stimulate further critical examination and scholarly approaches to the era of the Patriarchs.

★ ★

A congregation or Bible study group may wish to honor one of its members by sponsoring a special issue of Dor Le Dor. We shall be happy to dedicate such an issue to the honoree. Please write to the Editor, Dor Le Dor, for further details.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN THE PERIOD OF THE MONARCHY

BY ABRAHAM RUDERMAN

A collection of essays edited by Hershel Shanks and Benjamin Mazar called: *Recent Archaeology in the Land of Israel* was translated from Hebrew by the Biblical Archaeology Society and the Israel Exploration Society. Nineteen scholars contributed articles which give an overview of Israeli Archaeology unavailable elsewhere. This article is limited to a brief summary of the article: "Archaeological Research on the Period of the Monarchy" by Amihai Mazar.

There are few archaeological remains from the Davidic period because David's reign was occupied with war and concern for establishing a government. Extensive royal building was not his first priority. In the peaceful Solomonic era the Bible mentions numerous building aetivities inside and outside of Jerusalem (I Kings 9:15). This was the purpose of the forced labor which Solomon imposed on his people. He was concerned with building the House of God, his own palace, the Millo (a eitadel), the wall of Jerusalem and the fortifications of Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. At Megiddo Yadin confirmed two palaces attributed to Solomon's time, one newly discovered and the other excavated in 1930. These palaces were built of ashlar masonry and decorated with beautifully carved proto-aeolic stone capitols. At Gezer Yadin proposed that the fortress, discovered by McAlister at the beginning of this century was part of a Solomonic six-chambered gate to which a casemate wall was joined. An American expedition under the auspices of Hebrew Union College has confirmed this view. It has unearthed the entire Solomonic gate and positively established its date.

In the Negev, Nelson Glueck's identification of King Solomon's Mines has been found to be mistaken. The mines at Timnah have been identified as Egyptian mines from the 13th century B.C.E. and the mines at Tel el-Khaleifah

Rabbi Abraham Ruderman ordained at the Jewish Institute of Religion, served as a chaplain during WW II, and was spiritual leader of congregations in Poughkeepsie, Elmont, Hazelton and South Africa. He came on Aliya in 1976 and is at present editor of the weekly bulletin of the Jerusalem Rotary.

should be dated to the period of the Monarchy, but have no connection with copper. A number of settlements have been unearthed in the central Negev mountains north of Machtesh Ramon. These began in the time of David or Solomon as part of the expansion southward, and were destroyed by Pharaoh Shishak during the reign of Rehoboam. The names of these settlements are found in Shishak's victory inscription at Karnak.

Since 1948 a number of excavations have been carried out within the ancient boundaries of the Kingdom of Judah. At Ramat Rachel, south of Jerusalem, a palace citadel, built by one of the kings of Judah, was excavated. This building stands in the middle of a fortified area overlooking the Judean mountains.

The walls are built of huge ashlar stones with proto-aeolic capitols. It was suggested that this palace was built by Jehoiakim as described in Jeremiah 22:13–19, *Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness and his upper rooms by injustice... Therefore, thus says the Lord concerning Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, King of Judah. They shall not lament for him saying 'Ah my brother'.* Yigal Yadin suggested an earlier date on finding many stamped jar handles in the fill of the main courtyard building, which are clearly dated to the time of Hezekiah. This was confirmed from excavations of Lachish where stratum III (the third level of excavation) has been securely dated to 701 B.C.E. when the city was sacked by Sennacherib. The sealed jars found at this site, bearing royal seal impressions, clearly indicate that they were used during the reign of Hezekiah on the eve of the rebellion against Assyria. The number of these sealed jars found at Lachish running into the hundreds, were produced and sealed as part of Hezekiah's preparation for his revolt against Assyria. The jars were used to store huge amounts of food against the coming siege, and were stored in four cities, the names of which are inscribed on the jars: Hebron, Ziph, Sochoh, and Nimsht. At Tel Batash, biblical Timnah, there is a reference to the incursion in the annals of Sennacherib. Many broken jars were found here. In cities not destroyed by Sennacherib, notably Jerusalem, jars were found intact and were used during the 7th century B.C.E.

At Lachish the city gate was discovered, part of which had been exposed by the British in the 1930's. Like the Solomonic gate at Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer, the gate at Lachish has six chambers. It appears to have been built during the reign of Rehoboam who, according to the Bible fortified Lachish: *Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem and he built cities for defense in Judah. He built Bethlehem,*

Tekoah, Addulam, Gath, Ziph, Lachish... He made the fortress strong and put commanders in them and stores of food, oil and wine. And he put shields and spears in all the cities and made them very strong (II Chr. 11:5–11). The gate was destroyed by Sennacherib. The only Assyrian seige rampart known thus far anywhere, is exposed outside the city of Lachish.

During the '60's B. Mazar uncovered an Israelitish city at Tel Goren in the Ein Gedi oasis on the shore of the Dead Sea which had been built during Josiah's reign. Among the finds were workshops for the production of spices for which Ein Gedi was noted.

Excavations by Y. Aharoni in the past 15 years in Beersheba and Arad, contributed much new material to the study of the archaeology of Judah. Six strata were excavated at Arad where dozens of Hebrew letters inscribed on potsherds constitute the largest collection of ostraca found in Israel. At Beersheba Aharoni excavated an Israelite provincial administrative center, destroyed by Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. It contained a city gate flanked by towers, with four guard rooms and a complex of royal storehouses.

At Arad a local temple was discovered including a sacrificial altar in the courtyard. The Temple consisted of the broad room with a niche for the holy of holies and a sacred stone (massebah) and two small altars. Mazar suggested that this temple was associated with the wanderings of Hovav the Kenite, Moses' Father-in-law: *The descendants of Hovav, the Kenite went with the Judahites from the city of palms to the wilderness of Judah, which is south of Arad* (Jud. 1:16). The destruction of the Arad temple was part of the religious reforms of Josiah.

A fortified desert town dating to the 7th century B.C.E. was excavated at Aroer by A. Biran. (In 1953 the present writer was a member of the team of the late Dr. Nelson Glueck, then President of Hebrew Union College, which explored the site of Aroer, strewn with many pieces of pottery from that period. Dr. Glueck assured us that this site would be excavated within 15 years).

Since 1948 two important excavations have been conducted at two cities in the northern part of the Kingdom of Israel, Hazor and Dan. The city of Hazor was built in Solomon's reign and was destroyed by Tiglath Pileser III in 732 B.C.E. It was protected by strong walls and a citadel with a gate decorated with proto-

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FLATTERING EARTH

BY JOEL LITKE

When a dubious word or diffieult phrase is encountered in the Bible the normal approach is to explain it in terms of its linguistie root or by referenee to cognate languages. This however may not always be helpful. At times it may be preferable to get to the true meaning of the text by keeping in mind thc particular value concept that the Biblc espouses. A term may be ambiguous only because one fails to focus on the underlying perception that the Bible wants to convey. Such may well be the case with the phrase: ולא תחניפו את הארץ כי האדם יחניף את הארץ (Numbers 35:33), in eonnection with the shedding of human blood. While the translation here of the word *hanaf* as defiling and polluting is eontextually correct and consistent with its meaning in other instances, it is enticing to go beyond this and render it in the sense of flattering or acting hypocritically, which would also be valid, and sec in its use the unique denouncement of murder by the Bible.

Thc rendition of flattering here is acccptable if it is considered how the Bible regards murder not merely as a social disorder, but as an act having a cataelysmic impact upon the viability and continuanee of creation itself. One cannot fail to be impressed with this, if it is recalled that the very existenee of the earth was threatened by Noah's Flood beeause *the earth was filled with violence,* of whieh the essential form is murder, the taking of human life, that was created in the image of God, and for whose benefit all exists. The catastrophic dimension of murder is seen in the fact that in thc condemnation of man the earth, too, is implicated. She, too, is punished. Though it is man who perpetrates his violence, the earth is smitten, battered by the torrents of the flood, that erases all her inhabitants and turns her impotent and chaotic. The sharing of their fate is part of the original plan of ereation, that provides for the close affinity betwcen man *(adam)* and earth *(adamah)* whereby the latter serves as the warrant of the former. Concomitance was the order of ereation. Earth and man arc linked in a common bond. And when man fails, he is chastened through the diminishment of the earth. This eommonality is also encountered in the rebuke of Cain, following the murder of his brother, Abel, when he is warned that thc earth *shall not yield henceforth to you her strength* (Genesis 4:12). The earth is impaired, because of Cain's murder.

Rabbi Joel Litke is an ordained Rabbi, having served in congregations in Michigan and California. He has a B.A. and M.A. from the University of Toronto, Canada. He has contributed to various Jewish magazines and journals. He immigrated to Israel in recent years.

It is however in the story of the Flood that this tandem relationship is best illustrated. The earth is deluged beeause of the deeds of man and rendered uninhabitable, waste and devoid of life and growth. She is damned as an aceessory in man's lawbreaking. For man, as the erown of creation for whose sake the world exists, determines through his behavior the condition of the prosperity of the earth.

In the aftermath of the Flood, however, the original plan of creation is radically revised. Man and earth are no more to share the same fate. No longer is nature to be the warrant for man's eaprices. From hereon the earth will follow her own inexorable, ordained course and fulfil her task on her own terms. Thus God assures Noah on leaving the ark:

> *I will not again curse the ground anymore for man's sake; for the imagination (yezer) of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite everything living, as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.*
>
> *(Genesis 8:21, 22).*

In thcse words the blueprint for the new world order is enshrined. Nature and society will henceforth form two separate realms. The earth will now give forth of her strength in consonance with her own laws, irrespcctivc of man, who has becn demoted from his pedestal as the arbiter of the world. The primeval harmony and union between man and nature has been thwarted by the realization *of the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.* This eould not be otherwise, for holding the earth hostage to his fickelness would foredoom ereation, as man eannot be relied upon to rein his imagination. New perimeters must govern the relationship, if the earth is to endure and yet murder is to be condemned. The post-diluvian eovenant thus stipulates that man and earth will face each other in an opposing stance. Fear of man and separation from nature will replace the original bond. And while God Himself will bring to account the beast that sheds human blood, murder committed by man is to be requited, not as hitherto by cursing the earth, but by man's institutions which will mete out justice: *Who so sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.* (Genesis 9:6). The Sforno perceptively eomments, "by the judicial court of man."

The new order provides for the earth to be neutral and have no part in man's retribution. According to the laws of nature the earth will yield its bounty, even when forced to absorb blood, innocently shed. It will be generous, forthcoming, pretending that nothing has happened. To expect the earth to respond thus and to ignore the insult done to it, is the very essence of flattery* (a gesture that is due to special circumstances one is coerced to ster upon the earth).

Later legislation therefore admonishes men to respect the integrity of the earth and not to force it to "smile" in the presence of murder and violence. Since there would be danger that murder would

* Cf. Prov. 11:9; Job 36:13.

go unpunished, the Bible warns not to allow this and *not to cause the earth to be flattering* (or become a hypocrite)... *for* (innocently shed *blood will cause the earth to be flattering* (or become a hypocrite). This rendition retains the normal sense of the word *hanaf,* and echoes the terms of the Noahide covenant.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Continued from page 267

aeolic capitols. Besides massive granaries and warehouses an impressive water tunnal indicated considerable engineering skill and hydrological knowledge.

At Dan, A. Biran, after excavating for eleven years, exposed groups of monumental buildings from the Israelite period. The most interesting discovery at Tel Dan is the precinct believed to be associated with the sacred area erected by Jeroboam at Dan where he placed one of the golden calves.

While the spiritual contribution of the Hebrews is beyond compare, the material realm the Hebrew contribution to ancient civilization hardly matches with that of its neighbors, the Arameans, the Neo-Hittite kingdom of Syria, the Phoenieians in Cyprus Assyria and Babylon. In Israelite sites we never find statues of monumental reliefs. Neither do we find magnificent palaces or delicately carved ivories, jewelry or skillfully erafted vessels of local manufacture. The material culture of the Kingdom of Judah and Israel relate largely to self defense, agriculture and commerce. Agricultural and irrigation knowledge reached a high degree of development. The series of fortresses and towers in the desert regions and in Judah point to a highly developed system of defense and a well developed road net-work. Ancient Hebrew expertise is evidenced in the construction of their hewn stone burial sites, in their impressive water systems and in the design of their fortifications.

While many advances have been made in the archaeological research of this period, extensive excavations continue to shed new light which will bring a greater appreciation of the history of the Monarchy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

I enjoyed the interesting article by Rabbi Chernoff, Jewish Origins of Lord's Prayer, in the Fall issue of *Dor Le Dor* (XVII – I p. 39).

Although it appears that many of the sentiments in the Prayer have their origin in Hebrew Scripture or in the Oral Law, I do question an apparent anachronism in the article.

I refer to the citations from Berakhot 29b attributed to R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus. Since he lived mainly during the second-half of the First Century C.E. how would it have been possible for the historical Jesus, who preceded R. Eliezer by one or two generations, to have been influenced by his teachings?

If, however, the Lord's Prayer was composed by leaders of the early church from fragments of prayers by Jesus (the "O" source), and the Gospel writers developed the Prayer from this source later in the century, then Rabbi Chernoff's citations from Berakhot are plausible.

Sidney S. Kripke
Sylvania, Ohio

Rabbi Chernoff Replies:

I agree with Rabbi Kripke's comment. The "paper" should have read "Others say, 'May it be Thy will... body what it lacks."

I sincerely regret this unscholarly attribution to Rabbi Eliczer ben Hyrcanus.

Sir,

Through this letter I would like to make your readers aware of a special exhibit and International Symposium, Drugs and Pharmaceuticals in the Biblieal World, which the Rodef Shalom Biblical Botanical Garden will sponsor next summer.

The Biblical Botanical Garden will display pharmaceutical plants of ancient Egypt, Israel and the Near East through the summer.

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Walter Jacob, Rabbi

עשה תורתך קבע

THE TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
CHAIM ABRAMOWITZ

July-August 1989			תמוז תשמ"ט
4	T	Isaiah 33	א ישעיהו ל"ג
5	W	Isaiah 34	ב ישעיהו ל"ד
6	Th	Isaiah 35	ג ישעיהו ל"ה
7	F	Numbers 16-18*	ד קרח*
8	שבת	Haftarah I Samuel 11:14-12:22	ה הפטרה: שמואל א י"א, יד-י"ב, כב
9	S	Isaiah 36	ו ישעיהו ל"ו
10	M	Isaiah 37	ז ישעיהו ל"ז
11	T	Isaiah 38	ח ישעיהו ל"ח
12	W	Isaiah 39	ט ישעיהו ל"ט
13	Th	Isaiah 40	י ישעיהו מ'
14	F	Numbers 19-25:9**	יא חוקת-בלק**
15	שבת	Haftarah: Micah 5:6-6:8	יב הפטרה: מיכה ה', ו-ו', ח
16	S	Isaiah 41	יג ישעיהו מ"א
17	M	Isaiah 42	יד ישעיהו מ"ב
18	T	Isaiah 43	טו ישעיהו מ"ג
19	W	Isaiah 44	טז ישעיהו מ"ד
20	Th	Isaiah 45	יז ישעיהו מ"ה
21	F	Numbers 25:10-30:1	יח פינחס
22	שבת	Haftarah: 1 Kings 18:46-19:21	יט הפטרה: מלכים א י"ח, מ"ו-י"ט,כא
23	S	Isaiah 46	ב ישעיהו מ"ו
24	M	Isaiah 47	בא ישעיהו מ"ז
25	T	Isaiah 48	כב ישעיהו מ"ח
26	W	Isaiah 49	כג ישעיהו מ"ט
27	Th	Isaiah 50	כד ישעיהו נ'
28	F	Numbers 30:2-36	כה מטוס ומסעי
29	שבת	Haftarah: Jeremiah 2:4-28	כו הפטרה: ירמיהו ב', ד-כח
30	S	Isaiah 51	כז ישעיהו נ"א
31	M	Isaiah 52	כח ישעיהו נ"ב
		August	
1	T	Isaiah 53	בט ישעיהו נ"ג

*In the Diaspora — *בישראל רק חוקת

**In the Diaspora — **בישראל רק בלק

August 1989			מנחם אב תשמ"ט
2	W	Isaiah 54	א ישעיהו נ"ד
3	Th	Isaiah 55	ב ישעיהו נ"ה
4	F	Deuteronomy 1-31:22	ג דברים
5	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 1:1-27	ד הפטרה: ישעיהו א', א-כז
6	S	Isaiah 56	ה ישעיהו נ"ו
7	M	Isaiah 57	ו ישעיהו נ"ז
8	T	Lamentations 1-2	ז איכה א'-ב'
9	W	Lamentations 3-4	ח איכה ג'-ד'
10	Th	Feast of Ab: Lamentations 5	ט תשעה באב איכה ה'
11	F	Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11	י ואתחנן
12	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 40:1-26	יא הפטרה: ישעיהו מ',א-כו
13	S	Isaiah 58	יב ישעיהו נ"ח
14	M	Isaiah 59	יג ישעיהו נ"ט
15	T	Isaiah 60	יד ישעיהו ס'
16	W	Isaiah 61	טו ישעיהו ס"א
17	Th	Isaiah 62	טז ישעיהו ס"ב
18	F	Deuteronomy 7:12-11:25	יז עקב
19	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 49:14-51:3	יח הפטרה: ישעיהו מ"ט, יד-נ"א, ג
20	S	Isaiah 63	יט ישעיהו ס"ג
21	M	Isaiah 64	כ ישעיהו ס"ד
22	T	Isaiah 65	כא ישעיהו ס"ה
23	W	Isaiah 66	כב ישעיהו ס"ו
24	Th	Jeremiah 1	כג ירמיהו א'
25	F	Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17	כד ראה
26	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 54:11-55:5	כה הפטרה: ישעיהו נ"ד, יא-נ"ה, ה
27	S	Jeremiah 2	כו ירמיהו ב'
28	M	Jeremiah 3	כז ירמיהו ג'
29	T	Jeremiah 4	כח ירמיהו ד'
30	W	Jeremiah 5	כט ירמיהו ה'
31	Th	Jeremiah 6	ל ירמיהו ו'

אלול תשמ"ט		September 1989	
א	שופטים	F	Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9
ב	הפטרה: ישעיה נ"א, יב"נ"ב, יב	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 51:12-52:12
ג	ירמיהו ז'	S	Jeremiah 7
ד	ירמיהו ח'	M	Jeremiah 8
ה	ירמיהו ט'	T	Jeremiah 9
ו	ירמיהו י'	W	Jeremiah 10
ז	ירמיהו י"א	Th	Jeremiah 11
ח	בי תצא	F	Deuteronomy 21:10-25
ט	הפטרה: ישעיה נ"ד, א-י	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 54:10-25
י	ירמיהו י"ב	S	Jeremiah 12
יא	ירמיהו י"ג	M	Jeremiah 13
יב	ירמיהו י"ד	T	Jeremiah 14
יג	ירמיהו ט"ו	W	Jeremiah 15
יד	ירמיהו ט"ז	Th	Jeremiah 16
טו	כי תבא	F	Deuteronomy 26-29:8
טז	הפטרה: ישעיה ס', א-כב	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 60:1-22
יז	ירמיהו י"ז	S	Jeremiah 17
יח	ירמיהו י"ח	M	Jeremiah 18
יט	ירמיהו י"ט	T	Jeremiah 19
כ	ירמיהו כ'	W	Jeremiah 20
כא	ירמיהו כ"א	Th	Jeremiah 21
כב	נצבים-וילך	F	Deuteronomy 29:9-31
כג	הפטרה: ישעיה ס"א, י-ס"ג, ט	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 61:10-63:9
כד	ירמיהו כ"ב	S	Jeremiah 22
כה	ירמיהו כ"ג	M	Jeremiah 23
כו	ירמיהו כ"ד	T	Jeremiah 24
כז	ירמיהו כ"ה	W	Jeremiah 25
כח	ירמיהו כ"ו	Th	Jeremiah 26
כט	ערב ראש השנה	F	

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א	ראש השנה: בראשית ב"א, א-לד	שבת	Genesis 21:1-34
	הפטרה: שמואל א א', ב', י		Haftarah: I Samuel 1-2:10
		October	
ב	ראש השנה: בראשית ב"ב, א-כד	S	Genesis 22:1-24
	הפטרה: ירמיה ל"א, ב-כ		Haftarah: Jeremiah 31:2-20
ג	יונה א'	M	Jonah 1
ד	יונה ב'	T	Jonah 2
ה	יונה ג'	W	Jonah 3
ו	יונה ד'	Th	Jonah 4
ז	האזינו	F	Deuteronomy 32
ח	הפטרה: שבת שובה הפטרה: הושע י"ד, ב-י	שבת	Haftarah: Hoseah 14:2-10
ט	ערב יום כפור	S	
י	יום כפור ויקרא ט"ז	M	Leviticus 16
	הפטרה: ישעיה נ"ז, יד-נ"ח,טו		Haftarah 57:14-58:16
יא	קהלת א-ב'	T	Ecclesiastes 1-2
יב	קהלת ג'	W	Ecclesiastes 3
יג	קהלת ד'	Th	Ecclesiastes 4
יד	ערב סוכות	F	
טו	סוכות:ויקרא כ"ב, כו-כ"ג, מד	שבת	Leviticus 22:26-23:44
	הפטרה: זכריה י"ד		Haftarah: Zechariah 14
טז	סוכות: ויקרא*	S	Leviticus 22:26-23:44*
	הפטרה: מלכים א ח', ב-כא*		Haftarah: I Kings 8:2-21*
יז	קהלת ה-י'	M	Ecclesiastes 5-6
יח	קהלת ז-ח'	T	Ecclesiastes 7-8
יט	קהלת ט-י'	W	Ecclesiastes 9-10
כ	קהלת י"א-י"ב	Th	Ecclesiastes 11-12
כא	הושענא רבה	F	
כב	שמיני עצרת דברים י"ד, כב-ט"ז, יז	שבת	Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17
	הפטרה: מלכים א ח', מד-סו		Haftarah: I Kings 8:54-66
כג	שמחת תורה: וזאת הברכה**	S	Deuteronomy 33-34**
	הפטרה: יהושע א'		Haftarah Joshua I
כד	ירמיהו ב"ז	M	Jeremiah 27
כה	ירמיהו כ"ח	T	Jeremiah 28
כו	ירמיהו כ"ט	W	Jeremiah 29
כז	ירמיהו ל'	Th	Jeremiah 30
כח	בראשית	F	Genesis 1:6-18
	הפטרה: שמואל א כ', יח-מב	שבת	Haftarah: I Samuel 20:18-42
	ירמיהו ל'	S	Jeremiah 30

*רק בחוץ לארץ

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