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דפוס רפאל חיים הכהן בע"מ, ירושלים

EDITORIAL

גור בארץ הזאת

Many, though not enough, Olim from free democratic countries have settled in Israel. Some have come and have returned to their countries of origin. Most have remained in Eretz Yisrael.

It is our clear impression that Olim are looked upon by their friends and relatives in their former countries with great admiration, perhaps even with a touch of envy that they have not been privileged to be Olim likewise.

One wonders at times why have the Olim come to live in Israel, and why do they stay when it is so much more convenient to live in the "old country."

The motives for aliyah are obvious:

In Israel the Jew can live his Jewish life fully—religiously, culturally, communally. He is home.

In Israel he can feel the reality of the Bible. In his mind's eye he can see the patriarchs moving up and down the land. He can hear the majestic tones of Isaiah as he proclaims his universal messages from the Temple Mount or from near his home in the City of David at the Kidron Valley. He can stand at the Hadassah Hospital on Mount Scopus and look across the valley at the town of Anatot, the birth place of the Prophet Jeremiah. There is no end of personal enrichment as he relives Biblical experiences wherever he is in the land.

He can sense the import of Jewish history. He can stand before the Kotel in prayer or meditation and feel the glory of the ancient Temple. He can walk toward

the Zion Gate along the path outside the Old City wall and see the newly excavated Hasmonean wall of twenty one centuries ago and the Herodian wall of 2000 years ago described by Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first century, uncovered only recently. He relives Jewish history.

Another obvious reason is the self-awareness that he is living in the vortex of Jewish historical development in determining the destiny of his people. On the verse גור בארץ הזאת... כי לך ולורעך אתן כל האל (Gen. 26:3), the medieval commentator Sforno gives the reason for God's request of Isaac not to leave the Promised Land despite the famine:

והקימותי את השבעה אשר נשבעתי לאברהם אביך: By your occupancy of the land, I can thus fulfill My promise to your father Abraham. God needed Isaac to stay in the land if His pledge to his father was to be redeemed. The Jew today feels that same sense of mission so that the ideal purpose of Zionism may be attained.

But there is yet one more dimension to one's auspicious settlement in Israel despite the wars, economic vicissitudes and physical inconveniences often experienced. It is probably rooted in a mystical sense of duty.

Again, on the verse, אל תרד מצרימה שכון בארץ (Gen. 26:2), Rashi makes this telling comment: Isaac intended to go down to Egypt as his father had done in times of famine, whereupon God said to him: Do not go down to Egypt for you

are an offering without a blemish (עולה תמימה) and therefore residence outside Holy Land is not befitting you. Since Isaac had reached the highest level of holiness through his readiness to offer himself as a sacrifice—עקידת יצחק—his tie with the sacred soil of Eretz Yisrael became binding, and to leave the land would, as it were, constitute a repudiation of that sanctity.

The Jew today feels that same sense of duty that binds him to the land ever more tenderly. It is the awareness of all who live in Israel that they are constantly at the battle front with regard to the ever present terrorism. Wherever they are, in bus or supermarket, Israelis can understand the thankfulness of the prayer, ועל

ניסיון שבכל יום עמנו of the miracle of daily discovering objects imminently poised to explode. Also, all too often Israeli families mourn their loved ones who fall victims to the terrorist's bomb. The response to this unceasing danger all around them is: גור בארץ הזאת. They are obliged by the degree of sanctity reached, accruing from the existential situations of impending close-calls, to stay on with their people.

Inseparably part of עם וארץ—land and people—Olim will continue to enjoy the blessings of Israel, glory in its glories, accept its challenges and wait patiently for a better day to come when tranquility will be the norm of the land.

Louis Katzoff, Editor

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WAS JONATHAN GUILTY?

A Study of I Samuel Chapter 14

BY LAWRENCE M. SILVERMAN

When Jonathan and his armor-bearer made their foray against the Philistines at Gibeah/Geba (I Samuel 14:6-16), two events which were related to Jonathan's absence took place in Israel's camp. First, Saul's sentries witnessed the initial results of Jonathan's assault, although at the time they did not know that Jonathan was responsible (vv. 16-17). Second, before that day's pursuit of the Philistines, Saul pronounced a curse that would fall upon anyone who ate food before the day's end, when the rout of the Philistines would be complete (v. 24). Since Jonathan was absent from the camp at the time Saul uttered the curse, Jonathan was not aware of it.

These two events, both related to Jonathan's absence, bore a further, dramatic similarity to one another. In connection with both events, Saul and Ahijah the priest made inconclusive attempts to ascertain God's counsel (vv. 18-19, 36-37). In the first case, Saul's consultation was interrupted by the tumult in the Philistine camp (v. 19); in the second case, his consultation was frustrated, apparently because Jonathan had become cursed by eating food (vv. 25-30, 38).

In our examination of these related events in the Biblical narrative, we wish to raise several questions. First, why did Saul consult with Ahijah in particular on these two occasions? Second, why were both consultations inconclusive? Third, and perhaps most in need of an answer, how could Jonathan become cursed, when he had not heard his father warn the people not to eat?

CONSULTING AHIJAH

Ahijah's presence at the battle-front as custodian of the Ark was not without precedent. Hophni and Phineas, the sons of Eli, had taken the Ark into a previous, ill-fated encounter with the Philistines (I Samuel 4:4-11). The Ark, which was a cause of dread to the Philistines (4:5-8; 5:10-11; 6:1-9), seems to have been regarded by Israel as an embodiment of God's guardianship of his peo-

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ple. Possibly Saul took the Ark with him to the battle-front on other occasions. But the presence of the Ark and a custodian-priest is mentioned only in connection with the battle against the Philistine garrison near Gibeah. The Ark's presence had special importance in this particular situation because, through Ahijah and the Ark, Saul had a possible access to God's word.

Israel's confrontation with the Philistines is portrayed as having taken place within a short time after Saul broke Samuel's command at Gilgal (13:8-14). At the time of Saul's anointment, Samuel had commanded Saul to wait for him seven days in Gilgal; according to the command, Samuel would then arrive and offer sacrifices before Samuel's and tell Saul what to do (9:8). Saul broke the command, however, by offering sacrifices before Samuel's arrival. Saul was punished in that Samuel prophesied that his kingship would not be established (13:5-15). Saul may also have been punished in that Samuel left Gilgal before telling him what to do. Samuel withheld from Saul the promised instructions which were vital to him on the eve of his battle with the Philistines. Since no word from God was forthcoming through the prophet, we can understand why Saul turned to the priest: in order to obtain God's word by other means, i.e., through the medium of the Ark.

When Saul's sentries initially reported an unusual commotion in the Philistine camp, Saul ordered a count to be taken of his own troops (14:16-17). It was at this point that the absence of Jonathan and his armor-bearer was discovered. Saul then summoned Ahijah in order to obtain a word from God (v. 18). But the Philistine camp was evidently in so great a state of tumult, that Saul interrupted Ahijah, gathered his men, and went to the battle (vv. 19-20). God's word, therefore, was not revealed to Saul by Ahijah and the Ark. Yet, God's word already had been revealed to Jonathan by means of the sign Jonathan had proposed to test God's intention. In response to God's word, as it had been shown to him, Jonathan initiated the attack against the Philistines; and his attack had the effect of motivating Saul to commit his small army to the battle (vv. 8-12).

DISREGARD OF OTHER HUNGRY MEN

During Jonathan's absence, Saul cursed any man of Israel who ate food that day:

Cursed be the man who eats any food until evening, and I am avenged on my enemies (v. 24).

Yet, in Ralbag's view, Jonathan's ignorance of the curse was no excuse for his violation of the fast imposed by Saul (see Ralbag on I Samuel 14:24).

When the people came into the forest, behold, there was a flow of honey. But no man put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath (v. 26).

Ralbag argues that Jonathan was guilty because he disregarded the behaviour of all the other hungry men of Israel, none of whom ventured to taste the honey. This unusual behaviour, Ralbag suggests, should have prompted Jonathan to inquire into the reason the people refrained from eating. Jonathan did not do so, however, but ate of the honey without regard for the abstinence of his companions, one of whom immediately informed him of Saul's curse (v. 28).

Later, when Saul had formally broken the fast by setting up an altar to sanctify the slaughter of meat, he once again summoned the priest (vv. 34-35). While the narrative is not specific on this point, it may be assumed that the priest was Ahijah and that the Ark was involved, as in the first consultation. Saul's purpose was to determine Israel's next move in the battle with their enemies.

Saul asked counsel of God: "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?" But he answered him not that day (v. 37).

As before, the process of seeking the word of God was inconclusive. This time, however, the process was not interrupted by the pressure of circumstances; but rather, it was frustrated by an unknown obstacle. Saul immediately realized that this obstacle was the result of a sin (v. 38). Even when Jonathan had been found out and acquitted by the people, Saul did not inquire further for God's word that day. Saul apparently decided that, in this case, God's failure to answer was the same as a negative answer. Since God obviously had withdrawn his favour from Israel, Saul abandoned his pursuit of the Philistines (v. 46).

CASTING LOTS

When prophecy had been withheld by Samuel and God had not communicated through the mediation of the priest, Saul attempted to discover the reason for God's displeasure by means of casting lots (vv. 38-42). By this system, whose mechanism may have involved a binary process of elimination, it was believed

possible to determine God's judgement. This system was used, for example, by Samuel before he publicly designated Saul as Israel's leader (I Samuel 10:20-21); and by Joshua, when he assigned the tribes their portions in the Land (Joshua 15:1, et seq.).

Some commentators understand the casting of lots to have involved the Urim and Thummim. If there is a reference to the Urim and Thummim in the Hebrew text, it may be in Saul's words, "הִבֵּה חֲמִים" (I Samuel 14:41), generally translated "declare the right," in accordance with the Masoretic reading. (See also Rashi, Radak, Ralbag, and Targum Jonathan on this passage.) But the Hebrew phrase may also be read "הִבֵּה חֲוֹמִים—give Thummim", as indeed it is translated in the Septuagint. The Septuagint parallel, moreover, records a prayer uttered by Saul immediately before the casting of lots. Only the last two words of this prayer have an equivalent in the Masoretic text.

Saul said: "O Lord, God of Israel, why have you not answered your servant this day? If the guilt be in me or in Jonathan my son, O Lord, God of Israel—give Urim! But if you say, 'It is in my people Israel' — give Thummim!" (Septuagint on I Samuel 14:41).

We note that some modern scholars regard the Septuagint as preserving an original tradition (cf. Henry P. Smith, et al.). In their opinion, only a fragment of this tradition — the last two words — has been preserved in the Masoretic text. Our concern, however, is not to investigate possible relationships between the Masoretic and Greek traditions. We propose instead to try to make sense of the narrative as it is presented in the Masoretic version alone.

NOT A MAN ANSWERED HIM

Convinced that a sin on the part of Israel, or an Israelite, was the cause of God's silence, Saul tried to identify the responsible party. But when Saul confronted the people before the lots were cast, "there was not a man among all the people that answered him" (v. 39). Jonathan's failure to acknowledge his guilt stands in contrast to his later willingness to accept his punishment (v. 43). Why did Jonathan acknowledge his deed only after the lots had been cast?

Saadia Gaon suggests that, since Jonathan had not been present when Saul imposed the fast on Israel, he knew he had sinned through error. Jonathan knew that popular opinion was in his favor, Saadia argues, and that his own admission of guilt would have been repudiated by the people. But God's judgement, revealed

by the lots, could not be rejected. Saadia concludes that Jonathan therefore wanted his guilt to be determined in that manner, so that the verdict would be accepted by Israel. (Saadia's view is cited by Abravanel in the latter's commentary on I Samuel 14:37ff.).

WHY IMPOSE A FAST ON ISRAEL

The nobility of character ascribed to Jonathan in the interpretation of Saadia is consistent with the picture of Jonathan given elsewhere. Abravanel, however, offers an alternative explanation of Jonathan's initial refusal to admit his guilt. Abravanel suggests that Jonathan saw nothing wrong in eating the honey and, moreover, that Jonathan blamed Saul for imposing a fast on Israel that day.

My father has troubled the land! See, I pray you, how my eyes have brightened because I tasted a little of the honey. How much more if, perhaps, the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies, which they found! Would there not have been a greater slaughter of the Philistines? (vv. 29–30).

Jonathan believed himself to be innocent, Abravanel concludes; and for this reason, Jonathan confessed that he had eaten only after he had been singled out by lot and Saul had said: *Tell me what you have done* (v. 43).

Regardless of the interpretation adopted, it is clear that Saul believed Jonathan to be the cause of God's anger. But when Saul re-iterated his vow to punish the offender by death (vv. 39, 44), the people intervened in Jonathan's behalf, vowing that he should not be harmed: *So the people rescued Jonathan that day, that he died not* (v. 45). It is not certain how the people overruled Saul's vow and released Jonathan from its consequences. Possible, as Rashi, Ralbag, and Radak suggest, the vow of the people was understood to take precedence over the vow of the king, so that Saul's vow was no longer considered binding. Possibly the people ransomed Jonathan by offering an animal in his stead.

Saul may have been correct in his judgement that God's failure to answer him was the result of a sin on the part of Israel. Yet, the fact that Saul resorted to casting lots in order to identify the sinner is actually surprising. To begin with, there were many known sinners present in the Israelite camp. Did not Saul himself sin at Gilgal, on the eve of the battle with the Philistines? After that battle, did not many Israelites sin by flying upon the spoil and eating meat with

blood (vv. 32-33)? Was not any one of these sins sufficient cause for God to withhold His word from Israel? As for Jonathan, was not his sin in eating the honey, if indeed this was a sin, less reprehensible than the sins committed by Saul and the people?

JONATHAN'S INNOCENCE

A resolution of these difficulties may be possible if the significance of the casting of lots is re-interpreted. As we noted above, Abravanel explains that Jonathan did not acknowledge his guilt before the lots were cast because he believed himself to be innocent. Abravanel further maintains that God's support of Jonathan must be taken for granted, as indeed the people took it for granted (v. 45); for God gave victory to Israel that day in response to Jonathan's act of faithfulness. God's displeasure with Saul and the rest of Israel, however, must be recognized. Of all the men of Israel, in Abravanel's view, *only Jonathan was innocent*; and the casting of lots actually demonstrated his innocence.

DECLARE THE RIGHT

Abravanel's revolutionary interpretation is, first of all, incompatible with the version of the story presented in the Septuagint. As indicated above, the Septuagint records a prayer uttered by Saul immediately before the casting of lots; and according to the terms of this prayer, it is clear that the person designated by lot *can only be understood as guilty*, not innocent. Yet, as we observed, the Masoretic text does not contain this prayer; this version states that Saul spoke only two words before the lots were cast: הִבֵּה חַמִּים — *Declare the right* (v. 41).

Abravanel accepts the Masoretic as complete, commenting upon it as follows:

When Saul consulted the Urim and Thummim, they did not reveal Jonathan's sin, but rather his own sin, because he had transgressed the word of God at Gilgal. Moreover, the victory which God had given to Israel by his hand was only because of the merit of Jonathan. Therefore, when Saul asked whether he should pursue after the Philistines, God did not answer him, in order to show that he did not favour him and did not desire his pursuit. But when Saul cast lots and asked God to "declare the right" [or: "Indicate who is righteous"], Jonathan was chosen.

Abravanel on 1 Samuel 14:37ff.

In the casting of lots, then, the people were eliminated in the first round on ac-

count of their sin; in the second round, Saul was eliminated because of his sin; only Jonathan was taken. While God meant to indicate by this result that his favour was upon Jonathan, Saul understood exactly the reverse and accused Jonathan of bringing God's displeasure upon Israel.

Abravanel's interpretation, we believe, is wholly compatible with the Masoretic text as it stands. His explanation resolves the difficulties and answers the questions raised above. It is, moreover, consistent with the Biblical portrait of Saul as a man who distorted the word of God. Saul apparently did so on two occasions at Gilgal: once when he offered sacrifices without waiting for Samuel's promised arrival (13:8-14); and later, when he spared Agag and offered sacrifices of Amalekite spoil in contravention of Samuel's divinely authorized command (15:1-31). In a similar fashion, after Saul's battle with the Philistines at Gibeah, he distorted God's judgement when it was revealed to him through the casting of lots. Jonathan was designated as the man who was in the right; but Saul misinterpreted God's judgement and condemned to death the one on whom God had set his favor.



The breastplate, worn by the Kohen Gadol, contained the Urim V'tummim

PROPHECY — A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

BY SHIMON BAKON

PART - I

Phenomenology is a method of analyzing psychological phenomena as data of the immediate experience. It elucidates phenomena of behavior as they manifest themselves in their perceived immediacy. It rejects causality. Behavior displayed now is not necessarily caused by previous behavior. Phenomenology much prefers the discipline of "motivation" and "intent" in the arena of human behavior, rather than causation: a window closed by a wind and a window shut by man discloses the major difference between the categories of causality and motivation. To round out some of the methods employed by phenomenology, it rejects dissection, because it reduces man to fragments which defy re-synthesis.¹

This method, it seems to me, is superbly equipped to deal with the unique phenomenon of Jewish prophecy. If there is such a thing as a field theory of being, then the prophet has his true being in *being motivated* by the spirit of God. True to the proposition that "articulation" is possible only in the context of a whole that has been left intact², the prophet can be understood only in his inextricable relation with God, Who has overwhelmed him, has imposed upon him a task which, at first he accepts most reluctantly, but then with a sense of total commitment. This is how the phrase *and the hand of the Lord was upon me*, often found in Ezekiel, has to be understood.

This is not to be confused with the intellectual amor dei of a Spinoza. It is an existential immersion in the service of the Lord, motivated by a sense of awe, balanced only by his readiness to intercede on behalf of his people, to argue with God and even challenge Him. In short, overwhelmed by divine imperatives, he is engaged in a life-long, thankless dialogue with his Master.

¹ Medard Boss, *Psychoanalysis und Daseinsanalysis*, 1963, p. 285.

² Ibid p. 263.

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In keeping with the thesis of phenomenology, any approach that views Jewish prophecy as a derivative of other movements, or attempts causal explanation of this unique phenomenon, will be repudiated. The sole source to assess the experience of the prophets is Scripture which tells of their acts, behavior and words.

MOSES – THE PARADIGM OF PROPHECY

Scholars are split on the etymology of נביא – prophet. Some base this term on the Akkadian “nabi,” having the significance of “Calling.” According to this interpretation the נביא is one having been called (by God).³ Others view נביא as stemming from נבו, signifying “to announce,” to “speak” (for God) – in other words, being a mouthpiece of God.⁴

Utilizing the phenomenological approach, a much clearer and comprehensive picture of prophecy emerges if we go back to the primary sources, foremost Exodus. There we will note the birth of a prophet who was to serve as a paradigm of all prophets: Moses.

At the encounter at the burning bush,⁵ the Lord “called unto him... and said: Moses, Moses. And he said! Here am I.” The Lord then burdens him with the responsibility of bringing forth the people of Israel from Egypt, and to bring them into the promised land. After repeated refusals, Moses accepts this mandate.

Already at this stage we note a few elements characteristic of Jewish prophecy: being *called* by the Lord to do His bidding, namely, to serve as His messenger and *redeem* the people. It is most revealing, that at this hour of great need, when the people are at a breaking point, God calls on Moses to be His messenger to fulfill God’s part of the covenant. We note a profound *reluctance* on the part of the person called to prophecy to answer the call. It is then, at the final part of the remarkable dialogue, that a fourth element of true prophecy emerges. To Moses’ objection that “he is slow of speech and of a halting tongue,” the Lord responds: “Now therefore go and *I will be with thy mouth* and teach thee what thou shalt speak.”⁶ What we now have is the prophet as the *passive mouthpiece* of the Lord. He is a humble vessel, waiting for the words of the Lord to come to him.

It is only in this context that the paradox of Moses, a man of whom Scripture

3 W.F. Albright, *Von Der Steinzeit Zum Christentum*, p. 301.

4 מקורו הנבואה והתפחחותו, לוי אשד.

5 Ex. 3:4.

6 Ibid 4:10, 12.

tells that God spoke mouth to mouth with him on one hand, and that he was the humblest of men on the other can be understood. It is not his greatness nor his power which is extolled. He is depicted as a man to whom the power of prophecy is vouchsafed by the grace of God. There is no room for arrogance.

DEGREES AND UNFOLDING OF PROPHECY

In an incident related in Numbers 12:6-8, where Miriam and Aaron "spoke against Moses," the Lord interceded and said: "...if there be a prophet among you, I the Lord make Myself known unto him in a vision. I speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so... with him I speak mouth to mouth."

This encounter clearly indicates degrees of prophetic endowment. As mentioned before, a part of God's commitment to the Jewish people is the promise that He will raise up prophets. But these prophets vary. There are prophets like Moses and prophets like Miriam; there is an Elijah and there is an Elisha; and there is also a considerable difference in prophetic endowment between an Isaiah and a Micah. To some He makes Himself known in visions, to others in dreams. To some very elect He speaks mouth to mouth.

It is crucial to our understanding of prophecy that the implications of monotheism, dawning slowly on the consciousness of Israel, were far from being grasped. There was also a process of *unfolding*, interspersed with serious backslidings in the comprehension by Israel of monotheism or the full implications of the Covenant; the prophets were those few individuals to whom a clearer insight into the complexity of its seeming pristine simplicity was vouchsafed.

It was these processes of degree of prophetic gift, the unfolding of elements that already had been in existence, and the dialectics of seemingly irreconcilable concepts such as ethics and worship, universalism and particularism, God's immanence and transcendence, His mercy and His unbending justice, which were operative in the unique movement of Jewish prophecy. It took almost one thousand years before the import of the battle between paganism and monotheism engaged in by these prophets became fully understood by Israel and became her unquestioned possession.

ENQUIRING OF THE LORD: TWO ALTERNATIVES

Mantis, the art of enquiring into what the future held in store for men, was widely practiced in the ancient Near East. There were individuals who from the

flights of birds or the composition of entrails or the liver could “foresee” the future.

In ancient Israel there also existed legitimate means of making enquiries of the Lord. The brevity enforced by an article limits me to mention just a few: the sign, the lot and the Urim VeTumim.

An “אות – Sign” could be requested of the Lord by any man and on any specific occasion. Eliezer⁷ prays that the “sign” by which he can recognize God’s chosen bride for Isaac, would be a girl who, on being asked to provide drink for him, would also volunteer drink to the camels. It was an excellent, common-sense sign. A girl responding thusly is a young lady of charitable character and blessed with energy – for offering drink to ten thirsty camels requires prodigious effort – a fitting help-mate for the passive Isaac. Jonathan’s heroic exploits at the crags of Bozez and Seneh⁸ after requesting a sign, leading to a decisive victory for king Saul over the Philistines, can be interpreted in the same vein. Gideon prayed for signs as marks of assurance that “Thou wilt save Israel by my hand.”⁹

In all these cases none is versed in the occult art of reading signs; and these signs were requested on a very specific occasion.

The “גורל – Lot” was used to ascertain which of the two goats was consigned to Azazel and which as a sacrifice on Yom Kippur.¹⁰ The Book of Numbers¹¹ proposes lots as a means of dividing the land of Canaan to the tribes of Israel. Joshua¹² makes use of lots repeatedly to implement the division of the land. On one occasion he finds by the method of the lots that it was Achan¹³ who was responsible for the defeat at Ai. Samuel¹⁴ elects Saul by the process of lots, to be king in the presence of the peoples’ representatives.

The “אורים ותומים – Urim VeTumim,” described in Ex. 28:30, Lev. 8:8, Nu. 27:21 and Deut. 33:8 pose for us a few unanswerable questions. What we know for a certainty is, that the Urim VeTumim were solicited by priests only. The questions addressed to it were of a nature that allowed either a positive or a negative answer.

7 Genesis 24:12-15.

8 I Sam. 14:4-10.

9 Judges 6:36-40.

10 Leviticus 16:8-10.

11 Numbers 26:55, 33:54, 34:13.

12 Joshua 14:2, 15:1, 16:1, etc.

13 Ibid 7:14-17.

14 I Sam. 10:20, 21.

When we examine the sources we note that the utilization of the lots and the Urim VeTumim, reaching a height during the early reign of David, went out of fashion thereafter. It seems quite certain that with the renewed ascendancy of prophets of the stature of a Gad and Nathan, the *spirit of the Lord* speaking through them was valued higher than the mechanical use of lots or the Urim VeTumim.

Two things are very clear: there existed two alternatives of making enquiries of the Lord. There is no warrant for the assumption that one led to the other. In fact, Samuel had “seen”¹⁵ the coming of Saul as the anointed king prior to confirming him by “lots.” Indubitably there was a price to be paid for the “subjectivization” of the prophetic alternative. Anyone could now claim to speak in the name of the Lord, thus leading to the spectacle of the false prophet. Second, it was in the nature of the dialectics of the Covenant, that sometimes the stress was laid on “what man can expect from the Lord” and on other times on “what the Lord demands of man.” It was with the coming of the classical prophets that the second aspect of the dialectics was much more strongly emphasized. Yet both co-existed.

רואה-חזה-נביא – SEER, PROPHET

Beforetime in Israel when a man went to inquire of God thus he said: Come let us go to the seer. For he that is now called prophet - נביא - was beforetime called a seer - רואה - (1 Sam. 9:9).

Does this comment mean that the seer preceded the prophet? In fact Samuel himself had established prophetic schools and we encounter the expression חבל נביאים – band of prophets a few verses later (10:5). What is more, on the very day preceding Saul’s arrival at Ramah, the “Lord had revealed unto Samuel...: “Tomorrow about this time I will send thee a man... and thou shalt anoint him to be prince over My people.”¹⁶ Undoubtedly, Saul, in his touching innocence, viewed Samuel as a “diviner” who could unravel for him the whereabouts of three lost asses. There is deep irony in this account. Seen from the standpoint of Samuel, he must have wondered what kind of simpleton God had elected to be king. Here was a man, prophet, seer, a charismatic leader who had subdued the Philistines, had restored some of the cities lost to them, a circuit judge and chief priest,

¹⁵ Ibid 9:16. ¹⁷

¹⁶ Ibid 9:16.

presiding over three sanctuaries, Beth El, Mitzpah and Gilgal. And to him comes that farmer with a ridiculous request, offering a quarter Shekel for that important man's service.

It is true that to shore up the lacking self confidence of Saul, Samuel gives him three signs, the third of which was that Saul would meet a band of prophets — חבל נביאים¹⁷, prophesy with them and "... be turned into another man,"¹⁷ a man gaining in self-confidence, in preparation for kingship and at the same time cleared from the dross of superstition, undoubtedly far spread in Israel.

But there is not the slightest hint of the "diviner" in Samuel. He is first and foremost the prophet-judge-priest attempting to create a united Israel under the kingship of God.

After Samuel we meet two prophetic personalities: Gad and Nathan. Gad is designated both as seer-prophet חוזה-נביא,¹⁸ while Nathan is consistently named the נביא-prophet. Why a much later document, Chronicles, calls Samuel the רואה-seer, Gad the חוזה-seer, and Nathan the נביא-prophet, is beyond the bounds of this article.¹⁹ At any rate we see a simultaneous designation of prophetic functions in terms of נביא, חוזה, רואה, one not preceding the other. Again there is no warrant for the assumptions that seer corresponds to diviner, nor that the seer was a stage preparing the way for prophecy. In fact, the quality of seer, one to whom God reveals the future, is a concurrent quality characteristic of the greatest of the later, literary prophets. Deuteronomy, indeed, makes fulfillment of prophecy the mark of the true prophet.

THE GLORY OF ISRAEL WILL NOT LIE NOR REPENT

It is on two occasions where the concept of God who will not repent occurs. On the first Balaam, a strange man, part magician part prophet, who had been invited to curse the Jewish people, anxious but unable to force the hand of the Lord ("Behold I am bidden to bless, and when He hath blessed I cannot call it back"), utters the following words:

¹⁷ Ibid 10:6.

¹⁸ f.i. II Samuel 24:11 — חוזה דוד, חוזה הנביא, דוד.

¹⁹ I Chronicles 29:29 — הראשונים והאחרונים הנם כתובים על דברי שמואל הרואה ועל דברי נתן הנביא ועל דברי גד החוזה.

Seemingly we deal with various strands of prophetic functions whose significance is lost to us.

*God is not man that He should lie
Neither the son of man that He should repent*

(Nu. 23:19)

On the second, we find a similar sentiment expressed by Samuel, when he announces to Saul:

*The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day...
And also the Glory of Israel will not lie nor repent
For He is not a man that He should repent.*

(I Samuel 15:28-29)

On closer reading of the relevant text in the Book of Samuel, we note the fact that the election of David as king by God after the previous election of Saul, poses either a theological paradox – for indeed He had repented – or else posits in the conduct of the individual or the group the final responsibility for accomplishing or denying the design of God. Scripture states categorically: “It repents Me that I have set up Saul to be king, for he is turned back from following Me...” (15:11). Samuel, frequently vilified as a harsh prophet, cried all night in an attempt to nullify God’s verdict (15:11). To no avail. Saul is indicted as an idolator and beyond repair; the verdict, alas, is sealed:

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness as idolatry and teraphim (15:23).

It is undoubtedly true that the possibility of “turning back”, as the vehicle to become at-one with God, turned into a powerful leitmotif of the literary prophets. But this is not to say that there existed a straight line of development in the prophetic stance from an initial concept of God unbending in His ways, unwilling to repent His decisions to that of חשׁוּבָה as a means of reverting His decree.

Already Abraham, in his daring dialogue, had explored such possibilities. We also find in the aftermath of the golden calf God’s willingness to repent. First He said unto Moses: “Let Me alone... that I may consume them...” (Ex. 32:10). Moses beseeches the Lord to turn from His wrath “and the Lord repented of the evil which He said He would do unto His people ” (32:14). A few verses later, in a most difficult passage, Moses is engaged in a subtle dialogue which erodes God’s harsh decision. God announces that “I will send an angel before thee... for I will

not go up in the midst of thee" (33:2-3). After Moses beseeches the Lord He consents: "My presence shall go with *thee*" (33:14). Moses, still unsatisfied, implores: "For wherein now shall it be known that I have found favor in Thy sight, I and Thy People; is it not in that Thou goest with *us*" (33:16). The dialogue then reaches its climax when God's glory, requested by Moses to be shown to him, is revealed to him in a cleft of the rock in the thirteen attributes of mercy, goodness, truth and long sufferance. God's glory is thus revealed in the attributes of mercy and forgiveness and not in the attribute of "not repenting."

Zalman Shazar's views on Jonah,²⁰ whom he represents as a transition from the early to the later prophets needs some examination. Jonah's qualities of a prophet are lampooned. It is more correct to say that Jonah conducts himself *not* as a prophet should.²¹ He is perfectly aware that repentance may revert the evil decree, just as he is conscious of the fact that He is the God of heavens, seas and earth, of the universe and all it contains, including the arrogant and cruel Assyrians. What he cannot accept is that Nineveh may repent and thus be spared. Though he knows God's ways he is unwilling to fulfill the commission for which he was singled out. Jonah thus stands before us as a defective but certainly not as a prophet of transition.

ECSTASY AND PROPHECY

It is an incontrovertible fact that frenzied bands of "prophets," bacchantes, arose somewhere in Aram, a movement that spread to many parts of the ancient Near East. On the basis of this strong evidence, some Bible scholars came to the flimsy conclusion that this movement became also entrenched in ancient Israel. To Gunkel²² ecstasy was the raw material from which later prophecy evolved. Hölscher,²³ does not even restrict ecstatic experience to the sons of prophets — בני נביאים, but makes it an integral experience shared by all prophets. Kittel²⁴ somewhat softens the influence of the bacchantic movement on Israel prophecy by stating that under Samuel ecstatic prophecy had been cleared of "orgiastic" elements.

20 Zalman Shazar — *Jonah, Transition from Seer to Prophet*. Dor le-Dor, Vol. VII, no. 1.

21 Yitzhak Shalev — *Jonah, A Lesson for All Generations*. Ibid.

22 H. Gunkel as quoted by H.W. Rowley, *The Servant of the Lord*, (London 1953), p. 93.

23 G. Hölscher, *Die Profeten*, p. 7, 8.

24 R. Kittel, *Die Geschichte des Volkes Israel II* p. 150.

Let us examine the biblical evidence. We learn that music seemed an integral part of the movement of “the children of prophets — בני נביאים.” Saul is to meet a band of prophets equipped with a “psaltery and a timbrel and a pipe and a harp” (I Sam. 10:6). We also read that Elisha, on being consulted by king Jehoshaphat, demanded:

Now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him (II Kings 3:15).

In the first instance cited, we are only told that “the spirit of the Lord will come mightily upon you and thou shalt prophesy with them.” We are not let in on what was the nature of this “prophesying.” It is the last clause that perhaps offers a clue to the secret: “and you will be turned into another man.” A dramatic process of instant conversion!

In the second instance cited, we know the precise results: Elisha offers a cogent and very clear prophecy. It contains nothing of oracular haziness and obscurity. The minstrel was required in this instance by Elisha to put him in the proper mood of communion with God. This is what music or cantorial chant is supposed to do for the modern worshipper.

There is one stronger piece of evidence that cannot be dismissed lightly. David had fled to Samuel from the wrath of king Saul. The latter had sent out emissaries to find him. On meeting a company of prophets, they also began to prophesy. Then Saul betook himself to Naiot in Ramah. On getting there, “he also stripped off his clothes, and he also prophesied before Samuel, and lay down naked all that day and all that night.” The word “also” invites questions. Does it mean that, like the rest of the company of prophets, he also stripped? Or does it mean that, in addition to prophesying, he also stripped off his clothes? There is no clear answer to these questions. What we know is this: Saul was given to extremities of moods; further, that Samuel and his company in this particular instance were intent on protecting David. Thus they apparently did all they could to keep Saul in an extreme state of trance “all that day and all that night,” sufficient time for David to escape to safety.

Already W. Robertson Smith²⁵ pointed out that a true prophet never sought in heathen fashion to authenticate his divine commission by throwing

25 W. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel* (N.Y. 1892), p. 219.

himself into a state of visionary ecstasy. Abraham Joshua Heschel²⁶ examines the basic assumption of ecstasy. To him it is an attempt of merging with the divine. The less there is of man, the more there is of the divine; and the result of the mystic union is the total extinction of man. But this basic assumption, he rightfully claims, is entirely unknown to biblical man. Though there is submission to the will of God, the prophetic personality remains intact. He pleads with God, he engages in dialogue, he argues, even challenges.²⁷

We can assume that the schools of prophets established by Samuel and later by Elijah, were designed to assist in the battles for the Lord and expunge inroads made by Baal prophets. The techniques used to inculcate the Bnai Neviim, and the methods they themselves utilized to counterbalance the influence of the heathen prophets, are unknown to us.

THE CONTEST ON MOUNT CARMEL

True to our phenomenological approach, we shall examine the evidence presented to us by the scriptural record in the contest on Mount Carmel between Elijah and the 400 Baal prophets. The stake: the heart and soul of the Israelites, and perhaps the future of Israel monotheism. As Elijah mocked them and Baal does not respond, the Baal prophets are goaded into ever-growing frenzy: "And they danced in halting wise about the altar... and they cried aloud and cut themselves after their manner with swords and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them" (I Kings 18:26-28). Elijah, on the other hand merely utters prayers: "Oh Lord... let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel and that I am Thy servant, and that I have done all these things at Thy word" (18:36).

Not to cut oneself *לא התגודדו*, a prohibition to engage in the practice of dionysian frenzy is recorded by the Torah (Deut. 14:1). One can conclude that the notion of Jewish prophecy evolving from ecstatic movements of surrounding cultures, is a cardhouse without foundation. There is no evidence that either of the early prophets, such as Samuel, Nathan, Gad were ecstatic prophets. Nor can we state that bands of prophets prophesying was after the manner of orgiastic frenzy displayed by Baal prophets. The supposition that from the raw material of ec-

26 Abraham J. Heschel, *The Prophets — An Examination of the Theory of Ecstasy*, p. 355-357.

27 It is true that Hölscher is aware of the incompatibility of union with gods, through rapture and springing from notions underlying the magic cult, with Israelite prophecy. He bridges this difficulty by stating that a demon is the operative factor in the experience of ecstasy.

static bands of prophets literary prophecy evolved, will also be rejected out of hand. The opposite is true: great prophets established schools of prophets, with some of the members displaying great and transmittable enthusiasm, designed to bring about converts to the cause of the Lord.

Bias is not easily eradicated. Frequently the strange behavior of Ezekiel is made a case in point to *prove* that he also needed ecstasy for his *prophetic experiences*. The following verse is then quoted:

This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spoke

(Ezekiel 1:28)

It is, however, crucial for our understanding of prophecy that we read most carefully what follows:

And He said to me: Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak with thee (2:1).

What happens here is quite clear. Beholding the glory of the Lord so overwhelmed him that he fell upon his face. But God was willing to address him only after he stood on his feet: a man overwhelmed, but still a man facing Him. We see no trace of ecstasy, nor is there any mystic merger with God.²⁸

SUMMARY

Between the brief interval of the most awe-inspiring theophanies recorded in Scripture, God's revelation to Moses at the burning bush and then to the entire people at Mount Sinai, monotheism, as we know it, emerged with elemental force on the historic scene.

Essentially, monotheism was characterized by two features. First it was "Gestalt," for together with it the Election of Israel finding expression in the reciprocal covenant, prophecy was born in an organismic and indissoluble union. One aspect cannot be understood without the other. Second, monotheism

28 It is most characteristic that the *Sifre Deuteronomy* points to the difference between Moses and Balaam. "Moses received his revelation while retaining his full power of consciousness... whereas Balaam lost his power of consciousness in the moment of revelation, as it is said 'the oracle of him who hears the words of God, who sees the vision of the Almighty falling down, yet with opened eyes'" — quoted by A.J. Heschel, *The Prophets*, p. 339.

also marked a drastic revolution and turning point in the spiritual history of man, establishing new categories of thought about God, the universe, man and history.²⁹ Requiring the full commitment and undivided loyalty to the One and Only God and what He asked of man, it meant total war against heathenism.

Prophets, in accordance with the demands of the hour and the situation that faced them, or in accordance with the degree of prophetic endowment, stood in the forefront of a continuous battle that lasted for over one thousand years, to clarify the religious, ethical or social implications of the covenant and the relations of God to His people and the rest of the world.

We noted that the uniqueness of the prophetic movement can properly be understood from what the Germans call "von innen heraus — from the inside." Any attempt to penetrate to its essence from any other direction distorts its unique and essential feature.³⁰ Only those who wish to destroy or minimize the uniqueness of Jewish prophecy, will present mantis, divination, oracles and bacchantic ecstasy, all existing in surrounding religions, as the raw material from which Jewish prophecy painfully evolved.

29 Yehezkel Kaufmann attributed such significance to this fact that he considers the victorious march of monotheism as "an iron law of history."

30 Spinoza. *Tractatus Theologico — Politicus*. Chs. I-III. Defending his theory of 'deus sive natura' (god is nature), he denies the uniqueness of the Bible or any special status to prophetic inspiration. All knowledge is from God. In fact the prophet, to his mind, has less reliable knowledge than a philosopher.

The second part of this article will appear in the forthcoming Fall issue of Dor le-Dor. It will deal with the following aspects of prophecy: Little known prophets and their relation to kings of Judah and Israel; false and true prophets; the emergence of literary prophecy; cessation of prophecy.



SOLOMON AND THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

BY SOL LIPTZIN

The encounter between King Solomon at the height of his glory and the Queen of Sheba, who had heard of his fame as the wisest of mortals and who came to Jerusalem to test his wisdom, is narrated in the tenth chapter of the First Book of Kings and again in the ninth chapter of the Second Book of Chronicles. Such an encounter may indeed have taken place, for there existed a kingdom of Saba in the southwestern part of the Arabian peninsula during the tenth century B.C.E., the century of Solomon's reign. Archeologists are still uncovering fragments of Saba's past from surviving relics long buried under the desert sand. However, the historical or pseudo-historical kernel of the encounter is overlaid with three thousand years of legendary lore.

THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVE

The biblical narrative already reads like a romance of courtly splendor dimly remembered. It is preceded by the story of an expedition that Solomon sent out from Eilat and Etzion Geber to the distant shore of Ophir in order to fetch the gold wherewith to adorn the Temple then being erected. The sailors, Phoenicians and Hebrews, not only brought back fabulous treasures of gold but they must also have spread to remote peoples tales of the elegance and wisdom of the king who had ascended the throne of David. When these tales reached the ears of Queen Sheba in her inland realm, she was rather sceptical and decided to find out for herself whether there was any truth in them. She travelled overland to Solomon's kingdom with a very large retinue. Her camels were laden with gold, precious stones, and spices.

Arriving in Jerusalem after her long journey, she tested the king's wisdom with hard riddles. He answered all her questions and solved all her riddles correctly. Then there was no more spirit of scepticism or arrogance in her. She

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acknowledged that she had not believed the reports that had seeped down to her kingdom. However, after seeing the magnificence of Solomon's court and experiencing the impact of his wisdom, she could state that the reports were not exaggerated; indeed, that they did not reflect even half of his true greatness. But not only the king of Israel impressed her. She also impressed him. He gave her all her desire, whatever she asked of him (I Kings 10:13). This emphasis on his yielding to her desire has given rise to many conjectures as to their relations during her visit. Before she left, Solomon presented her with royal gifts comparable to the royal bounty she had brought to him. Then she returned with her retinue to her own kingdom.

THE SHEBA THEME IN THE ARTS

This biblical romance was embellished by popular imagination, as Solomon's kingdom was divided after his death and less glamorous rulers came to the thrones of Israel and Judah. Bedouins transmitted the romance by word of mouth along caravan trails and merchants brought it across the Red Sea to Abyssinia. It accompanied Jewish exiles to Babylon and returned with them to their Palestinian homeland. It reached Mecca and was incorporated in the Koran. As Islam spread to ever new lands, the Koran made Moslems acquainted with this romance throughout Asia and Africa. Pilgrims and Crusaders who sojourned in the Holy Land brought it to medieval Europe in Christian adaptations.

Lorenzo Ghiberti in 1457 engraved it on a panel of his much admired Gates of Paradise installed fifteen years later at the Baptistry of Florence, where it is today still a great tourist attraction. Renaissance painters of the sixteenth century, such as Jacopo Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese, and Hans Holbein the Younger vied to put its magnificent episodes on canvas. They were followed by Peter Paul Rubens and Claude Lorraine in the ensuing century.

While Shakespeare preferred non-biblical subjects for the plots of his dramas, he was well acquainted with the Bible and with the Queen of Sheba story. In the last scene of *Henry VIII*, he has Crammer, the Archbishop of Canterbury and godfather to the newly-born daughter of Anne Boleyn, eulogize the royal infant, the future Queen Elizabeth, by comparing her to the Queen of Saba:

*Saba was never more covetous of wisdom and fair virtue
Than this pure soul shall be; all princely graces,*

*That mould up such a mighty piece as this is,
With all the virtues that attend the good,
Shall still be doubled on her; truth shall nurse her,
Holy and heavenly thoughts still counsel her.*

Spain's foremost dramatist, Calderon de la Barca, adapted the Sheba-theme twice for the stage of the seventeenth century.

Handel's oratorio *Solomon*, first performed in 1749, Gounod's opera *La Reine de Saba* of 1862, and Karl Goldmark's opera *Die Königin von Saba* of 1875 were the best known of the musical interpretations.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, the encounter of Solomon and Sheba left its mark upon novels from Gérard de Nerval's *Voyage en Orient*, 1851, and Gustave Flaubert's *La Tentation de St. Antoine*, 1874, to John Dos Passos *Three Soldiers*, 1921. It inspired poems by Robert Browning, John G. Whittier, Edwin Arnold, Arthur Symons, William Butler Yeats, Rudyard Kipling, Lascelles Abercrombie, John Freeman and a host of other poets. Among contemporary artists, Marc Chagall, in 1956, created a most interesting, original interpretation.

SOLOMON AND SHEBA, A SCIENTIFIC APPRAISAL

James B. Pritchard, who edited the authoritative volume *Solomon and Sheba* in 1974, summed up in the opening chapter the conclusions of present-day archeologists about the economic and cultural level of Israel during the Age of Solomon. A second chapter, by G.W. van Beek, surveyed the results of recent archeological digs in the Arabian Kingdom of Sheba or Saba. Both of these scholars are non-committal as to whether a meeting of the two rulers actually took place. They merely do not negate such a possibility. Equally non-committal is Sir E.A. Wallis Budge in his introduction to the Ethiopian classic *Kebra Nagast*, which he first published in 1922 and then again in 1932 under the English title *Queen of Sheba and Her Only Son Menyelek I*. But he does call attention to the invasion of Abyssinia by Asiatic Semites during the Age of Solomon or soon thereafter. These invaders came from Southwestern Arabia and brought a higher form of civilization to the African realm. However, whether fact or fiction, the reputed meeting of the King of Israel and the Queen of Saba did have a significant impact upon the human mind during the past three thousand years and gave rise to four major currents of tradition, Judaic, Islamic, Ethiopian,

and Christian. Although there were areas of contact between these currents, each developed along distinct, independent lines.

THE JUDAIC TRADITION

The Judaic tradition devoted much ingenuity to the riddles propounded by the idolatrous queen and the sagacious answers given by the Jewish king, but it was hostile in its treatment of the personal relations that developed between them. The queen who challenged the monarch to a duel of wits was often presented as a temptress, even as an incarnation of Lilith, the demonic first mate of Adam, who left him for her more suitable mate Ashmodai, the prince of demons. The queen's affair with Solomon, who succumbed to her wiles no less than to the charms of a thousand other women, had as its aftermath the birth of Nebukadnezzar, either as their son or as a later descendant of their son. This Babylonian monarch destroyed Solomon's Temple and put an end to the First Jewish Kingdom, thus proving that sin leads to catastrophe, sooner or later.

The development of the Judaic tradition can be traced through various stages from Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* and Talmudic and Midrashic texts to cabalistic incantations and contemporary Yiddish folklore and literary references. Its most detailed and picturesque version is that of *Targum Sheni*, an Aramaic commentary on the *Book of Esther*, which scholars have dated at approximately fifteen hundred years after Solomon's reign.

After referring to the sumptuous feast of King Ahasuerus, the author of the commentary digresses by recalling an earlier feast in the days of King Solomon and then goes on to tell of Solomon's magnificent throne and royal establishment.

To that earlier banquet there were also invited numerous kings and noblemen. When Solomon's heart was merry with wine, he commanded beasts, birds, reptiles, and demons to appear and to entertain his guests by dancing before them. One bird, the hoopoe, failed to appear. When it was peremptorily summoned by the angry, impatient monarch, it explained its delayed appearance by the long distance it had to travel. It had flown from a remote land not yet subject to Solomon's sway, a land whose dust was of silver and gold and lay about in the streets like dung, and whose trees, as old as creation, were watered by streams that flowed from the Garden of Eden.

On hearing this report, Solomon ordered the hoopoe to return to that fabulous land with a message to its queen to come to Jerusalem immediately. Otherwise, he

would destroy her kingdom and its inhabitants. When she consulted her counselors, they advised against her going and to prepare for war, but she overruled their advice and set sail with a great fleet and with precious gifts. She found the king seated on a magnificent throne in a palace whose floor glistened with crystal. Never having seen such crystal, she thought he was sitting in the midst of water. As she nighed the throne, she raised the hem of her garment, thereby revealing to the astonished monarch's gaze that her feet were hairy, the feet of a demon. Though fascinated by her beauty, he was repelled by her hairiness and remarked to her: "Your beauty is the beauty of women and your hair is the hair of men. Hair is becoming to a man but to a woman it is a shame."

Queen Sheba did not reply to this insult and proceeded to propound her questions to him. She was impressed by his answers. Both exchanged gifts, and the king gave her what she asked of him. At this point, the episode in *Targum Sheni* ends, as this commentary reverts to other subjects. However, the hint of her demonic nature clearly showed the negative Jewish approach toward the queen. Neither her glamorous beauty nor her royal affluence sufficed to endear her in Jewish eyes because her behavior was basically immoral.

In our own century, the classical Yiddish writer, Yitzkhok Leibush Peretz, in his tales of King Solomon XXVII, reigning in the marvelous realm beyond the Sambation, ascribed the long raging conflict between the men with small bodies and great souls and the men with great bodies and small souls, a war which could have been nipped in the bud by King Solomon I, to the fact that, when the dwarfs came to Jerusalem to appeal to the wise and mighty monarch, the Queen of Sheba was just then visiting him and he gave no ear to more important matters, a behavior that calls into question his reputed wisdom.

THE ISLAMIC TRADITION

The Islamic tradition, as recorded in the Koran, was based not only on biblical sources but also on post-biblical Judaic sources and on oral stories circulated by Arab weavers of tales in pre-Islamic centuries. It has many similarities to *Targum Sheni*. Sura 27 of the Koran relates that Solomon sent for the sun-worshipping queen who ruled over Saba demanding that she worship the true God. When she asked her nobles for advice, they hesitated and finally told her that she would have to reach a decision by herself and that they would follow her commands.

She tried to postpone a final answer by sending gifts to the King of Israel, but he spurned her gifts and sent back her envoys with the threat that he would invade her land unless she herself came. When she arrived in Jerusalem, she found that, upon Solomon's command, a Djinn had already transported her throne to him. When she saw his palace, whose floor was paved with sparkling glass, she thought that the floor was covered with water and raised her garment, thus baring her legs. According to Moslem commentators, Solomon wished to verify whether she really had goat's feet, as was rumored. The *Koran* does not mention the result of his inspection. It merely concludes that she acknowledged that she had sinned against her soul and that she would now abandon her heathen beliefs and accept Solomon's God, the Lord of the World.

Commentators expanded upon the *Koran* verses. Arabic, Persian and Turkish storytellers added themes from native folklore and elaborated on the splendor attending both rulers. In the Islamic versions, the queen bore the name of Balkis and claimed to be the offspring of the Emperor of China and a Peri. Her throne was identified as her great bed, which measured thirty feet. Solomon had a demon transport it to Jerusalem because he knew that the way to a woman's heart led through her bed. Djinns had slandered her by telling Solomon that her feet were hairy, but when Solomon tested her by his crystal stratagem, he saw the most beautiful ankle and a thigh formed for delights. Solomon succumbed to her beauty and she to his wisdom.

THE ETHIOPIAN TRADITION

The most glamorous tradition of the encounter between Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, however, developed on Ethiopian soil. The earliest rulers of the African kingdom of Axum regarded their capital as the Zion of Abyssinia, and the Emperors of Ethiopia down the centuries until our own continued to bear the title Lion of Judah. The last Imperial constitution, adopted in 1955, stated in Article 2: "The Imperial dignity shall remain attached to the line of Haile Sellassie I, descendant of King Sahle Sellassie, whose line descended without interruption from the dynasty of Menelik I, son of the Queen of Ethiopia, the Queen of Sheba, and King Solomon of Jerusalem."

Ethiopia's national saga, *Kebra Nagast* (*Glory of Kings*), recorded in the fourteenth century, seeks to trace back Ethiopia's royal house to Solomon,

son of King David, and still further back to the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The episodes of the *Kebra Nagast* were derived from the Bible, rabbinical writings, traditions current in Syria and Palestine, oral and written sources from Egypt, Yemen, and Coptic Christianity.

This saga located Sheba not in the Arabian peninsula but in Africa. The Queen of Sheba, who had been apprised of Solomon's wisdom by the captain of her caravan, went to Jerusalem not under compulsion but of her own free will in order to test his wisdom. Convinced of his greatness, after many conversations, she gave up her sun-worshipping religion and accepted as her God the sun's creator, the God of Israel. One night, after a splendid banquet, Solomon took her to wife and she became pregnant. When she returned to her African realm, a son, Menelik, was born to her. After he grew up, he journeyed to Jerusalem. Solomon arrayed him in royal apparel and seated him on a throne at his side. But when Menelik learned that Rehoboam was to become the heir to Solomon's kingdom, he returned to Ethiopia with many sons of Jewish noblemen in order to establish a second Jewish kingdom. They took with them the tabernacle of Israel's God which contained the two tablets of Moses, the rod of Aaron, and the pot of manna. Since then, the Divine Presence dwelt in Axum, the holy city of the Ethiopians and Ethiopia has been governed by the laws of Israel with the later accretion of Coptic Monophysite Christianity.

THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION

The Christian tradition of Solomon and Sheba goes back to *Matthew* 12:30, which reads: "The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgement with this generation; and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here." This statement is repeated in *Luke* 11:31. The reference to one greater than Solomon was to the Christian savior, and medieval commentators therefore saw in Solomon his prefiguration. The Jerusalem Temple built by Solomon was envisaged as an earthly representation of the Temple of God in the heavenly Jerusalem. The Queen of Sheba, who came with her retinue from the ends of the earth to Zion's House of God was allegorically understood to anticipate the flocking of mankind to be converted to Christianity and to accept the discipline of the Church. This interpretation surfaced in the writings of Isidore, Archbishop of

Seville in the seventh century, and of the Venerable Bede in eighth century England.

The Queen of Sheba also played a role in the Legend of the True Cross as recorded in *The Golden Legend*, a popular work of the closing fourteenth century by Jacobus de Voragine, Archbishop of Genoa. Of this compendium of miracles, more than five hundred manuscripts survived. It experienced about one hundred and fifty printings in the Latin original and in translations during the first century of printing. It included the following tale of the Cross.

When the aged Adam fell sick, his son Seth approached the Gates of Paradise and asked for a few drops of oil from the tree of mercy as medicine for his father. Archangel Michael refused to give him the oil, but did give him a branch of the tree of knowledge. By the time Seth returned to his father, Adam was already dead. He planted the branch over Adam's grave and it grew into a mighty tree, which flourished until Solomon's time. Solomon had it cut down in order to use it in the building of the Temple but the builders found it unsuitable and threw it across a pond to serve as a bridge. When the Queen of Saba made her way to Jerusalem and was about to cross the pond, she foresaw in a vision that the Christian savior would one day hang upon this tree. Instead of putting her foot upon it, she knelt down to adore it. After the cross was later fashioned of this tree, it remained hidden in the earth for more than two centuries, until it was found by Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, the first Roman Emperor to accept Christianity after winning a battle with the help of the cross.

MODERN ADAPTATIONS

The modern adaptations of the encounter between Solomon and Sheba are eclectic. They draw upon all four streams of tradition, with the Moslem tradition generally dominant. The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed the height of the vogue of Oriental tales in Western and Central Europe. Byron, Shelley, Thomas Moore in England, Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Gautier, and Victor Hugo in France were winning wide acclaim with their Oriental legends in verse and prose. The Viennese poet, historian and Orientalist Joseph Freiherr von Hammer-Purgstall, who spent many years in Constantinople, included among the legends in his fascinating volume *Rosenöl*, 1813, an account of the meeting of Solomon and Sheba, which was based on Persian and Turkish stories and which may have been the source for Robert Browning's philosophical poem *Solomon*

and *Balchis*, composed seventy years later. The French Romantic poet Gérard de Nerval, who travelled through Egypt, Syria and Lebanon in 1843, incorporated in his *Voyage en Orient*, begun during the following year, tales of this exotic area, among them "The Tale of the Queen of the Morning and Soliman, the Prince of the Genii."

For this tale, he used as his principal sources the Bible, the Koran, the Talmud, and the occult lore of Freemasonry. But he also added incidents, myths and mysteries culled from his own wild and erratic imagination, which often brought him beyond the brink of sanity. His story begins with Queen Balkis arriving in Jerusalem from the land of the Sabeans. It is her intention to marry King Soliman, if he is really as wise as reputed. All workshops are emptied of people as the artisans rush out to greet her. Only Adoniram, the master-builder of Soliman's palace and the still unfinished Temple, keeps aloof. This somber, audacious and mysterious genius senses no kinship with the Hebrews, offsprings of Shem, for he is the last of the descendants of the great, defiant Cain and of Tubal-Cain, the forger in brass and iron. From Tubal-Cain there came down to him knowledge of subjecting by fire all metals to his will.

The queen is far more impressed by this master architect, sculptor and builder than by Solomon, whose wisdom turns out to be inferior to her own. Though the inflamed monarch offers her half his throne and kingdom, she remains reserved and cautious. Like Adoniram, she too is a creature of fire. When Adoniram gets her with child, she flees from Jerusalem back to her kingdom, expecting him to follow. But he is assassinated. The disappointed Soliman tries to overcome his fatal passion for the queen by drowning himself in sensual indulgence with other women who are brought to him from every corner of the world. He grows old and decrepit and meets an inglorious end trying vainly to cling to shreds of life.

In the short-lived, solitary genius Adoniram, Gérard de Nerval depicted himself and foresaw his own fate. Geniuses, he felt, were spirits of fire. Scorned despite their superiority, they remain unrecognized during their days on earth, they bestow joys upon others and receive sorrows in return. Their tombs alone will be honored. Yet, these giants of intellect, these torches of knowledge, these organs of progress, these instruments of liberty are the supreme benefactors of mankind.

THE QUEEN OF SHEBA IN OPERA

Gérard de Nerval's recasting of the ancient encounter became the basis for the

libretto by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, which Gounod used for his opera in four acts *La Reine de Saba*, 1862. Gounod's opera has been far less popular than Karl Goldmark's *Die Königin von Saba*, which this Viennese composer began a year later and which swept the stages of Europe after its première in 1875.

Goldmark was an admirer of Richard Wagner and the influence of Wagner is all too apparent, especially in the procession-scenes and in the tragically moving final scene.

In Goldmark's opera, for which S.H. Mosenthal wrote the libretto, the hero is Assad, Solomon's favorite courtier, and not the king himself. The calm happiness that characterized the love between Assad and Sulamith, the daughter of Israel's High Priest, is disturbed when the Queen of Sheba arrives in Jerusalem with her magnificent entourage bearing vases filled with gold, diamonds and precious spices. Assad recognizes in the queen the beautiful, demonic, Undine-like figure whom he had espied arising from a spring in Lebanon and who had intoxicated his senses. At court, however, she disowns any knowledge of him. Later on, in the garden of Solomon's palace, she again lures him during a romantic night, but disappears when dawn breaks in on them.

At the Temple wedding ceremony of Assad and Sulamith, attended by the king, priests and courtiers, the bridegroom is about to place the ring on the bride's finger, when the queen enters. Assad, reverting to his blind passion for her, stops the ceremony and rushes to her, but she wards him off and again disclaims any knowledge of him.

The final act takes place at the edge of the desert. There Sulamith and her maidens have found a refuge from the world's turmoils, just like Jephthah's daughter and her virgins. There the exiled Assad wanders about, lonely, disgraced, crushed by his guilt, ripe for death. The queen appears before him and for a third time seeks to exercise her spell upon him. But now he can at last resist the flames that emanate from her. He curses her as a demonic temptress that destroyed his life and rejects vigorously the paradise of passion that she again offers him. She vanishes from sight, while he accepts his nighing death in a sand-storm as atonement for his earlier sin of lust. When the desert storm subsides, Sulamith and her twelve maidens come across the dying Assad and in a scene, reminiscent of the concluding scene of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, he sinks to death in her arms and enters into the heavenly realm of true, eternal love.

GUSTAVE FLAUBERT

The Queen of Sheba as a demonic temptress was also portrayed by the French novelist Gustave Flaubert in *La Tentation de St. Antoine*, 1874. The ascetic hermit was the subject of memorable paintings by Salvator Rosa, David Teniers and Brueghel. Flaubert has the Queen of Sheba tempt this saint with sensual visions. The emaciated Anthony dreams of her arriving on a white elephant. She enters his cell and tells him of her great longing for him which led her to leave King Solomon in order to be with him. She invites him to join her in her realm of wealth and oriental splendor. When the saint remains adamant, she offers herself to him as the embodiment of all the mysteries of womanhood. A single touch of her shoulder would let a fiery ray course through his veins and the possession of her body would fill him with more passionate ecstasy than the conquest of an empire. But still he resists her and she retreats weeping.

ROBERT BROWNING

Less glamor and greater profundity surround the encounter between the rulers of Israel and Sheba in the philosophical poem *Solomon and Balchis* by Robert Browning. Seated on an ivory throne on Mt. Zion, both talk, on a conscious level, of things sublime and the king solves the queen's hard riddles without difficulty. But, on the subconscious level, emotional streams course between them. Before giving up the intellectual game she began and lost, the frustrated Balchis asks one final question: whom of all mankind would Solomon admit to his palace as his equals? His answer is that he would welcome as his peers the wise, namely, the supreme creative personalities, poets, painters, sculptors, builders. In turn, he asks her whom she would admit as her equals. She replies that she would prefer as her mates the good, be they rich, poor, shrewd or simple. As she speaks, she jostles the king's outstretched hand, so that his ring which bears the Ineffable Name turns from inside to outside and he is compelled to tell the real truth which lodged in the deepest layer of his soul. He then confesses that he would consider as wise and would welcome at his court only those who would flatter him in word and deed, paint his portrait or sing his praises in verse. Then, turning the ring with the truth-compelling name of God toward her, he makes her also answer truthfully from the depths of her soul. Blushingly, she confesses that by the good she meant young men, strong and tall and proper. The king notes with a sigh that there have just been revealed to them two levels of truth, the truth of the mind

that would spread wing and soar to heaven and the truth of the body that must crawl and plod heavily on earth. At one level he yearns for knowledge above everything else, while at another level he enjoys the praise of fools, even if he recognizes such adulation as pure vanity. When he asks the queen whether her reason for coming to him was solely to test his wisdom, she laughs amidst her blushes and remarks that at the so-called higher level mind may commune with mind and seek wisdom but that down here at the earthly level she would prefer one small kiss. Would he grant her bold wish?

ARTHUR SYMONS

A similar conclusion permeates Arthur Symons lyric playlet *The Lover of the Queen of Sheba*. The royal couple are presented as ultimately weary of wisdom. Before coming to Solomon's court, the Queen of Sheba seemed to be indifferent to love and rejected all royal suitors who poured out gold and incense in tribute at her feet. Wisdom alone then had supreme value for her but, after she met in Solomon the wisest of mortals and wanted to share in his wisdom, she discovered that wisdom too, even as fame and dominion, did not lead to happiness but rather to sorrow. Solomon had already arrived earlier at the pessimistic conclusion that, whether life be long or short, fair or forlorn, it was far better not to have been born. When the queen persists in inquiring how we who have not yet been laid away under the earth can best use the interval between birth and death, the king replies that we may love. But is not love also an illusion? asks the queen. The supremely sagacious monarch replies that all life is illusion, even as all wealth and state and power:

Love only is the eternal now.
When thou art I and I am thou,
Time is no more.
Let us forget that we are wise,
And wisdom, though it be the sum
Of all but love, is love's disguise.
Let us forget all else that is,
Save this that joy is ours to know,
A moment, ere he turn and go,
And that joy's moment, love, is this.

Symons, in this playlet, expresses the pessimism and weary disillusionment of his fin-de-siècle circle, which included Oscar Wilde, Aubrey Beardsley and Ernest Dowson and that sought in momentary passion momentary forgetfulness of the meaninglessness of life.

JOHN FREEMAN

John Freeman, the poet and literary critic who rose to prominence after World War I, published his epic in nine cantos, *Solomon and Balkis*, in 1926. He distinguishes between true and ephemeral love. Though Solomon had a thousand wives, the only true love he ever experienced was his love for the princess who had come to the throne of Sheba but who was still unloved and unhusbanded. He journeyed to her kingdom, wooed and won her. Of their union was Menelik born. However, after the death of Balkis, Solomon knew only lesser loves and fleeting passions. The many strange women satisfied his lust and led him to idolatries. In his hour of death, he sought in vain to enter Heaven. Nobody came to plead for him at Heaven's gate because a ruler has no real friends. Then he remembered Sheba's queen. She flew to him and implored God to let them abide together, whether in Heaven or Hell, since true love survives earth, heaven and hell.

BERTRAND RUSSELL

In 1954, the British philosopher Bertrand Russell began his *Nightmares of Eminent Persons* with "The Queen of Sheba's Nightmare." This story was to illustrate the saying: "Put not thy trust in princes."

Returning through the Arabian desert after visiting King Solomon, the Queen of Sheba daydreams about her recent experiences. She was impressed by the king's wealth, splendor, wisdom. But for her he was also the supreme lover and poet. On parting, he gave her a jewelled volume of his songs which expressed in language of exquisite beauty the joy he experienced in her company. Though her queenly duties compelled her to return to her kingdom, she would always carry with her the knowledge that there was one man on earth who penetrated into the recesses of her soul and who was worthy of her love.

In her reverie, she espies a figure approaching who introduces himself as Beelzebub, a friend of Solomon. The queen flatters herself that, though the king may share secrets of statecraft with this friend, he shared with her more intimate

feelings and incorporated these in a precious volume of love lyrics. Beelzebub then disillusioned her by telling her that the love verses were sung by Solomon in his youth to a farmer's virtuous daughter whose scruples he overcame by his poetic gifts. The king later gave a copy of the *Song of Songs* to each of the ladies he wooed and made each in turn think herself supreme in his affections. The Queen of Sheba was but the last in a long series of seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines.

Horrified by such perfidy, the queen vows that she will never again let flattery deceive her. And yet, when Beelzebub entices her with honeyed words, she is again beguiled and agrees to extend her travels by a visit to his dominion. She trusts herself completely to his guidance and ends up being deceived a second time. But now she cannot escape, since the realm of Beelzebub is the abode of the dead. He tells her that she will be his consort until superseded by Cleopatra. At these words, a tumult of rage and despair overcomes her and she awakes from her horrible dream.

ALEXANDER KUPRIN

The Russian novelist Alexander Kuprin depicted in his idyllic romance *Sulamith*, 1908, the impact that the Queen of Sheba made upon the eight year old Sulamith when she arrived with her camels in golden harness, her mules with bells of gold between their ears, her monkeys in silver cages and her wondrous peacocks. After Sulamith matured and became the beloved of Solomon, she questioned the king about the amazing queen, her predecessor in his affections. Solomon then described Balkis as a magnificent woman of forty who was already beginning to fade. But she knew how to make her body, grown flabby, seem graceful and supple like a girl's, while her face bore the impress of an awesome, inhuman beauty. Solomon, however, was not at all impressed by her wisdom, which he characterized as the petty wisdom of a woman. He found her riddles easy to solve. All her secret charms of love's passion in the night did not suffice to retain his love. She soon palled upon him. He hurt her cruelly by having her expose to the entire court her crooked, hairy legs, which she had always kept covered but which became visible when, through his stratagem of the crystal and seemingly waterlike palace floor, he caused her to raise up the hem of her garment. She then fled back to her kingdom in a rage and could not be appeased.

YEHOASH

The Yiddish poet Yehoash, who is famed for his magnificent translation of the Bible, also adapted and expanded upon many of its themes. His *Queen of Sheba* is the longest of his biblical poems. It consists of five cantos. It relates that, when the news of Solomon's greatness reached young Queen Balchis in her remote kingdom, it was not his wealth or reputed nobility of mien that impressed her but rather his wisdom. In vain had she searched in Sheba's old temples to find an answer to the riddle of existence. Would Solomon have the answer? And so she set out with her retinue of slaves and with rich gifts. For weeks she travelled through the desert on her throne atop a tall elephant and dreamed of the all-wise king. When she met him, she offered him her wealth for a fragment of his wisdom. Overwhelmed by her loveliness, however, he descended from his throne to woo her. His eyes burned with desire. But, as the queen listened to his words of passion, she turned pale. His words fell upon her heart like heavy stones and her faith in his wisdom collapsed.

For three thousand years, the encounter between Solomon and the Queen of Sheba has reverberated in written and in oral lore. And today, when the traveller winds his way along Israel's main road from the north and nears Eilat, the gateway to the African continent, he is advised to make a slight detour in order that he might view King Solomon's Pillars and the natural amphitheatrical opening in the mountains fronting the Araba. There, the traveller's guide explains, the legendary queen, who came up with her rich retinue from her southern kingdom of Sheba, first caught sight of her host, King Solomon, who descended from his northern kingdom in order to escort her to his capital Jerusalem, the citadel of David, and to the Temple he had just built for the Lord, the God of Israel.

THE CARTERS READ A CHAPTER OF BIBLE EACH DAY

President Carter's visit to Israel in March, to negotiate peace terms, coincided with the pre-Purim period. Mrs. Carter visited a school and witnessed a Purim pageant presented by the children. When the setting was explained to her, she interjected by saying that Purim was known to her. How? Well, each evening she and Jimmy alternate reading a chapter of the Bible to each other. And by mere chance, "we have now reached the Book of Esther in our sequence of chapters."

HOLY CITIES IN THE LAND OF EPHRAIM REVISITED

BY HAIM GEVARYAHU

There are gradations in sanctity. For the Jew, the entire land of Israel is sacred. Yet many will wish to live in Jerusalem for its higher measure of holiness. And among Jerusalemites, many will choose the Old City, preferably a place close enough to the Temple Mount, if only to be near the Western Wall, the one remaining object of the ancient Temple period.

Outside of Jerusalem, many are inclined to settle near some historic site. Thus the early inhabitants of the Valley of Jezreel were inspired early this century by the deeds of the prophets Elijah and Elisha who moved about this area. To this very day the mothers who come with their children for a walk along the spring of Harod narrate the great exploits of Gideon who selected 300 warriors after a two-fold elimination at that spring.

Moreover, when soldiers of Zahal (the Israel army) fought on battlegrounds where their ancient forbears contended, their commanders usually reminded them of the deeds of these warriors to instil courage in them. The natural desire of Jews to link their lives to our ancient history found expression in the movement to settle in the areas of Judea and Ephraim, with special preference for sites of ancient holy cities.

ALON MOREH

Alon Moreh, near Shechem, is in the heart of the land of Ephraim. This site is close to the ancient sanctuary of the Children of Israel in Shechem, related in the Book of Joshua (chapter 24). There the prophet-general Joshua, who bequeathed the land to Israel, concluded a covenant with his people in an impressive ceremony wherein Israel chose God and God chose Israel to be His people:

So Joshua made a covenant that day with the people, and set them a

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statute and an ordinance for them at Shechem. And Joshua wrote its terms in the book of the law of God. Then he took a great stone and set it up there under the oak in the sanctuary of the Lord (Joshua 24:25-26).

The remains of the sanctuary and of the great stone were discovered in the archeological excavations in Tel Balata, the site of ancient Shechem. Today an Israeli settlement is established in Alon Moreh.

BETH-EL

When a Jew today takes up permanent residence in Beth-El, he is conscious of the fact that this is the place where Abraham built an altar and invoked the name of the Lord and where Jacob saw angels in his dream descending and ascending a ladder.

Our sages said that every place holy to Israel in ancient times retains its sanctity and endows its surroundings with a measure of sublime nobility. It is thus simple to visualize in Beth-El a ladder standing on the ground and its top reaching to the heavens. This feelings applies also to Gibeah where the remnants of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting (Ohel Moed), erected by Moses in the desert, were preserved after the destruction of the Temple of Shiloh. From the sanctuary in Gibeah the Ohel Moed was brought to the Temple in Jerusalem.

SHILOH

But above all, Shiloh stands out as a holy city, its sanctity almost equal to that of Jerusalem.

The first mention of Shiloh in Scriptures is found in Jacob's blessing:¹

As long as men come to Shiloh and unto him shall the obedience of people be (Bereshit 49:10).

From the Book of Joshua we note that Shiloh was the site of the first Israel Temple:

And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there; and the land was subdued before them (Joshua 18:1).

¹ On this obscure verse many ingenious interpretations have been brought forward. There is no certainty that with "Shiloh" the site of Shiloh is meant. In fact, to this day, no fully satisfactory interpretation to this verse has been found.

The Book of Samuel opens with events centering in the Temple of Shiloh, the place of the vision of Samuel.

As is well known through excavations, the city and the sanctuary were burned by the Philistines circa 1050 BCE. Attempts to restore the site were already made in ancient times. Thus we read:

Out of spoil won in battles did they dedicate to repair the house of the Lord. And all that Samuel the seer, and Saul the son of Kish and Abner the son of Ner and Joab the son of Zeruiah had dedicated (I Chronicles 26:27-28).

Psalm 80 expresses the profound wish on the part of King Saul that the sanctuary, which is "burned with fire" will be restored. Only Shiloh can be intended here, since the expression, *Thou art enthroned upon the cherubim*, the place of the holy ark, appears frequently in sections concerning Shiloh in the book of Samuel. In this Psalm which mentions only the tribes of Ephraim, Menasseh and Benjamin and not Judah, King Saul is intended in Verse 18: *Let Thy hand be upon the man of the tribe of Benjamin* – יהי ירך על איש ימין.

Saul did not succeed either in restoring Shiloh or returning to it the ark of the covenant which had found a temporary resting place in Kiriath Yearim. But Shiloh was not forgotten in Israel. Jeremiah says of it: *For go ye now unto my place which is in Shiloh where I caused my name to dwell at first* (Jer. 7:12). Indeed it served as a site of pilgrimages for many generations.

Rabbi Ashtori Haparchi ² tells in his book "Kaftor Vaferach" that he was once troubled by a difficult halachic problem. When he left Jerusalem to go to Beth-

2 The story is told of Rabbi Ashtori Haparchi who heard from Reb Baruch, a disciple of Rabbi Yehiel of Paris, that Rabbi Yehiel and his followers came from France to Jerusalem with the intention of renewing sacrificial offerings in order to speed up the coming of the redeemer. Rabbi Ashtori tells that he was thinking while traveling how Rabbi Yehiel thought it possible to sacrifice while Jews are defiled by the dead? When he arrived at Shiloh the solution to the problem dawned upon him, namely, that if *all* Israel is defiled it should be permitted to bring public sacrifices also in defilement. The interesting part of the story is the psychological aspect of Rabbi Ashtori's idea that when he came to a holy place of antiquity his spiritual resources were recharged and he was able to solve a complex problem of halacha. It is worth noting that in the Middle Ages and until about a century ago gentile pilgrims were not able to identify Shiloh as Tell Silon which is near Turmus Aya. Rabbi Ashtori was the first scholar to identify the site.

Shean, while passing by Shiloh, he hit upon a solution to the problem.³ We, too, can better understand the Book of Samuel when we arrive at this site.

EXCAVATIONS AT SHILOH

The ancient site of Shiloh lies south of the ruins. The Danish archeologist Hans Kjaer⁴ excavated the city and its Temples. The area, where the remnants of the sacred buildings are located, is at the southern side of the city. Here one can see clearly that this region was an entity in itself and, in ancient times, was probably surrounded by a wall or some kind of partition. What interests us here is the Dome of the Shechina (an ancient Jewish term preserved by the Arabs) in which, according to tradition, the Ohel Moed and God's temple stood in Shiloh, i.e., near Shiloh.

At the site one can see stone walls built at an incline. According to the scholars Gustav Dalman and Joseph Breslavi, the circumference of the structure, to our surprise, is very close in dimensions to that of the Ohel Moed which Moses constructed in the desert, namely, 100 X 50 cubits.

Why are the walls of the building inclined? In the tradition mentioned in the Mishna Zevachim, "The Mishkan of Shiloh was made of stones below and curtains above." According to this ancient tradition there arose in Shiloh a structure of special architectural design. It is assumed that the wooden boards of the tabernacle could not last 300 or more years in the rainy climate of Ephraim. Hence, the priests of Shiloh found it necessary in the course of time to replace the boards with stones while preserving the ancient dimensions. Stones were laid at an incline in order to preserve the shape of a tent. The ancient "curtains" survived a long time. The Temple of Shiloh in a later era was built of stone, hence its name Temple, and of curtains, and therefore its name Ohel Moed.

VISUALIZING ANCIENT EVENTS

As we walk about at the site of the ancient temple, we can visualize important events of antiquity. The door of the Ohel Moed was located in the east. The Holy of Holies in Israelite temples faced west which, according to Maimonides, was

3 At Km. 43, on the highway north of Jerusalem, you turn right for several miles a little beyond the Arab village of Turmus Aya.

4 The friends of Hans Kjaer said of him when he passed away while working at the site that he sacrificed his soul on the altar of an ancient Israeli Temple.

located there to express opposition to the idolatrous custom of bowing down eastward toward the sun. We can imagine Joshua sitting at the door of the building receiving the chiefs of the tribes of Israel and allotting to each tribe its territory in the Land of Israel.

One may ask, why was Shiloh chosen as the place for the Tabernacle? One possibility is that Shiloh lay in the province of Ephraim, of which Joshua was a member. Hence the tabernacle was located near the home of the prophet-judge-leader, *at the place which the Lord will choose in one of your tribes* (Deut. 12:14); i.e., in the place belonging to the one chosen to head the tribes.

Viewing the vast valley of Shiloh, one may recall the daughters of Shiloh dancing in the vineyards while the remnants of the tribe of Benjamin were *seizing each one his wife from among the girls of Shiloh* (Judges 21:21). From this place one can take in a particularly beautiful view of the mountains of Ephraim.

As we look about, we also understand better the story in I Samuel 4 concerning a man of Benjamin fleeing from the battleground. When he arrived, Eli was sitting on a chair by the road waiting for news concerning the outcome of the battle, deeply troubled about the ark of God. Eli the priest waited at the gate of the temple, just outside the city. The man in his haste passed him by. On entering the city with his bad news, all the people cried out in horror. When Eli heard it, he asked, "What does this uproar mean?" Only then did the man return to Eli at "the gate of the temple" to relate to him the sad news as well. It is worth noting that without attention to the topography of the region, it is difficult to understand the written text.

HANNAH, MOTHER OF SAMUEL

As we read the story of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, in the first chapter of I Samuel our heart goes out to this barren woman who, hoping to be remembered by God and have a son of her own, prays in this place. We read with interest the poignant dialogue between Eli the priest and Hannah. We sympathize with her suffering and enjoy one of the most beautiful stories of Scriptures.

I recall one of my trips to Shiloh with a Bible study group of Jewish women from Switzerland and the United States. I asked: "What is the most beautiful episode from a human point of view in this complex of stories?" I then read to them the poem of David Shimoni who sees a climax of experience in the little coat

which Samuel's mother made for him, and which she and her husband brought once a year to the Temple (I Sam. 2:19).

But the members of the study group taught me that, Shimoni's honor notwithstanding, there are more touching episodes in this story, among them the very act of weaning the child, and then bringing him to the temple in Shiloh, saying to the priest with motherly pride, *for this boy I prayed*. Some women added that the truly beautiful part of the story is the love of the husband Elkanah for his wife Hannah and his statement, *Am I not better to you than ten sons?* This opinion found complete agreement with the Bible students at the sanctuary in Shiloh.

It seems that the effect of a holy place persists even after it is destroyed, and continues to purify and refine all who remember it. Not only did the biblical narratives become more meaningful to me when I visited ancient Shiloh, but also the ancient halacha of the Mishnah which states: *There is very little difference between Shiloh and Jerusalem*" (Mishna Megilah 9:b).

Shiloh, the ancient holy site, remained in ruins for untold generations. But only a short while ago new life returned to it when a few families decided to establish a new settlement and a Yeshiva.

Translated by Dr. Mordecai Sochen



Ancient jugs of the Israelite period found at Shiloh

THE WESTERN WALL

BY B.Z. LURIA

PART VIII

This is the final section in a series of articles commemorating the tenth anniversary of the unification of the city of Jerusalem. The present account continues the history of the Western Wall.

BRITAIN AND OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

The Mufti knew that on the religious plane it would be easy to incite the Moslem masses against the Jews, and so he spread rumours about Jewish plans to gain sway over the Western Wall, and from there over the Mosques on the Temple Mount. His call was: "Slaughter the Jews! The government is on our side." In other words, there was no fear of government retribution. Thus, the disturbance broke out in all parts of the country in August 1929, with serious effects on the Yishuv everywhere, but especially in Hebron, Safed and the Georgian Quarter near the Damascus Gate in Jerusalem. The Mandatory Government held that both sides, that is the murderers and their victims, were equally responsible for the outcome of the disturbances since it was not clear which party had begun the acts of provocation. In order to clarify things, a Parliamentary Commission was appointed, headed by Sir Walter Shaw.

Under its terms of reference the Commission had to look into the causes of the disturbances. Since, however, it gathered in the course of its enquiry that the reason for the disturbances was to be sought in the dispute over the rights of the Jews and the Arabs to the Western Wall, it recommended that the problem be submitted to a Commission set up by the League of Nations for decision.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS COMMISSION

The League of Nations Commission, composed of three statesmen from Sweden, Switzerland and Holland, arrived in Jerusalem on June 19, 1930. The Jewish delegation submitted a memorandum on behalf of the Chief Rabbinate, the Jewish Agency, the Vaad Leumi and the Agudat Israel Centre. This memorandum was drawn up by a group of scholars which included Dr. Cyrus

Ben Zion Luria is the editor of Beth Mikra, the Hebrew publication of the Israel Society for Biblical Research. He is the author of numerous volumes in Hebrew on Biblical history and geography.

Adler, President of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, Professors David Yellin, Samuel Kline and Ben Zion Dinaburg of the Hebrew University, Yitzhak Ben Zvi, Rabbis Samuel Webber and Raphael Katzenellenbogen, and the lawyer M. Eliash. The memorandum included all the historical evidence concerning the Wall throughout the generations, the traditions and the custom of Jewish prayer in the Western Wall area. A special section in the memorandum denied the sanctity of the Western Wall in the religion of Islam. The memorandum concluded with a proposal to solve the Western Wall problem by evacuating the residents of the Moroccan Quarter and exchanging the area for new buildings in some other suitable location in Jerusalem.

During the month that the Commission sat in Jerusalem, it heard 51 witnesses: twenty Jews, thirty Moslems and one Britisher. It tried to bring the two parties to some compromise but to no avail. In the end it submitted its recommendations to the British Government. The tenor of its recommendations was:

Ownership of the Wall and of the area facing it was to remain in Moslem hands, while the Jews were entitled to pray at the Wall as they pleased, but on condition that they place no benches and put up no partition there, and do not sound the shofar.

The government gave legal sanction to these recommendations through a proclamation of the King-in-Council in 1931 concerning the Western Wall. The Jerusalem authorities stationed a police guard at the Wall to see that the law was not broken. In order to prevent any possible attack on Jews making their way to the Wall through the bazaar area, the government demarcated another route through the Armenian Quarter.

RESPONSE OF THE YISHUV

The Jews could not help acquiescing to the limitations imposed upon them by the League of Nations Commission. Nonetheless, the number of visitors to the Wall did not decrease; on the contrary, traffic to the Wall grew considerably and many people began praying at the Wall regularly. A number of teachers in Jerusalem, headed by Isaiah Press, Headmaster of the Laemmel School, conceived the idea of a pilgrimage to the Wall by all school pupils in the eighth grade, thus ensuring that every Jew in the country came up to Jerusalem and to the Wall at least once in his lifetime. Many schools answered the call and came with hundreds of pupils to the Wall. On the occasion of one of his visits to the

Wall at the head of his pupils, Isaiah Press was arrested by a police guard stationed there. The pretext for the arrest was that after prayers and his historical explanations of the significance and sanctity of the Wall, he and his pupils sang the "Hatikvah." The police claimed that this was a political demonstration and so brought him to trial. He was acquitted on the strength of a Sephardi Prayer Book in which the national hymn had been printed as one of the prayers.

SUDDENLY THE SOUND OF THE SHOFAR

The ban on the blowing of the shofar on the outgoing of the Day of Atonement was never actually observed, because every year there were groups of courageous youths who fulfilled this precept, despite the stringent steps taken by the police and the Mandatory Government to prevent it. Every Day of Atonement, a large police force would be stationed at the Wall in order to avert the blowing of the shofar, but failed to enforce the prohibition. Of these impressive moments of the blowing of the shofar at the outgoing of the festival, the crude attacks of the police and the courage evinced by the worshippers, an eye-witness writes:

"Beside the Wall which was thronged with worshippers stood British policemen, their bayoneted rifles pointing to the crowd. On the low roof of the Arab building facing the area stood an armed squad of Arab Legionnaires who also pointed their rifles at the worshippers.

"Then, as the congregation concluded the traditional declaration: 'The Lord He Is God,' a sudden silence ensued. Everything around was ghostly quiet, not a sound was heard. But everyone stood in expectation of the sensational to happen. Suddenly the sound of the shofar rent the oppressive stillness. At the sound of that mighty blast, the Congregation called out in excitement: 'Next year in Jerusalem rebuilt!' Some of the young people then and there began singing the 'Hatikvah.'

"The policemen and soldiers began jumping in frenzy from the roofs and surrounding vantage points, running to block the exits from the Western Wall area, hitting out indiscriminately at the people coming towards them. They combed the area, found the shofar and arrested several young suspects whom they beat up, manacled and transferred to prison. The police dispersed the excited and agitated crowd with their rifle butts and did not permit even the old people to remain behind for the Maariv prayer."

Yom Kippur 1947 was the last Day of Atonement before the outbreak of the

War of Liberation that Jews prayed and sounded the shofar at the Western Wall. The following year the Old City and the Wall were in the hands of the Arab Legion, and no Jew was allowed to set foot in the Wall area, despite the express provision in the Armistice Agreement with Jordan, in which the Jordan Government pledged free access to the Wall for the Jews.

UNDER JORDANIAN RULE

For twenty years the Western Wall stood desolate and forsaken. The Arabs thought that they would succeed in effacing all traces of Jewish association with the Wall. They erased all the age-long inscriptions on the stones, removed the notes of supplication that had been inserted by worshippers in between the crevices in the Wall, and affixed a sign in Arabic and English bearing the legend: el-Burak.

There were instances of Jewish tourists of foreign nationality succeeding in entering the Old City of Jerusalem and endangering themselves by a visit to the Western Wall. They told of how the Wall area was desolate and forsaken of its worshippers, and of a Jordanian soldiers standing there to guard the desolation.

ON THE DAY OF REDEMPTION

No day in modern Jewish history was of greater significance and implication to Jewry than the 28th of Iyar 5727 (June 7, 1967), when the Israel Defence Army surrounded the Old City of Jerusalem and captured it from the Jordanian forces. That morning the Commander of the Paratrooper Division issued an order of the day to his men: "We are advancing to the Temple Mount, to the Western Wall. The eyes of the whole Jewish people are turned to our victory. Israel is awaiting this historical moment. Go up and succeed!"

The Jewish combatants converged on the Old City from the east over the Mount of Olives and broke in through the Lion's Gate.

A short while afterwards the Commander of the Partatroopers' Brigade announced: "The Temple Mount is in our hands."

Immediately the combatants made their way to the Western Wall. With them came the Chief Chaplain of the Israel Defence Army, who read the following declaration to the liberators of Jerusalem: "Soldiers of Israel, beloved ones of the Jewish people, adorned in wreathes of heroism and victory, the Lord be with you, valiant men.

"I speak to you from the area of the Western Wall, the remnant of our Holy Temple.

'Comfort ye, my people,' saith your God.

"This is the day that we have hoped for, let us be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

"The vision of all the generations has materialized before our eyes. The City of God, the site of the Holy Temple, the Temple Mount and the Western Wall, the symbol of the messianic redemption of our people, have been redeemed this day by you, heroes of the Israel Defence Army.

"You have this day fulfilled the generations-long oath: *If I forget thee O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its cunning.* Indeed, we have not forgotten thee, Jerusalem, our Holy City and House of Glory. It is your right hand, the right hand of God, that hath wrought this historical act of redemption.

"The heart of whom can fail to rejoice and to jubilate at hearing the tidings of this redemption? From now on the Gates of Zion and of ancient Jerusalem, and the roads to the Western Wall are open for the prayer of its sons, builders and liberators in this land, and for the Jews in all the Dispersions to come hither and make supplication to the Creator of the World.

"Unto the nations of the world we declare: We shall keep all the holy places of the nations with due respect and reverence, preserving peace and good faith. Their gates will be open to members of all religions.

"Soldiers and dear sons: It is through you that this great privilege of the Jewish people has been extended. The age-long prayer and visions of the Prophets is being materialized: 'For Thou, O God, hast with fire consumed her, but with fire wilt Thou also in time to come rebuild her,' as it is said: 'And I will be unto her, saith the Lord, like a wall of fire round about, and a glory I will be in the midst of her. Blessed art Thou, O God, who comfortest Zion and rebuilddest Jerusalem.'

"And unto Zion and unto the remnant of our Holy Temple, we announce: Return ye sons to your homeland. Our feet now stand at thy gates, O Jerusalem, the City that is united with the new Jewish City of Jerusalem, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, the capital city of the everlasting State of Israel.

"In the name of the whole congregation of Israel in this land and in the Diaspora, I pronounce the blessing with exalted feelings of joy. 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who hast kept us alive and preserved us and brought us to this time.' "

□

TORAH DIALOGUES

BY HAROLD D. HALPERN

This series of questions and responses on the weekly Sidra is designed to encourage closer study of the text in order to promote discussion. The dialogues are especially appropriate for the Shabbat table between parents and children or in the synagogue between rabbi and congregation.

The responses given are necessarily brief and should be regarded merely as starting points for fuller discussion.

We recommend that these dialogues be kept for future reference. Following issues will continue with questions and answers on all books of the Pentateuch.

QUESTIONS

VaYESHEV

1. Which actions and traits of Joseph showed his immaturity and incurred his brothers' animosity?
2. Describe Reuben's role in the attack on Joseph. Why should he feel a special responsibility?
3. Why do you think the Torah interjects the story of Tamar at this particular point in the Sidra? (ch. 38).
4. What law in the Torah is referred to in 38:8?
5. What essential differences are there between the way Potiphar's wife relates the supposed attempt upon her by Joseph to her servants and to her husband (39:14-18)?

MIKETZ

1. The Torah hints that the professionals did their job but Pharaoh considered their dream interpretations unsatisfactory (41:8). Why did Pharaoh prefer Joseph's interpretation to that of his professional magicians?
2. Who else in the Bible interprets dreams?
3. What links to Hanukah may be found in the Sidra which generally is read then?
4. From his behavior in Egypt until his brothers appear, what can you deduce about Joseph's attitude towards his family in Canaan? Cite specific facts.

Rabbi Harold (Chaim) Halpern, member of the Dor le-Dor editorial staff, is president of the Bergen County, New Jersey, Board of Rabbis. He has prepared a number of Bible quizzes for Dor le-Dor.

ANSWERS

VaYESHEV

1. (a) The self-centered dreams (37:5–9).
(b) Joseph isn't working while his brothers are (37:12).
(c) He bears tales about them (37:2).
(d) Jacob's favoritism is demonstrated by the multi-colored robe (37:3).
2. As the eldest, he feels a responsibility for the safety of his young brother Joseph (37:21f., 29f.) but he is absent at the crucial moment when the brothers take Judah's suggestion to sell Joseph.
3. Perhaps it is another example of "midah keneged midah" – measure for measure. Judah is being punished for his participation in the sale of Joseph and deceit towards Jacob. He, in turn, is now deceived by Tamar's masquerade and confronted with his staff and cord (cf. 37:32 and 38:25). Judah is man enough to confess: "She is more righteous than I..." (38:26) and emerges more and more as the leader.
4. The law of Yibbum – levirate marriage (cf. Deut. 25:5).
5. *To the servants*: "See, he has brought us a Hebrew *man*, to *ridicule* us. He came to *lie* with me..."
To Potiphar: "The Hebrew *slave* you brought us came to *mock* me..." It is not surprising that Joseph is not executed.

MIKETZ

1. Prof. Nehama Lebovitz explains that Pharaoh felt that there must be some practical purpose and call to action in his dream. The Egyptian interpreters didn't respond to this feeling. She also cites R. Arama who believes that Joseph *reminded* Pharaoh of what he had understood during the course of the dream but had forgotten by morning. The king's complaint is "v'ayn magid lee – no one *tells* me" (41:24).
2. Daniel (Daniel chs. 2, 4). Both interpreters served pagan kings.
3. (a) The weak overcome the strong in Pharaoh's dream as in the Maccabean struggle vs. the Syrian-Greeks.
(b) Joseph is faced with the threat of cultural assimilation as the Judeans are later under Hellenistic rule.
4. Evidently he wished to forget them completely. This is indicated by the following facts:
(a) He does not contact his father to notify him that he is alive.
(b) He does not send food home during the famine.
(c) He marries an Egyptian, rears two sons and settles down.
(d) His first son is named Menashe because he has forgotten all his suffering and his family.

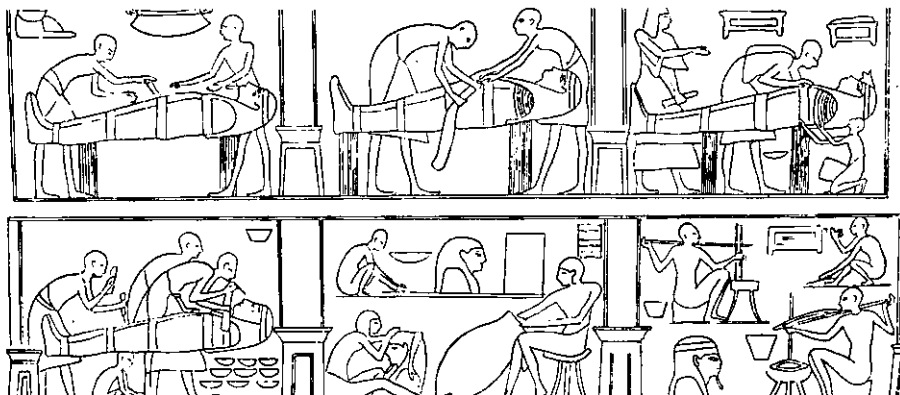
QUESTIONS

VaYIGASH

1. *In this Sidra we see a new Joseph. What specific acts indicate his growth and maturity? Compare with question number 1 of VaYeshev.*
2. *How does the Torah emphasize that the Israelite settlement in Egypt is to be temporary? Further evidence is in the next Sidra.*
3. *In what ways does Reuben demonstrate his lack of leadership so that Judah is put in charge of the mission to Joseph? Compare this with question number 2 of VaYeshev.*
4. *Why did Joseph present only five of his eleven brothers to Pharaoh (47:2)?*

VaYEHI

1. *Why does Jacob tell Joseph about the death and burial of Rachel at this juncture (48:7)?*
2. *Did Jacob ever find out the truth about Joseph's disappearance?*
3. *Why is Jacob's body borne to Hebron soon after his death but Joseph's is not (50:5ff.)?*
4. *The Talmud and Midrash say that the brothers told Joseph an untruth "for the sake of shalom". To which statement are the sages referring and how can they be sure that it wasn't true?*



ANSWERS

VaYIGASH

1. Instead of being a tattler, Joseph is now a forgiver of past wrongs. He even rationalizes their act (45:5). He provides his brothers with food. He does not tell his father about their sale of him (see *VaYehi* 2). He tries to prevent favoritism for Ephraim (48:17).
2. 45:28; 46:3.4; *VaYehi*: 48:3; 50:24.
3. First, in the way he mishandled the rescue of Joseph in Chapter 37. Second, in his manner in 42:22 and the hysterical proposal in 42:37 to which his father does not respond. In Chapter 43 Judah displays reliability and leadership (vv. 8–10).
4. He is concerned with the impression the brothers will make on the king and court (46:33f.). Perhaps he feels that the twelve brothers standing together might look too formidable and overwhelming. Rashi notes that he took the five least impressive men so that Pharaoh would not think of pressing them into Egyptian military service.

VaYEHI

1. Probably because he is asking Joseph to bury him in the family sepulchre in Hebron. He seems to be asking that the separate burial of Rachel not be held against him (Ibn Ezra, et al.). He also appears to be making amends at this time by a special blessing to her grandchildren.
2. There is reason from negative evidence to believe that the truth was carefully hidden from Jacob. Rashi comments on 50:15 that the brothers often dined together but when Jacob died the appearances no longer had to be maintained. The matter was of such importance that the Torah would have surely mentioned it if Joseph had revealed it to his father. Also, see question 4 here.
3. Jacob was only a temporary resident-alien in Egypt. His burial in Canaan would have little political impact. Note, however, that mention is made of having families and livestock in Goshen while Jacob's remains are transported (50:8). The transfer of the body of Joseph, close advisor to Pharaoh, right after his death would have had weighty political significance and perhaps dangerous implications for the Israelite community.
4. The comment is on 50:15–17. The Torah states that the statement was motivated by fear! Also, Jacob could have spoken the message directly to Joseph! Rashi feels that it isn't true because Jacob would never suspect Joseph of seeking vengeance. Joseph's response bears out this confidence in him.

PHARAOH NOW HAS ONLY ONE OPTION...

BY GABRIEL SIVAN

The historical connection between Israel's Torah and the Land and the People of Israel is axiomatic. To many non-Jews this truth is also self-evident, although theological and political considerations still blind some people to the underlying significance of the Third Jewish Commonwealth in Eretz Yisrael. Speaking on Israel's "right to the land," David Ben-Gurion once observed that whatever resolutions might be passed by international bodies, in the final analysis, "the Bible is our Mandate."

Study and teaching of Tenakh is so "naturally" part of everyday life in the State of Israel that it is taken for granted. No one is surprised by the fact that virtually every winner of the International Bible Contest for Jewish Youth, held annually in Jerusalem on Israel Independence Day, has been an Israeli. Fluency in Hebrew gives one immediate access to the Biblical sources, and the Israeli youngster has the added advantage of growing up in a country that fosters a love of Torah and contains most of the Scriptural locations within its borders.

Some recent developments in this Land of the Bible have nevertheless aroused concern and uneasiness among thought-

ful Israelis. Soundings by public opinion polls and the type of attitude expressed by members of the "Peace Now" movement prove that the "historic connection" needs fresh emphasis in at least part of Israel's educational system. The calibre of teacher and quality of teaching available to Bible students over here may well require some serious investigation.

PROBLEMS OF BIBLE TEACHING

If educators in the Land of the Bible must grapple with such realities, can the task of Jewish teachers in Diaspora schools be an easier one? My own comparatively brief experience in a South African Jewish day school (which led me to compile an amusing list of schoolboy "howlers") suggests otherwise. On the one hand, an unusually high proportion of youngsters receive full-time Jewish education in that very Zionist and Israel-oriented community; on the other hand, a growing lack of well-qualified staff (only partly offset by imported Israeli teachers) places Bible study there at a disadvantage. My particular "solution" was to dramatize personalities and events wherever possible, to present issues in modern terms, and to hand out stencilled background notes.

Dr. Gabriel Sivan, author of *The Bible and Civilization*, is deputy director of the World Jewish Bible Society and a member of the editorial board of *Dor le-Dor*. Born in England, he emigrated to Israel on the eve of the Six-Day War of 1967, was one of the editors of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, and latterly served as director of education with the South African Zionist Federation.

There are, of course, other countries where Jewish day schools enjoy financial aid from the State, but their proportionally smaller intake of the community's children will make an overall assessment of the situation harder to record. One is tempted to conclude that the experience of those teaching Bible in cities like Baltimore, London and Toronto is unlikely to be a very different and more encouraging one.

AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS

How can the alert teacher "bring the Bible to life" when he or she lives in some place far removed from the scenes of its enaction? Audio-visual aids naturally spring to mind, one example being the newspaper-type series of *Chronicles* marketed for some years past. Unfortunately, those ready and able to make use of such graphic material normally encounter the reluctance of parents to buy extra books for their children — especially when (in the case of Bible and Judaica) this additional literature seems unlikely to have much bearing on the pupil's future career.

Another potential aid is the LP record or cassette tape of Bible readings by some well-known personality capable of infusing the texts with meaning and expression. There is so far no demand for these here in Israel, although we do have an ongoing radio series of *Pirkei Hayom baTenakh* (daily broadcasts of Biblical chapters with brief commentary). During

the 1960s, a British record company issued some memorable "Old Testament" readings by Laurence (now Lord) Olivier, complete with appropriate background and incidental music provided by an Anglo-Jewish choir. Other LPs of this type have been produced in the United States. From the educational point of view, however, teachers in the Diaspora could probably make far better use of Hebrew readings, if these were only available at reasonable cost.

ORIGINAL "SOUND PICTURE"

The most effective and imaginative audio-visual aid obtainable to date is "Bible News",* which may yet revolutionize classroom teaching through its adoption of a familiar (though hitherto neglected) technique: major Biblical episodes and events presented as news reports and "live" commentaries from the radio or TV studio. So far, ten 15-minute programmes are available on five cassettes that cover the period from Abraham to King Saul (1800-1000 BCE).

Certain dangers are, of course, inherent in this "sound picture" technique. The listener may be exposed to sensationalism and poor taste displayed in "interviews" with Biblical heroes and villains; anachronism and other inaccuracies arising from shoddy research; and religious bias resulting from the adoption of non-Jewish theological slants. Fortunately, however, such

* BIBLE NEWS, produced and distributed by Bible News Limited, York House, Empire Way, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 0QQ, England (1977), in association with Encyclopedia Britannica, UK; price £14.95

dangers have been avoided by the producers of "Bible News". Their "on-the-spot" reporters bring hard news, not interviews: authentic Biblical and ancient historical sources provide all the basic material; and two scholarly consultants* have evidently done all the groundwork. These programmes have, incidentally, been approved by the London and New York boards of Jewish education.

SOPHISTICATED APPROACH

What happens when, as the blurb informs us, "a team of today's top reporters and commentators step back in time to cover the exciting events of the Bible"? First of all, each self-contained programme brings up-to-the-minute information on key developments as this reaches the studio ("Here is the news from BRM..."). Announcers read the headlines, telling of assorted calamities ("latest news of the famine in Canaan"), invading armies ("siege of Jericho enters its 7th day"), and military successes ("Gideon's commandos have routed the Midianites"). Eyewitness reports from far and wide then supply details of an unprecedented catastrophe at Sodom or of the Red Sea engulfing Egyptian chariots. These are followed by some expert analysis, generally a panel discussion concerning the political, economic and religious aspects of whatever has just occurred ("Pharaoh now has only one option..."), and by an in-depth assessment of "This Week's Man In The News."

The panellists invariably assume con-

trasting positions, one "realistically" minimizing Israel's ability to survive in the Sinai wilderness or to defeat assorted enemies, the other adopting a more sanguine and far-sighted approach. With historical hindsight, of course, the listener will find these discussions alternately diverting and ironic, not least because of certain instructive parallels with events in our own time.

Occasional news items concerning other contemporary developments (such as the Trojan War or conspiracies in distant Mesopotamia) are introduced so as to provide a measure of historical perspective. Since "Bible News" is a British production, BBC-type voices tend to predominate. The sophisticated presentation, with introductory musical jingles and appropriate sound effects, should nevertheless have an international appeal.

Some highlights are the investiture of Joseph as Viceroy of Egypt ("listen to the crowds cheering"), Samson's destruction of the temple of Dagon ("we have no further news of our reporter..."), and the daring Israelite rescue of Saul's mutilated body from the walls of Bet-Shean. Features of this kind are bound to enthrall the young and to rekindle interest in the adult.

TECHNICAL DATA

This first series from "Bible News" manages to escape the pitfalls lurking in early chapters of the Torah by taking Genesis 12 as its point of departure and

* Listed as Dr Markham J. Geller, of University College, London, and Dr Irving Finkel, research fellow of the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute.

then proceeding as far as I Samuel 31. It comes in an attractively designed and sturdy album with snap-in containers for the cassettes, and also includes a programme guide offering the listener useful synopses, background maps and a time chart. Special teaching notes are available, providing questions for discussion and ideas for class projects. The next series will apparently continue the story from King David up to and including the (strictly un-Biblical) 2nd Jewish War of survival against the Romans, popularly known as the Bar-Kokhba "revolt".

Inevitably, points of weakness can be detected here and there among the ten programmes. Studio experts sometimes tend to state the obvious; some episodes might have been less protracted and better handled; and Hebrew names are occasionally mispronounced, although one reporter is clearly familiar with *leshon ha-kodesh*. Though legitimate, these criticisms in no way detract from the overall quality of "Bible News" and its value as an educational aid.

Extracts have been played over BBC radio and TV and the American media. My own first acquaintance with these

programmes was, in fact, by way of an illustrated feature broadcast on an early morning news magazine in South Africa. El Al Israel Airlines have reportedly been offering selected items on their Boeing 747 services, while the *Jerusalem Post* enables its readers to acquire an album when taking out a new subscription.

GENERAL ASSESSMENT

For Bible teaching and family listening, "Bible News" is in every way deserving of recommendation. Even those with an above-average acquaintance with the Tenakh should find the current series instructive and stimulating. Further possibilities might be an adaptation of these programmes for Hebrew-speaking listeners in both Israel and the Diaspora, or even a more ambitious TV cassette production for viewing at home or in school.

Altogether, therefore, the project merits warm praise and wholehearted encouragement as the most up-to-date means of fostering popular study and appreciation of our Bible. One is tempted to add: You've heard the stories — now read the Book!



עשה תורתך קבע

TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

July 1979	מנחם-אב חשל"ט	August 1979	אלול חשל"ט
W 25 Isaiah 53	א	F 24 Isaiah 51:12-52:12	א
Th 26 Isaiah 54	ב	Sa 25 שופטים	ב
F 27 Isaiah 1:1-27	ג	Su 26 Jeremiah 8	ג
Sa 28 דברים	ד שבת חזון	M 27 Jeremiah 9	ד
Su 29 Isaiah 55	ה	T 28 Jeremiah 10	ה
M 30 Isaiah 56	ו	W 29 Jeremiah 11	ו
T 31 Isaiah 57	ז	Th 30 Jeremiah 12	ז
W 1 Isaiah 58	ח	F 31 Isaiah 54:1-1:10	ח
Th 2	ט צום חשעה באב		
F 3 Isaiah 40:1-26	י	September 1979	
Sa 4	יא שבת נחמו ואחחנן	Sa 1 כי תצא	ט
Su 5 Isaiah 59	יב	Su 2 Jeremiah 13	י
M 6 Isaiah 60	יג	M 3 Jeremiah 14	יא
T 7 Isaiah 61	יד	T 4 Jeremiah 15	יב
W 8 Isaiah 62	טו	W 5 Jeremiah 16	יג
Th 9 Isaiah 63	טז	Th 6 Jeremiah 17	יד
F 10 Isaiah 49:14-51:3	יז	F 7 Isaiah 60	טו
Sa 11 עקב	יח	Sa 8 כי תבוא	טז
Su 12 Isaiah 64	יט	Su 9 Jeremiah 18	יז
M 13 Isaiah 65	כ	M 10 Jeremiah 19	יח
T 14 Isaiah 66	כא	T 11 Jeremiah 20	יט
W 15 Jeremiah 1	כב	W 12 Jeremiah 21	כ
Th 16 Jeremiah 2	כג	Th 13 Jeremiah 22	כא
F 17 Isaiah 54:11-55:5	כד	F 14 Isaiah 61:10-63:9	כב
Sa 18 ראה	כה	Sa 15 נצבים-וילך	כג
Su 19 Jeremiah 3	כו	Su 16 Jeremiah 23	כד
M 20 Jeremiah 4	כז	M 17 Jeremiah 24	כה
T 21 Jeremiah 5	כח	T 18 Jeremiah 25	כו
W 22 Jeremiah 6	כט	W 19 Jeremiah 26	כז
Th 23 Jeremiah 7	ל	Th 20 Jeremiah 27	כח
		F 21	כט ערב ראש השנה

דף יומי

We add here the daily Talmud page followed by the Jewish Community

א' במנחם אב: ממשיכים בדף קי"ג במסכת בבא קמא

ח' במנחם אב: מתחילים מסכת בבא מציעא

TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

September 1979			חש"מ	October 1979			חש"מ
Sa	22		א ראש השנה	M	22	Jeremiah 44	א
Su	23		ב ראש השנה	T	23	Jeremiah 45	ב
M	24	Jeremiah 28	ג צום גדליה	W	24	Jeremiah 46	ג
T	25	Jeremiah 29	ד	Th	25	Jeremiah 47	ד
W	26	Jeremiah 30	ה	F	26	Isaiah 54-55:5	ה
Th	27	Jeremiah 31	ו	Sa	27	נח	ו
F	28	Hosea 14:2-10; Joel 2:15-27	ז	Su	28	Jeremiah 48	ז
Sa	29	האזינו	ח שבח שובה	M	29	Jeremiah 49	ח
Su	30		ט ערב יום כפור	T	30	Jeremiah 50	ט
				W	31	Jeremiah 51	י
October 1979				November 1979			
M	1		י יום כפור	Th	1	Jeremiah 52	יא
T	2	Jeremiah 32	יא	F	2	Isaiah 40:27-41:16	יב
W	3	Jeremiah 33	יב	Sa	3	לך לך	יג
Th	4	Jeremiah 34	יג	Su	4	Ezekiel 1	יד
F	5		יד ערב סוכות	M	5	Ezekiel 2	טו
Sa	6		טו סוכות	T	6	Ezekiel 3	טז
Su	7		טז סוכות	W	7	Ezekiel 4	יז
M	8	Jeremiah 35	יז חול המועד	Th	8	Ezekiel 5	יח
T	9	Jeremiah 36	יח חול המועד	F	9	II Kings 4:1-37	יט
W	10	Jeremiah 37	יט חול המועד	Sa	10	וירא	כ
Th	11	Jeremiah 38	כ חול המועד	Su	11	Ezekiel 6	כא
F	12		כא הושענא רבה	M	12	Ezekiel 7	כב
Sa	13		כב שמיני עצרת	T	13	Ezekiel 8	כג
Su	14		כג שמחת תורה	W	14	Ezekiel 9	כד
M	15	Jeremiah 39	כד	Th	15	Ezekiel 10	כה
T	16	Jeremiah 40	כה	F	16	I Kings 1:1-31	כו
W	17	Jeremiah 41	כו	Sa	17	חיי שרה	כז
Th	18	Jeremiah 42	כז	Su	18	Ezekiel 11	כח
F	19	Isaiah 42:5-43:10	כח	M	19	Ezekiel 12	כט
Sa	20	בראשית	כט	T	20	Ezekiel 13	ל
Su	21	Jeremiah 43	ל				

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