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EDITORIAL

The three component parts of the Hebrew Bible, Torah, Neviim, Ketuvim, are the record of successive encounters of God and the Jewish people. Containing altogether 24 books, the Bible is a veritable library, spanning creativity over a period of close to 1,500 years. The primary concern was with the message it conveyed, and it was only in the 18th century that the unmatched literary quality of some parts of the Bible was discovered. Johann Gottfried von Herder, a German Christian theologian and writer proclaimed in his *Vom Geiste der Ebräischen Poesie* that Hebrew poetry, especially the Psalms, is one of the world's oldest and most soulful poetry.

The Greeks worshipped the holiness of beauty, the Jews reflected on the beauty of holiness. In moments of profound religious experience, the Psalmist burst forth into song, expressing in rhythmic cadences praise, feelings of guilt, hope, and despair. The Psalms became Everyman's book, Jew and Gentile alike. Another example of biblical poetry is the triumphal ode of Deborah, celebrating her victory over Sisera, considered among the finest odes in the world literature.

The Bible contains not only poetry but also narrations, prophetic oratory of the highest literary order. Of the many superb narratives in the Bible, including the Joseph stories and the Book of Ruth, the Book of Samuel might be singled out. A masterpiece of historiography, it portrays in unforgettable prose the overwhelming personality of Samuel, the tragedy of Saul, the life of David, his rapid rise to power, his friendship with Jonathan, the growing tension between David and his capable military leader Joab, his love affair with Bathsheba, Absalom's rebellion and the collusion to bring Solomon to the throne.

As to prophetic speech and writing, is there anything in world literature that can compare with Isaiah? The wealth of his imagery, the splendor of diction, the amazing variety displayed in his style, the majesty of his vision, his play on words, mark Isaiah, even from

a strictly literary viewpoint not only as the prince of Hebrew orators but as one of the world's greatest.

In this short editorial, touching superficially on the literary excellence of some genres in the Bible, the extraordinary Book of Job stands by itself. James A. Froude called it "unequaled of its kind . . . towering up alone far away above all the poetry of the world." Thomas Carlyle viewed it enthusiastically as one of the "grandest things ever written with pen."

No wonder then that some of the great Bible translations, having themselves great literary merit, had an incalculable impact on world literature. As a literary monument, the King James version remains the noblest example of the English language. Less known is the fact that Martin Luther, using one particular dialect of the many current in Germany as the vehicle for his splendid translation, created *Neuhochdeutsch*, the German used almost exclusively in subsequent German literature. So great was the impact of his translation that the noted philosopher Nietzsche declared in *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* that "compared with Luther's Bible, almost everything else is merely literature — something which . . . has not taken and does not take root in German hearts as the Bible has done."

Shimon Bakon

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THE THEOLOGY OF PSALM 145

PART II

CHAIM PEARL

In the first part of this essay¹ we attempted to understand the significance of the rabbinic emphasis on Psalm 145. It was there suggested that when the rabbis noted that the psalm was an alphabetic hymn which also celebrated the mercy and loving-kindness of God, essentially what they are pointing to is the two-fold concept of God, His transcendence and His immanence. In other words, God is the all-powerful Creator of all things in existence, but He is also close to everyone who calls upon Him, opening His benevolent hand to all who are in need.

In this part of the essay we will discuss the second question of the talmudic sages, viz., "Why is there no *nun* line in Psalm 145?"² Every other letter of the Hebrew alphabet is represented in sequential order at the beginning of each sentence; from *aleph* till *tav*. All, that is, with the exception of the letter *nun*. It would never have occurred to the rabbis that the line was lost in the course of the copying and transmission of the text. For them the line must have been deliberately omitted so the question is a perfectly good one which calls for an answer. But let us first of all clear away some preliminary points.

The rabbis knew full well that some alphabetic psalms are complete, that is, with no letter omitted, but that most alphabetic psalms are defective; some of them very much so, with several

1 *J.B.Q.*, XX:1, Fall, 1991.

2 Ber. 4b.

Dr. Chaim Pearl is the Associate Editor of the J.B.Q., an author and lecturer. His tenth book The Stories of the Sages was recently published by Dvir.

letters missing.³ Why don't the rabbis ask the reason for the missing letters in the other defective psalms? Why is their concern restricted to Psalm 145? It is suggested here that the rabbis were grappling with a very disturbing theological question and they had a special point to make about the missing *nun* line which has direct relevance to that question. Hence their insistence in following through with their question, "Why is there no *nun* line in Psalm 145?"

The next point which has to be addressed relates to the fact that in other versions of the Bible, the *nun* line actually appears. The Septuagint, the Peshitta and the Vulgate all have a *nun* line. The Dead Sea Psalms Scroll also contains the *nun* line. All of them have almost the identical text. The Scrolls text, in Hebrew, is נאמן אלוהים בדבריו וחסידי בכל מעשיו "The Lord is faithful in His words and gracious in all His works."⁴ While the Peshitta Syriac of Psalms and the Vulgate Latin versions appeared after the period of those rabbis who were involved in the talmudic discussion on Psalm 145, the Septuagint translation already existed. Still more important in this respect is the version found in the Scrolls psalm. It is hardly likely that the rabbis were unaware of this variant text, especially as the Scrolls text clearly shows that the psalm was antiphonal, that is, sung or recited by the leader — probably the Temple levites — and the people who gave their response *Barukh Elohim U'varukh Shemo*, "Blessed be God and blessed be His Name" after each sentence. It is more than likely then, that the full text, together with the *nun* line, had been in general use and known by the people. Yet the rabbis persist in their question about the missing *nun* line. Why?

3 Examples of other defective psalms are 9, 25 and 34. Being perfectly aware of this, a rabbinic source notes, "When poets compose alphabetic hymns, sometimes they are defective (i.e., with letters missing) and at other times they are complete, with no letters missing" (Koh. Rab. I).

4 *The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11*, ed., James A. Sanders, Oxford, 1965. The Revised Standard Version (RSV) of the English Bible (1946) supplies the missing verse from the source.

Two observations can be submitted in reply. First, by the third century, which is the probable date of the talmudic discussion, the traditional text of Psalm 145 had already been transmitted in its present imperfect form, that is, without the *nun* line. Why this happened is something we shall soon examine. But the fact is that by the time the rabbis discuss the psalm it had long been without the *nun* line. Consequently, even if they had been aware of the variant text in the Septuagint or of the text that was later found in the Scrolls in our own time, their question is perfectly in order since the popular version in their time was the one with the missing line. They would therefore regard the transmitted text as authentic, and even if they knew about other texts they would have seen those as illegitimate. For the rabbis the transmitted text in their hands was the single authentic text and all others were false.

The second point which is made here is that even if the rabbis were aware of the alternative complete text they would not offer that as an answer to the puzzle of the missing *nun* line. Not only because they regarded the alternative text as spurious — as stated above — but because they wanted to make a theological statement which related to an agonizing problem which confronted them at that time. We shall now see what that was.

Let us follow the talmudic text.⁵ R. Johanan asked, "Why is there no *nun* line in the *ashre* psalm?" And he answers, "Because that letter is associated with the prophecy of Israel's destruction." The Talmud goes on to explain this by quoting the verse in Amos 5:2 נפלה לא תוסיף קום בתולת ישראל *The virgin of Israel is fallen, she shall no more arise.*

The Talmud thus makes the point that because this terrible prophecy of Israel's destruction begins with the letter *nun*, that letter shall not be represented in the great Psalm 145. Of course one may immediately react to this by arguing that most other prophets gave dire warnings of destruction and exile. If we were to follow the

5 Ber. Ibid.

reasoning of the talmudic observation it is more than likely that most letters of the alphabet would be missing from the *ashre* psalm! Why should Amos be singled out? And why is this verse more shocking than other prophecies of destruction? The answer to the first question is that Amos is one of the first of the literary prophets. In the rabbinic order of the Bible Canon he is listed with the first group of prophets.⁶ This makes his prophecy of destruction more alarming, since it is the first time that such a message of doom was heard. Further, and even more significant, Amos' prophecy appears so frightening because of the second phrase, *she shall no more arise*. That is a prophecy of total and permanent destruction. All other prophecies of doom are followed by some words of comfort and hope, with a message of national revival after repentance. Even Amos himself follows this style, and there are subsequent verses which do in fact hold forth the promise of national revival after repentance.⁷ However, this particular verse represents the worst kind of prophecy; a destruction which will be permanent. It was this terrifying prospect which troubled the rabbis so much that the Talmud records the fact that in Palestine they deliberately misread the text in Amos, changing its meaning altogether. They would read the verse, "She shall fall no more; Arise O virgin of Israel." It is quite clear that such a reading mutilates the plain reading and its meaning. But it is further proof of the horrific implications of the prophetic pronouncement which the rabbis sought to reject. That rejection is illustrated in the suggestion that the letter *nun* which is the first letter of Amos' declaration of total disaster should have no place in the grand *ashre* psalm. The rabbis believed that David was the author of the Psalms. They knew of course that Amos lived some hundreds of years after King David. How then could David know what Amos would say? That was no problem for them: he was inspired with the divine spirit and foresaw the prophet's awesome

6 B. B. 14b.

7 5:14, 15; 7:3, 6; 9:11-15.

words. This is a further indication of the extent to which Amos' awful prophecy burned into the troubled consciousness of the rabbinic leaders of the time. They couldn't get it out of their minds.

So much for our exposition of the talmudic observation on the mystery of the missing *nun* line. But one question, the most important one, still remains. Granted that the rabbis reacted so fearfully to Amos' prophecy that they went as far as to reject the first letter of that prophecy in the attempt to push aside anything that could remind them of the prophet's alarming message, what has all that to do with Psalm 145? Here we come to the main theological dimension of the entire discussion. It will be remembered that Psalm 145 celebrates the double concept of the Divinity, viz., the transcendence and the immanence of God. God is all-powerful and He is also all-merciful. But the Jews were living in the most terrible circumstances of persecution and poverty. The Temple had been destroyed, tens of thousands had been slain in the Roman wars, signs of destruction were everywhere, the exile and dispersal of the Jews had been going on with increasing momentum, and the situation in the Holy Land was grim, almost to the point of hopelessness. The old-new question tormented the rabbis. Here was a sublime psalm which sang of God as all-powerful and all-merciful, then why doesn't He do something to help His people? Why did He permit the Romans to destroy the Temple and to slaughter untold numbers of Jews? Why does He allow the Roman oppressor to continue to persecute His people? Either God is not all-powerful and thus cannot do anything about it, or He is not all-merciful and will not do anything about it. But He cannot be both all-powerful and all-merciful and permit the disasters befalling the Jewish people.

The talmudic rabbis had no answer. No more than we can produce an answer to similar questions about the Holocaust. But it is here suggested that their comment about the missing *nun* line is a startling reaction to the agonizing problem. What does it really mean when they say that the *ashre* psalm has no *nun* line because of Amos' prophecy of doom? It means that the *ashre* psalm is somehow

flawed. Here we have a great psalm which sings about God's power and His mercy. But it is precisely those attributes which can be questioned by the harsh realities of Jewish suffering. His transcendent power and His immanent compassion are not being shown to the Jews suffering persecution.

However the rabbis sincerely believed that God is powerful and can destroy the enemies of His people. They also sincerely believed in the divine compassion so that they expect God to act for His people. But meanwhile the situation of the Jews is desperate; and God is silent. So the *nun* line which reminded them of Israel's destruction cannot be reconciled with the theology of a transcendent all-powerful God and an immanent ever present God of compassion. Therefore that line which points to Israel's suffering drops out of the great psalm, in order not to challenge the theology of the psalm which celebrates God as the transcendent power who is also the immanent merciful God.

An epilogue to the talmudic discussion is introduced by a sage who lived years later and who offers a message of comfort that in spite of the deliberate omission of the *nun* line because of its horrific association with destruction, David, the author of the psalm, immediately compensates for the missing line in the very next sentence by declaring *סומך ה' לכל הנפלים וזוקף לכל הכפופים* *The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that are bowed down.*⁸ That line is in the traditional mold of prophetic utterances where a prophecy of destruction is followed by words of comfort and reconciliation. So too in our Psalm 145, after the implied protest against God's silence in the face of Jewish suffering,⁹ the psalmist continues with a verse which sings of God's sustaining support.

⁸ Ps. 145:14.

⁹ Rabbinic protests against God for allowing Jewish suffering are occasionally found in the literature. See, for example, Simeon bar Yohai's argument against God that, had He wished to, He could have prevented Cain from killing his brother Abel (Ber. Rab. 22:9). The Rabbi's intent of course was to apply his homily to the contemporary situation of the Roman oppression of the Jews. See my edition of the *Sefer Ha-Aggadah*, Dvir, 1988, pp. 21-23.

DAVID'S MARRIAGE TO MICHAL

JOSIAH DERBY

A major theme in classical literature is the one in which a brave and courageous hero performs a death-defying feat in order to win — or in consequence of which he wins — the hand of the beautiful princess. And they live happily ever after. This is the stuff of “fairy tales” that has delighted and encouraged countless children.

It is this theme that is the controlling force in Wagner’s “Ring” operas. Wotan assures his beloved daughter, Brunhilde, as he puts her to sleep and surrounds her with a ring of fire, that only the purest and mightiest of heroes will dare to penetrate the fire, to awaken her and claim her as his bride. In a variation on this theme Puccini created the opera “Turandot” in which a beautiful but cruel Chinese princess offers herself in marriage to the man who can solve three riddles that she poses. Any man who attempts to solve them but fails will be put to death. In one of the many legends that Jewish folklore wove about King Solomon we are told that he kept his daughter in a tower protected by many dangerous approaches so that only the most valorous could penetrate them in order to release her and be worthy of becoming her husband.

The Bible offers us another illustration of this theme. It is the story of the marriage of David to Michal, the daughter of King Saul, as it is related in I Samuel, Chapters 17 and 18. Rather than summarize this story, I would urge the reader to turn to the biblical text itself. It is extremely worth reading.

It is commonly accepted that Saul gave Michal to David in fulfillment of the promise he had made when the Israelites were confronted by Goliath (I Sam. 17:25). To be sure, the text does not

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specifically quote Saul as making such a statement, but the men who told this to David could hardly have concocted this idea on their own. Moreover, it is conceivable that Saul might very well have made such an offer in order to encourage someone in his army to undertake the dangerous yet noble task of fighting Goliath. And thus, it is believed, that young David, moved not only by religious and patriotic zeal but also by the promise of fame and fortune, goes forth to meet the giant, kills him and thereby wins the hand of the princess.

But is this really so? A careful reading of the two chapters will lead us to a different conclusion.

To begin with, some modern Bible scholars contend that the entire episode of David's encounter with Goliath is only one of the many legends which the folk imagination had created in order to glorify its great hero, the founder of Israel's eternal dynasty.¹ They give more credence to II Sam. 21:19 which states that one of David's mighty warriors, Elhanan of Bethlehem, killed Goliath.²

If this is so, where does it leave the story of a hero and a princess? That David was married to Michal is universally accepted as historical. How, then, did it happen? I Sam. 18:14-27 tells a far different story. To understand the events described in these verses we must accept the veracity of the text in I Sam. 16:15-23. Here David is depicted not as a lad³ but as a mature young man (although the adjectives lavished upon him in v. 18 may be rather extravagant), capable of becoming Saul's armor-bearer. With the consent of his father, Jesse, David becomes a permanent member of Saul's entourage.

1 See, for example, *Sifre Shmuel* by Moshe Zvi Segal p. 135 ff.

2 We will not enter into a full discussion of the historicity of the story. Question: Would Saul place the fate of his army and, indeed, of the entire nation in the hands of an unarmed, unprotected boy with a slingshot?

3 The phrase: "Your son who is with the sheep" in v. 19 is an effort on the part of the editor to harmonize the description of David here with his being only a "lad" (na'ar) in the Goliath story.

As time goes by, David's charismatic personality and his prowess as a warrior become more and more apparent to the people and hence his great popularity over and above Saul's.

Saul has slain his thousands

But David his tens of thousands (18:7).

This did not help Saul's ego nor his depression; it fueled the fires of rage and guilt within him which transformed themselves into a pathological jealousy of David. Saul's mental and emotional condition approaches paranoia: he must get rid of David. His first attempt to kill David fails (18:11).⁴

It appears that Michal, Saul's youngest daughter, had fallen in love with David. When Saul heard about this, his distorted mind devised what must have appeared to him a brilliant scheme: he would give Michal to David and ask him for one hundred foreskins of Philistines as a bride-price. David would surely be killed in this effort (18:25).

David, when approached with the offer of Michal's hand in marriage,⁵ at first demurs. He says he is not worthy of so high a marriage and, besides, he could not afford it. This could be a polite display of false humility, but it could also conceal his disinterest in Michal. However, when challenged — dared, in a sense — to go out and kill one hundred Philistines, he could not resist the opportunity not only to strike a blow at the enemy but to show off his valor and prowess yet once again. He accepts the deal, and goes one better by bringing back two hundred foreskins, not just one hundred.

But again, this could not be the reason why Saul gave Michal to David. Note that according to the text Saul's motive was not to perform a kind, fatherly deed, to satisfy a daughter's wish. It was a most sinister and deadly intent. To be sure, Saul was capable of such

⁴ Scholars believe that this episode is an insertion at this point, a duplication of what is told in II Sam. 19:9.

⁵ In 18:17 we are told that Saul first offered his oldest daughter, Merav, to David. This text is suspicious because it is confused (18:19), and it is altogether missing in the Septuagint.

a thing, but is it plausible? Would not sending David on such a perilous mission have aroused some pleading for mercy from Michal, some question or opposition from Saul's own followers who valued David as an important asset in the continuous struggle with the Philistines? And why only one hundred foreskins? It is not possible that this is just another opportunity by a Judean author to paint Saul in the blackest possible colors?

I would like to suggest a totally different scenario for Saul's giving Michal to David in marriage. It seems to me that this was a carefully conceived and highly political act on Saul's part; he was not, after all, irrational at all times. The historical fact at that time was that Saul's authority did not extend over the tribe of Judah. Judah had always set itself apart from the other tribes, and went its own way: *And all Israel and Judah loved David* (18:16). Only David succeeded in uniting the nation, and even that union, strong as it was, easily crumbled on the death of Solomon.

Saul knew that the ultimate showdown between Israel and the Philistines was inevitable. He also knew that if there was any hope of defeating the Philistines, this could not be accomplished without the participation of the tribe of Judah. But how to involve the Judeans?⁶

Saul saw in David a possible solution. By taking David as a son-in-law might it not create a strong bond with David's tribe? Was not David a scion of one of Judah's most prominent families with a lineage going all the way back to the very founder of the tribe? When the time would come for the great battle, David would be at his father-in-law's side (together with his beloved friend, Saul's son, Jonathan); and how could David's tribesmen turn their backs on his urgent plea that they join in the defense of the nation and the land? In his rational moments Saul knew how desperately he needed David.

6 According to 17:14 three of David's older brothers were in Saul's army at the time of the confrontation with Goliath. But this is hardly proof that Judah had joined Saul's forces.

This was a political marriage, as has been so common throughout history among monarchies. In accepting the marriage its purpose and intent were not lost upon David. It is no wonder that he hated it. This princess and her hero did not live "happily ever after." The marriage turned out to be a tragedy to Michal who, upon David's ascension to the throne, spent the rest of her days in childless solitude.⁷ All the other women whom David took to wife were of his own choosing.

The redactor of the two Books of Samuel, long after the events, was apparently more interested in the legendary aspects of David's life and therefore ignores the historical circumstances that led to this marriage.

Saul was doomed, and not even this plan could save him. Had he been able to overcome his psychological problems, how different history might have turned out. But they drove him relentlessly to his tragic end. When the final battle arrived, David was not at Saul's side, nor at Jonathan's; and the tribe of Judah stayed at home minding its own business.

⁷ See II Sam. 6:21. In II Sam. 21:8 "Michal" is an obvious scribal error for "Merav" who was the wife of Adriel.

Editorial note

Some of the terms used in this article may not be understood by many of the readers of the J.B.Q. To enable them to come to grips with this article, we enclose an interpretation of some of these terms.

merism — repetition of parts.

hendiadys — two nouns connected by “and” in place of an adjective and a noun.

chiasma — contrast by parallelism in reverse order.

metonymy — use of the name of one thing for that of another suggested by it.

For example: “The White House has decided.”

synecdoche — putting the whole of a thing for a part, or a part for the whole.

quinary meter — arranged in fives.

A STYLISTIC-EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF JEREMIAH 46:1-12

J. P. van der WESTHUIZEN

INTRODUCTION

This study is neither an attempt to rewrite the poem in Jer. 46:1-12, nor to disregard all that has been said about the poem by other scholars. It may, however, substantiate what has been said about the poem and elucidate it from a new angle, thereby gaining a deeper and richer insight particularly with respect to its literary aspect.

Bright, realizing the importance of this type of approach, states that “. . . he who interprets a novel, a play, an essay, a history, a lyric poem, as if they were alike will not get very far.”¹

Snaith made an attempt at this type of stylistic-exegetical approach.²

1 Bright, John. “The Book of Jeremiah,” *Interpretation*, Vol. IX, no. 3, 1955, p. 264.

2 Snaith, John G. “Literary Criticism and Historical Investigation in Jeremiah Chapter XLV.” *JSS* Vol. 16, 1971, pp. 15-32.

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As a general comment on this poem and this type of approach it may be stated, in the words of Bright, that ". . . exegesis may proceed only along grammatical historical principles . . . Before we may declare what word Jeremiah has for his people, we must take the trouble to learn as exactly as we can what word of God Jeremiah had for ancient Judah . . . Exegesis plunges one beyond the text and throws one into grips with the problems of criticism . . . The literary form of the passage must be taken into account . . . In short, exegesis involves Form Criticism . . . Exegesis cannot avoid the problems of composition."³ It is thus clear that cognizance must be taken of the type of literature with which we are confronted, as well as the personality of the author. Holladay discusses these aspects, concluding that "Mowinckle's study was a turning point. Here three main sources were posited: A, poetic oracles; B, biographical material; C, prose sermons."⁴ This shows that an analysis of the style of a writer is of the utmost importance for an understanding of his work. Holladay substantiates this stating: "It is commonplace to speak appreciatively of Jeremiah's great stature as a poet, but we have not been employing stylistic analysis with nearly as much acumen in works of criticism . . . Although it would be out of the question to define completely a poet's style, we may still list several characteristics which mark out Jeremiah. (1) Chiasmic . . . (2) Double meanings . . . (3) Assonance . . . (4) Double occurrences of roots . . . (5) Heightened vocabulary . . . (6) Abrupt changes of speaker and mood . . . (7) Irony."⁵

A poet, particularly one of high standard, has two tools of which he may avail himself in conveying his message, viz., language and literary devices (or stylistic techniques). He uses these in very

3 *op. cit.*, p. 260.

4 Holladay, William L. "Prototype and Copies: A new approach to the poetry-prose problem in the Book of Jeremiah." *JBL* Vol. 79/4, 1960, pp. 351-352.

5 Holladay, William L. "Style, Irony and Authenticity in Jeremiah." *JBL* Vol. 81/1, 1962, pp. 44-47.

much the same way as a craftsman uses his tools — some to create his object and others to polish the final product. The literary devices — the structure of the poem — are thus used by the poet in giving this refined finish to his poem and hence speak more effectively to his audience.⁶

GENERAL REMARKS

Characteristic of the poetic sections in Jeremiah is that they are mainly collections of prophetic oracles — brief discourses cast in metrical form together with various stylistic devices — a fact to be borne in mind when analyzing any of these poems.⁷ Considerations that must have had an influence on the style adopted by the poet as well as on the literary devices employed by him are the process by which a poem came into existence, the reason for its composition, the audience for which it was intended, and other related matters.⁸

ANALYSIS OF THE POEM

The superscriptions to i) the section containing the oracles, viz. 46:1, and ii) the subsection 46:2, clearly indicate that this oracle is lodged against Egypt. Hence 46:1 and 2 are not included in this poem. Though this oracle is directed against Egypt, it is actually Judah that was warned against relying on Egypt.⁹

The examination of the poem and the discussion thereon is based on the Masoretic text (MT) and Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia

6 Snaith propounds: "... a poet may use the structure of his poem as a means of expression, giving a key position to the most important aspect of the poem." *Op. cit.* pp. 15-16.

7 Cf. also Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 267-268.

8 Cf. Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 269-270 and Giesebrecht, F. 1907. *Das Buch Jeremia*, HAT. Göttingen, p. 227.

9 Cf. de Jong, *De Volken by Jeremia*, Proefschrift, Theologische Academie, 1978. Harrison, R. K. *Jeremiah and Lamentations*, The Tyndale Press, London, 1973, p. 170.

(BHS). As a basis to work on for the analysis of this poem the "word meter", where the word unit is taken as one verse-foot, is accepted.

v. 3: In this verse, where the poet uses the device of "histrionics", the first phase of the command to prepare for the battle is presented.¹⁰ Naturally imperatives are used, supplemented by nouns in the singular in such a manner that it creates the impression of militarism;¹¹ it is thus not just one shield or one buckler that should be prepared but all of them. There are excellent examples of synecdoche¹² where shield and buckler used as hendiadys collectively represent some of the whole range of battle equipment used by the infantry. There are also very good examples of initial rhyme and end rhyme as well as assonance, viz. . . . מִגֵּן וְצִנְהָה and לְמַלְחָמָה וְגִשְׁרֵי . . . עֲרֹכָרִים, also displaying some degree of alliteration and onomatopoeia. The meter, taken as 2+2, reading מִגֵּן-וְצִנְהָה as one verse foot, supplements the imperative nature of this verse. Rudolph suggests a 3+2 meter.¹³

v.4: Here the command is extended to the attackers, already confident of victory, for the final preparation before proceeding to the battle. The staccato two-beat arrangement, evoking the rhythm of war — the main theme of this poem — extends to v. 6. The nouns in v. 4, however, are in the plural, to suit the sense and nature of the command. In v. 3 the attention is sought, whereas in v. 4 instructions are given for preparations prior to the advance. In accordance with Ezk. 27:14 a reading פָּרָדִים — "steeds" seems well suited,

10 Cf. also Harrison, p. 170, as well as van Selms, A. *Jeremiah, deel III en Klaagliendered*, Uitgeverij G. F. Callenbach BV, Nijkerk, 1974, p. 15.

11 Cf. also Bright, John. *Jeremiah*, The Anchor Bible, Doubleday and Co., Inc. Garden City, New York, 1965, p. 305 as well as Thompson, J. A. *The Book of Jeremiah*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980, p. 66: ". . . Commands in sharp staccato terms . . .", and Snaith, pp. 22-23.

12 Cf. van Selms, *op. cit.* pp. 15f. as well as Weiser, A. *Das Buch Jeremia, Kapitel 25:15-52:34*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977, p. 382.

13 Rudolph, Wilhelm. *Jeremia*, Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen, 1968, p. 269. Cf. also Thompson, p. 668 n. 7.

presenting a better parallelism.¹⁴ Some excellent examples of assonance, internal rhyme and alliteration inclining to onomatopoeia are also presented in this verse. Synecdoche, though not to the same extent as in v. 3, are also evident. Van Selms points out that in this way the hurry of the command is well expressed.¹⁵

Considering the meter of this verse, 2+2: 2+2+2, we are confronted with a case of imbalance. Furthermore, the last verse-line has a feminine plural noun, whereas the preceding nouns have masculine plurals, thus providing an effect of suspense — a minor division in the structure of the poem.

On the other hand, as verse 4 completes this strophe concerning the call to prepare for the battle, a better metrical balance with its counterpart, v. 9a, is achieved if the last two verse-feet of v. 4b, **לבשו הסריגת**, are discarded.

The first line of v. 4 presents a good example of synonymous parallelism.

v. 5: A description of the outcome of the battle projected on Egypt.¹⁶ There is a predominance of long vowels, expressive of dismay caused by defeat, supplemented by an extensive use of the letters **מ** and **נ**, which "captures the spectacle in vigorous phraseology . . ."¹⁷

Although BHS 5a states that **ראיתי** is missing in the LXX, it could, however, for metrical reasons, be retained. A slight permissible rearrangement of v. 5 presents an appealing example of poetical parentheses, viz.

Why do I see:

They are terrified, they run back.

14 Cf. also Dahood, *M. Biblica* 51, p. 400, supported by Rudolph, *op. cit.* p. 266 as well as by Weiser, p. 378.

15 *op. cit.* p. 15 at v. 4. Cf. Bright, p. 305.

16 Cf. Harrison, p. 171, Bright, p. 305 and Giesenbrecht, p. 228.

17 Harrison, *loc. cit.* Cf. also Nicholson, *Ernest W. Jeremiah Chapters 26-52*, Cambridge University Press, 1973-1975, p. 168.

Their warriors, panic stricken, they turn to flight.

They look not backward, panic everywhere.¹⁸

With the above rearrangement we obtain the following metrical scheme: 2: 2+2; 2+2; 2+2: 2 and a treble parallelism in a crossed arrangement of the last two stichoi, an expansion on the first stich. We retain מָרוֹעַ — “why”, regarding it as *Verlebendigung der dichterischen Schau* (Weiser *op. cit.*, *ad. loc.*) and *poetische Vergegenwärtigung* (Rudolph, *op. cit.*, *ad. loc.*). De Jong states that ‘why do I see . . .’ wants to express the absurdity of the situation.¹⁹

v. 6: A continuation of the description of the defeat and the futility in attempting to flee. The verse commences with short words, indicative of the mood and of the hurry-scurry during the flight from the battle field. Thus affecting a type of crescendo ending in the two longer words כָּשָׁלוֹ וְנַפְּלוֹ reproducing the climax of despair owing to crumbled morale.²⁰

The first line is a couplet with a perfect synonymous parallelism. The meter of the verse, in its present form, presents a slight problem as the first and second verse-lines do not balance. If one verse-foot from the second verse-line is eliminated the problem might be solved. Footnote BHS 6a states that the Peshitta reads גְּבוּרִים instead of צְפוּנָה, which suggests some problem with this word. There is, however, no evidence to support its deletion from the MT. Yet, according to BHS 6b, there is some evidence suggesting that the LXX lacks either נָהַר or פָּרַת.

A possibility is that for the sake of rhyme and assonance — in accordance with the already existing . . . עַל-יַד and כָּשָׁלוֹ וְנַפְּלוֹ — either נָהַר was added to פָּרַת or vice versa. It is, however, also possible that צְפוּנָה was added either in agreement with v. 10 or as an amplification of the exact location of the defeat. The Peshitta reading

18 Cf. Ps. 31:14, “. . . terror on every side”. Probably a proverbial curse formula. Cf. also Jer. 6:25, 20:3.

19 *op. cit.*, p. 349, n. 12.

20 Cf. Harrison, p. 171 and Rudolph, p. 269.

proposes בגבורים. It could also be a case of textual corruption for בגרביה — “in the North” (van Selms, *op. cit.* p. 101). In view of the foregoing and for the sake of rhyme and assonance, the words פרת נהר is retained²¹

v. 7: This is an introduction to a short satirical poem, including a slight irony, consisting of vv. 7-12. The resurgence of Egypt and her reappearance in Syria-Palestine is depicted in vv. 7-8.²²

In this verse the simile is a method to indicate the beginning of a new stanza, referring to the flooding of the Nile,²³ combined with the simile in v. 8 describing the expanding power of Pharaoh²⁴ forming a striking example of a metaphor.²⁵ There are also some good examples of metonymy, i.e. ‘Egypt’ for the ‘army’, and of personification in that Egypt speaks.

v. 8: In the second verse-line of v. 8 it would seem fit to transfer וי of ויאמר to מים of the first verse-line and read מימי — “waters” (as in v. 7), but read אמר (participle) and not אמר (perfect). Furthermore, the imagery of flooding may well be represented by the אכסה, but not by the אבירה — “destroy”²⁶ as “destruction”, which is not normally associated with the rising of the Nile, would seem misplaced in this instance. Apparently someone contemplated that the intended irony would be lost if the difference between the consequences of the rising of the Nile and those of the resurgence of Egypt were not specifically pointed out; the flooding of the Nile being advantageous to people, whereas, except for herself and her allies, the rise of Egypt would be to the disadvantage of the people.²⁷

21 Cf. van Selms, p. 16 and Rudolph, p. 266.

22 Cf. Giesebrecht, p. 228.

23 Harrison, p. 171 and van Selms, p. 16.

24 Harrison, *loc. cit.*, Nicholson, p. 168, van Selms, p. 16, Weiser, p. 383, de Jong, p. 104 and Giesebrecht, *op. cit.* p. 228.

25 This metaphor also occurs elsewhere in the OT, Is. 8:7-8, applied to Assyria and the flooding of the Euphrates.

26 Cf. also van Selms, p. 16.

27 Cf. Nicholson, *op. cit.* p. 168, van Selms, *op. cit.* p. 16, Weiser, *op. cit.* p. 383 and Rudolph, *op. cit.* p. 269.

A case of implied irony is found in Judah's almost religious reverence for Egypt/Pharaoh and her decline of faith in the Lord; a trust and confidence in the power that destroys at the expense of trust in the Power that creates and maintains. Because of the stylistic devices contained in **אעלה אכסה** viz. assonance, alliteration, rhyme, hendiadys and personification, it would be preferable to retain the two words *ad. loc.* A solution would be to replace **אבידה** with **אכסה** from the first hemistich, accept BHS 8b-b, and read: "I will rise over the earth, I will cover its inhabitants." In this case a 3+3 meter, in accordance with the first verse-line of v. 8, will be obtained. To a certain extent we have the same sense conveyed by Is. 8:7, **ועלה ועלה** *and it will rise over all its channels, it will go over all its banks*. Only, in this instance the word pair **עלה/הלך** is employed. Perhaps an even better example is found in Jer. 51:42 where the same word pair which is used in our v. 8, **עלה/כסה**, is employed in the oracle against Babylon: **עלה על בבל הים בהמון גליו נכסתה** *The sea has come up on Babylon, she is covered with its tumultuous waves*.

v. 9: A change of scene is introduced, almost the same as found in v. 3, with short abrupt commands, the two-beat 'battle rhythm'. Horsemen, chariots and warriors are mentioned — a merism — for the mercenary troops mentioned in the second part of v. 9. The question is whether v. 9b could not also be an example of merism, where only a few of the more prominent mercenaries out of a larger group are mentioned.²⁸

In v. 9b there are some good examples of assonance, **כוש ופוט** and **תפשי דרכי** (also an example of hendiadys). BHS 9a points out that the LXX reads **צא**, which we also accept, together with our suggestion that the **ו** before **התהללו** should be dropped.²⁹ This will add to the abruptness expressive of this verse-line and at the same time produce internal initial rhyme, viz. **צא . . . עלו**. According to BHS

28 Cf. Rudolph, p. 269.

29 Cf. Rahlf's edition of the LXX.

9b the second תפשי should be deleted.³⁰ We, however, would retain it as it gives a balanced metre and fits in with the assonance as well as with the alliteration of this verse-line. There is, however, also the possibility that another word may have been used *ad loc.*, which was later, for some unknown reason, replaced by תפשי. On the other hand, v. 9 being the opening verse of a new stanza, an unbalanced metre would not be out of place.

In this verse there are some excellent examples of metaphorical language used in imagery — the sword depicted as (a wild beast) devouring people and drinking his fill of blood (cf. Deut. 32:42), and Egypt's defeat interpreted as a sacrificial feast which the Lord celebrated (cf. Is. 34:5-7; Zeph. 1:7).

The first verse-line of v. 10 reveals some beautiful examples of alliteration, assonance (a succession of a sounds) and onomatopoeia, particularly if the disrupting צבאות is deleted (BHS 10a).³¹ This would at the same time solve the metrical problem, culminating in a 4+4 meter. If מצריו is replaced with מצרים an even better example of alliteration and onomatopoeia, representing the melancholy that prevails on the battlefield, is obtained. If מצריו is retained it could be regarded as a pun, wordplay and allusion combined.

The second verse-line of v. 10 presents an unbalanced meter, hence some form of metrical rectification would seem appropriate. According to BHS 10b the LXX inserted יהוה after ורב to read "the sword of the Lord".³² If this is accepted, the ו before שבעה discarded as haplography and שבעה transposed to the second hemistich, the problem is solved, a hendiadys ורותה ושבעה and a verse-line that makes good sense, is obtained, viz. *The sword of the Lord shall devour — be sated with and drink it's fill of their blood.* Again there

30 Cf. also van Selms, p. 16, Weiser, p. 378, n. 3 *ad. loc.*, Rudolph, p. 268 and Bright, p. 302.

31 Cf. also Weiser, p. 378, Rudolph, p. 268 and Thompson, p. 68.

32 Cf. also Bright, p. 302 and Rudolph p. 268.

is a beautiful example of onomatopoeia — the heard consonants expressing the devouring action, supplemented by the assonance of a-a sounds.

The third verse-line also has an unbalanced metrical pattern. In Rahlfs' edition of the LXX the Greek equivalent of יהוה (with the vocalization of אלהים) is lacking. If this is accepted as an emendation and נהר פרת is taken as one verse-foot, expressing a single idea, or else apply BHS 6b also *ad. loc.*, a balanced 4+4 meter is obtained. The metrical structure of the entire verse now being 4+4; 3+3; 4+4, expressive of the whole situation where the second verse-line is a type of double duty modifier, indicating how the day of the Lord, His day of vengeance, is achieved and also presenting the means and method of accomplishing the sacrificial feast to be presented to the Lord (Is. 34:6).

The result of the suggested emendations in lines 1 and 3 of this verse, is that we now have . . . ארני יהוה . . . representing the Lord as the "Sovereign" and צבאות ארני . . . representing the Lord as "Victor".

In vv. 11-12 the satirical irony reaches its climax.

v. 11: Unless taken as a double quinary-meter, the meter of this verse is to be regarded as an entirely irregular 4+3; 3+2 meter; this means not only regarding the verse-lines as irregular themselves, but also with respect to the relation of the lines to each other. Since no solution to, or rectification of this problem is evident, it should perhaps be accepted as intentional and expressive of the futility of seeking healing, after the complete defeat Egypt had suffered.

The first verse-line of v. 11 has some good examples of alliteration in ל, ב, and ת as well as synonymous parallelism. The second verse-line, in addition to synthetic parallelism, also presents an example of alliteration, but to a lesser extent than in the first verse-line. Furthermore, this verse reveals a very good example of imagery, with a hint of sarcasm, or as Snaith put it: ". . . a treble significance: Egypt's pride in medical matters; her wounding

defeats and her longing for territorial expansion and commercial gain."³³

Already in the first verse-line a type of sarcastic-spite is encountered, expressed by the appositional hendiadys,³⁴ supplemented by short abrupt expressions: "Go to Gilead, fetch balm, so-called virgin, daughter of Egypt!" The hendiadys is found in *בחולת בת*, both being in the construct state, not in the sense of "Virgin of the daughter of . . .", but in the sense of "Young woman, daughter of" Egypt.³⁵

However, so devastating was the defeat that no medical care of whatever nature would have been able to cure and heal the wounds. In the same way no amount of riches whatsoever could have paid for the financial losses and embarrassment suffered by Pharaoh. Note also the play on words *מצרים . . . צרי . . .* and, if retained, *מצריו* in v. 10.

V. 12: This verse presents no metrical problem as it is a straightforward 3+3; 3+3 meter. The entire verse consists of synonymous parallelism, arranged in a criss-cross order. Examples of hyperbole are also encountered in the first verse-line of v. 12, viz. ". . . the nations have heard your cry, and the earth echoes with your screams", as well as synecdoche where the part, "warrior against warrior", is used for the entire army of both sides engaged in battle, which is then resumed again in "both have fallen together".³⁶ It is evident that, to obtain the synonymous parallelism in a cross

³³ *op. cit.* p. 17. Cf. also Harrison, p. 171.

³⁴ Cf. Avishur, Y. "Pairs of synonymous words in the construct state (and in appositional hendiadys) in Biblical Hebrew" *Semitics*, publ. of The University of South Africa, 1971/2, pp. 17-81.

³⁵ Cf. also van Selms, p. 17.

³⁶ Cf. Avishur, Yitzhak. "Stylistic studies of Wordpairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literature", 1984, *AOAT* 210, p. 269.

arrangement, BHS 12a should be accepted, reading קולך instead of קלונך.

Looking at the poem in its entirety, it appears as if vv. 9-12 (excluding v. 11) is an elucidation of vv. 3-6 so as to emphasize the satirical-irony, whilst vv. 7-8 forms a link between the two sections, "a sharp, prophetic characterisation of the situation before the advance against Carchemish."

From the foregoing discussion it may be deduced that the different literary devices individually and collectively applied in conjunction with other exegetical methods, could assist in solving problematic textual interpretation. It is also equally clear, however, that where a poem is plagued by textual corruption, stylistic aids alone, though effective in supplementing the message of a poem and giving it a certain degree of vividness, cannot be used in a proper analysis and text restoration.

In some cases the application of stylistic analysis in conjunction with other exegetical methods can produce a final unanimously accepted solution to a textual problem, as in the case of v. 10. In other instances, however, such a solution is neither final nor unanimous, as in the case of v. 11. In certain cases similar solutions are only tentative and hypothetical, as for example v. 9.

Nevertheless, the writer is of the opinion that the value and importance of stylistic aids, in the analysis and understanding of a poem, as has been illustrated in the foregoing study, should not be ignored or underestimated, but neither should it be applied as the only or prime means of exegetical text analysis of a poem.

THE TRAUMA OF ISAAC

MURRAY J. KOHN

The study of the Akedah story often concentrates on Abraham's excruciating struggle between fatherly love and obedience to God's command. Abraham's internal struggle resulting from God's behest is made explicit in a plethora of traditional and non-traditional commentaries which are based upon the psychological reactions drawn from normal human experiences, such as anxiety, fear and doubt. In short, Abraham's conflicts are made relevant to our human dispositions and every sensitive person has either experienced them or can readily relate to them.

Isaac's tragedy, however, is tersely explained in the Bible, and he is portrayed, by implication, as an obedient and willing subject who follows his father's instructions with trustful naivety. But from a careful reading of the text and relevant commentaries, we obtain a clearer view of Isaac's life-long suffering from the *Akedah* trauma and his actual estrangement from his father, who wished "to make up" to his son, as the text implies, but who did not succeed in winning back the alienated Isaac.

To be sure, Abraham — and Abraham alone — is central in Isaac's continuous nightmarish experience. Abraham, as the text portrays him, is always in a *hineni* state of readiness to do God's bidding: ready to transgress the limits of humane compassion for the sake of obedience *ad absurdum*. This "leap of faith," which is the result of suspension of the ethical, as Kierkegaard would argue, has been unsettling. It seems that all the arguments in the Midrash fall short in reconciling our conception of a just and compassionate God with God's demand to Abraham that he commit such a monstrous act. This divine command is also in direct contradiction of God's

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own assurance, *for it is through Isaac that offspring shall be continued.*¹

Yitzhak Kolar in an essay in Beth Mikra² declares: "The whole Akedah story is a riddle . . ." and Professor Goitein quoting Ibn Ezra argues: "Abraham Ibn Ezra rejected already the entire argument asking derisively: Why all these intimidating trials when God already knew beforehand their outcome."³

And again, Kierkegaard asks a pointed question: Why did not Abraham offer himself for a sacrifice in place of his son? The answer Goitein offers makes sense. The sacrifice of an old man who is ready to forego his life makes no great dramatic impact. However the sacrifice of one's "only" son is most impressively dramatic.

The Talmud,⁴ quoted by Rashi, introduces an interesting dialogue between Satan and God aiming at implicating Isaac as equally responsible for the Akedah drama and trauma:

Satan to God: "Look, at the banquet Abraham prepared, he didn't even offer one sacrifice in Thine honor."

God to Satan: "After all, it was in honor of his son. Had I asked him to sacrifice himself before me, he would not have hesitated."

Another version:

After Ishmael boasted to Isaac, that even though he was thirteen years of age, he accepted without any protest the pain which followed the circumcision. Isaac retorted: "You are boasting about one part of your body. Were God to ask me to offer up all my body I would do it without any hesitation." Thus Abraham and Isaac are portrayed as totally obedient servants and subservient to the will of God.

And yet in the Midrash⁵ we find also contradictory views. On Isaac's inquiry: *Where is the offering*, the Midrash tells us that

1. Gen. 21:12.

2. Tevet-Adar, 5744.

3. "עיונים במקרא" pp. 72-79.

4. Sanh. 89b.

5. מדרש משנה כספי Midrash Hagadol Vayera.

upon learning from Abraham the truth, that he is to be the sacrifice, Isaac burst into a bitter cry. These opposing views only reflect that the idyllic scenario of harmonious consent was not the unanimous rabbinic perception.

Professor Shalom Spiegel in his famous article *מאגרות העקדה*⁶ begins his study with the verse, *and Abraham returned to his servants*⁷ which is an opening for the question: And where was Isaac when Abraham returned from Mt. Moriah to his waiting entourage?

Spiegel presents us with two speculative answers.

1. Rabbi Josi the son of Haninah said: Abraham his father realized that a miracle took place therefore he sent Isaac away during the night to prevent an evil eye.

2. Rabbi Berachya in the name of his colleagues said: Abraham sent him to study in the school of Shem, where he remained for three years.

Spiegel presents us with two additional later commentaries:

1. Caspi in *כסף משנה* asks: Why didn't Isaac join his father Abraham in mourning and eulogizing Sarah; nor was he mentioned at all in Eliezer's mission until he returned with Rebekah? Caspi predicates his question on a textual reading that Isaac absented himself totally from all affairs and events until Rebekah came into his life . . .

2. Astruk's comment in *מדרשי התורה* is laced with a tinge of sarcasm when he observes: Possibly Isaac went quietly to hear what his father had to say to his servants (about his absence) and whether he would tell them everything or conceal from them the entire event. Or possibly (Isaac) was overwrought from the "binding" that he was too tired to join his father.⁸

The major question still remains: What happened to Isaac immediately following the *Akedah*? Did he leave the scene un-

6. ספר היובל לאלכסנדר מרקס.

7. Gen. 21:19.

8. מדרשי התורה להקדיש אנשלמה אשתורק, הוצ' שמעון עפפתשטיין ברלין תרנ"ט עמ' 36.

scathed, serene, and unharmed from this anguish-laden trauma? Or is the unreported condition of his state of mind indicative of a problem?

From the few biblical texts and from the exegetical materials in rabbinic literature, we are able to piece together a clearer picture of Isaac's lifelong psychological suffering from his early youth and culminating in the *Akedah* experience and its aftermath.

Sanford Seltzer's article⁹ attempts to deal with "Isaac's agony" claiming that Isaac's life was enmeshed in difficulties from the time his conscious life began. His relationship to his mother was possibly strained, in view of his witnessing Sarah's matriarchal struggle with Hagar, whom she succeeded in banishing, leaving Abraham in an emotional quandary, and Isaac bereft of an older brother to whom he could relate much better than to his aged parents. The text also lends itself to being interpreted that Isaac at first had a closer relationship with his father. The feast that Abraham threw for Isaac *on the day that Isaac was weaned*¹⁰ without mentioning Sarah's participation, may indicate a sort of "bachelor party" in honor of independence from Sarah's domineering grip. The textual statement, *and they walked together* may seem to be out of context in Genesis 22. It may rather point to this "father-son" relationship, unrelated to the *Akedah* that was in the making. Thus when Isaac later discovers through his unsuspecting inquiry, *and where is the sheep for the burnt offering?* and Abraham's answer, *the Lord will see to the sheep for His burnt offering, my son*¹¹ that Abraham is about to sacrifice him, we can well imagine the tragic break between father and son. It is therefore quite understandable that the Bible story hastened to settle this conflict with *and they walked together* as an afterthought, to smooth over the entire drama and obviate the obviously horrendous realization by Isaac that after trusting his

9. Sanford Seltzer, *Journal of Reform Judaism*, Summer 1981.

10. Gen. 21:8.

11. Ibid. 22:7-8.

father he is now being prepared for his own involuntary sacrifice.¹² This breach of trust, by a supposedly protecting father, caused an indelible and an irreconcilable conflict between Isaac and Abraham.

Whatever our speculation may be, the cynic should beware when he is to answer: Where was Isaac when Abraham returned to his waiting servants without him? The very silence of the Bible as to the immediate whereabouts of Isaac after the *Akedah* has been open to speculation, as we have seen it from the comments of the sages. It became quite clear that from a purely human point of view, the *Akedah* trauma was a devastating experience. No wonder that the "Protecting God" of Abraham: **מגן אברהם** became for Isaac: **פחד יצחק** the "Fear of Isaac". Does not the Bible's silence regarding Isaac's daily conduct suggest that he suffered constant depressive and melancholic moods that caused him to avoid social intercourse, and to spend his time in solitude? *And Isaac went out to meditate in the field*¹³ does not harmonize with tradition's suggestion that he went out to compose the Minhah Service. To me it seems more likely that he went to cry his heart out, oblivious of his surroundings.¹⁴

Abraham, with his burdened conscience, was obviously worried. He thought that the panacea for Isaac's condition was for him to get married. He summoned Eliezer, his chief of staff, and ordered him to find a wife for Isaac. Eliezer succeeded in his mission and returned home with Rebekah.

We may recall the scenario when the Eliezer-Rebekah caravan nears the Abrahamic homestead. We may read the text in a more sequential format: *And Rebekah raised her eyes . . . and said to the servant: "Who is this man walking in the field toward us?" And the servant said: "That is my master."*¹⁵ The text's language tells us of

12. Midrash Hagadol Vayera Ch. 22 offers here a telling comment:

"וילכו שניהם יחדיו: אחד בידו והלכו כאחד. אמר אברהם שמא ישא יצחק רגליו וירוץ"

And they walked together namely walking as one. Abraham held on to Isaac's hand out of fear, lest Isaac may escape.

13. Gen. 24:63.

14. "לשווד" suggests "to speak to himself."

15. Gen. 24:64-65.

something unusual beheld by Rebekah. It seems that she saw from a distance a person moving about in an unusual manner *מי האיש הזה*, *Who is that man?* is indicative of a strange sight. Read then the question of Rebekah: "Who is this strange looking person?"; and when she heard: *That is my master* the text continues: *ותרא אח יצחק* and she took a closer look at Isaac; and what happened *ותפל מעל הגמל* and she fell off the camel. The text should have read: *ותרד מעל הגמל* "and she descended the camel". Normally one dismounts the camel. Upon seeing Isaac, Rebekah fell off the camel? Perhaps the text meant to convey, that upon seeing Isaac, her intended husband, in such a distraught state, she fainted, therefore the text reads correctly: *ותפל מעל הגמל* and she fell off the camel.

Let us now turn to Midrash's insightful observation: Three years Isaac was mourning for his mother and every time he entered her tent and saw its darkness, he pulled his hair out.¹⁶ Isaac's first recourse after the *Akedah* experience was to run home and find comfort from his ordeal in the arms of his mother. But Sarah, by then, was dead. His sorrow and grief could not be contained nor assuaged. His previous extrication from his mother in favor of his father, and the horrendous betrayal by his father threw Isaac into a deep melancholy and depression until Rebekah came into his life: *Isaac then brought her into the tent of his mother, and he took Rebekah as his wife. Isaac loved her and thus found comfort after his mother's death.*¹⁷

And the Midrash continues: And since Isaac married Rebekah and brought her into the tent (of Sarah) the light was restored and Isaac found comfort.¹⁸ The Zohar elucidates further: Since Rebekah was endowed with the image of Sarah, Isaac found comfort for the loss of his mother. Here the Zohar makes a telling, incisive observation: Isaac actually saw in Rebekah a replica of his mother Sarah. The Zohar continues: The Torah does not say: "after the

16. Midrash Hagadol: Chaye Sarah, Ch. 24:67.

17. Gen. 24:67.

18. Ibid.

death of his mother" but rather "after his mother."¹⁹ That Isaac found Rebekah to be "after the likeness of his mother" and it was in this that he found comfort, constitutes a keen observation. In short, the Zohar claims that Rebekah replaced his mother; therefore he was comforted. Isaac, indeed, yearned more for a mother, the commentaries maintain, than for a wife; for the former represented the emotional security and reconciliation, which he craved. Rebekah later on succeeded to some extent in meeting his needs.

This and more. Since the *Akedah* experience had embedded itself so deeply in his mind, Isaac was subject to instant recollection by any associative reminder. For example, Seltzer reminds us,²⁰ that at the scene when Jacob deceitfully brings the dinner to Isaac, the text reads: *and he came to his father, and he said: Father! and Isaac said "Hineni" here I am my son.*²¹ Is it possible that Isaac subconsciously associated his off-guard response: *Here I am my son* with the same response he heard from his father Abraham when he inquired as to the sacrificial animal? Can one afford to speculate what scene was conjured up in Isaac's mind upon this accidental instant recollection of the suppressed frightening experience of his youth? Why does Isaac become terribly frightened at critical moments? Is this *and Isaac was frightened* an isolated reaction or part of Isaac's constant struggle with the memories which robbed him of a normal pursuit of life?

From the Bible text we learn by implication that since the *Akedah* there seems to be an abrupt break between Isaac and Abraham, and it was Isaac who kept avoiding his father, who tried to compensate for the anguish he caused his son.

The text informs us that after Isaac's marriage, Abraham remarried²² and created a new family. Then we continue to read: *Abraham willed all that he owned to Isaac, but to Abraham's sons by*

19. "ספר הזוהר" פי "חיי-שרה" הוצ' ספרים מעוז מאירי (1970).

20. Sanford Seltzer: *Isaac's Agony: A Psychoanalytic Midrash* JRS summer 1981.

21. Gen. 27:18.

22. *Ibid.* 25:1.

*his concubines Abraham gave gifts . . . and he sent them away.*²³ This seems contrary to the biblical laws of inheritance. Even if Isaac had been a first-born to Abraham, which he was not; Ishmael was, he would have inherited no more than a double portion: nor do we hear that Ishmael received anything. This, although Ishmael and Isaac cooperated in taking care of their father Abraham's burial and interred him in the cave of Machpela, which indicates that Ishmael was not estranged from his father nor out of the family picture.

How is it that Isaac inherited "all" of Abraham's possessions, asks the Midrash.²⁴ And why did Abraham give everything away to Isaac? and the Midrash offers a classical answer, in conformity with the established traditional understanding of the story: "Because he obeyed him (in all respects) like a servant obeys his master, therefore Abraham felt obliged to bequeath unto him all his possessions . . ." Taking this midrashic explanation at face value, we encounter a basic fact that Abraham was guilt-ridden about what he had done to Isaac and endeavoured to compensate with material goods, which was the least he could do for the unending nightmare he had brought upon Isaac.

Furthermore, it is unusual in the biblical tradition for a father to fail to bless his children before he died. Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau regardless of the complex circumstances. Jacob blessed all his children including Ephraim and Manasseh before he died. How is it that Abraham did not try to offer his blessings to Isaac, and Isaac did not seek Abraham's parting blessing? What we read in the Bible is that after the death of Abraham God blessed his son Isaac.²⁵ The Talmud²⁶ comments on the above text that this divine blessing was in the form of God's comforting the bereaved. Rashi adds the following commentary based on a midrashic source: Despite the fact that the Holy One blessed be His Name empowered Abraham with

23. Gen. 25:5-6.

24. Breshit Zuta 25:5.

25. Gen. 25:11.

26. B. Sotah 14b.

his blessings, nevertheless Abraham was afraid to bless Isaac since he foresaw Esau coming forth from his loins. Therefore he thought, rather let the Master of all blessings come and bless Isaac. And this is why God blessed Isaac instead of Abraham.²⁷ In all deference to the Midrash and the greatness of Rashi and their keen insightfulness, I submit that they were on the right track, but gave in to the prevailing opinion of traditional interpretation. Had they stopped at: "He was afraid to bless Isaac", it would have conformed with the psychological difficulties Abraham and Isaac were entangled in, as the text implies. Had Abraham summoned Isaac to his bedside for a parting blessing, he would have had to lay his hands on Isaac's head — the very same hands with which he attempted to slaughter him. Therefore the Midrash was right in stating that Abraham was afraid to bless Isaac. The Midrash perceived the lurking problem if Abraham were to bless Isaac.

From all the aforementioned evidence, it is clear that the tragic conflict between Isaac and Abraham was irreconcilable, and it also implies a didactic message that even a supreme "leap of faith" has no license to suspend the ethical behavior upon which human society depends for its very existence.

And yet the *Akedah* lesson has been of great sustaining encouragement and faith in the history of the Jewish people throughout the generations. Nevertheless, had Abraham disobeyed God's command, it may have equally driven home a great lesson of ethical import, to teach us that God tested Abraham's ethics rather than his blind faith in moments of great stress and dilemma. The hope of man rests in his ethical deportment rather than in his blind, unquestioned obedience to supreme authority.

27. *Ibid.* ad loc.

THE PROBLEM OF JOB: THE QUESTION STILL REMAINS

SIDNEY BREITBART

The character of Job as outlined in the Bible describes a man with no sense of communal responsibility. His challenge to God is limited to his own personal needs. Moreover, the book portrays its protagonist as suffering because of divine injustice, the result of a casual bet between God and Satan. Yet, the fact of narrow self-interest alone undermines the moral challenge against God that might have made the Book of Job a powerful universal work.

The Book of Job poses three intertwined issues: God's justice, human responsibility, and personal suffering. Job, like Abraham, cries out for divine justice. However, there the similarity ends. While Abraham demands God's justice on behalf of strangers in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, thus exhibiting a communal responsibility, Job argues on his own behalf, and then only when suffering befalls him. Job, in further contrast to Abraham, complains that his suffering is undeserved and thus unjust. Job's complaint of injustice also sharply contrasts with Abraham who does not complain but even silently sets out to sacrifice his only son by his own hands.

Nevertheless, since the terrible suffering that befalls Job is the result of a wager between God and the Adversary and not brought on by Job's actions, it is undeserving. Unaware of the source of his trouble, Job claims that as a man of integrity and righteousness, his suffering is undeserved because there is no suffering without sin.

From the very beginning of the Prologue, Job is said to be *blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil* (1:1,8).¹

1 *The Book of Job*, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1980, translation.

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This characterization of Job does not place him on a high moral plane of responsibility. The Hebrew words (וּסַר מֵרָע) "turns away from evil" do not imply any responsibility on his part to actively prevent evil. This is confirmed in his relations with his children. His children held feasts involving drinking, (1:4, 13).² Instead of preventing such actions,³ which lend themselves to sin,⁴ *Job would send word to them to sanctify themselves* and he would make burnt offerings for each one of his children.

Job failed to prohibit or dissuade these revelries. Evidently, Job was not concerned with actions which could result in spiritual and moral deficiencies. He showed no responsibility towards other people's actions, not even his children's which could lead them into evil paths. Job was guilty in the moral sense of acts by omission but not commission, even though he helped the needy, the poor, the widow, the orphan and the stranger.

As for Job's suffering, the Prologue to the book continues with the conversation between God and the Adversary about Job. The Adversary argues with God: *Does Job not have good reason to fear God? . . . But lay Your hand upon all that he has and he will surely blaspheme You* (1:9, 11). God agrees to the test. The question arises as to why God allows Himself to be persuaded by the Adversary. Nachmanides' comment on Job 22:1 states: "All trials in the Torah

2 a. A banquet (מִשְׁתֵּה) was so called from the prominence, at such feasts or banquets, of drinking, which led at times to excessive drunkenness. See *The International Critical Commentary — Job*, p. 6.

b. *When a round of feast days was over* (Job 1:5) — this indicates that the feast was not an occasional event as a birthday or celebration of a holiday. If they had been limited to one day's duration, the book would not say, *This is what Job always used to do* (Ibid.) (כָּל הַיָּמִים) which denotes every day. The plural use of days indicates prolonged or frequent events.

3 "In ancient days, the children were regarded as the absolute property of their father," Robert Gordis, *The Book of Job, Commentary, New Translation — Special Studies*, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, N.Y.C. 1978, p. 2. Under these conditions, Job could have stopped these feasts.

4 As Job put it, *Perhaps my children have sinned and blasphemed God in their thoughts* (1:5).

are for the benefit of the one being tested." If so, one may question of what possible benefit was this test to Job? Furthermore, not every individual who finds himself in the same situation as Job would react in the same way as Job, since his is a subjective reaction, not an objective one. Thus, Job represents a specific individual in a particular situation. The question itself, however, can be universalized in its application "Why do righteous people suffer?" And it is to this question that we must eventually turn.

As for God's justice, God allows Satan in the Book of Job to take the lives of Job's children. This is highly immoral. Why, in order to prove a point to the Adversary, is it necessary to take innocent lives (innocent in the sense of not being a principal in the test)? Even in the test of Abraham, Isaac was spared. In that case, it was God who authorized the test. Also, in all other tests, it is God who initiates them in the Torah, while in the case of Job, He assigns the test to another party. This is perplexing.

Job's reaction to his suffering is inconsistent. He proclaims that *the Lord has given and the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord* (1:21) and *should we accept only good from God and not evil?* (2:9), thus acknowledging God's unquestioned power and judgment. These statements exclude the right to question God for they serve as the answer as well. If God gave possessions and health to a person, He has the sovereign right to take these away without being challenged by man for an explanation. Thus, Job does not utter any blasphemy with his lips against God. Nevertheless, he demands an explanation for God's actions and in his lament he curses the day of his birth. If Job trusts God and believes that everything that occurs is the result of God's will, his curses can easily be construed as blaming God. Job further complains that *the earth is given into the hand of the wicked; He covereth the faces of the judges thereof* (9:24). However, since Job did not raise this complaint on behalf of those less fortunate when he was well off, he thus appears as an indifferent, uncommitted personality with no sense of responsibility beyond self-interest.

Modern commentators are sharply divided as to what the author of Job intended to teach his readers. The problem arises from the fact that in the speeches of God from the whirlwind (Chapters 38-42), God ignores the issue as Job posed it. Job, in his own view, a righteous person of integrity, challenges God for an explanation of his suffering. He sees only injustice in his situation. While he agrees with the concept that righteousness brings rewards, and suffering is a result of sin, he denies that his suffering is a consequence of sin, as his three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar insist. The implication is that Job's repeated assertions of a lack of a visible correlation between his life of rectitude and the dreadful fate visited upon him refutes his friends' contention that his suffering is proof of his sin.

Regarding God's response, Job, in ignorance of the reason for his suffering, demands a confrontation with God and an explanation. God, however, cannot provide an explanation because Job's dreadful fate was a result of a wager with Satan. Instead of explaining Job's suffering, God confronts Job with a series of seemingly irrelevant, ironic questions intended to illustrate to him the paltriness of human knowledge and power. God's answer implies that it is presumptuous of man to question His justice, an answer that stands in sharp contrast to His patient instruction of Abraham. Nevertheless, it is in the absence of any charge of guilt against Job in God's reply that we may find divine vindication of both Job's innocence and his argument, even though God did not affirm that there is suffering without sin.

God's constant reference to His awesome celestial power in answer to Job's desire for an explanation of the moral deficiency of justice in his innocent suffering can even lead to the conclusion, abhorrent in its nature, that "might makes right." Job, however, in finally encountering God in the whirlwind, stating, *This is my desire — that the Almighty answer me* (31:35), makes the choice to continue to trust God, not because of His power, but because of His "Living Presence." God's appearing as a "Living Presence" to Job

as an individual is not equivalent to God's appearing to the Jewish people in its entirety at Sinai. God speaks to Job. Thus, Job, in his ignorance of the cause of his suffering, can submit and in his defeat can say, *Even though He slay me, yet will I trust Him* (13:15).

The Book of Job not only upholds the force of God's power, but maintains that man is evil. All the protagonists in the book claim that man is evil. Eliphaz, Job's friend, denies that God's world order is the source of evil and places the blame squarely at the door of man:

*Indeed, misfortune does not come forth from the ground,
nor does evil sprout from the earth. It is man who gives
birth to evil . . . (5:6-7).*

In his bitter denial of his friend's position, Job never denies the moral responsibility of man. It is only that he demands the same standards from God. In demanding an answer from God with respect to his own suffering, even though he claimed complete innocence, Job does not present a universal problem. He demanded to know why he personally suffered, not why suffering is present in the world created by a God of Justice, Love and Goodness. It is true that in the course of his speeches, he does refer to the broader problem, but that is not the main thrust of Job's argument.

In the Epilogue, Job's fortunes are restored and other children are born to him, as if one child can replace one that was taken away. This situation certainly does not add to the theological and philosophical dialogues in the body of the book.

From our discussion, the Book of Job does not hold together as a theological or philosophical discussion of the problem. Even as a personal representation of a solution, it fails because of the conditions of the test on which the story was predicated.

Job's concern for himself (as indicated in the Prologue regarding his children's parties) remains to the end — as seen in the "answer" that he gets and his willingness to submit to it. No reference to communal responsibility is mentioned at all. Job is satisfied with the return to his former state of being, rich and having children, but

he does not instruct his children to avoid conditions which could lead to immoral behavior. He still believes that he is innocent and, therefore, suffering is not a consequence of sin. It is God's Will, which within its wide, unlimited scope, includes suffering of the innocent. The question still remains.

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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.

THE ABEL SYNDROME

SCHNEIR LEVIN

The first parents, Adam and Eve, symbolized paleolithic (old stone age) man. Their sons, Cain and Abel, symbolized neolithic figures, and in the correct order for, it seems, the taming of wild grains for bread preceded the domestication of sheep, goats and cattle. The sons were named, not necessarily at birth, but at some time during life, and surely with relevance to their chief features or activities. Cain means a stalk of straw, appropriate for an agriculturist, a tiller of the ground. Other explanations are unacceptable in an anthropological context. Cain cannot be derived from 'obtained' (*Kaniti*: I have obtained a man! from the Lord. Gen. 4:1), nor from 'smith', metal-worker (such as Tubal-Cain, Gen. 4:22, and the later Kenites, Numbers 24:22, presumed metal smiths) because this is an illicit example of eisegesis, reading back into the name the characteristics or attainments of a later period.

Cain derives from *Kaneh* (e.g. Gen. 41:5, 22), a stalk of some kind of grain. If this be so, why is the second son's name Abel not related to his herding activities? A common explanation is that his name recalls the shallowness and brevity of his life, but this is also an example of eisegesis and must be rejected. It is suggested here that his mother, during the course of Abel's development, had noticed something special and disturbing about him, something of greater cogency than his taming and herding of sheep, and she voiced her sadness and her diagnosis in the name Abel, meaning, in English, anything but able, indeed dis-abled. *Hevel*, after all, means worthless, futile, vanity (Eccl. 1:1), emptiness, void, even defective.

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There was something wrong with Abel. Eve thanked God for the birth of Cain, and for the later birth of Seth, but not Abel: he simply arrived (Gen. 4:2). How accurately does this notion portray the human family! A couple have a child, a blessedly normal child, and confidently expect another normal product from the next pregnancy, but no! A defective infant is delivered to grow up to disturb the family and the larger society. Should this defective child die, often the parents will want another child as a replacement; and what does Seth mean? It means replacement, a fresh foundation. It could be argued that Seth was a replacement for the dead Abel (Gen. 4:25); so he was, but in the light of the above suggestion it can be argued that he was a replacement for the defective Abel.

In what manner was Abel defective? In several ways, illustrating the wide spectrum of human deficiency. Consider what happened when Abel and Cain clashed. The Genesis story is curiously deficient on precisely this issue. The numerous English translations of this encounter are almost invariably faulty. Even the so-reliable New English Bible has "Cain said to his brother Abel, Let us go into the open country" (Gen. 4:8). (The Christian attitude must be anti-Cain because Abel is categorized as righteous: Matthew 23:35, Hebrews 11:4). Even the translation (Koren, Jerusalem, 1967) by Harold Fisch, translates verse 8 as "And *Qayin* talked with *Hevel* his brother." The Jewish Publication Society (1962) translation is true to the Hebrew *vayomer Cain el Hevel ahiv . . . And Cain said to his brother Abel . . .* A footnote explains that "Ancient versions, including the Targum, add 'Come, let us go into the fields.'" A similar inference appears in the Septuagint.

It seems that the biblical writer or redactor was reluctant to record what Cain said to Abel. It might not have been the "deliberate deceit" (footnote in the New International Version, 1983) of 'Come, let us go into the field' said to an unsuspecting Abel. It could have been quite the reverse; "Get off my field!" (see Genesis Rabbah 22:7 for support for this view). At some stage, perhaps during a period of drought or locust, when there was insufficient grain for Cain's (and his

family) own needs, the sheep of Abel had entered the fields of Cain, in effect plundering Cain. In other words, despite Cain's order to move off his field, Abel refused (Gen. 4:8, implied). To move to human frames of reference, a midrash even suggests that Abel was about to overcome Cain in a physical struggle, when Cain retaliated in self-defense and in defense of his property, hence the offense is manslaughter, not premeditated murder. The Hebrew as much as says so; it could have used the word *ratzah*, murder, as in the sixth commandment, for Cain's action, but no, it uses the root verb *harag*, kill, slay, manslaughter.

With admirable insight Rabbi Johanan explains (Genesis Rabbah 22:8) this clash in the following way. He claims that Abel was *gibor mikayin*, bigger, stronger, than Cain. Furthermore, he sees significance in the single word *vayakom* — and (Cain) rose up. If he rose up, the Midrash Rabbah states, he must earlier have been down, with the inference that Abel had felled him. On reading the Bible story with its midrashic exegesis, it is Abel who appears as the aggressor.

A modern clinician might be tempted to make the following tentative diagnosis. Although it seems bizarre it can fit into a type with a genetic disorder based on a karyotype masculine (chromosomal constitution) known as XYY instead of the normal masculine XY karyotype. The XYY karyotype has been known for several decades, and especially among penal prisoners. Initially, during the 1950s, it was observed that the men involved were generally tall and strong often resorting to anti-social behavior, including assault, and they were generally not very clever, so that they were easily apprehended and jailed.

During the 1970s and 1980s it was stressed that many ostensibly normal men, tall and strong, and with the XYY karyotype, were not criminally inclined and not significantly intellectually retarded, but a stigma in relation to XYY is still current because some, possibly a disproportionate number of such individuals, do fit the initial impression: "There is a definite correlation between the 47XYY

karyotype and the chance of internment in an institution for mentally retarded delinquents."¹ Adam's replacement, Seth, is specifically noted (Gen. 4:25) as being *zera*, seed, which could mean a normal genetic seed.

Might we consider the affected members of society as manifesting the 'Abel Syndrome' of *gibor*, tough and tall, given to violence and somewhat intellectually retarded. They are defective, and Eve had recognized her second son as such and tagged him accordingly as *Hevel*, deficient in two critical aspects of human behavior: he was anti-social and mentally retarded.

This proposed interpretation permits us to understand, in a new way, a couple of other matters relating to their physical clash. Cain, as a normal intelligent adult, brought to the Lord a gift of agricultural produce. It was not well received by the Lord. Abel brought the first born of his flock, not because he was more righteous: it is argued that in fact he was more thoughtless, or foolish. In the first place, during a time of drought or flood he could ill spare the best of his flock, and secondly, he used this means as a form of appeasement for his deficiencies, long manifest to all. The role of God as a righteous parent was also manifest. Irrespective of gifts, a caring parent might temporarily ignore the normal or older child and show favoritism to the younger or to the handicapped one, the one who so often requires special attention. There is a hint of this in Cain's *double-entendre* and resentful answer (Gen. 4:9) to God's inquiry about the dead Abel: *Am I my brother's keeper?* Am I, the normal son, always required to guard and keep watch over my problem brother? Is this my permanent duty?

Such an interpretation could indicate the special insights which modern science and sociology have brought to our understanding of human aberrations.

1 De Grouchy, J. and Turleau, C., *Clinical Atlas of Human Chromosomes* 2nd edit. John Wiley, New York, 1984, p. 399.

MOSES' THREE SIGNS: SYMBOL AND AUGURY

AVI RABINOWITZ

When from the burning bush Moses was given by God the mandate to liberate Israel from Egypt, he repeatedly refused it. Then when Moses objected regarding the elders of Israel *But behold they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice; for they will say: the Lord hath not appeared unto thee,*¹ God gave Moses three signs, involving a serpent, leprosy, and blood.

We wish to gain insight into the choice of the three signs which God gave to Moses by analyzing the context within which they were given — specifically the dialogue between God and Moses which immediately preceded the giving of the signs. Then we will show how the signs were both symbols of God's displeasure at Moses' inadequate response, and also auguries of later tragedies involving Moses and his loved ones — tragedies caused by the appearance of the same inadequacies exhibited by Moses in his dialogue with God.

In his dialogue with God, Moses had been guilty of three major transgressions:

He had not immediately accepted God's instructions, and had placed himself in the position of one who knows better than God what to do and what not to do.

He had slandered the Jewish elders, saying that they would not listen.

He had forestalled an act of *Kiddush Ha-Shem* — the sanctification of God's name — which would have followed upon acceptance of God's words by the Jewish elders: instead the elders were now to be impressed by the signs, rather than by the divine Presence resting on Moses.

1 Ex. 4:1.

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THE SIGNS AS SYMBOLS

We can see the signs as symbols relating to the above-mentioned offenses. Immediately after the objection voiced by Moses in the above quote, we read:

*And the Lord said unto him: 'What is that in thy hand?'
And he said: 'A rod.' And He said: 'cast it on the ground.'
And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and
Moses fled from before it.²*

The only prior mention in the Torah of a serpent is that of the creature in the Garden of Eden. There the serpent represents the force pushing man to disobey God, to neglect a personally directed divine command. Indeed, one can see in the serpent the symbol of that part of man which leads him to believe that he knows better than God what one should or should not do.

Therefore, as a symbol of Moses' refusal to follow God's command the sign was that of a serpent.

After this we read:

And the Lord said furthermore: 'Put now thy hand into thy bosom.' And he put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous, as white as snow.³

In the biblical tradition, the punishment for slander is leprosy. Thus Moses' slander against the elders was associated with the sign of leprosy.

Finally, we read:

And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe even these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land; and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land.⁴

2 Ibid. 4:2-3.

3 Ibid. 4:6.

4 Ibid. 4:9.

In preventing the *Kiddush Ha-Shem* — the sanctification of God's name — which would have followed upon the direct acceptance of God's words by the Jewish elders, Moses committed his most serious offense: one that warranted a penalty of death. The symbol of death is blood, whereas the symbol of life is water. Specifically to Moses, whose life was saved by the Nile river, Nile water symbolized life. Therefore the transgression of Moses in preventing the *Kiddush Ha-Shem* was symbolized by the transformation of Nile water to blood.

We will note that two of the three signs did not affect Moses personally, while one [the leprosy sign] did so in a very dramatic — albeit temporary — manner. Secondly, two of the signs were performed by Moses both in front of the elders and when God was demonstrating the signs to him, whereas one [the transformation of water to blood] was performed only once — in the presence of the elders — and was not performed when God demonstrated the other signs.⁵

The reason for the first distinction may become evident when we note that of the above mentioned three wrongs committed by Moses, two involved offenses against God, and one involved an offense against his fellow man — the elders.

We would assume that offenses committed against God should have been punished. Nevertheless we can see that the two offenses against God were not punished — the transgressions were merely symbolized by the signs of the serpent and the blood. Indeed, the signs were a helpful hint meant to warn Moses against a potentially fatal recurrence of such offenses.

It was only the offense against his fellow men — the slander — which was actually directly punished. The punishment for slander is leprosy, and indeed the sign involving leprosy was not a passive

5 The signs were given in the desert rather than near the Nile, and so demonstrating the sign using Nile water would have been possible only if the locale had been changed. Moreover, any water could have been used for the purpose — for example a nearby oasis, or desert stream.

or external sign like the other two — instead it directly involved Moses — his hand actually became temporarily leprous.

The second inconsistency finds its explanation in the timing of the transgression. Moses' rebellion against God and his slander of the elders took place during his dialogue with God. However the prevention of the *Kiddush Ha-Shem* occurs later, when the elders, witnessing the transformation of water to blood, react to the sign rather than to God's direct assurances to Moses.

THE SIGNS AS AUGURIES

The sign of the serpent can be seen as a warning meant to prevent a tragedy caused by Moses' own apparent lack of sufficient faith. Immediately after the dialogue between God and Moses, we are told a very strange story, which makes little apparent sense:

And it came to pass on the way at the lodging place that the Lord met him and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at his feet; and she said: surely a bridegroom of blood art thou to me. So he let him alone. Then she said: a bridegroom of blood in regard of the circumcision.⁶

Although the passage is very unclear in its meaning, it is obvious that Moses nearly suffered a tragedy due to the fact that he had neglected to follow the divine command to circumcise his son.⁷

Indeed, the words immediately previous to the above text are spoken by God to Moses — in apparent reference to Pharaoh — but their proximity to the above passage leaves an impression that they are double edged — applying to Moses as well. The entire text is as follows:

⁶ Ex. 4:24-26.

⁷ According to the Talmud, Moses had decided not to circumcise his son due to the danger to the child during their travel. He believed that this was the proper course of action under the circumstances. From the quoted passage we see that this was a mistaken judgement.

*And the Lord said unto Moses: 'When thou goest back into Egypt, see that thou do before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in thy hand; but I will harden his heart, and he will not let the people go. And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh: Thus saith the Lord; Israel is My son, My first-born. And I have said unto thee: Let My son go, that he may serve Me; and thou hast refused to let him go. Behold I shall slay thy son, thy first-born. And it came to pass on the way at the lodging place that the Lord met him and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at his feet . . .'*⁸

Thus the implication is that Moses' refusal to circumcise his son is being compared to Pharaoh's refusal to release the Jewish people, and that Moses or his son will be killed.

This episode — immediately after the giving of the signs — relates three things: a refusal of Moses to carry out a divine command, a divine threat of death, and circumcision. If we view the serpent which became a rigid rod as a phallic reference, as well as a symbol of rebellion against God, then one can see the first sign — the serpent — as an augury of a future refusal of Moses to obey God regarding a command involving the phallus.

Indeed the sages may have been implying some such connection between the serpent sign, the phallus, and Moses' disobedience. In interpreting the above incident concerning Zipporah, they state that a serpent attempted to slay Moses until Zipporah understood that the circumcision of her son was being demanded.⁹

Moses' older sister Miriam — who had watched over him as a baby while he was in the ark on the Nile — contracted leprosy after speaking critically about Moses. The suffering of the victim was

⁸ Ex. 4:21-26.

⁹ According to the Zohar — 1:93b — a fiery serpent. According to the Talmud [B. T. Nedarim 32:a and J. T. Nedarim 3:9] an agent of God, which according to Rashi was a snake-like being, swallowed Moses or his son until the *brit* from both sides [head, torso, and feet].

heightened by the fact that those who contracted this incurable disease were banished from the camp. Miriam's affliction greatly distressed Moses, and the Bible records his emotional plea to God to heal her.

It is fitting that her transgression in this matter was the result of her lack of faith in Moses' decisions, just as Moses responded inadequately to God in the dialogue quoted above. Furthermore, as Moses was the leader of the Jewish people, her slander of him was similar to his own slander of the elders during his conversation with God, when it was they who were the leaders of the Jewish people. Therefore during Moses' slander of the elders, the sign of leprosy can be seen as presaging this tragedy involving him and his sister.

In the well-known incident at 'the waters of quarreling', Moses struck the rock to produce water, rather than speaking to the rock as God had instructed. Since the watching people could perhaps be misled into thinking that the force of the blow released the water, this action of Moses prevented the sanctification of God's name. For this Moses and Aaron were destined to die before the entry into the Promised Land. This tragedy was augured by the third sign — the water turning into blood.

Moses began his life in the waters of the Nile, and was saved by these waters. Indeed, the Bible relates the name 'Moses' to the word for 'drawn from the water'. Furthermore, one can presume that God saved him from Pharaoh's decree only in order that Moses fulfil the very task he was now balking.

Thus the transformation of the Nile waters to blood was perhaps a hint to Moses that his life would be forfeit should he be guilty of preventing a *Kiddush Ha-Shem*, as indeed occurred at 'the waters of quarreling'. The sign of the water turning into blood was perhaps both a warning to Moses, and an augury of future tragedy to befall Moses and Aaron.

SUMMARY

The three signs associated with Moses' fateful first dialogue with God both symbolize his transgressions in that dialogue, and also act as an augury of the tragedies which will later strike Moses himself, his wife the 'Cushite', his brother, his sister, his son, and Zipporah — that is, all his immediate family.

1. Serpent as symbol: Moses had rebelled against God's command, an action associated with the serpent archetype. As a result, the first sign was a serpent. As augury: the serpent-rod symbolized rebellion and phallus — namely the refusal to circumcise his son.

2. Leprosy as symbol: Moses had slandered the elders, and was punished by the traditional punishment for slander — his hand became leprous. As augury: The sign of leprosy was an augury of the affliction of Moses' sister Miriam with leprosy after she slandered Moses, as Moses had slandered the elders.

3. Water to blood as symbol: By introducing the necessity of signs, Moses had prevented a sanctification of the Name. Therefore one of the signs was blood, symbol of death, the punishment for desecration of the Name. As augury: Moses' death prior to the entry to the Land of Israel — as a result of prevention of *Kiddush Ha-Shem* at the 'water of quarreling' — was augured by water — the symbol of life, being transformed into blood — symbol of death.

EZION-GEBER SOLOMON'S SEAPORT

ABRAHAM RUDERMAN

For many years archeologists have raised the question as to the exact location of Ezion-geber mentioned in I Kings 9:26. *King Solomon also built a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber which is near Eloth on the shore of the Sea of Reeds, in the land of Edom.* Alexander Flinder in an article in *Biblical Archeological Review*, (July-August 1989) raises the question "Is This Solomon's Seaport?"

According to Flinder, Ezion-geber is an island seven miles south of Elat. It was known by various names, Jezirat Faraun (Pharaoh's Island), Isle de Graye, and Carol Island. Jezirat Faraun, measuring 1,000 feet from north to south and 200 feet from east to west, provides the best natural anchorage of the region. Its importance in antiquity is beyond doubt. Hiram, king of Tyre helped build the fleet of King Solomon that sailed from Ezion-geber. I Kings 5:15 ff relates that King Hiram of Tyre contributed the cedars of Lebanon for building the ships together with his people's expertise, while King Solomon provided the manpower and the port from which his fleet embarked on a three year expedition bringing many treasures from far-off lands. The partnership between Hiram and Solomon lasted for many years as we are told in II Chronicles 9:21: *The king's fleet traveled to Tarshish with Hiram's (Hiram's) servants. Once every three years, the Tarshish fleet came in, bearing gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.* Philo, quoting the Phoenician historian Sanchoniaton, tells us that Hiram sent 800 camels laden with timber to Ezion-geber for the building of ten ships.

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

Throughout the nineteenth century travelers have been trying to locate the ports of Ezion-geber and Eilat, but no archeologically grounded claim was made until well into the present century. In 1938 Nelson Glueck, eminent archeologist, rabbi, and director of the American School of Oriental Research and President of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, suggested that his excavation at Tell el Kelifah, not far from the Gulf of Eilat, was none other than Ezion-geber of biblical fame. Today Tell el Kelifah is in Jordan west of the city of Akaba. In his book "Rivers in the Desert" 1959, Nelson Glueck expressed the conviction that Ezion-geber and Eilat were identical, a conclusion based on the verse in I Kings 9:26. Ezion-geber was located "beside Elath on the shore of the Red Sea in the Land of Edom." Glueck's conclusion was based on what he thought was a large copper smelting refinery which he found at Tell el Kelifah and attributed to the time of King Solomon. He based his evidence on what he thought was copper slag at the site and sulfuric discoloration of the wall on the smelting furnace. He sought further evidence in the positioning where the north winds from the Aravah were at their strongest, furnishing the best draft for the furnace. He even dated the pottery found at the site to King Solomon's time (10th Century B.C.E.) He also found casemate walls (two parallel walls with intermittent cross walls) typical of the Solomonic period. Glueck called this mining area King Solomon's Mines upon which Solomon's wealth was built. He called it the "Pittsburgh of Palestine." This conclusion was accepted for twenty years and was echoed by every book on biblical archeology.

Then in 1962 Glueck's theory was exploded by Benno Rothenberg, Glueck's chief assistant and photographer. Rothenberg published a paper in the *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* entitled: "Ancient Copper Industries in the Western Aravah." He disputed Glueck's theory on almost every point. What Glueck regarded as a furnace room was none other than a large grain storeroom, and sulfuric discoloration of the building was the result of a fire which destroyed the building. There was no evidence of large quantities of slag

usually associated with copper production. The flue holes in the furnace room were none other than the holes for wooden beams, some of which contained burnt wood destroyed in the fire. The site was not located on the windiest location in the valley as this was found further to the west. Finally the pottery dated to Solomon's time could not reliably be dated so early. Rothenberg's arguments seemed irrefutable.

In 1965 in an article in the *Biblical Archeologist*, Glueck recanted. He stated that he had come to agree with Rothenberg in every detail. His statement came as a shock to biblical archeologists who had held to his theories for decades.

Benno Rothenberg visited Jezirat Faraun in 1956 together with architect Avia Hashimshoni and students from the Haifa Technion. They mapped the island and recorded its architectural installations. They found a low-level sea wall around the entire perimeter of the island and the existence of a small harbor. The space between the island and the shore is extremely calm even when the open sea was choppy. Any sailor would appreciate what an excellent anchorage this would make. The perimeter wall contained nine projecting towers, two of which were located on each side of the channel leading into the harbor. This site was important in the Crusader period and during the Byzantine period. In 1968 Rothenberg led a fully equipped British-Israeli expedition for a three week season. He discovered two mounds of stone, the remains of marine "dolphins", mooring piers, just outside the harbor entrance. Two stone jetties were also found sticking out of the water from the mainland beach. The perimeter wall around the island is of the casemate type, consisting of an outer wall, an inner wall and transverse walls creating casemate rooms. The total thickness of the perimeter wall averages twenty feet. The nine towers of the perimeter wall were constructed of huge blocks, each precisely laid. The dating of this wall is conjectural. Pottery found in 1968 has been dated to the Iron Age 1200-930 B.C.E. Rothenberg's excavation of the Hathor Temple at Timnah, north of Eilat, has produced evidence of

an Egyptian mining operation in the 14th - 12th centuries B.C.E. and from this he concluded that the island was an Egyptian mining harbor of the Ramessid pharaohs. Rothenberg also points to the remains of a small metallurgical installation on the island as well as slag from iron smelting activities. The most convincing argument for identifying Jezirat Faraun with Ezion-geber is its geographical disposition, a harbor where a fleet would be protected from the elements even when the sea is most choppy. The plan at Jezirat Faraun is similar to those used at numerous Phoenician harbors in the Mediterranean, such as Tyre, Sidon, Atlit, and Acco — all of which follow the same pattern as Jezirat Faraun of Ezion-geber. Elath was used as a storage center while the ships would unload at Ezion-geber. In II Chronicles 8:17 we read: *Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to Elath*. There is no doubt in the mind of archeologists that Ezion-geber and Jezirat Faraun are one and the same.

BOOK REVIEW

A RABBI'S BIBLE, by Jonathan Magonet, London, SCM Press, 1991.
Pages 179.

SOL LIPTZIN

Jonathan Magonet is rabbi, educator, lecturer, and Principal of Leo Baeck College, London. His book is partially autobiographic, narrating his adventures with the Bible in a style popular, witty, anecdotal.

Like so many British, American and Canadian boys, his first encounter with the sacred Hebrew text occurred when he prepared for the Bar-Mitzvah ordeal. He had to learn an Haftorah with the appropriate cantillation and had to display his prowess before a synagogue audience to the delight of his parents and the polite acquiescence of the worshippers.

Coming from a family of physicians, he too planned for a career in medicine. During his university years, however, he had a second and more meaningful encounter with the Bible under the influence of inspiring teachers. He then decided to study for the rabbinate, a profession which would enable him to be a healer of souls rather than of bodies. Because of his earlier scientific training, he tried to understand the Bible rationally as a religious, philosophic and literary masterpiece and not merely emotionally as a fervent believer in Jewishness.

Participating for many years in interfaith conferences and interfaith Bible weeks, he came to appreciate the traditions and viewpoints of differing Jewish, Christian and Moslem lovers of the

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

Bible. He realized more and more that, despite many commentaries and midrashim of millennia by the finest scholars ranging from talmudic sages and influential medieval exegetes to the critical scientific investigators of our own day, new approaches and insights were still possible and indeed desirable. The Torah has myriad faces and each serious student who immerses himself in its intricacies can emerge with original interpretations and should not fear contradicting earlier ones.

The first half of the book demonstrates this conclusion by emphasizing various themes, events, characters and passages.

To illustrate with a single example, a famous passage in the opening chapter of Isaiah is generally assumed to mean: *Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* Without changing a single word, syllable, or letter in the Hebrew text but merely by reading the passage with an interrogative intonation — the passage can also be given an entirely different meaning: “*Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow? Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool?*” The former reading stresses God’s endless forgiveness while the latter reading is sarcastic and scornful, conveying an opposite conclusion.

Poets, novelists, dramatists have produced in diverse tongues splendid literary works inspired by major or minor biblical episodes. As a believer in interfaith contacts, the author demonstrates how such contact with non-Jewish biblical traditions can yield considerable enrichment even to rabbis, provided that participants are open minded and tolerant of contradictory views. If John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* is an enduring English classic, an epic dealing from a Puritan viewpoint with the fall of man and his expulsion from Eden, it does not bar the appearance of more recent imaginative works circling about this theme. A chapter on Adam and Eve’s leaving Paradise bears the provocative title: “*Did They Fall or Were They Pushed?*”

In the second part of the book, the author, despite reverence for

preceding sages, offers his own views on Salvation versus Redemption, on Universalism versus Particularism, on Prophets in Conflict, on Images of God, and other biblical ideas that have been sources of controversies down the centuries.

In calling attention to seers, visionaries, prophets — true and false, the author unveils complexities in the evolution of these terms, but it is in the chapter on the many designations for God that he wrestles to find a common denominator and has to confess that with all the information we can glean from the Bible, the invisible God remains also the Unknowable. Entrapped as we are in a universe of space and time, a universe of matter and energy, a universe of millions of galaxies and billions of suns, we know nothing of other universes that may exist or may have been created outside of space and time, where neither matter nor anti-matter, neither life nor death, neither good nor evil are meaningful terms. How then shall we fathom the essence of the Creator and Lawgiver of all the universes? The anthropomorphic terms we use for the Unknowable "I am that I am," merely express our consciousness of the distance that separates the n^{th} dimensional deity from our tri-dimensional humanity and the impossibility of our experiencing more than the merest hint of God's reality (p. 168).

Nevertheless, paradoxically, the Bible ventures into concepts, experiences and encounters with God. Rationally, we cannot know whether God is just or unjust, cruel or compassionate, but it is easier for us to live with the image of a just and benevolent deity. We may logically accept the notion that the Eternal who led our people out of Egypt also brought Aram out of Kir and the Philistines out of Caphtor. But it is more comforting to believe that there exists a special covenant between God and Israel and the Bible does not withhold such comfort.

The Torah is for the author a source of constant pleasure and he meanders along many paths exploring its richness. This pleasure he seeks to share with his readers and braids his comments with an abundance of humor. He is well aware that the God of the Hebrew

Bible never laughs. However, the gift of laughter has been bestowed upon the human species and Genesis already records the laughter of our first matriarch. With all reverence for the sacred text, the author wants us to find delight in its pages and relaxation even as we muse on its religious contents.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

It may seem presumptuous to disagree with Rashi, but I wish to raise a point which questions a Rashi comment. In Exodus 10:14 Rashi explains that whereas the plague of locusts in Joel consisted of several species, the plague in Egypt was one species.

Joel refers to a plague of Yelek, Hasil, Gazam and Arbeh. Yehuda Felix states that when the larva breaks out of its egg it is legless and wingless. This is a Yelek. When it casts off its skin it becomes a Hasil which has legs. It in turn casts off its skin twice to become a Gazam which has half wings. Then the Gazam develops into a full grown Arbeh or locust.

We will agree with Rashi that in Egypt there was only one species of locust. Yet in Psalm 78:46 we read: *He gave also their increase to the חסיל and their labor to the ארבה* referring to the plague in Egypt. And in Psalm 105:34: *the ארבה came and ילץ without number*, also referring to the plague in Egypt.

The two psalms refer to חסיל and ילץ as well as ארבה in Egypt. Therefore if Rashi is right that there was only one species in Egypt — then there was only one species in Joel, which goes through the metamorphosis from Yelek to Hasil to Gazam to Arbeh.

Isadore Cass

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir,

It is indeed unfortunate that Dr. Russel Edwards indulges in the process of "blaming the victim" in his article Reply to "Ahasuerus is the Villain" (Vol. XIX-1 Fall 1990).

To denigrate Mordecai for sitting in the king's gate when he could have sat elsewhere to avoid a confrontation, is to completely miss the point, namely that this "activity" is not simply "lazing around" but is an active process of advising, legislating, and working in and for the government.

Why does the king have to command obeisance to Haman? Could it be that Haman was advanced to a position he did not deserve? (3:1, 2). Mordecai states that he is part of the king's court in spite of the fact that he is a Jew, and that Haman did not deserve to be appointed above the others (3:1) for whatever reason?

Haman lost little time in plotting and activating the process of the destruction of the Jews, as well as giving a timetable. The act of Mordecai mourning in the king's gate (4:1) is the equivalent of advertising the event on television. Queen Esther is so isolated in the harem that she has no way of getting the news nor any means of preventing the tragedy until her conference with Mordecai via messenger (4:4-4, 17).

Furthermore, Mordecai probably recognized Haman's intentions regarding the kingdom, which Ahasuerus belatedly acknowledged in the incident of Haman being forced to honor Mordecai (6:4-6, 11) and at the party of the queen (7:8).

Finally, where would Mordecai get the 20,000 talents of silver, as suggested, to bribe the king? Haman would get his silver from the plunder of Jewish possessions. Mordecai did not have that luxury.

No, Mordecai is far from being the villain of the Purim story. To blame the victim is unconscionable. We know who the villain is: and it is not Mordecai.

Naphtali Gutstein

עשה תורתך קבע

THE TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
CHAIM ABRAMOWITZ

December 1991

January 1992

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

1	W	I Samuel 19
2	Th	I Samuel 20
3	F	Genesis 18:1 - 33
5	S	I Samuel 21
6	M	I Samuel 22
7	T	I Samuel 23
8	W	I Samuel 24
9	Th	I Samuel 25
10	F	Genesis 19:1 - 38
12	S	I Samuel 26
13	M	I Samuel 27
14	T	I Samuel 28
15	W	I Samuel 29
16	Th	I Samuel 30
17	F	Genesis 20:1 - 18
19	S	I Samuel 31
20	M	II Samuel 1
21	T	II Samuel 2
22	W	II Samuel 3
23	Th	II Samuel 4
24	F	Genesis 21:1 - 34
26	S	II Samuel 5
27	M	II Samuel 6
28	T	II Samuel 7
29	W	II Samuel 8
30	Th	II Samuel 9
31	F	Genesis 22:1 - 24

February 1992

2	S	II Samuel 10
3	M	II Samuel 11
4	T	II Samuel 12
5	W	II Samuel 13
6	Th	II Samuel 14
7	F	Genesis 23:1 - 20
9	S	II Samuel 15
10	M	II Samuel 16
11	T	II Samuel 17
12	W	II Samuel 18
13	Th	II Samuel 19
14	F	Genesis 24:1 - 32
16	S	II Samuel 20
17	M	II Samuel 21
18	T	II Samuel 22
19	W	II Samuel 23
20	Th	II Samuel 24
21	F	Genesis 24:33 - 67
23	S	I Kings 1
24	M	I Kings 2
25	T	I Kings 3
26	W	I Kings 4
27	Th	I Kings 5
28	F	Genesis 25:1 - 18

March 1992

1	S	I Kings 6
2	M	I Kings 7
3	T	I Kings 8
4	W	I Kings 9
5	Th	I Kings 10
6	F	Genesis 25:8:1 - 34
8	S	I Kings 11
9	M	I Kings 12
10	T	I Kings 13
11	W	I Kings 14
12	Th	I Kings 15
13	F	Genesis 26:1 - 35
15	S	I Kings 16
16	M	I Kings 17
17	T	I Kings 18
18	W	I Kings 19
19	Th	I Kings 20
20	F	Genesis 27:1 - 27
22	S	I Kings 21
23	M	I Kings 22
24	T	I Kings 6
25	W	II Kings 1
26	Th	II Kings 2
27	F	Genesis 27:28 28:9
29	S	II Kings 4
30	M	II Kings 5
31	T	II Kings 6

We mourn the death of

Professor Harold Wilkenfeld

A member of the Editorial Advisory Committee

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