

THE JEWISH BIBLE QUARTERLY

DOR LeDOR



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EDITORIAL

Is the Jewish Bible Quarterly too traditional in its published articles, or is it too liberal? From time to time we receive criticism and complaints from one side or the other. Some readers have argued that our policy is too "orthodox" and that our hands are therefore tied behind our backs preventing us from opening our pages to modern radical scholarship because it might undermine religious faith. On the other hand we are occasionally accused of providing a forum for authors to express views which either explicitly or implicitly question the divine origin of the Bible.

We plead guilty to both "offences". It is true that we occasionally publish essays which support the mainstream or classical Jewish tradition relating to the origin or the authorship of biblical books, as well as pieces which rely somewhat heavily on the medieval commentators. On the other hand we also publish articles which embrace biblical criticism and which are strongly influenced by modern research which seem to deny the traditional beliefs about biblical sources and authorship. It means that the J.B.Q. has deliberately remained without a definite policy with respect to theological aspects of Bible scholarship. Its single policy is to provide a forum for authors to offer an honest and reasonably expounded essay on any topic of interest to Bible readers. We would therefore accept a good article which supports the doctrine of the divine authorship of the Pentateuch, just as we would be prepared to publish another piece which expounds the view of the higher critics that the Pentateuch was written by several different hands and at quite different times in Israel's history. The only criterion we would like to establish is that the essay is well written, and of interest to our general readership. Further, the fact that an article is published in our journal in no way suggests the agreement of the editors with the opinions expressed by the author. In fact our Editorial Board and the Advisory Committee is made up of people who belong to all streams of Jewish religious and academic life. There are Orthodox, Conservative and Reform

rabbis and scholars among them — as well as several members who belong to no religious grouping at all. What binds them together is their unanimous love for the Bible and their unquestioned commitment to strengthening the study of the book which has exercised the greatest influence on human life in every period of our recorded history.

CHAIM PEARL
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

**WE ENCOURAGE OUR READERS TO SUBMIT
ARTICLES ON BIBLICAL THEMES**

MANUSCRIPTS should be submitted to the Editor, the J.B.Q., P.O.B. 7024, Jerusalem, Israel. The manuscript should be typed on one side of the page only, double-spaced, with at least a one-inch margin all around, and be no longer than 12 pages. If possible, *also* send a computer disk with your typed manuscript. To standardize spelling, the American usage will be employed. Quotations from the Bible should follow one of the Jewish Publication Society's translations, unless a special point is being made by the author for the purpose of his article. Biblical quotations should be checked by the author for accuracy. The following transliteration guidelines, though non-academic, are simple and the most widely accepted:

א and א	assumes the sound of its accompanying vowel = e.g., Amen, Alenu, Olam, Eretz.
ה	= H e.g., Hodesh.
כ and ק	= K e.g., Ketuvim, Kadosh.
ח	= Kh e.g., Melekh.
צ	= Tz e.g., Tzaddik.
ב	= E e.g., Ben.

Standard transliteration of biblical names remains unchanged.



JOSEPH HALPERN

A Memorial Tribute

Readers and supporters of the Jewish Bible Quarterly will have learned with deep regret of the death of Joseph Halpern, a respected and long-standing member of the Editorial Advisory Committee of this Journal.

Born in London, he graduated from Jews' College and London University and after working as a synagogue social worker at the beginning of his career, he dedicated his life to Jewish education. During the Second World War he was a senior education officer of the London Board for Jewish Religious Education and contributed significantly to the strengthening of Jewish education in a particularly difficult period in the life of that community. One pioneer work of his was the creation of the Jewish Study Group Movement which encouraged Jewish teenagers in lively and exciting programs of regular Jewish study. The Movement spread from London to become an important national Movement and also

organized regular summer and winter schools. It had a tremendous influence on several generations of Anglo-Jewish youth: many of its graduates are today living in Israel.

Halpern was a great teacher and some of his text books became "best sellers" going into several editions. Perhaps the most welcome of his books was *The History of Our People in Bible Times*.

Joseph Halpern was a man of great faith. "If God wants it, it will happen" and this unshakeable faith in the divine will gave him the strength he needed to overcome problems of ill health, enabling him to tackle projects which much stronger men would have regarded as impossible. The chief source of his faith was the Bible which he embraced as the literal and unchangeable word of God. His love for the Scriptures overflowed to others, and for many years he was the guiding spirit behind the English "Bible Readers' Union". When the family moved to settle in Israel he immediately became a supporter of our Quarterly (Dor Le Dor) and did what he could to keep his old Bible Readers' Union members on the list of our own Journal.

His influence will be missed, but his magnificent contributions to Jewish education, and particularly to Bible reading and study will be remembered with deep appreciation.

C.P.

AN ELEGY OF DAVID

To Teach the Sons of Judah the Bow

SHUBERT SPERO

One of the most poignant elegies in the Bible is the lament of David over the defeat and death of King Saul and his son Jonathan in the battle of Gilboa with the Philistines. While David was surely aware of the positive implications of this event for his own political future, what stands out in this poem is his grievous sense of loss over one person whom he loved dearly and over another who, for all the suffering he caused David, was the divinely anointed king of Israel whose death was a terrible misfortune for the nation.

What has puzzled readers from the very beginning has been the superscription to the elegy:

And David lamented with this lamentation over Saul and over Jonathan his son, and said - To teach the sons of Judah the bow. Behold it is written in the book of Jashar:

(II Sam. 1:17-27).

What is the relevance to the elegy of *to teach the sons of Judah the use of the bow* and what is the meaning of the reference to the Book of Jashar? Rashi comments: "Now that the mighty men of Israel have fallen it is necessary that the children of Judah give instruction in warfare and the use of the bow." I believe Rashi to be on the right track but the connection must be elaborated.

The Book of Jashar which is mentioned twice in the Bible would appear to be an ancient collection of epic songs and dirges associated with victories and defeats in war waged by the early Hebrews

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beginning with the period of the Patriarchs.¹ I would like to suggest that this folk collection was kept open over the years to incorporate significant literary works as they developed. David's elegy over Saul as originally composed and performed started with the words: *Thy beauty O Israel, upon thy high places is slain . . . (ibid. 1:19)* but when added to the collection in Sefer ha-Yashar at the suggestion of David's court, it was given the superscription: *To teach the sons of Judah, the bow* for reasons we shall soon describe. When the author of II Samuel included the texts of the elegy of David in his account he decided to include this superscription, and as the competent historian that he was he informed us of the source: . . . *behold it is written in the book of Jashar.*

Now what has "teaching" the use of the bow to do with this elegy? It so happens we have another case of a war poem being associated with "teaching." Psalm 60 which is ascribed to David and deals with a crucial phase in David's war with Edom, has the following for a superscription: *For the Leader upon Shushan Eduth; Michtam to David to teach . . . Shushan Eduth* is thought to be a name of a melody and *michtam* a musical title. It has been suggested, however, that the directive "to teach" may have meant that this particular musical composition was "to be taught to army recruits because of its connection with war."² This may have been not only for inspirational reasons but for strategical purposes as well. For the sequence of peoples and places in the song may suggest a certain strategy used by David and Joab. In a similar manner it can be maintained that David's elegy over Saul was placed in the Sefer ha-Yashar to teach the importance of the bow as a military weapon.

We have now arrived at our main task which is to discover what the defeat of Saul at Gilboa and David's elegy have to do with the use of the bow.

It would appear that after the entrance of the Israelite tribes into Canaan and after the initial conquests under Joshua, the individual

1 B. Z. Luria, "ספר הישר," *קדמות העברים*, p. 42-46, 1977 (קרית ספר ירושלים).

2 *Book of Psalms*, Cohen, A. Soncino Press, 1950, p. 189.

tribes turned their attention to settlement and peaceful pursuits. With the passage of time and with no king or standing army, particularly during the first half of the period of the Judges, the martial arts were generally forgotten. The profession of soldiery and expert knowledge in the use of weapons fell into disuse. It is against this background that we can perhaps understand the following verses in the Book of Judges.

Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them, even as many as had not known all the wars of Canaan; only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as beforetime knew nothing thereof (Judges 3:1, 2).

In trying to explain why large areas of the Promised Land remained unconquered by Israel, our author states that its purpose was to keep the younger generation in a state of military preparedness. However, we are not told whether the purpose was achieved.

Towards the end of the period of the Judges during the cruel war between the tribe of Benjamin and the remaining tribes over the affair of the concubine in Gibeah, we are told of thousands of men on either side who *drew sword, all these were men of war*. It is not clear if the reference here is to experienced soldiers or simply men of "draft age" and physical ability to draw sword. We are told, however, of 700 "chosen" men who were *left handed; every one could sling stones at a hair breadth and not miss* (Judges 20:16, 17).

This clearly indicates that the use of the bow had been forgotten in Israel and that the only tribe that possessed a sizeable group of men armed and expert in the use of a long range weapon was Benjamin; and the weapon was the sling.³

Let us briefly review the weapons that were available in antiquity. The sword, axe, mace and stabbing spear were used in short range combat. The javelin was used for medium range and the bow and sling for long range. The bow is one of the earliest known weapons

3 See comments by Yehezkel Kaufmann, *ספר שופטים* (1962, ירושלים).

of war and was used in pre-historic times for hunting. Among the Hebrews it is already mentioned by the Patriarch Jacob: . . . *which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow* (Gen. 48:22). Long before the period of Samuel and Saul, the bow had been developed among Israel's neighbors, particularly in Egypt, as a most effective long range weapon. In its modified versions as a double convex or composite bow, it had an effective range of some 300-400 yards. The advantages of such a long-range weapon in war are obvious. One can outrange the enemy i.e. begin to strike at him before he can strike at you. Also one can surprise the enemy before he can hear or see you. However, the disadvantage of the bow, to quote Yadin was: "No other weapon in ancient days required so high a technical capacity to produce and such skill to operate."⁴ The sling, by comparison, while requiring considerable training and experience to operate with effective accuracy, is quite easy to produce. This would explain why after decades of neglect and lack of interest the only long range weapon in the arsenal of the Israelites was the sling. This would also explain David's proficiency with the sling which enables him to overcome the giant Goliath. (I Sam. 17:40). As a shepherd he would have had the time and the occasions to practice and develop a skill with this easily fashioned yet deadly weapon.

However, in the consciousness of the people, the symbol of the well-armed warrior remained the archer as we see in Hannah's song of praise: *The bows of the mighty men are broken, And they that stumbled are girded with strength* (I Sam. 2:4).

With the coronation of Saul as the first king of Israel, the need to organize a standing, well equipped army became the first item on the national agenda. We see the beginning of this in the following verse:

And Saul also went to his house in Gibeah; and there went with him the men of valour (I Sam. 10:26).

⁴ Yadin, Y., *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1963) pp. 6-10.

And Saul chose him 3000 men of Israel; whereof 2000 were with Saul in Michmas and in the mount of Beth-el, and a 1000 were with Jonathan in Gibeath-benjamin (I Sam. 13:2).

However, the problem was not only of manpower but also of weapons. The tight Philistine control over the forging of metal particularly bronze had practically disarmed the Israelites in terms of the conventional short range weapons of sword and spear.

So it came to pass in the day of battle (Michmas), that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan; but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found (I Sam. 13:22).

This is not to suggest that the Israelites went into battle empty-handed. They simply fought with farming implements and with staves.

What the evidence compels us to hypothesize is that as soon as Saul took power he initiated a crash program of developing a corps of bowman at whose head stood Jonathan. We know that at this time the Philistines were adept in the manufacture and use of the bow which they learned from the Egyptians. Given the royal will, it would not have been too difficult for Saul to secure the requisite technology from renegade Philistines or at least capture a few bows. But he may not have had enough time.

Of the existence of some bowman in the army of Saul we learn from the following: *And in the days of Saul they made war with the Hagarites who fell by their hand . . . as many as were valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow . . . (I Chr. 5:10, 18).* The chronicler is here referring to the Israelite tribes on the eastern side of the Jordan who were supportive of Saul in his expeditions in their area.

There are a number of references in our sources which indicate that Jonathan was adept in the use of the bow.

1. It was part of his personal weaponry: *And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his apparel, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle (I Sam. 18:4).*

2. The most plausible way to reconstruct the battle of Michmas in which Jonathan and his armour-bearer were able to dispatch 20 of the Philistine enemy who were standing close together (I Sam. 14:6-16) is by assuming that Jonathan climbed up (one of the rocky crags of Bozez or Seneh) upon his hands and feet (13) and unseen by the enemy picked off 20 of them with his bow who were then slain by the armour-bearer with his sword.⁵

3. The secret message that Jonathan transmitted to David that he must flee before the wrath of Saul is given by means of the particular instructions that Jonathan will give to the lad retrieving his arrows. (I Sam. 20:20-23). Since this elaborate subterfuge was concocted so that Saul would not become suspicious and have him followed, it can be assumed that it was a well known fact in court that Jonathan frequently went into the field to practice shooting the bow.

4. In his elegy over Saul and Jonathan, David states, *The bow of Jonathan turned not back, And the sword of Saul returned not empty* (II Sam. 1:22). This would clearly indicate that the particular weapon associated with Jonathan was the bow rather than the sword. Later events tend to bear out the belief that in spite of Saul's efforts, the special force of bowmen actually developed by Jonathan was not very large. This was probably due to the difficulties involved in the manufacture of the bow and the relatively short amount of time at Saul's disposal. Furthermore after David established himself in Ziklag and Hebron in the south, Saul's force of bowmen was continuously weakened by desertions of some of his best men to the camp of David:

Now these are they that came to David to Ziklag while he was yet shut up because of Saul the son of Kish; and they were among the mighty men, his helpers in war. They were armed with bows and could use both the right hand and the left in slinging stones and in shooting arrows from the

⁵ See the discussion in Arieh Bartal, *The Kingdom of Saul* (Kibbutz Hameuchad, 1982) p. 70 (Hebrew).

bow; they were of Saul's brethren of Benjamin.

(I Chr. 12:1, 2).

It was to be expected that the first candidates for training in the use of the bow would be from the cadre of Benjaminites who were already expert in the use of the other long range weapon, the sling.

With this as background we may now focus on the battle of Gilboa, Saul's last clash with the Philistines in which he died. This was no mere border incursion of the kind the Philistines were wont to engage in, but a major effort by the Philistines and their vassals to penetrate the important valley of Jezreel. This posed a serious threat to the Israelite tribes which Saul could not ignore. The Philistines thus hoped to draw the Israelites out into the open battle against their vastly superior forces and thus destroy the army of Israel. The Bible gives us an important clue as to the major factor in the defeat of Saul's army.

And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchi-shua the sons of Saul. And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers overtook him; and he was in great anguish by reason of the archers (I Sam. 31:2, 3).

It would seem that the Philistine bowmen riding on swiftly moving chariots were the key factor not only in the mortal wounding of Saul but in the defeat of the Israelite forces. The Philistine archers were able to rain death upon the soldiers of Saul long before the latter could engage them in close combat. The Philistines were then able to turn the initial retreat into a headlong rout. Saul had no comparable force of bowmen to keep the Philistines at a distance.

David as a military man and leader-to-be of a united Israel included in his elegy expressions not only of his personal anguish over the loss of loved ones, not only his grief over the defeat of the armies of Israel before their implacable enemy, but also his alarm over the military inferiority of his nation arising out of their lack of proper weaponry.

And so in his poetic description of the battle, David makes repeated mention of the weapons of war.

Ye mountains of Gilboa . . . For there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away, the shield of Saul not anointed with oil. (But) from the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty . . . (II Sam. 1:21).

David in his grief curses the terrain over which are strewn the shields of the warriors of Israel who cast them away in their retreat not only to rid themselves of the extra weight but also because they were useless in defense against the arrows of the Philistines. Even the shield of Saul, while useful in close combat with the sword, was ineffective in protecting the entire body against a shower of arrows. The shield of Saul did not have to be smeared with oil as the others because they were always lubricated by the blood and gore of the slain. *The bow of Jonathan turned not back and the sword of Saul returned not empty (II Sam. 1:22).*

The swordsmen of Israel represented by "the sword of Saul" in the elegy were brave, skilled and effective as far as they went as were whatever bowmen Israel had ("bow of Jonathan"). The tragedy was that the swordsmen were outranged and the few bowmen were outnumbered by the archers of the Philistines. *How are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perished (II Sam. 1:27).*

It is significant that David closes his elegy with this reference to "the weapons of war." Astute leader that he was, David saw this perhaps as the overriding lesson of the battle of Gilboa. First, he was, of course, alluding to the irreparable loss of actual weapons of war such as bronze swords and spear heads which could not be easily replaced and the precious bows whose technology had still not been completely mastered by Israel. But over and beyond that there seems to be an additional meaning resonating in the words of David: "The weapons of war have perished." The entire concept that we possess of the instruments of war has been destroyed! The weapons available to Israel were simply not effective. The bows of the Philistines won the battle for them.

Once aware of this underlying theme which runs through the elegy we can understand why in incorporating this work in the Sefer ha-Yashar, there was added a note as to how it could be used: *to teach the sons of Judah, the bow*. At the time of the composition of the elegy David was only in control of Judea. The thought was – let this elegy and the entire analysis of the battle of Gilboa that it implies, be read and studied by the army recruits of the sons of Judah so that they might understand in military terms why Saul and Jonathan lost the battle, and that they may appreciate the importance of a balanced army with trained units in every branch. An improvement that David set about to institute as soon as he became king of the United Kingdom was: “To teach the sons of Judah the bow.”

The battle of Gilboa may very well have had the same effect as the battle of Agincourt in 1415 where the English defeated a vastly superior force of the French by virtue of their use of the long bow. Saul's defeat may have radically transformed the concepts of warfare and weaponry in Israel.

KADDISH AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

DAVID BAUMGARDT

On the centenary of the birth of the German-Jewish philosopher David Baumgardt, our Quarterly remembers him by the publication of his article on the *Kaddish*.

A lifelong Zionist, well versed in Hebrew and biblical thought, he began in 1924 as a brilliant teacher at the University of Berlin. After a decade, his promising career was cut short by the advent of the Nazi regime.

In 1935, on the octocentennial of the birth of Maimonides, he was invited to lecture at the University of Madrid on this philosopher and was thus able to leave Germany. After years of exile in England, he found refuge in the United States and settled in the seaside resort of Long Beach, New York, as my neighbor.

In 1941, he was appointed Consultant in Philosophy for the Library of Congress shortly after Thomas Mann, another distinguished German refugee, became Consultant in Literature. This gave him the leisure to continue his philosophical studies and his publication of books which concentrated mainly on ethics.

After his death in 1963, his students, colleagues and admirers published a volume of essays in his honor. His valuable library and archives were turned over to the Jewish National Library in Jerusalem.

The article on the *Kaddish* is typical of his method of comparing Jewish themes, concepts and religious traditions with non-Jewish ones.

Sol Liptzin

In Judaism, we have a brief prayer very different in character from its Christian counterpart but alike in intensity of thought and feeling, which has been spoken throughout almost two thousand years. The *Kaddish* and the Lord's Prayer have both comforted every generation of believing Western men, particularly in fateful hours, at open graves and in times of mourning. But they have done it, however, in markedly different ways.

In his thoughtful analysis of the meaning of prayer, Friedrich Heiler sees an analogy to the Lord's Prayer in the Shema Yisrael (Deut. 6:4-9);¹ and indeed every Jew will know that throughout the centuries Jewish martyrs went to their death with the few brief words of the Shema on their lips. Still, the Shema is rather a confession of faith in the one unique God than a prayer. The same applies to an Islamic prayer which refers to several surahs of the Koran and which M. Grunert plainly calls the Muslim Lord's Prayer.² On the other hand, the didactic intellectualism of Thomas Aquinas tried to reveal even in Jesus' impulsive prayer a distinct system of principal requests of "rational beings" without paying sufficient regard to the strongly emotional traits of this allegedly "logical arrangement" of thoughts.

Without convincing justification, the Jesuit Josef Staudinger denies any analogy of the Lord's Prayer to the Kaddish. The majority of modern Protestant theologians also were inclined to ignore this analogy. It is evident from their expositions, however, that these two principal prayers have played similar parts in the worlds of Jewish and Christian piety. I believe it therefore most desirable to understand also the undeniable essential difference between the two religious attitudes which are here illustrated.

According to Ismar Elbogen (*Der juedische Gottesdienst*, p. 90), the Kaddish as a liturgical prayer is found first about 600 C.E. in the Palestinian treatise Sofrim which is a non-canonical addition to the Babylonian Talmud. The Lord's Prayer, however, is historically of earlier date than its counterpart in the otherwise considerably older religious literature of Judaism. As is well known, it is a prayer which Jesus taught his disciples (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4). But with regard to the spirit of this Christian prayer, its verbal expression as well as its general sense in thought and feeling, could only have arisen on Jewish soil.

1 F. Heiler, *Das Gebet*, 1932, p. 482, 391ff.

2 M. Grunert, *Das Gebet in Islam*, 1911, p. 30.

Even a beginner in Hebrew can translate the Christian prayer into the language of the Jewish Bible without difficulty. From the invocation to the Amen, the Lord's Prayer is filled with allusions to the spirit and the letter of Jewish piety. Although the great Leiden humanist Daniel Heinsius glorifies the use of that most intimate word "Father"³ in the Christian prayer, and Hans Schloeter admires the unique way in which the contrasting terms "Father" and "the Heavens", are there fused into an indissoluble inner unity in a few words,⁴ the same had already been done earlier in the prayer *Avinu Malkenu*.⁵ Why then is there nevertheless such a spiritual and emotional gulf between the *Kaddish* and the Lord's Prayer?

The Lord's Prayer, does not hesitate to include 'Give us this day our daily bread', a demand for sufficient nourishment. In the history of Protestant piety, the interpretation of daily bread as spiritual food, like the Word of God, or the bread of the Eucharist, – an interpretation found in the Fathers of the Church such as Origen, Tertulian, and even in later medieval writers, including the young Martin Luther, has been rejected. Nevertheless, as late as the 18th and 19th centuries, Georg D. Seiler, Immanuel Kant, Heinrich Zschokke, and other Protestant authors, explained the request for bread by implying that it actually was no demand for wealth and abundance, but only a claim for the bare necessity, – "bread for one day only."

Already the majority of Greek Church fathers, among them such leading minds as Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, whose native language was Greek, understood the seldom used term 'bread' to mean real material, and not spiritual bread. Basil even stresses the point that he was not ashamed that the Gospels speak of down to earth

3 Daniel Heinsius, *Sacrae exercitationes ad Novum Testamentum*, 1640, p. 155. "Pater quo nomine nec dulcius nec efficacius quicquam." But the turning to God the "Father" is of course to be found elsewhere in Deuteronomy 32:6; Isaiah 63:16; Jeremiah 3:4 and 19.

4 H. Schloeter, *Vaterunser im Himmelreich*, 1924, p. 24f.

5 I. Elbogen, *ibid.*, p. 147f.

matters. In scholasticism, Thomas Aquinas referring to Augustine and Hieronymus, mentions in this context earthly as well as sacramental food, and in Luther's catechisms (1527), and in Protestant theology of the 19th century in general, the theological commentators rightly reject any reference to "spiritual bread" as artificial interpretation.

The following plea "Forgive us our debts" (trespasses) refers, at least in the concept of the Gospel of Matthew, to material, worldly debts, especially when they are brought into the context of the parable of the unrelenting servant (Matthew 18:29), as done frequently by conservative and progressive commentators (See *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, ed. by Jeh. Weiss, 1906, p. 268).

With regard to the next request in the Lord's Prayer "and lead us not into temptation", the querulous Hermann Cohen is said to have exclaimed in anger: "What kind of demand is this? Man does not wish to be led into temptation? As if we were created for anything else but to resist temptation!" In his main work on religious philosophy, Cohen refused to appeal to God not to lead us into temptation on the ground that God is not Satan who would be capable of such iniquity.⁶ But Cohen concedes at least that we might ask God not to have us exposed to "dangerous attraction."⁷

The Kaddish is entirely free from such specific personal requests. The intimate address "Our Father" in Luke 11:2, or the even greater intimacy in Matthew (6:9) "Our Father which art in heaven," are not to be found in our prayer. The first half of the Kaddish contains an almost ecstatic doxology proclaiming the greatness, the power and the sovereignty of God; exceeding in rapture any hymn of praise and song of glory which could be uttered in God's honor. The attributes, the offering of glory and of reverence are here intentionally multiplied and repeated with intensity. The ear is filled with continuous, almost repetitive exaltations. Why?

6 H. Cohen, *Die Religion der Vernunft aus den Quellen des Judentums*, 1919, p. 452.

7 *Ibid.* p. 452.

Even charitable Christian interpreters have criticized the accumulation of praise and honor of God in the Kaddish. They pointed out a certain likeness with the servile excessiveness in the pagan "witchcraft papyri" which were retained in antiquity up to the time of the Roman Empire. By contrast, the brief simplicity of the Lord's Prayer is stressed, especially in Luke's version, where even the words "kingdom, power and glory" which were taken from I Chronicles (29:11) are omitted. It is my belief, however, that this criticism fails to appreciate the fundamental idea which runs through the Jewish prayer and is in marked contrast to its Christian counterpart.

In the Lord's Prayer the principal emotion lies in humility and submission and is rightly read in a kind of soft and subdued tone. The Kaddish, on the contrary, in spite of its supreme glorification of God, requires a much stronger, powerful and manly attitude and should be recited neither with resigned intonation, nor rapidly without emphasis. Again it may be asked - Why?

In my conviction, the fundamental tendency of the Kaddish is the firm intention to silence all human woes and every narrow human desire and need for consolation before the supreme divine Power. All self-centered grief, the struggles and tumults of man's limited emotions, are submerged, suppressed, and extinguished by the strength of feelings bursting out into a steadily increasing praise and surpassing the preceding expressions of God's power and greatness. God, the Master of the Universe, is high enthroned and transcendent above all human existence.

In pure seniority, this praise of the Divine belongs indisputably to the most moving and solemn words that ever were spoken in any tongue. The ancient Greek may have greater melodious splendor, Italian more magnificent resonance, and Latin a greater precision. But the Aramaic and Hebrew of the Jewish Bible remain the language of the utmost emphasis and highest pathos that mankind has created. It is not by chance that the atheist Nietzsche has used the

style of the Bible when, in prophetic rapture, he wrote his Zarathustra, and that the best translation of this philosophical epic is the Hebrew version by David Frischmann.

The unusual and exceptional quality of the Kaddish prayer which emerged in Judaism during the late period of antiquity, and which is in distinct contrast to the Lord's Prayer, should not be underestimated or softened by us. I consider it as one of the many great intuitive acts of the Jewish religious rites that in the presence of personal afflictions or general misfortune, no words of solace are said, nor any request to be spared further suffering. The Kaddish, the prayer of mourners, paradoxically does not contain a trace of solace for grief, pain or despair. In words both strong and upright, it demands suppression of all such feelings in the acknowledgement of the superhuman greatness of the Divine. It preaches not submissiveness to Fate but to carry inflicted sufferings with the aid of a loud praise of the Source of all existence.

The only plea which appears in Hebrew and Aramaic in the second part of the Kaddish is to be given "Peace", not individually confined peace, but an all-pervasive peace for all. Shalom means much more than peace in the sense of an end of hostility. It means primarily "Wholeness", inviolability, inner harmony. Of this inner adjustment, this kind of peace and life as it is established "in the highest", man needs to have a part both in his most difficult hours as well as in his everyday life. And this pressing desire, the longing for freedom from his own limited cares and suffering, finds a response in the singular mastery and fervor of the Kaddish prayer.

BULRUSH AND BRAMBLE

DAVID WOLFERS

Those readers who have followed previous articles¹ in this series on the Book of Job will have perceived that I have been attempting piecemeal to build up a case for an allegorical interpretation of that book. In particular, they will have noticed from "Is Behemoth also Jewish?" that there is a parallel pair of sets of equivalent terms in the last speech of God centered around the identities of the mysterious antagonistic beasts, Behemoth and Leviathan. Schematically, this may be presented as follows:

Monster:	Behemoth	Leviathan
Person:	Job (? Hezekiah)	Sennacherib
Nation:	Judah	Assyria
River:	Jordan	Nahar
Character:	The Proud	The Wicked
Divine:	First-Fruit of God's Ways	God's Agent to Humble Pride

It will also have been noticed that the *national* equivalents of Behemoth, Leviathan and Nahar in the table are to be found also in the (first) Book of Isaiah.

In this short article, I propose to examine one strange verse in God's second speech to which no reference was made in the earlier article, to wit, verse 40:26. It will not be useful for the non-Hebrew-speaking reader to turn at this point to his favorite translation to ascertain what the verse says, for with no exception the translators of the Bible have rendered these two lines as they individually thought

1 "Is Job after all Jewish?" D. Wolfers, Dor Le Dor, Fall 1985; "Is Behemoth also Jewish?" D. Wolfers, Dor Le Dor, Summer 1986; "Greek Logic in the Book of Job" D. Wolfers, Dor Le Dor, Spring 1987; "Elihu" D. Wolfers, Dor Le Dor, Summer 1987.

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they ought to have been written, not as the author of the Book of Job wrote them. In truth, the real Book of Job is simply not available in translation.

החשים אגמן באפר
ובחח תקב לחיר

As a study in the art of false translation, we may sample what has been made of the verse by successive scholars through the millennia.

Qumran Aramaic Targum (according to Michael Sokoloff):²

Will you place a muzzle on his nose

And will you pierce his jaw with your engraving-tool?

Septuagint:

Or wilt thou fasten a ring in his nostril

And bore his lip with a clasp?

Pope, Gordis, Driver and NEB³ put a cord through his nose and pierce his jaws with a hook, while JPS⁴ has a ring and a hook, AV a hook and a thorn, REV a rope and a hook, NJPSV⁵ a ring and a barb. Tur-Sinai⁶ produces a hook and a bridle-ring. Cox⁷ acknowledges the original by writing of a rush-rope (and a hook), while Renan⁸ actually translates the first stitch almost correctly with "Wilt thou pass a rush through his nostrils?" but makes up for it in the second "Wilt thou pierce his gills with a hook?" (As Renan accepted the identity of Leviathan with the crocodile, these gills are certainly infelicitous.)

2 *The Targum to Job from Qumran Cave XI* M. Sokoloff, Bar-Ilan University, Ahva Press, Jerusalem, 1974.

3 *Job*, M. H. Pope, Doubleday, New York, 1965; *The Book of Job*, R. Gordis, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1978; *A Critical & Exegetical Commentary on The Book of Job*, S. R. Driver & G. B. Gray, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1921; New English Bible.

4 Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955.

5 New Jewish Publication Society Version, 1980.

6 *The Book of Job*, N. H. Tur-Sinai (H. Torczyner). Kiryath Sepher Ltd., Jerusalem, 1967.

7 *Book of Job*, S. Cox. C. Kegan Paul & Co., London, 1880.

8 *Book of Job*, E. Renan, W. M. Thomson, Ludgate Hill, 1859.

It would be tedious to continue ringing the changes. What the Hebrew asks is whether Job (=Behemoth) will put an אגמן in his nose and pierce his jaw with a חרח.

The most direct way to find the meaning of relatively rare words in the Bible is to consult a Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Bible which will not only provide a range of meanings from the scholarly literature, but will also give the root of the word, its relatives in the cognate languages, and all the citations of the word throughout the Bible. Deservedly, the most popular Lexicon is that of Brown, Driver and Briggs.⁹ In the case of אגמן the entry reads:

n(m). rush, bulrush. 1. used as cord or line, Job 40:26 (of twisted rushes or spun of rush-fibre cf. *Di ad loc*) as fuel 41:12; sim. of bending head Is. 58:5. 2. metaph. of lowly, insignif. (כספה) Is. 9:13, 19:15.

We also learn that the root is אגם which usually means pools or marshes, but in Jer. 51:32 also means a swamp-reed or bulrush.

After checking all the references we can reach only one conclusion, that the word אגמן means a reed or rush, and that the sense "cord made from rushes" is no more than an attempt to make sense out of the Job verse by an unjustified and unprecedented extension of the meaning of the word by translators who declined to accept the apparently ridiculous phrase used by the author. Translations which depart yet further — muzzle, ring, hook — are entirely devoid of theoretical justification.

As for חרח, we find that there are two related words — חרח, a bramble or brier, and חח, a hook, ring or fetter. Presumably the latter derived from the former on the basis of the thorns of the brier. Apart from Job 40:26, there is one citation where confusion may have occurred between the two words. This is II Chron. 33:11 where the plural חרחים, but with the vowels appropriate for חרחים, seems to mean "hooks". BDB suggests both this and Job 40:26 as a "late" meaning

⁹ (BDB). *A Hebrew & English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, F. Brown, S. R. Driver, & C. Briggs, Oxford, 1907.

for חרור but the word is used in its regular sense both in II Chr. 25:18 and in Job 31:40, which pretty well rules out this theory. The *correct* plural of חרור is חרורים (S.S. 2:2 and I Sam. 13:6) so that we are obliged to conclude that חרורים in II Chron. is an atypical or misvocalized plural of חרר and that חרור is always a bramble or brier, and the normative meaning of Job 40:26 is:

*Will you put a bulrush through his nose
And pierce his jaw with a bramble?*

Obviously, there are some aspects of this verse which are appropriate, and some which are discordant. A bulrush, shaped as it is like a spear, can be *imagined* driven through a nose; a bramble with its barbs can be *imagined* as piercing a jaw. Reed and bramble, both humble vegetable parts, make an excellent pair, every bit as good as hook and ring. But there is a basic absurdity about the verse, for reed and bramble are in fact wholly unsuitable as weapons for the capture of Leviathan, whether he be crocodile, mythical monster, whale or tiddler.

Is this absurdity evidence of incompetence in the author, or after all I have said, mistranslation or misunderstanding of the Hebrew, or is it intentional and well-directed absurdity?

Is not in fact 40:27 equally absurd?

*Will he make supplications to you?
Or will he speak soft words to you?*

A crocodile! A sea-monster!

And 40:28

*Will he make a covenant with you
That you take him as a servant forever?*

And 40:29

*Will you play with him as with a bird?
And will you bind him for your girls?*

God is jeering at Job-Behemoth-Judah for its folly in attempting to engage in combat with Sennacherib-Leviathan-Assyria, and absurdity is precisely what the author is straining after. Nor is the absurdity in verse 26 irrelevant to its context. It is first of all a skewed quotation of Isaiah 37:29, spoken by God to Sennacherib:

*Therefore will I put my hook (𐤇𐤍) in thy nose
 And my bridle in thy lips
 And I will turn thee back by the way
 By which thou camest.*

The contrast between God's effective metallic implements, hook and bridle, and Job's limp botanical ones serves to heighten the absurdity of the picture; it also serves to recall the challenge immediately preceding the introduction of Behemoth when God asked Job in effect if he possessed the power and authority of God Himself (40:9-14). The effect is one of devastating mockery, far more devastating than those versions which accord Job the same or similar implements to those God declares that He will use. But none of this explains the choice of just these implements as the barbs with which to taunt Job.

Had Judah attempted to defend herself against the Assyrian threat by writing letters of petition to Sennacherib, it would have been appropriate for God to have taunted Job "Will you thrust a pen through his nose and bore his jaw with a quill?" and the allusion behind the ridicule would have been clear. We have to try to understand how it is appropriate for God to taunt Job with a bulrush and a bramble. In fact the flavor of the jibe is identical with the above. If we turn to the description of Behemoth which is God's accusation of Job and the people of Judah, we find in 40:21, 22:

*He prostitutes himself to the trees
 Concealed in reed and fen.
 The lotus-trees screen him as his defence;
 The willows of the brook guard him round about.*

And here finally we find the reason for the specifics of verse 26, the bulrush and bramble derived from the defences of Behemoth, the fens and reeds where he hides himself, the trees which he worships as his fortress — the metaphors with which God had already derided him for the perennial faithlessness of the people of Judah.

The Book of Job is a miraculously constructed organic whole, and interconnections of the kind I have indicated to explain this verse

abound in it. Most particularly I have found that the individual chapters refer back and forth within themselves, each being a unity in which apparently quite separate passages, as the challenge of God to Job, the description of Behemoth, and the taunting of Job with Leviathan, when properly and fully apprehended, fall into a coherent sequence of ideas, progressing and unfolding towards a single logical conclusion. All this is inevitably missed if we take the easy way out of difficulties and anomalies, and rewrite the text to make it run smoothly in accordance with preconceptions which are often far less sophisticated and daring than the author's masterly composition.

The most important lesson to be learned from the bulrush and bramble of Job 40:26 is that the translator of the Bible must render what is written literally and faithfully as it is written, whether he comprehends it or not. This is the principle to which the Masoretes adhered with fanatical pedantry and trust, and it is owing to that unswerving humility that we still have the original Bible to study and admire.

JEREMIAH, A TRAGEDY

Thou Hast Enticed Me, and I Was Enticed

SHIMON BAKON

Three components in the life of Jeremiah combined to make him the most tragic figure among the prophets.

He was born in a time of great turbulence. Assyria, once the scourge of that part of the world, had rapidly declined. Its power was usurped by Babylonia, a new world power, vying with Egypt for supremacy. Judea, beginning with the reign of King Josiah and ending with that of Zedekiah, was trying desperately to find viable political and military solutions, to meet the new threat. Pro-Egyptian and pro-Babylonian parties exerted every effort to influence the king to their way of thinking. Pagan rites and moral corruption were rampant. How Jeremiah reacted to the prevailing conditions, was one of the causes of his tragedy.

With his call to prophecy, while still a youth, he became a man obsessed. He pursued his ministry with undeviating single mindedness for forty years. Totally committed to his call, he embarked on a career of loneliness, derision, and sorrow. His very life was threatened on at least three occasions. His divinely inspired warnings were ignored during his lifetime. It was his fate to witness the destruction of the first Judean Commonwealth in the year 586 B.C.E.

A third factor, contributing to his tragedy, lay in his personality. By nature gentle, introspective, endowed with the gift of poetry more than any other prophet, he found himself in unceasing conflict with kings, priests, princes, and false prophets. Wishing to be left alone, he was caught up in a maelstrom of events he felt compelled to confront. It is difficult to ascertain whether this inclination toward strife was the result of some psychological facet in his personality –

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he called himself a man of strife – or was the consequence of what he conceived to be his prophetic task: to meet and fight against religious, moral, and political corruption. Perhaps the most serious aspect of his personality was his lack of tact. The French have a saying: *c'est le ton qui fait la musique* – it is the tune that makes the music. One can only speculate if Jeremiah would have been more successful in bringing his magnificent message across had he used persuasion rather than harsh language.

At the heart of Jeremiah's tragedy was an inner conflict generated by his complex personality and the 'divine call' which forced upon him the stance of inflexibility. This inner conflict drove him to the point of despair.

HIS INITIATION INTO PROPHECY

The date and the manner of Jeremiah's call to prophecy, as described in the first chapter of the Book of Jeremiah, are relevant to the thrust of our article. It occurred in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign, i.e. approximately in the year 625 B.C.E. It will be recalled that the discovery of the "Book of the Law" by Hilkiah, an event that caused a major movement of reformation by King Josiah, was made in the eighteenth¹ year of Josiah's reign, i.e. in the year 620 B.C.E. By then Jeremiah was already five years in his ministry. Yet, from sources available to us, it is apparent that Jeremiah had no hand in the process of reformation. In fact, it was an obscure prophetess Huldah to whom the king sent to "inquire of the Lord."

Talmudic sages raised the questions:² "But Jeremiah was there, how could she prophesy? How could Josiah pass over Jeremiah and send to her?" Answers given, such as: "She was a relative of Jeremiah, and he did not mind it"; "She was a woman who was tenderhearted" are not satisfactory. In all probability he was so little

1 II Kg. 22:3; II Ch. 34:8.

2 Megilah 14b.

thought of that the king ignored him. Indeed, the Book of Kings, which devotes some chapters to his great predecessor Isaiah and graphically described the last days of the Judean kingdom, does not mention Jeremiah even once.

The manner of Jeremiah's initiation into prophecy, if carefully analyzed, is most significant:

*And the word of the Lord did come unto me saying,
Before I formed you in the belly I knew thee,
And before thou camest out of the womb,
I sanctified thee . . . (1:5)*

We encounter here the unique phenomenon of a prophet designated to be one prenatally, as it were. Jeremiah's response to the divine call: *Ah Lord, behold I cannot speak, I am a child* – נער (1:6) displays, at first sight, the traditional hesitation, shared by some of the great prophets, to accept the burdensome task of prophecy.

God's assurances that follow, uncover layers of profound anxieties on the part of the new initiate: *Be not afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver thee* (1:8). This assurance seems a *non-sequitur* to the concern voiced by Jeremiah. He merely had stated that, as a youth, he cannot speak. What is Jeremiah afraid of? None of the prophets had expressed fear in the execution of divinely imposed tasks. They merely had questioned their own competence, or the willingness of their audience to listen to them. Furthermore, who is meant by "them"? The term נער – may offer a clue: according to Gesenius³ it has the additional meaning of "cast out" (outcast). Is it possible that even at this early junction of his life Jeremiah alienated some Anathothians, who, as we shall see later, sought his life?

At any rate, already at his initiation we discover hidden layers of unexpressed anxieties. It is only in the following passage that we get a deeper insight into Jeremiah's reluctance:

As for me, I have not hastened from being a shepherd after

3 See Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*.

Thee. Neither have I desired the woeful day . . . Thou knowest it . . . (17:16).

Though initially we note only meek reluctance in accepting the call, we now become aware of deep anguish mingled with resentment. Consider the difference between Amos, who boldly asserts *The Lord God hath spoken, Who can but prophesy?* (Amos 3:8) and Jeremiah, who from the start is assailed by fears and inner conflicts.

THE MAN OF SORROW

There is no other prophet who bared his soul as did Jeremiah. In a variety of passages in which he decried his fate, one can discern an open complaint against God who had burdened him with the thankless task of prophecy.

*Why is my pain perpetual and my wound incurable,
So that it refuseth to be healed.
Wilt Thou indeed be unto me as a deceitful brook,
As waters that fail . . . (15:18).*

His anguish reaches a peak in the following heart-rending passage:

*O Lord, Thou hast enticed me, and I was enticed.
Thou hast overcome me, and hath prevailed;
I am become a laughing-stock all the day,
Everyone mocketh me . . . (20:7).*

Here again we note the essential source of Jeremiah's frustration. Ordained from before birth to the exalted position of a prophet, his ministry causes him only derision. His is the classical voice crying in the wilderness, and there is no echo. People do not wish to hear the truth, he is not being taken seriously. So, why then does he not still the "voice"? Jeremiah asks that very same question, and we become aware of that ambivalence we spoke of before:

*And if I say: 'I will not make mention of Him,
Nor speak any more in His name',*

*Then there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
Shut up in my bones
And I weary myself to hold it in, but cannot (20:9).*

From some of the most pathetic self-revelations in the entire Bible, there emerges the portrait of Jeremiah full of dissonant, contrasting features. Cursing the day wherein he was born *to see labour and sorrow that my days should be consumed in shame (20.18)*⁴ he yet braces himself to proclaim fearlessly the word of God. Despairing unto death, he still cannot contain himself.

THE MAN OF STRIFE

As if that were not enough, Jeremiah reveals another characteristic that, without doubt, added to his troubles.

*Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me
A man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth!
(15:10).*

It seems that his first conflict was with his own townspeople, the Anathothians, one that almost cost him his life. Though the nature of the conflict is not recorded, we hear Jeremiah's complaint regarding it.

*But I was like a docile lamb that is led to the slaughter;
And I knew not that they had devised devices against me . . .
. . . let us cut him off from the land of the living,
That his name may not be remembered (11:19).*

We are informed about his being reassured

*Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the men of
Anathoth that seek thy life, saying: 'Thou shalt not
prophesy in the name of the Lord, that thou die not by our
hand' . . . Behold, I will punish them . . . (11:21, 22).*

In all probability the clash with the men of Anathoth occurred early in his career, for he first prophesied in his home town. When

4 Chapter 20, verses 14-18 should be read in their entirety.

this ended in near-disaster, God ordered him to *stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah which come to worship in the Lord's house* (26:2).

JEREMIAH ON TRIAL

In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim (circa 609 B.C.E.), Jeremiah found himself again in serious trouble when he announced publicly in the court of the Temple: *Then will I make this house like Shiloh* (26:6). On hearing these words *the priests and the prophets and all the people laid hold of him saying: 'Thou shalt surely die'* (26:8). He was put on trial, with "the princes of Judah" sitting in judgment in the "entry of the new gate of the Lord's house." The priests and prophets – in all probability the obsequious court-prophets – initiated these proceedings against Jeremiah, who pleaded that God had sent him to prophesy against this house. Totally resigned he said: *As for me . . . I am in your hands; do with me as is good and right in your eyes* (26:14). Strangely, it was the "princes" who took his side, using Micah, the Morashtite, who had prophesied in the days of King Hezekiah, as a case in point, for when he said:

*. . . Zion shall be plowed as a field,
And Jerusalem shall become a heaps,
And the mountain of the house
as the high places of the forest* (26:18)⁵

Hezekiah did not punish him: on the contrary, the people of Judah repented and were spared from the evil edict.

However, those who called for Jeremiah's death, based their argument on a certain Uriah, who also prophesied against the city, and King Jehoiakim himself sought to put him to death. Uriah, aware of the king's intent, fled to Egypt, but the fury of the king was so great that he sent emissaries to Egypt, had him extradited and executed.

5 This is an almost verbatim quotation of Micah 3:12.

At the end of Jeremiah's trial, the *hand of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah* (26:24),⁶ and the prophet was acquitted and saved from certain death.

JEHOIAKIM BURNS HIS BOOK

Undeterred by his harrowing experience, Jeremiah remained true to his calling and when he saw the abominations in the Tofeth, that is the Valley of Hinnom, he went to the Temple and prophesied about the dire consequences of these evil practices. There he was confronted by Pashhur, chief officer of the Temple, who struck him and put him in the *stocks* – *מהפכת*.⁷ When he was finally released, Jeremiah was forbidden access to the Temple, and certainly could not preach there.

In the fourth year of Jehoiakim's rule, Jeremiah was directed by God: *Take thee a roll of book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel* (36:2), in order for Israel to repent. Since Jeremiah could not prophesy in the court of the Temple anymore, he requested Baruch, son of Neheriah⁸ to go to the "Lord's house" on a fast-day and to read there from the roll which he had dictated to him over a period of a year's time. The date of this public reading is recorded, and it took place in the ninth month of the fifth year of Jehoiakim's reign. It created a major stir among the people, reminiscent of the finding of the "book of the Law" by Hilkiah in the days of King Josiah: only Jehoiakim was no Josiah. Incensed by its contents, he personally cut it with a knife and cast its pieces into the fire, ordering the arrest of both Jeremiah and Baruch. Both evaded the severe punishment that was in store for them, as Scripture briefly states: *but the Lord hid them* (36:26).

6 This Ahikam is also mentioned in II Kg. 22:12, as one of the men sent by Josiah to consult the prophetess Huldah in regard to his campaign against Egypt.

7 The Hebrew term *מהפכת* indicates "contortion." It was a wooden frame in which feet, hands and neck of the convicted person were so fastened that his body remained in a painfully cramped position.

8 Jeremiah's relationship to his disciple Baruch is perhaps one of the few bright spots in the troubled career of the prophet.

ACCUSED OF TREASON AND SEDITION

Though King Zedekiah, who followed soon after Jehoiakim in the year 597, was not ill-disposed toward Jeremiah, the situation of the prophet worsened. Jeremiah, who from the start of his ministry had envisioned a major threat from the north, now advised full submission to Nebuchadnezzar. In the year 587, one year before the final disaster, Jeremiah, by then in his sixties, having served and suffered as the prophetic conscience of the people for forty years, was apprehended and arrested on the charge that *thou fallest away to the Chaldeans* (37:13). Charged with treason, the princes "smote" him and put him into the dungeon-house *בית הבור* of a certain Jonathan, the scribe.⁹ Zedekiah, upon learning of the arrest, sent secretly for Jeremiah to inquire "is there any word from the Lord", whereupon the prophet begged the king not to have him returned to the dungeon lest he die there, and Zedekiah granted his request. He was committed to the "court of the guards" instead, receiving a daily ration of bread "until all the bread in the city was spent."

THE LOWEST POINT OF HIS CAREER

There were a few princes – the book of Jeremiah names four – who were dissatisfied with the king's soft treatment of him, and charged Jeremiah with sedition: *Let this man . . . be put to death; forasmuch as he weakeneth the hands of the men of war* (38:4). Zedekiah, revealing an astonishing weakness, responded: *He is in your hand; for the king is not he that can do any thing against you* (38:5).

During the reign of Jehoiakim, it was the priests and prophets who wanted Jeremiah's death, while the princes sought his exoneration. Here we encounter a reversal, which can be understood if the nature of the latter accusation is considered. Here he is charged with a political-military crime, not mere predictions by a prophet who was

⁹ The term *הכה* "smiting" does not make clear whether he received "stripes" or was merely beaten.

not taken too seriously in the first place. At any rate, he was lowered by cords into a pit, and *Jeremiah sank in the mire*, left there to starve to death.

An Ethiopian, Ebed-melech, pleaded with the king for the prophet's life, and it is to Zedekiah's credit that he authorized him to rescue Jeremiah. In fact, the king again secretly consulted the prophet, who turned to him in a final appeal:

Thus saith the Lord . . . if thou wilt go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, thou and thy house (38:17).

That King Zedekiah did not, or was not able to heed Jeremiah's advice, had dire consequences. Zedekiah was blinded and his sons slain in his presence. Jerusalem was conquered, the Temple plundered, many leaders executed, and the elite of Jerusalem's population dragged into exile.

THE HEIGHT OF TRAGIC IRONY

Among the captives was Jeremiah, "bound in chains." A certain Babylonian captain of the guard, knowing that Nebuchadnezzar himself had given orders to "look well to him" (39:12) freed him and gave him the option to come to Babylonia, there to be treated royally, or to stay with Gedaliah, who had just been appointed governor of Judea. Jeremiah chose to remain in Jerusalem. However, his cup of suffering was not yet filled to the brim, for by some twist of tragic irony, he wound up in Egypt.

After the assassination of Gedaliah – whose death is still observed on the 3rd of Tishri to this day, Ishmael, son of Nathaniel, the moving spirit behind the assassination, initiated a senseless massacre of innocent people, which was stopped only by the intervention of a group of army leaders, headed by Johanan. They also freed the prisoners, including, in all probability, Jeremiah. Fearful, lest the fury of Nebuchadnezzar be loosened against them, they prepared to flee to Egypt, but prior to their departure asked the

prophet to *pray for us unto the Lord . . . that the Lord may tell us the way wherein we should walk* (42:2-3). Jeremiah had to wait ten days before the word of the Lord came to him: *If ye will still abide in this land, then I will build you* (42:10), *Be not afraid of the king of Babylon* (42:11).

Surprisingly, the very people who had approached Jeremiah for divine intercession, now accused him of speaking falsely, and both he and Baruch were dragged by them to Tahpanhes, Egypt. Even there he did not cease his ministry, though his end is shrouded in darkness. We do not know how old he was when he died, nor where he was buried. He died a lonely man, forbidden by divine decree to marry, misunderstood by his own people.

His choosing to stay in Jerusalem, and his words of counsel to the army leaders, strongly indicate where he stood in the internecine struggle within Judea, that eventually brought about its downfall. He was neither pro-Egyptian nor pro-Babylonian, but primarily concerned with the integrity of his people, its religion and morality, and of Jerusalem. As a matter of practical politics envisioned as a message from God he counselled submission to Nebuchadnezzar.

Those scholars who present him as a great statesman are as wrong as those who portray him as a man following his "conscience". He was the quintessential prophet who lived and acted in the certainty, once expressed by Amos (3:7):

*For the Lord . . . will do nothing, but He revealeth His counsel - unto His servants the prophets*¹⁰

It is that certainty of standing in the Lord's council, that made him prophesy, from the start, that the danger to Judea will come from the north, and which made him counsel, repeatedly under threat to his life, unconditional submission to Nebuchadnezzar.

It was this prophecy, as well as the one that predicted redemption seventy years later, plus his mournful pleading for true religion and moral rectitude, that made him one of the immortals in history.

¹⁰ Jeremiah reflects this sentiment when, attacking false prophets, he asks ironically: *For who hath stood in the council of the Lord* (23:18).

THE BOOK OF ESTHER - SOME QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

JOSHUA J. ADLER

This year, in preparation for the reading of the Megillah (Book of Esther) on Purim, I decided to make a list of questions I had about this biblical book from previous years and to try to think of or find some new as well as old answers. One new question which came to mind and which I had never asked myself earlier was why Ahasuerus waited so long to make a big party for the nobles and officials after he had already been king for three years? Or why he later decided to open up the festivities to the lower classes as well.

The ancient rabbinic sages already had their theories about this with some suggesting that Ahasuerus was a usurper who declared himself king but was not recognized as such by the 127 states of the empire till three years later. This huge celebration, therefore, may have served as a substitute for the more usual coronation ceremony and accompanying revelries. After struggling and finally winning the throne, Ahasuerus sought first to gain the support of the noblemen by making a party which lasted 180 days and later opening up the celebration to the masses by inviting all the citizens of Shushan.

A second question is not a new one but may be discussed again. Why did Vashti refuse to obey her husband's order to appear at the big celebration? The fact that it was an order rather than a request may have been one reason. Other suggestions given by the sages are, that the very demand that she display herself in public either dressed or naked and in front of a group of intoxicated revellers was a flagrant violation of the modest traditions of Persia. Others think

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that Vashti simply was not feeling well or had some kind of scab on her face which did not flatter her that day. Then of course there were commentators who pointed out that without Vashti's refusal we would have no story and that this was the first example of how God works behind the scenes, which seems to be the basic teaching of the entire book since God's name is never even mentioned once.

A third question involves the king's character and personality. Was he intelligent and suitable for kingship? Was he venal, evil or irresponsible? What were his true feelings about Jews? As usual the sages have different opinions about Ahasuerus with some praising him and others considering him not only stupid but evil. He wins the praise of some rabbis not only for turning out not to be such a bad man in the end but also for not deciding the fate of Vashti in his anger but leaving it up to his council of wisemen to reach a more objective decision. However, others see in his call for a special meeting to deal with the problem of Vashti a sign of his incompetence and lack of ability to make decisions on his own. And then there are those who feel Ahasuerus was no less wicked and evil than Haman because he agreed to the wholesale extermination of a people without even checking into their identity and the truth of Haman's charges against them. Furthermore, the king agrees to this genocide of an unknown people, and to show that he is not interested in money he even refuses to accept Haman's bribe offer "Keep your money and do with them what you like" (3:11). We never do learn his true feelings about the Jews since whatever Ahasuerus does to help them later is only due to his hatred of Haman and his positive attitude toward Mordecai and Esther.

A fourth question concerns the problem of Mordecai's refusal to bow down to Haman inasmuch as there are many examples in Scriptures of Hebrews bowing down to another human being as a sign of honor and respect such as we find with Abraham (Gen. 23:7) and Jacob (Gen. 33:3). One answer is that Mordecai did not bow down because Haman may have been wearing some kind of idol round his neck. Others think that Mordecai did not bow to Haman

because of some old feud between them. A third view holds that Mordecai who had saved the king's life by revealing a plot against Ahasuerus considered himself to be exempt from paying homage to one of the king's underlings. And then there are interpreters who take the long historical view and see in this antagonism between Haman, the Agagite descendant from the hated tribe of Amalek, and Mordecai from the tribe of Benjamin, descendant of King Saul, the continuation of the unfinished struggle between these two nations. We might recall that King Saul, the Benjamite, failed to annihilate the tribe of Amalek when ordered to do so by God (I Sam. 15). In the Talmud one of the sages remarks: "Had Saul annihilated Amalek and its king Agag, Haman would never have been born" (Megilla 13a).

A fifth question is why did Mordecai not want Esther to reveal her origins to anyone in the palace and not even to the king? Rabbinic sources suggest various answers. One is that if everyone knew she was Jewish and a descendant of King Saul she would be given special treatment either for ill or even for good, something which Mordecai did not want for Esther. Perhaps a better answer might be that as a woman of mystery she would be more attractive and a more formidable competitor than if everyone knew about Esther's background. This may also explain why the king's servant Hegai was also drawn to her more than to her rivals in the beauty competition. We can also imagine the king's interest being aroused in Esther and her coyly postponing his importunings to reveal her origins and he hoping that at their next meeting she would finally give in and tell him. Perhaps this is why Ahasuerus always stretched out his scepter whenever Esther wanted to see him and why he unhesitatingly accepted invitations to attend her parties. Not only her good looks but the mysterious aura around this woman was what mostly attracted the king. Then, there is the theory that the very fact that Esther had no group pushing for her "election" as queen helped the king decide on an unknown candidate without national affiliations rather than risk alienating the various delegations

from the 127 states of his empire who were lobbying for their "favorite daughter" to be installed in the palace at Shushan. (There are those who believe that this was also David's intent when he set up his capital in the former Jebusite city which belonged to no single tribe rather than in a town controlled by one of the twelve tribes of Israel). Of course one could make out a good case for the opposite view, that Esther did everything possible *not* to be chosen as the new queen by not asking for any special clothing or jewelry for her first meeting with King Ahasuerus. By ordering Esther not to reveal her identity Mordecai may have thought that this would influence the king *not* to choose her. As a Jewish uncle he may not at all have been interested that Esther become the wife of a Gentile king, and thought that this was the best tactic to use in order to achieve her release. It is apparent that the girls for the contest were rounded up or drafted and were not only *bona fide* volunteers. This is how the sages explain why Esther "entered" the competition in the first place. My last answer to the question why Esther did not reveal her nationality is based on the fact that the story-teller needed this secret for the surprise denouement of Haman and the revelation of his plot against her people. Perhaps this literary device is the essential element in the story which gives it so much charm and excitement.

A sixth question which any careful reader should pick up is the statement that after choosing Esther and making a coronation party for her, we read that there was a second gathering of virgins (2:19). Why was this necessary after the king already made his choice? Some feel it was a way of keeping the girls who were not chosen happy by getting at least one night to be with the king as a kind of consolation prize. Another explanation was suggested by Avshalom Kor, a popular Israeli Hebrew linguist, who observed that as in all bureaucracies the one in ancient Shushan simply claimed that it did not get the official word to close down the queen choosing program and so kept it and their jobs going for another few months.

A seventh question is why did Esther invite the king and only Haman to her party? It seems that her plan was to make the king

jealous and get him to think that she and Haman were having an "affair." This is why after her first party she invited Haman again. All this was to make Ahasuerus jealous and eventually get him to get rid of Haman. Some think that her strategy had worked already after the first party and that may have been the reason why the king could not sleep that night and why he was so curt with Haman when he showed up early in the morning at the king's court. Ahasuerus then did not even bother to greet Haman or ask him what brought him out so early. The king only asked Haman's advice about how to honor a man who did him a big favor. And his choice of Haman and none of his other officials or servants to do the "honors" for Mordecai may suggest that he already suspected Haman of being a secret paramour to Esther. Later, at the second party when Ahasuerus sees Haman falling over Esther his earlier suspicions are confirmed and he orders Haman's execution.

Though the story does not end here, from this point on the reader is optimistic that somehow the Jews of the Persian empire will be saved from their cruel fate, with Mordecai and Esther working openly with the blessing of King Ahasuerus and with God helping them from behind the scenes.



TEHILLIM – THE PSALMS

ROBERT CHERNOFF

תהלים – Tehillim means psalms or songs of praise. The Psalms are divided into five books, in imitation of the Torah. Book I consists of psalms 1 through 41. Book II is made up of psalms 42 through 72. Book III involves psalms 73 to 89. Book IV is comprised of psalms 90 through 106. And Book V consists of psalms 107 through 150.

As we read Tehillim, we become increasingly aware that the Psalms are a “collection of a collection”. The following terms should be noted as psalm designators:

Shir (song) is noted 30 times.

Mizmor (religious psalm) is noted 57 times, of which 13 are associated with Shir.

Mikhtam (something highly valued), 6 times.

Maskil (instructive or meditative) 13 times.

Tefillah (prayer) 5 times.

Tehillah (praise) only once.

There is a similarity between the cultic songs, hymns of praise and atonement of ancient Egypt and Babylonia and the Psalms. The bulk of the Psalms seem to indicate a Palestinian setting in the time of Ezra, thus imputing an important connection to the Temple and its ritual, the teaching of the Torah and to ethical monotheism. The original reason for the Psalms was to provide a common prayer book for use in the Temple and the outlying early synagogues of the Holy Land, for the purpose of a semblance of uniformity.

The third portion of the Bible, known as the hagiographa, opens with Psalms, which is the longest and the most important book of this section. Among the Sacred Writings, it is sometimes called the זמירות ישראל (Songs of Israel). It is different from the other books of

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the Bible in that it is **not narrative** or a story. Nor is it a composition most commonly attributed to a single author; although tradition has it that the Psalms were **written by King David**. The fact is, that the Psalms were over a thousand years in the making and were finally completed *circa* 142 B.C.E.

It has been well said that in **all the sacred writings**, God speaks to man; in the Psalms, man speaks to God.

100 psalms have a person's name in the superscription or in the title. Thus, David is mentioned in 73 psalms, Moses in one psalm (90), Solomon is mentioned in two (72 and 127), the sons of Korah in eleven psalms and Asaph in twelve psalms. A point should be made here that Asaph was a levite, a son of Berechiah, one of the leaders of David's choir. In later times Asaph was recognized as a seer and a musical composer. He (Asaph) may well have been the founder of the school of poets and composers who were called, after him, "Sons of Asaph."

It should also be noted that Asaph is mentioned several times in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and in I, II Chronicles. Heman is mentioned in Psalm 88; and Ethan in Psalm 89. Heman, son of Joel and a grandson of Samuel the Prophet was called a "singer" and not a "musician", as is stated in I Chronicles, 6:18. He (Heman) was the levite to whom was committed the vocal and instrumental music of the service in the time of King David. Heman and Ethan were the "cymbalists" referred to in I Chronicles, 15:19, wherein it is stated, *So the singers, Heman, Asaph and Ethan were appointed with cymbals of brass to sound aloud.*

Sixteen psalms do not have any names in the heading; whereas 34 psalms have no heading at all. A source for the number of psalms is to be found in the Jerusalem Talmud, wherein it is stated: "Meah v'arbaim v'shivah mizmorot shekatuv b'Tillim, kneged shnotav shel avinu Yaacov" – there are 147 psalms corresponding to the 147 years of the life of Jacob our father. This number is obtained by combining psalms 1 and 2, 9 and 10, 114 and 115. In the conflagration of the Temple, many holy scrolls were burned and

otherwise lost; but, according to a tradition, many of the "Songs of God" (Psalms) were saved, and they were kept in the hands of the priests and the leaders of the people who brought them into the Diaspora.

There are two main categories of the Psalms. One is liturgical and the other is individual. The liturgical psalms were sung or recited during the processions to the Holy Sanctuary. For example, Psalm 118 was chanted at the Temple gates and Psalm 24 during the sacrifices; and much later, in the synagogues. Because these liturgies were intended for popular use, they are simple. The liturgical psalms reflect a view of Israel's religion based upon ethical monotheism.

The individual psalms on the other hand are, in an important sense, the glory of the Psalms. The poverty-stricken, the wealthy, and the wise portray their contriteness and their hope for God's support.

There is no one central theme in the Psalms. It is varied in theme as is the gamut of human emotions and experiences. There are joyous and grief-laden psalms. There are processional psalms and there are devotional psalms. There are psalms expressing fear and confidence, uncertainty and assurance as well as hope and despair. Some are tender as a mother's lullaby. Others reflect the bitterness of the imprisoned and the rage of deeply wounded exiles in the Diaspora.

Every mood is represented and reflected in the Psalms. They contain petitions, offer thanksgiving and praise. The Bishop of Worcester in his treatise *Book by Book* (London, England 1894) writes: "The words are the words we want, they are written for us . . . all is real here." The fact is that they are as fresh today as they were thousands of years ago.

The Psalms had a tremendous influence upon the Jew, both individually and communally. In the course of the week, either before or after a religious service, psalms were read, becoming for each Jew a spiritual treasure. On every occasion of life — in

sickness, danger, on building a house, at birth, death or celebration, appropriate psalms are read.

Liturgical psalms are part of the morning service, Ashrei (145) in the Mincha (afternoon service), and every Amidah is introduced by a verse from the Psalms, i.e. *ה' שפתי תפתח ופי יגיד תהלתך*, *O Lord open Thou my lips and my mouth shall declare Thy praise* (51:17), and practically closes with another, i.e. *יהי לרצון אמרי פי והגיון לבי לפניך*, *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before Thee, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer* (19:15). We also have the psalms of the Hallel as well as those recited at the Passover Seder; and even for the ritual involving the return of the scroll of the Torah to the ark. Funerals and memorial services use the 23rd Psalm and the 91st Psalm.

But this is true not only for the Jews, since the Church has incorporated many psalms in its standard liturgies. Indeed, the Book of Psalms has become the universal heritage of all mankind, an eternal torch of inspiration for all creeds in all ages.

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HEZEKIAH'S SECOND PASSOVER

SCHNEIR LEVIN

The first Passover took place by the light of the full moon on the 14th-15th day of the month of Nisan, as Israelites swarmed eastward out of the land of Egypt. This momentous liberation from slavery was recalled and celebrated again under Joshua (5:10, 11).

Thereafter silence.

We hear nothing further about Passover during the period of the Judges and the rule of David and Solomon and the several kings of Israel-Ephraim and of Judea until the advent of the virtuous King Hezekiah of Judea who reigned at about the same time that Isaiah the prophet spoke his eloquent words.

According to Josephus (*Antiquities* 9; 13:2, 3) the festival hadn't been celebrated – at least not in a memorable manner – before the advent of Hezekiah. The king evidently made up for lost time and organized festivities on an unprecedented and lavish scale (*II Chr.* 30:5f). Royal couriers with formal invitations went south through Judea and north through Ephraim-Samaria and, both according to the account in *Chronicles* and in Josephus, pilgrims came from these areas, including from the areas of Zebulun and Issachar in the north, to join Judeans in celebrating Passover.

The northern pilgrims were certainly notable because that year was about 700 B.C.E. Twenty years earlier the kingdom of Samaria-Ephraim in the north had been devastated by the Assyrian army and the ten tribes driven into captivity. Evidently there were enough of

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the northern tribes left to come to Jerusalem and its Temple for the Passover.

But there was an extraordinary anomaly in relation to the timing of the festivities, mentioned in the Book of Chronicles but passed over in silence by Josephus. It wasn't celebrated in the month of Nisan but in the next month Iyyar. Why? Because, according to the text *not enough priests had consecrated themselves and the people had not assembled in Jerusalem* (II Chr. 30:3).

Can this really be? Had the priests been in contact with corpses perhaps (cf. Num. 9:9f), or forgotten to hallow themselves in time, and had the people also forgotten that Passover was in the month of Nisan? After all, Hezekiah's grandson Josiah, who reigned some 75 years later arranged an authentic Passover celebration (II Kg. 23:21-23; II Chr. 35:1f). Josiah was also especially virtuous and was compared with Moses (II Kg. 23:4-6 in relation to Ex. 32:19f and II Kg. 23:25 in relation to Deut. 34:10).

Was the problem a legacy of the Assyrian rampage in Samaria in 721 B.C.E.? Was Hezekiah waiting for the tardy escapees from bondage — a second mini-Exodus from Nineveh in Assyria? Or did he wait for refugees among the remnants of Manasseh, Zebulun, Asher and elsewhere to agree to come to the Jerusalem Temple? Did the king have to delay Passover because of events beyond his control?

It seems that his reason was political and a shrewd move to reunite the two kingdoms sundered two centuries earlier. After the death of Solomon, Rehoboam reigned in Judea and Jeroboam in Israel-Ephraim. At his accession, about 930 B.C.E., Jeroboam reasoned that his kingdom could revert to Judea and be taken over by Rehoboam if his northerners partook in sacrifices and religious festivities (I Kg. 12:26f).

In order to forestall a coup by disaffected (see v. 27) northerners he made two golden bull-calves (no doubt recalling the Apis bull-calf of the Egyptians) for worship, situating one in Bethel near Judea, and

the other in Dan in the far north, and he arbitrarily appointed non-levitical priests to administer to the religious needs of his people.

More than this, he instituted a festival of sacrifice in Bethel, 12 miles north of Jerusalem, *on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, a month of his own choosing . . . and went up to the altar to make offerings.* (I Kg. 12:32, 33). When was the eighth month? Since by this time the autumn New Year, in Tishri, could have been operational, the eighth month would be the one after Nisan, namely Iyyar. Perhaps it was a deliberately late Passover "like the festival held in Judah" (v. 32) bearing in mind that the golden bull-calves he had set up were stated to be the gods who brought them out of Egypt (v. 28).

Clearly Hezekiah knew something of the ritual festivities in the north. Perhaps the times didn't correspond with those current in Judea, especially in view of the fact that originally Jeroboam had chosen an arbitrary festival date. In order to accommodate northern religious sensibilities and to coordinate northern with southern celebrations, Hezekiah might deliberately have delayed arrangements for Passover festivities, and especially if he also anticipated the late arrival of some returnees from Assyrian captivity. It was a shrewd political move, an effort at rapprochement, and it received some positive response from the north and resulted in a measure of reunification of the long sundered northern and southern tribes.

His diplomatic skill is further illustrated in the name of his son, Manasseh, who was to reign after him. Such a northern name was surely no accidental choice, but carefully thought out beforehand. Furthermore, Manasseh must have been well-trained by his father and advisors for, even more than his father, he bent over backwards to accommodate the remnants of the northern tribes. So much so, that he is castigated as paganish and evil (II Kg 21:1f, 23:26), a *post hoc* judgment invoked to explain the later destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. and the exile of Judaites to Babylon. We can understand the opinion of the writer on the supposed evil of Manasseh, but

he was probably a very capable and popular king, with nary a single attempt at assassination during the 55 years he sat on the throne (II Kg. 21:1).

Other festivals, Shavuot (Pentecost) and Succot (Tabernacles) are not duplicated; only Passover, because of the exigencies of the times of King Hezekiah.

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THE SONG OF SONGS

THE BIBLE'S CELEBRATION OF LOVE

YAAKOV THOMPSON

The Song of Songs is quite a short composition when compared to many other biblical books. Its eight chapters can be read quickly but to understand these verses filled with images of plants, animals, and a young couple in love can take a lifetime! The complexity of this small book can be sensed by an awareness of the incredible amount of commentary and exposition that it has generated.¹ The question that we should consider, however, is whether this expository literature has brought us closer to the text or, rather, estranged us from the immediate beauty and meaning found in our first reading, a reading not mediated by the traditions of exegesis.

The result of exegesis, the bringing forth of meaning from a text, should lead to a fuller and more exact understanding of Scripture. In the case of the Song of Songs the mainstay of commentaries has been an enterprise of exegesis, a reading of meaning into the text. For both the Jewish and Christian traditions that reading has been the allegorizing of the text. More than this, we might even speak of the creation of a counter-text. The Song of Songs has been read as allegory and thus became a statement of the community faith of the exegete.²

1 On the history of the exegesis of the Song of Songs, cf. the introductory essay in M. H. Pope, *The Song of Songs: A New Translation* (Garden City, 1977). Although Pope's material is rich and varied, the reader must make careful use of the material. In this context see, for example, the review of J. Sasson, "On M. H. Pope's Song of Songs," *Maarav* 1:2, 1979.

2 G. D. Cohen, "The Song of Songs and Jewish Religious Mentality," in *The Samuel Friedland Lectures 1960-1966* (New York, 1966).

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In the Jewish tradition the allegorical interpretation became authoritative as early as the generation of Rabbi Akiba (first century C.E.) and from that time until the nineteenth century the "official" meaning of the text was its allegorical interpretation. The love so humanly portrayed in the Song of Songs was explained as the love between God and the people of Israel. There was not a single passage, despite the sensual or erotic surface imagery, that could not be "interpreted" allegorically. Christian interpretation also followed the same path of allegory and the love motif of the text was transformed to depict the love between Savior and Church.³

What was shared by both faiths was a denial of the literal textual meaning of the Song of Songs and, I believe, a general embarrassment and confusion on the part of exegetes concerning the canonical standards of the Bible. After all, if the Song of Songs was only love poetry, what was it doing in the Bible? The only possible answer was that the text was included for the purpose of allegorization. With the passing of each generation, text and interpretation became more firmly bound together and more difficult to separate.

However, it is interesting to discover some early attempts by Jewish commentators to return to the text. Back in the twelfth century there were some exegetes who explained that the true theme of the Song of Songs was love, desire, and the pain of separation.⁴ Likewise, as early as Theodore of Mopsuestia (fourth century C.E.) we find Christian commentators who recognized the true subject of the book.⁵ In the Jewish tradition such voices went unheard because of the accepted fashion of those who continued to teach ever new and more complex schemes of allegory concerning the text, while the Christian tradition labelled the literal interpretations heretical.

3 Pope, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-132.

4 See, for example, the commentary of Samuel ben Meir (Rashbam) in Y. Thompson, *The Commentary of Samuel ben Meir on the Song of Songs* (Ann Arbor, 1989). Much can also be found in the commentary of the Malbim on the Song of Songs. This commentary has been studied very little but offers an excellent multi-layered approach to the text.

5 Pope, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

Biblical scholarship is not against the allegorizing of the text: this method of interpretation has done much to enrich the religious understanding and vocabulary of both Judaism and Christianity. But one can nonetheless be opposed to any reading that denies the validity of the primary, textual meaning (and message) of the text. If the allegory can provide a paradigm that enriches our understanding of both the human and the religious experience, should we not allow the text itself to do so as well?

Let us recognize the Song of Songs as love poetry.⁶ It is from this recognition that we can build exegetical statements that can include both the meaning of the primary reading and the exegesis that is necessary for today's reader of the Bible. Let us address the canonical question: What is love poetry doing in the Bible? The question is not rhetorical but calls for an answer that is as serious as the question. Such an answer is needed today when the value of love as a human virtue seems to be tragically divorced from our source of ultimate values, the Bible.

The following comments are made from the perspective of the Jewish tradition but they may be found to be just as applicable and meaningful to readers familiar with the Christian tradition.

What is it that we expect to find in the Bible, and why? Many readers expect to find in the Bible statements that concern only God or so called "religious things." That is to say, that the reader expects to find only some type of obscure statement of the divine will that is far removed from his or her own life. Such an assumption may be made by the reader regardless of his own religious disposition. The only difference being that the "believing" reader may be more committed to discovering the biblical message than the reader who views the Bible as but one of many ancient classics that are, at best, of antiquarian interest. Such an approach to the Bible betrays a

6 On the Song of Songs as an expression of a very ancient genre of love poetry see the following: F. Landy, *Paradoxes of Paradise: Identity and Difference in the Song of Songs* (Sheffield, 1983) and M. Fox, *The Song of Songs and the Ancient Egyptian Love Poetry*, (Madison, 1985).

basic misunderstanding. The Bible must be read for what it adds to the reader's whole life. In this sense the Bible is anthropocentric not theocentric. The Bible addresses life in its totality, in every sphere of activity and the text continues to inspire because there is nothing that is beyond or outside of its concern. The Bible speaks to us at every moment because there are no separate realms of the profane and the holy: there is only life in its totality. If religious experience is to touch and inform every aspect of our lives it is necessary that the source of that experience do so as well. The Bible may teach us how to speak of God but it must also teach us what it means to be fully human.

This consideration is relevant to any examination of the Song of Songs since the portrayal of love in this book is a reminder that love is the common experience that makes us human. It is love that binds parent to child and creates the possibility for nurturing and growth. It is love that binds a man and a woman to each other and makes them partners for life. It is only through their loving union that they become partners with God in the process of salvation and actualize the full potential of creation. To speak of the sanctity of love is not a metaphor but an assertion about the meaning and value of loving. If love is such a crucial part of our lives we should not be surprised to find it celebrated within the pages of the Bible.

The text of the Song of Songs illustrates that the Bible does address our most human experiences, love included. Today when so many people seem to struggle for the discovery of love it would be appropriate to recognize that the totality of all those feelings that we call love, from the most physical to the most spiritual, can be appreciated, incorporated, and transformed by the perceptions of the biblical writers. If it seems hard to understand a Bible that includes love poetry, it would be impossible to understand a Bible that would exclude it.

The label of love, like that of religion itself, can be a facade that conceals the worst of the human spirit. But love can also be a window that reveals exactly what it is that makes mankind but

“only a little lower than the angels.” For this reason the serious reader of the Bible can hear within the Song of Songs not a discordant note but one movement of the great symphony that is heard anew in each generation. If the Song of Songs is only love poetry so be it. What more could we ask?

THREE WOMEN

Continued from page 205

(5:12), Rashi comments that because of her pride, her prophetic spirit is momentarily lost. She also loses points for sending a message to Barak to call him to battle: “She should have gone herself” (BT Meg. 14b). “There are two arrogant women in the Torah, (Hulda is the other one) and their names (Devorah means bee) are irritating too” the Rabbis stated.

The story of Deborah, brings three role models for women. Deborah is wholly unfeminine in her mission and behavior. Jael is all woman, but breaks out of the tent to seal Israel’s victory, righteously if somewhat gruesomely. Sisera’s mother, properly feminine, is on the wrong side in this story.

THREE WOMEN

ANDREA COHEN-KIENER

The story of Deborah the prophetess, told in the Book of Judges, is a terse and intriguing tale with relevant lessons about the feminine ideal. The story is actually told twice, in prose (Judges 4:4-24) and again in grand and apparently ancient poetic form comprising chapter 5. There are three women who play roles in the story of this judge: Deborah, Jael and the mother of Sisera.

Israel was plagued at the time by a consortium of Canaanite natives, led by Jabin, king of Canaan and his commander Sisera. Deborah is named as woman (or wife) of Lapidoth, giving us either a clue to her husband's name or to her trade. Lapidoth, or torches, is explained as a reference to Barak, the eventual military leader of the Israelites (his name means lightning). Others infer that she spun wicks for the light in the Tent of Meeting (Rashi on Judges 4:4).

Deborah is wholly remarkable. She is a judge who actually judged, unlike most of her colleagues. Her actions are everything one would expect from a person with a divine mission. She prophesies, dispenses judicial rulings, calls, leads and speaks in the name of God. Scant attention is called to her femininity until Barak hesitates to go into battle without her. She predicts, correctly, that he will be victorious but that the credit will not be his. Rather *into the hand of a woman God will give over Sisera* (4:9).

The battle is engaged and proceeds as Deborah has foreseen: Sisera, the sole survivor, escapes on foot. He approaches the tent of Heber the Kenite, a distant relative of Moses who has made a truce with the Canaanite league. Sisera thinks he is safe. Heber's name means ally or friend; an ambiguous friend in the end. Sisera is

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greeted by Jael, Heber's wife. Jael welcomes, invites, comforts and covers Sisera. She coos to him *Turn aside, lord, turn aside unto me. Fear not . . .* When he asks for some water, she opens her flask of milk. She sates him and covers him again. Her use of purely feminine wiles is not lost on the commentators who claim she seduced him with her voice. An amazing reference in *Rimze Haftarah* (cited from Ginsberg, *Legends of the Jews*, vol. VI, p. 198) states that the milk she gave him was from her breasts. The Talmud suggests that Jael surrendered herself to Sisera's sexual passion (Yeb. 103a; Naz. 23b; Hor. 10b).

Feeling weary but safe, Sisera pronounces his own end when he instructs Jael to help him hide. *If any one asks 'Is there a man here?' say there is none* (4:20). Jael approaches the sleeping form of Sisera with a tent peg and drives it through his temple. He falls "between her legs", an ignoble end for a warrior! This is her apparent greatness. Jael does what needs to be done with the tools at her disposal. She is *blessed among women . . . of women in tents she is blessed*, according to Deborah's ode.

Compare these two to the mother of Sisera who's tragic plight is related in chapter 5. She does not go out at all. She sits at the window, fingers plaintively entwined in the lattice-work, and mutters to herself as to why her son is delayed. But gathering solace, she comforts herself and concludes he is busy splitting the spoils. *Has he not found booty, a woman or two for each man . . .* (5:30). The noun she uses to describe the women is *raham*, literally womb, a most functional and derogatory description. Meanwhile this "womb or two" has killed her son, the tragic opposite of her expectations. *So perish all your enemies* (ibid. 31) sings Deborah, glorying precisely in the disappointment of Sisera's mother.

It is curious that Jael fares the best of all three women in the rabbinic perspective. She is blessed and praised repeatedly in both the text and the commentary. On the other hand, Deborah is slighted. When she sings *Arise, arise Deborah, arise and sing . . .*

Continued on page 203

WAS THERE A FOURTH TEMPLE?

ABRAHAM RUDERMAN

Adjacent to the Western Wall there is an obscure tunnel, little regarded by the scholarly community, which visitors often frequent under the aegis of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Recently, archeologist Dan Bahat made some astonishing discoveries which provide us with a new look at ancient Jerusalem. These discoveries were reported by Abraham Rabinovich in the Feb. 2, 1990 issue of the Jerusalem Post. The Temple Mount is described in the talmudic tractate Middot as having one gateway from the west, while Josephus attributes four gateways to the Temple Mount from the same direction. Further, the size of the Mount as described by Josephus is twice that given in Middot. Dan Bahat who has been digging a tunnel along the length of the Western Wall has come up with some new conclusions about the shape of ancient Jerusalem. He informs us that the Second Temple re-built by Herod was really the fourth temple and the one hundred dunams occupied by the Moslem Quarter contains an immense substructure hitherto unsuspected. The tunnel along the Western Wall was dug after 1967 by the Ministry for Religious Affairs out of mystical curiosity rather than scientific exploration. While the length of the Wall is 488 meters, the prayer area known as the Western Wall is only eighty meters wide. Closed to the general public this tunnel became the private domain of the Ministry for Religious Affairs. The Rabbi of the Western Wall, Yehuda Getz, would rise each morning before dawn, unlock the tunnel and pray at a point which he reckoned to be opposite the Holy of Holies in the ancient Temple. When Bahat became Jerusalem District Archeologist six years ago, he proceeded to change the

Rabbi Abraham Ruderman was ordained at the Jewish Inst. 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 has been the editor of the weekly Bulletin of the Jerusalem Rotary.

tunnel from an attraction to one of Israel's prime archeological sites, shedding much light on the history of ancient Jerusalem.

Near the tunnel's northern end one encounters numerous Hasmonean remains, the first ever found associated with the Temple Mount. The Temple Mount was originally built in a round shape by King Solomon about 970 B.C.E. to provide a platform for the First Temple. In 586 B.C.E. this Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians and rebuilt fifty or so years later by the exiles from Babylon. This was regarded as the Second Temple. Four hundred years later Herod doubled the size of the Temple Mount and built a structure considered by contemporaries as one of the most magnificent in the ancient world. Thus far we can account for three temples. According to Bahat the tunnel sheds light on another temple built between the one built by the returnees from Babylonia and Herod's reconstruction. This was the Hasmonean temple from the 1st and 2nd century B.C.E. described in Mishnah Middot.

Judah Hanasi, the redactor of the Mishnah, relied on a centuries old text which antedated Herod's temple. No attempt was made to change that text to conform to the more recent knowledge held by Josephus who witnessed Herod's temple with his own eyes. This accounts for the discrepancy in the number of gates reported in the Mishnah and by Josephus.

The recent excavations in the tunnel baring high-ceilinged halls, provide a fascinating aspect of Islamic Jerusalem. Bahat provides the following explanation. The Western Wall plaza lies in the once deep central valley that separated the Temple Mount from the upper city, today's Jewish Quarter. The Hasmoneans and later Herod built a bridge across this area, which was used as an aqueduct to bring water from Solomon's Pools to the Upper City. Jews destroyed this aqueduct in 67 C.E. at the beginning of the great revolt against the Romans. The Romans controlled Jerusalem until the 7th century when the Moslems conquered Jerusalem and rebuilt the bridge to bring water to the Temple Mount, which then became a Moslem holy place. Jerusalem was captured by the Crusades in the

13th century and they retained control for a century. When the Moslems regained control they rebuilt the city. In place of the bridge they built a street, today's Street of the Chain, flanked on both sides by tall houses. Many houses, religious academies and mosques were built in this area west of the Temple Mount. It was these substructures that were uncovered in the excavations north of the Western Wall. Bahat made another discovery. Midway down the tunnel there is a concrete patch among the huge Herodian stones which, in Herod's time, was one of the four gateways leading up to the Mount by a stairway from the street below. Many years ago the British explorer Charles Warren discovered a gateway from the upper end which he stated was one of the blocked gateways mentioned by Josephus. Known as Warren's Gate it also figures in medieval Jewish history. During the Roman and Byzantine period Jews were barred from entering Jerusalem. It is to the credit of the Moslems that they permitted Jews to enter Jerusalem but not to the Temple Mount. They came by way of Warren's Gate to an area where they built a central synagogue. This structure remained standing for 350 years until the coming of the Crusades who killed off Jew and Moslem alike. In letters found in the Cairo Geniza the Synagogue was called *Hamearah* the "Cave." The gateway was hidden during the building program of the Moslems after the defeat of the Crusades. With the Moslems in control the Jews began to pray at the open stretch of wall known as the Western Wall. At the northern end of the tunnel stands the quarry where many of the massive stones were dug. One stone is the largest worked stone ever found in the land. It weighs 370 tons and measures 12.5 meters long.

In his new role of Archeological Advisor to the Minister for Religious Affairs, Bahat stated that with the exception of the hall adjacent to the Western Wall, which has been used for prayer for two decades, the rest of the subterranean area will not be used for prayer. He would like this area to become a unifying element between the religious and the secular, between Jew and non-Jew. It must not become a huge synagogue but rather a place of meeting for all people.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

We always find much to stimulate, challenge and enjoy in your *Jewish Bible Quarterly*.

We have a multi-puzzle arising from Vol. XIX - 1(73) Fall 1990 – the Book Review “MacBible version 2.0” by David Faiman, pages 42 to 46. We enjoyed reading the review and would have appreciated more information on the supplier (local or abroad) and the cost (local or abroad). Our puzzle, however is from the last short paragraph on page 46.

Psalm 42 in our KJAV English version of the Bible does not contain either of the two words “shake” or “spear”. Our Strongs Concordance, however, shows that Psalm 46 does.

The word “shake” in Psalm 46 is the 46th word from the start (i.e. not counting the Psalm title) and the word “spear” is the 46th word from the last word (providing you don’t count “Selah” at the end).

Finally, we assume he means that Shakespeare (who signed his name in at least six different spellings) was 42 in 1611 when the KJAV was published (or, as he says in 1610 when the finishing touches were being put to it).

The Encyclopedia Britannica says Shakespeare was “baptised” 24th April 1564. However as christenings may have been delayed for up to 18 months after the birth of a child, no one can say whether Shakespeare was born in 1564, 1563 or even 1562.

Les and Edith Johnson
Jerusalem

Sir,

Re: David Faiman's Afterthought, Fall, 1990, p. 46:

Shake and Spear occur in Psalm 46, not 42. 46 words from the start and 46 words from the end. Shakespeare was baptized 1564 and was 46 years old in 1610 (King James Version).

Preston Wilkerson
Washington, Ok.

Sir,

I have read, with pleasure, Prof. David Faiman's ebullient article: "MacBible Version 2.0" Vol. XIX, 1, p. 42-46.

I believe, however, that in his Afterthought (p. 46), Prof. Faiman is in error.

He places a riddle before us, whose answer is, obviously, "William Shakespear(e)." However, the Psalm he offers - 42 - should be 46, as, neither "shake" nor "spear", appear in Psalm 42; nor was Shakespeare 42 years of age at the publication of the King James version.

Prof. Faiman should have quoted Psalm 46, where 46 words from the top, and 46 words from the end of the Psalm, yield "Shakespear." And, in 1611, the date of the publication of the King James version, Shakespear was 46 years of age.

Rabbi Maurice Lyons
St. Louis, Miss.

Dr. Faiman Responds:

A copy of your letters to Dr. Bakon, editor of the *Jewish Bible Quarterly*, was sent to me in Australia and subsequently forwarded back to Sde Boqer to where I have since returned. Hence the delay in my reply.

I am glad you enjoyed reading my review of the computer program MacBible version 2.0, the printed version of which I have not yet seen owing to my recent travels. The address of Zondervan Electronic Publishing is: 1415 Lake Drive SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506, U.S.A., but I do not have an up-to-date price list for the software.

Secondly, as you correctly noted, my use of the number 42 in reference to a KJV textual curiosity was incorrect: It should indeed have been 46. The error was mine and I have no idea how it occurred. More to the point, however, is the fact that in trying to terminate on a lighter note what I feared might otherwise have been a too technical review I inadvertently caused offence to yourselves and perhaps to other readers too. I apologize for this and will endeavor to "mind my language" in any future reviews I might be called upon to write.

Sir,

It was with considerable interest and then considerable concern that I read S. Levin's article "Satan: Psychologist" in *The Jewish Bible Quarterly*, Vol. XVIII, 3.

In the first place, it would be appropriate to have regard to the history of psychology and its antecedents. Psychology emerged from philosophy, but in the beginning of the 19th century there were various schools which had an emphasis primarily on cognitive processes; in Scotland the work on cognition was considered as self-evident, in Britain the work on cognition was mainly

empirical, while the French psychology, influenced by the English, was bound with Descartes and his theory of reflex action and bodily mechanics. In Germany, the transcendentalist Kant, influenced realities beyond experience.

The contributions to psychology not only came from philosophy, but also from physiology, physics, mathematics and the stress was on apperception, the consciousness of one's internal state.

Nowhere, so far, is psychology concerned with those characteristics described by Levin on p. 163 "tempter, enticer, seducer, injurer, obstructor." Nor when the first "new psychology" moved to the United States was there an interest in such mundane characteristics. The first laboratories were set in the United States in 1900 and were established as models regarding methodology and scientific standards rather than with respect to theory. J. B. Watson was the first behaviorist, and since Levin states "Satan is not only psychologist but a behaviorist" (p. 163), it is important to know that Watson was a materialist who attempted to dismiss the entire notion of mind or consciousness and to make psychology simply the study of behavior and not feelings and emotions which he thought could not be studied with scientific rigor. Certainly, psychology was not interested in quiet, innocence nor the "nature of human conduct" (p. 164).

Levin must be aware that it was at first medicine and not psychology that was interested in the psychopathology of the mind and its vicissitudes, and this had its beginnings with the work of Charcot, Brewer and Freud. Perhaps his interpretations of the Bible are tainted by his profession and its limitations within the field of scientific inquiry.

Prof. O. Weininger

Ontario Inst. for Studies in Education

Dr. Levin Responds:

The great bulk of Weininger's letter is irrelevant. It is not even clear why he presents this history of psychology. If the object is to posit that psychology or experimental psychology is a recent discipline and therefore Satan couldn't have been a psychologist/behaviorist, then such a view is bizarre. There were ancient physicians before the modern variety and there were also ancient engineers (II. Ch. 26:15, Ez. 26:9). As for his hint that physicians should not express views on psychology, this is equally bizarre.

If Weininger objects to my approach, he places himself in opposition to three authoritative sources that I have quoted, viz., Brandon, Pope (in the Anchor Bible) and an entry in the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

My paper was republished in the *Jewish Bible Quarterly*, as is noted on the opening page. It was originally published in the *Journal of Psychology and Judaism* and the editor of that journal took it immediately, without negative comments on my ignorance of the history of psychology. Nor were there subsequent critical letters. In the text (p. 163) I wrote that psychology branched off philosophy in the 19th century and I even called Satan a proto-psychologist (p. 163).

No amount of lecturing can sidestep the issue that experimental psychologists do indeed experiment on birds, animals and humans in order to gauge their reactions to all kinds of stimuli including hurtful ones like pain. My terms, "obstruct", "entice", "injure", are wholly appropriate. I have reread my paper in the light of Weininger's objections and I don't feel the need to alter a single word.

עשה תורתך קבע

THE TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
CHAIM ABRAMOWITZ

March-April 1991

16	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 66
17	S	Job 28
18	M	Job 29
19	T	Job 30
20	W	Job 31
21	Th	Job 32
22	F	Leviticus: 6-8
23	שבת	Haftarah: Malachi 3:8-24
24	S	Job 33
25	M	Job 34
26	T	Job 35
27	W	Job 36
28	Th	Job 37
29	F	Exodus 12:21-51
30	שבת	Haftarah: Joshua 5:2-6:1
31	S	Leviticus 22:26-23:44 Haftarah: II Kings 23:1-9

APRIL

1	M	Song of Songs 1-2
2	T	Song of Songs 3-4
3	W	Song of Songs 5-6
4	Th	Song of Songs 7-8
5	F	Exodus 13:17-15:26 Haftarah: II Samuel 22
6	שבת	Deuteronomy 14:22-15:17 Haftarah: Isaiah 10:32-12:6
7	S	Job 38
8	M	Job 39

April-May 1991

9	T	Job 40
10	W	Job 41
11	Th	Job 42
12	F	Leviticus 9-11
13	שבת	Haftarah: I Samuel 20:18-42
14	S	Daniel 1
15	M	Daniel 2
16	T	Daniel 3
17	W	Daniel 4
18	Th	Isaiah 10:32-11:12
19	F	Leviticus 12-15
20	שבת	Haftarah: II Kings 4:3-20
21	S	Daniel 5
22	M	Daniel 6
23	T	Daniel 7
24	W	Daniel 8
25	Th	Daniel 9
26	F	Leviticus 16-20
27	שבת	Haftarah: Amos 9:7-15
28	S	Daniel 10
29	M	Daniel 11
30	T	Daniel 12

MAY

1	W	Ezra 1-2
2	Th	Ezra 3
3	F	Leviticus 21-24
4	שבת	Haftarah: Ezekiel 44:15-31
5	S	Ezra 4
6	M	Ezra 5

May-June 1991

7	T	Ezra 6
8	W	Ezra 7
9	Th	Ezra 8
10	F	Leviticus 25-27
11	שבת	Haftarah: Jeremiah 16:19-17:14
12	S	Ezra 9
13	M	Ezra 10
14	T	Ruth 1
15	W	Ruth 2
16	Th	Ruth 3-4
17	F	Numbers 1-4:20
18	שבת	Haftarah: Hosea 2:1-22
19	S	Exodus 19-20 Haftarah: Ezekiel 1
20	M	Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17 Haftarah: Habakkuk 2:20-3
21	T	Nehemia 1
22	W	Nehemia 2
23	Th	Nehemia 3
24	F	Numbers 4:21-7
25	שבת	Haftarah: Judges 13:2-25
26	S	Nehemia 4
27	M	Nehemia 5
28	T	Nehemia 6
29	W	Nehemia 7
30	Th	Nehemia 8
31	F	Numbers 8-12

JUNE

1	שבת	Haftarah: Zechariah 2:14-4:7
2	S	Nehemia 9
3	M	Nehemia 10
4	T	Nehemia 11
5	W	Nehemia 12
6	Th	Nehemia 13
7	F	Numbers 14-15

June-July 1991

8	שבת	Haftarah: Joshua 2:1-24
9	S	I Chronicles 1
10	M	I Chronicles 2
11	T	I Chronicles 3
12	W	I Chronicles 4
13	Th	
14	F	Numbers 16-18
15	שבת	Haftarah: I Samuel 11:14-12:22
16	S	I Chronicles 5
17	M	I Chronicles 6
18	T	I Chronicles 7
19	W	I Chronicles 8
20	Th	I Chronicles 9-10
21	F	Numbers 19-22:1
22	שבת	Haftarah: Judges 11:1-33
23	S	I Chronicles 11-12
24	M	I Chronicles 13
25	T	I Chronicles 14
26	W	I Chronicles 15
27	Th	I Chronicles 16
28	F	Numbers 22:2-25:9
29	שבת	Haftarah: Micah 5:6-6:8
30	S	I Chronicles 17

JULY

1	M	I Chronicles 18
2	T	I Chronicles 19
3	W	I Chronicles 20
4	Th	I Chronicles 21
5	F	Numbers 25:10-30:1
6	שבת	Haftarah: I Kings 18:46-19:21
7	S	I Chronicles 22
8	M	I Chronicles 23
9	T	I Chronicles 24-25
10	W	I Chronicles 26-27
11	Th	I Chronicles 28

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