

דור לדור DOR Le DOR

Our Biblical Heritage



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OUR BIBLICAL HERITAGE

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דפוס רפאל חיים הכהן בע"מ, ירושלים

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*Tribute
to
Chaim Abramowitz*



In the United States they were known as Hyman and Ann. In Israel, after making Aliyah in 1973, they are better known as Chaim and Chana. Chaim Abramowitz, our Assistant Editor, has been with "Dor le Dor" virtually from the beginning of his קליטה in Israel, and we take pleasure in honoring him upon his reaching the age of "Gevurot" — עד מאה ועשרים שנה.

A ninth-generation Sabra, born in the Nachlat Shiva neighborhood of Jerusalem, he received his earliest education in the typical Talmud Torah of the Old Yishuv. At the age of eight years, his family emigrated to the United States. His general education was pursued at the City College of New York (now known as C.U.N.Y.) and his Hebrew education at the Teachers Institute of the Yeshiva Rabbi Isaac Elchanan (now Yeshiva University).

Chaim has devoted his life and career to Jewish education: Educational Director of a synagogue school in Philadelphia, later on in Queens, N.Y. and most recently in Valley Stream, Long Island.

Among his professional affiliations, he served on the Board of the Educators Assembly; was the first president of the Philadelphia region of the Educators Assembly; chairman of the Education Committee of the Hebrew Principals' Association, and vice president of the Agudat Hamenahalim of New York.

TRIBUTE TO CHAIM ABRAMOWITZ

Mr. Abramowitz was active in developing supplementary aids in Jewish education. He is the author of "Miloni Alef and Bet", "Sefer Limud Hateamim" for the teaching of biblical cantillations ("Trop"), as well as a coloring workbook combined with songs for use in Sunday Schools.

Today, he serves in the inner cabinet as Assistant Editor of "Dor le Dor." A number of his illuminating articles have appeared in "Dor le Dor" issues wherein he has presented biblical themes, interpreted in the light of modern scientific knowledge.

In addition to his many articles, he has compiled the 3-year indexes and the 12-year composite Index to "Dor le Dor", as well as the Triennial Bible Reading Calendars for the World Jewish Bible Society. The forthcoming calendar for the years 1985-1988 will be published in the Fall of 1985.



THIS ISSUE OF DOR LE DOR
IS DEDICATED TO THE
MEMORY OF THE
DIEBACH FAMILY
WHO PERISHED IN THE HOLOCAUST
DONATED IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE
BY
MRS. ERNA FELLNER
OF FOREST HILLS, N.Y.

MAFTIR JONAH

BY CHAIM ABRAMOWITZ

The public reading of all, or part, of the Torah is an ancient custom initiated by Moses¹ and later again by Ezra². These two instances were one-time events, but the idea developed into the custom of reading a portion of the Torah on Saturdays and holidays, on fast days and on Mondays and Thursdays (ancient market days). This custom was already in effect as early as the second century B.C.E., and is as ancient as the additional reading of an appropriate selection from the Prophets on Saturdays, holidays, and fast days³. These prophetic readings must be *מְעִינָא דְיומָא*⁴, relevant to either the Torah selection or the special occasion of the day. For instance, the Haftara reading for the first Sidra, *בְּרֵאשִׁית*, talks about the greatness of God who created the universe,⁵ but should that Shabbat coincide with *רֵאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ* then we read that which begins "On every Sabbath and New Moon."⁶ If *רֵאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ* is Sunday, then we read the story of Jonathan and David beginning with "Tomorrow is the New Moon."⁷

The Talmud⁸ lists the Torah and Haftara selections for the holidays, and Rashi explains the reason for each selection. Its reference to Yom Kippur is as follows: On Yom Kippur for Mincha we read about the laws of chastity⁹ and the Haftara is the Book of Jonah. Reasons for the Torah selection (Lev. ch. 18) are varied. Rashi explains that "these sins are common and open to temptation and should be avoided." According to Tosefot, "this is a warning that one should refrain from sinful thoughts when he sees the women dressed in all their finery and be-

1. Deuteronomy 31:10–12
2. Nehemiah 8:1–8
3. Otzar Yisrael—Haftara
4. Maimonides: Laws of Prayer, Orach Chayim 284
5. Isaiah 42:7 ff
6. Isaiah 66:20 ff; 7. I Samuel 20:18 ff.
8. Megillah 31a 9. Leviticus 18

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jewelled in honor of the holiday.” Maimonides reasons that “listening to this chapter will make one who has transgressed on any of these prohibitions feel ashamed of his sin and he will not repeat it.”¹⁰ Each one tells why we read this particular Torah chapter on Yom Kippur afternoon, but no one tries to explain the reason for reading the story of Jonah. It would appear as if they all consider it so obvious that it needs no explanation. However, the matter is not as simple as the general silence seems to imply.

First, why do we add a Haftara on Yom Kippur afternoon, when we do not do so on any other Shabbat? The reason for the Haftara at the Mincha service on fast days does not apply to Yom Kippur. Fast days are the results of public calamity and based on Ezra 9: 4–5: *And I sat desolate until למנחת הערב the evening offering ובמנחת הערב and at the evening offering I arose from my fast;* together with our desire for the opportunity to give charity during the day, we read the Haftara toward evening, at the Mincha service.¹¹ Yom Kippur is a holiday, a Sabbath of Sabbaths, and even though we fast, we do not rise from our desolation nor do we give charity during the day.

Second, why the Book of Jonah? If the intended lesson is to teach repentance and avoidance of licentious acts, then Isaiah 3 would be much more appropriate. The reason given by the Ba'al Halevush, who probably took it from the Machzor Vitry, that “we read it because it extols repentance and shows that one cannot escape God” does not explain either its connection with the Torah reading nor with its preference over more telling prophetic pronouncements.

A PROPHET TO THE HEATHENS

The Book of Jonah is a strange and anomalous book. This is the only time when a Jewish prophet is sent to a heathen city to warn them of impending punishment for an unspecified sin. Other prophets have prophesied about other nations, but always in Israel and to their own people. Jonah was instructed to go to Nineveh to tell *them* that *in forty days Nineveh will be destroyed*, but the reason *for its wickedness has come before me* was given only to the prophet.

Jonah's reaction was typically unprophetic. He did not try to evade the call like Moses who said: *Who am I that I should go?* (Exodus 3:11), or like Isaiah who

10. Maimonides: Laws of Prayer 3:1

11. Megillah 30b

said: *For I am a man of unclean lips* (Isaiah 6:5), or like Jeremiah who pleaded: *For I am only a child* (Jeremiah 1:6). He did not plead or deprecate himself as unworthy. Seemingly fearful of the possibility that the Ninevites would repent, that God would forgive and that his prediction of doom would not materialize (something that was the sincere hope of every prophet), he listened and ran away, lest he be deemed a liar in the eyes of the people.

He went to Jaffa and boarded a boat bound for Tarshish. He was the only Jew among a boatful of gentiles. When a violent storm broke out, he was aware of its causes, yet while each of the passengers prayed to his individual god, Jonah lay in his bed and fell asleep, unmindful of the fate of the passengers and the crew. When they drew lots which brought them to the sleeping Jonah, and he admitted that he was to blame for their imminent danger, they did not panic and throw him over-board. They acted instead like calm, considerate human beings and did everything possible to ascertain first whether he was to blame, and then whether there was any possibility of saving the boat and him. Even though he refused to pray to his God, it was only after every other avenue of reaching safety was explored that they reluctantly threw him into the sea.

Jonah continued in his strange behavior even after he was swallowed by the fish. He did not pray to God until the third day. The Midrash accounts for his change of mind by explaining that he was first swallowed by a male fish (דג), which later transferred him to a pregnant female fish (דגה) where existence was so crowded and unbearable that in his trouble (קראתי מצרה לי) he finally prayed to God.¹²

This pattern of behavior continues in Nineveh. Instead of prolonged exhortations that were common among other prophets to Jews, his simple announcement that *in forty days Nineveh will be destroyed* so aroused the people to repent that they put on sackcloth even before word reached the King, who then made it official. One can imagine their joy when the forty days passed and they were not destroyed. Instead of rejoicing in their salvation, the prophet was distressed that his prophecy was not fulfilled (4:1).

Our sages, who were undoubtedly aware of all that, seemed to see in the Book of Jonah something of great moral and spiritual importance that merited its inclu-

12. Yalkut Shimoni 550

sion in the prophetic section of the Bible, and of being selected for public reading at the close of the holiest day of the year. After a careful analysis of the details of the story, we can arrive at a clearer understanding of its import.

THE SIN OF NINEVEH

What was the iniquity of the people in Nineveh? Since Nineveh was a heathen city, it was neither idol worship, nor disobedience of other laws in the Torah that was held against them. Their sin must have been great and self-evident, since all Jonah was instructed to do was "to proclaim against it," which meant, judging by his second message, warning them that their end is near, without highlighting the reason. In addition to Nineveh, the Bible mentions three other instances when a complete community was doomed to destruction for a great, but unspecified sin. The flood in the days of Noah came because of *רעת האדם* *the wickedness of man*.¹³ Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because *כי כבדה מאד* *their sin is exceedingly grievous*.¹⁴ And the Canaanites were conquered by Joshua, because of *עון האמורי* *the iniquity of the Amorites*.¹⁵ All of the above were pagans, so their "sins" must have been of a more universal nature. That each sin was some deviation of a sexual nature is alluded to by the narration of an incident or event preceding each destruction.

Before the flood, the Bible narrates the story of the *בני אלהים* *the sons of the mighty* who took the *בנות האדם* *the daughters of the common man* *מכל אשר בחרו* *whenever and whomsoever they desired*.¹⁶ The juxtaposition of these two stories is a clear indication that promiscuity, lasciviousness and rape were the reasons for the flood and the annihilation of all life.

In Sodom the men of the city surrounded the house of Lot, and demanded that his two visitors, whom they believed to be ordinary men, be turned over to them *ונדעה אותם* *so that we may know them*.¹⁷ Since "knowing" is a common biblical circumlocution for cohabitation, it is obvious that their sin was homosexuality.

13. Genesis 6:5

14. Ibid 18:20

15. Ibid 16:20

16. Ibid 6:1–6

17. Ibid 19:5

The Midrash states that there was a general agreement among the people of Sodom and Gomorrah that any stranger who comes into the city should be assaulted sexually and then robbed of his belongings.¹⁸

זמה - תועבה - חבל

Before entering Canaan, the Jews were instructed: *לא תחיו כל נשמה Allow no living soul to remain alive.*¹⁹ And the reason is explicit. *ואל תטמאו בכל אלה כי בכל Defile not yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations are defiled, which I cast out from before you.*²⁰ This is emphasized four or five times following the list of sexual interdictions.

Likewise, the sin of Nineveh is intimated by the automatic reaction of the people. When Jonah announced that *in forty days Nineveh will be destroyed*, they reacted as if they immediately understood the nature of their sin. They put sackcloth on themselves *and on their cattle*, as if to say that they *and* the animals were partners in “bestiality.” Though in biblical law the animal in such a relationship must be killed,²¹ the Ninevites thought that repentance would be sufficient.

It is interesting to note that in the entire list of sexual prohibitions, only the specific deviations mentioned above — promiscuity, homosexuality, and bestiality — were given additional derogatory terms.

Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter or her son's daughter, (Lev. 18:17) *זמה היא it is a depravity*. Amos, in mentioning some of Israel's transgressions, singles out the one about a father and son going to the same girl as a *חלול השם* desecration of God's name. Promiscuity without regard to family relationships — the sin of the generation of Noah — is designated here as *זמה*, (idem), as *חלול השם* in Amos 2:7, and as *חסד* in Leviticus 20:17.

Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womenkind (Lev. 18:22) *זמה היא it is an abomination*. Even though the end of the chapter labels all of them collectively as *תועבה*, nevertheless homosexuality — the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah is specifically labelled as such.

Thou shalt not lie with an animal, neither shall any woman stand before an animal (Lev. 18:23) — *חבל הוא it is a perversion*.

18. Yalkut Shimon 84

19. Deuteronomy 20:16

20. Leviticus 18:24

21. Leviticus 20:15–16

This was the sin that threatened the destruction of Nineveh.

Of the three sexual perversions (זמה — תועבה — תבל) that were given special degrading terminologies, זמה — promiscuity and rape — were also the underlying cause for the destruction of Shechem; תועבה — homosexuality — for the near annihilation of the tribe of Benjamin. There is no known example of תבל in Israel.

JONAH RE-ASSESSED

Now that we know what the nature of the wickedness of the heathen city of Nineveh was, one that was unthinkable in Israel, we can begin to understand the message our sages wished to convey to us when they selected this story for public reading at the close of the Yom Kippur service. Though Jonah was sent to Nineveh to inform them of their impending fate, there was nothing in the divine instructions about a call to repentance, as was customary among prophets to the Jewish people. This is in consonance with the הלכה that only Jews require a הוזהרה — a warning — with the possibility of forgiveness if they repent. His conscience rebelled at the thought that such grievous sinners could escape punishment. He found himself in a quandary. He could not say to God, “send someone else” because he did not want the warning to take place, and he did not want to go himself. But one cannot say “no” to God. He tried to escape to Tarshish, another heathen city, in the hope that the spirit of prophecy would leave him there.²² Therefore, when the storm broke out at sea, he did not join the common endeavor and pray to his God because prayer presupposes a change of heart, returning to Israel and then going on his original mission. Convinced in his belief that God would not hurt the passengers and the crew because of him,²³ he quietly went to sleep awaiting God’s wrath. He preferred death rather than have the guilty go unpunished because of him. When the crew found him, they refused to believe him because they could not understand that a man would refuse to pray to his God to help him in a situation for which he knew he was the cause. The emphasis on their futile attempts to save themselves before throwing Jonah into the sea, in spite of his insistence that he was to blame for all their troubles, shows the extent to which

22. Jonah 1:3

23. This explains the emphasis on their extreme kindness and fear of wrongdoing.

he was willing to go and not violate his conscience. Even though, instead of drowning, he found himself inside a fish, he refused to pray until the third day when he was extremely uncomfortable. It seems that Jonah could stand death, but was incapable of enduring discomfort, as we also see from the incident of the gourd and the sun.

Jonah finally went to Nineveh and delivered his message that *in forty days Nineveh will be destroyed*. Much to his chagrin they understood the reason behind the warning. By official decree both man and beast were instructed to fast, to be covered with sackcloth, to cry mightily to God, and to turn away from their evil ways. *And God saw that they turned away from their evil ways and He did not do as He said He would.*²⁴

Here the author loses all interest in the city of Nineveh. What was their reaction when the forty days passed and they were saved? Did they rejoice and offer thanks-giving to God, as did the sailors when the sea became calm again? Or did they consider Jonah a false prophet since his warning did not materialize? Neither the book nor the Midrash has anything to say about that. All the interest now centers on Jonah and his reaction.

As expected, Jonah was bitter. *וירע אל יונה ... ויחר לו* *It displeased Jonah exceedingly and he was angry. I know he said that you are a forgiving God. I knew that when I was in my own country. I was subject to the spirit of prophecy*²⁵ *therefore I fled to Tarshish. Now that You made me come back, take my life for I would rather be dead than alive.* Then the book closes with the story of his discomfort in the heat of the sun and of his anger over the withering of the gourd which gave him short-lived respite. It ends with the powerful statement in the form of a rhetorical question whose answer is obvious.

THE REAL LESSON

This is the real lesson of the story of Jonah. It is not that God is universal and that He has jurisdiction even over the gentiles; nor is it that God is everywhere and that one cannot run away from Him; nor does it stress the importance of תשובה — repentance.

24. Jonah 3 — 4:3

25. *אין השכינה נגלה בחו"ל* The spirit of God is not revealed outside Israel. (Yalkut Shimoni 549).

The Talmudic scholars are divided in their opinions on the value of Nineveh's repentance. Shmuel says their repentance was so great that if one had stolen a board and used it in the building of a palace, he would break down the building to retrieve the board and return it to its rightful owner. Resh Lekish terms their תשובה של רמאות a fraudulent repentance, and Rabbi Jochanan claims that they returned only the stolen goods that were obvious and public knowledge but not that which were put away in their houses or storerooms.²⁶ The Yalkut²⁷ deprecates them further by saying that after the forty days, they returned to their evil ways, even worse than before.

In the light of the above, it is obvious that it is not for the repentance of the Ninevites that the book of Jonah was chosen for the Mincha Haftara. The lesson, or rather the encouragement that comes to us when we listen to the Torah and Haftara on Yom Kippur afternoon is paramount.

For the past ten days we have been praying for forgiveness and have verbally retracted on sins, and on this tenth day we have been fasting and praying, as Jonah phrased it — בחזקה — with additional fervor. Now that the day is drawing to a close we may be troubled with the thought that our תשובה may have been a תשובה של רמאות, insincere and unforgivable. Since the sexual drive, which is the basis of the continuity of all life on earth,²⁸ is one that is commonly perverted, an example even of extreme perversion by man and beast that can be forgiven, is presented to us the afternoon of the Day of Repentance. Therefore our Sages tell us, through the Torah and Haftara selections, to face the world of reality by adhering to a moral code and a healthy family life. The Haftara gives us hope that God in His great compassion will overlook any deficiencies in our prayers and our expressions of repentance.

26. Jerusalem Taanit 4:2

27. Yalkut Shimoni 550

28. There is an interesting story in the Talmud (Yoma 29a) about an attempt to capture the יצר הרע, the Evil Desire, thus keeping the world from sinning. After three days the world comes to a standstill; not even an egg was laid by the chickens. They had to free the יצר הרע with certain restrictions so that life would continue.

THE BOOK OF JONAH

AN ETHICAL CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GOD AND PROPHET

BY NATHAN AVIEZER

THE THEME

The Book of Jonah is unique. It is the only Book of the Prophets that is not devoted primarily to the delivery of the Divine message. Indeed, the word of God as delivered by Jonah consists of but one brief sentence: *In forty days Nineveh will be overthrown* (3:4).

The central theme of the Book is the confrontation between Jonah and God. It is an account of a prophet who finds, to his dismay, that his Divine mission conflicts with his personal concepts of morality and justice. This confrontation, the ultimate rejection of Jonah's conceptions and the restatement of the Divine position are the essential components of the Book. It is our purpose here to elucidate this theme.

In the course of time, the Book of Jonah has become laden with homiletic interpretation. Therefore, we shall examine the Book afresh, paying close attention to the Biblical text and avoiding, as far as is possible, any interpretation that is not substantiated by the text. A careful reading reveals a fundamental conflict between Jonah and God as to the very essence of justice and morality. A study of this confrontation will yield answers to some of the traditional questions associated with this book:

(i) Why does Jonah try so desperately to avoid carrying out his Divine mission (1:3)? Why is he so opposed to warning the people of Nineveh of the impending consequences of their wickedness?

(ii) Why is Jonah so distressed when his mission is crowned with success? Why does he long to die (4:3) when the people of Nineveh sincerely repent and are therefore forgiven?

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(iii) What is the significance of the strange episode of the 'kikayon' (4:6-11)? This episode, with which the Book concludes, is obviously intended to be climactic, but its meaning requires clarification.

MERCY ERODES JUSTICE – THE VIEW OF JONAH

The philosophy of Jonah that emerges from the text is that of a man unequivocally opposed to the concept that repentance inevitably brings forgiveness for *every crime* no matter how heinous. Jonah totally rejects the tenet that a man can lead a persistently wicked life, committing every manner of evil, and escape all retribution by a sudden change of heart, albeit sincere. In an instant, all crimes are pardoned, the slate is wiped clean, everything is forgiven and all misdeeds atoned. To Jonah, this is intolerable – a gross perversion of justice. In his eyes, there are crimes so terrible that forgiveness is inconceivable and punishment is mandatory. For such crimes, Jonah sees neither need nor justification for tempering justice with mercy. Indeed, Jonah cannot bear to live in a world in which he sees justice thwarted by mercy.

The Book opens with Jonah receiving a Divine mission to go to the great city of Nineveh and inform the people that retribution for their wickedness is at hand (1:2). It is significant that Jonah is *not* instructed to exhort the people of Nineveh to repent and give up their evil ways and thus gain forgiveness, which is the message of every other prophet in the Bible. Mention of repentance and atonement are conspicuously absent, both in God's directives to Jonah (1:2 and 3:2) and in the message that Jonah ultimately conveys (3:4). This omission can be understood in the light of Jonah's philosophy and personality; it would be inconceivable that a prophet be directed by God to deliver the very message to which he is so utterly opposed.

After the incident of the 'big fish', Jonah reluctantly accepts his mission, makes his way to Nineveh and delivers his message of impending doom (3:4). Jonah's forebodings engender sincere repentance by the people of Nineveh, and God in His mercy forgives them and annuls the decree of destruction (3:10).

When Jonah realizes that Nineveh has been spared, he is enraged (4:1). His strident tones are tantamount to an accusation against God: "I told You so!... You are indulgent of crime!" (4:2). Jonah's worst fears have been realized. Nineveh, the great center of evil and violence, has been pardoned and its wicked

inhabitants are to go unpunished. In Jonah's eyes, this pardon is a total miscarriage of justice. Worst of all, this injustice has been perpetrated by God Himself, the symbol of Absolute Justice. This is more than Jonah can endure, and he longs only for death (4:3).

THE EPISODE OF THE KIKAYON – JONAH IS PUT TO TEST

At this point, in reaction to Jonah's complaint, God teaches him a very personal lesson. Jonah is about to be taught that his unswerving demand for strict and absolute justice, untouched by mercy for the inhabitants of Nineveh, is incompatible with human frailty. It will be demonstrated to Jonah that everyone needs the benefits of Divine consideration and mercy, even when unmerited. Indeed, Jonah will be shown that under duress, he himself desires to take advantage of an undeserved favor. Thus, he will bend the rules of uncompromising integrity to promote his own welfare.

Jonah is taught this lesson through the episode of the kikayon (4:6-11). This is the climax of the confrontation between Jonah and God, culminating with the Divine statement of the necessity of allowing repentance and atonement regardless of the crime, and the rejection of Jonah's demand for the strict execution of judgment for heinous crimes, with no opportunity for forgiveness. The events associated with the kikayon do not directly involve repentance and atonement; Jonah has not sinned and therefore atonement is not at issue. Rather, the events deal with a related issue: the granting of undeserved Divine favors. The episode of the kikayon (probably a castor-oil-plant, but often translated 'gourd') is thus to be understood in terms of the principle advocated by Jonah that Divine favors, such as forgiveness, are not to be granted without justification.

Let us now carefully follow the text to see how Jonah reacts when he suddenly finds himself the recipient of an undeserved Divine gift. After Jonah leaves Nineveh, he attempts to shelter himself from the hot sun (4:5). Suddenly a miracle occurs. A full-grown kikayon sprouts directly over Jonah's head, providing him with most welcome shade (4:6). How should Jonah, the paragon of integrity, have reacted to this miracle? He should have protested most vigorously and refused to benefit from it! By what right is Jonah entitled to a miracle whose sole function is to enhance his personal comfort? But what *is* in fact Jonah's response? The text relates that Jonah is *delighted* with his undeserved kikayon (4:6). The day is

hot and Jonah is physically exhausted and mentally depressed. Consequently, the strict integrity, for which Jonah has hitherto crusaded so vigorously, does not prevail. In succumbing to this slight lapse, Jonah begins to learn that he too is only human.

At this juncture, the pressures placed on Jonah are increased — his principal test is at hand. Two further miracles occur. A worm appears which destroys the kikayon (4:7), and an oppressively hot east wind is induced which renders the day virtually unbearable (4:8). How does Jonah respond to these new developments? He is *furious* that he has lost his kikayon (4:9). Note carefully the element of progression: with the destruction of the kikayon, Jonah's integrity is yet further eroded. It was perhaps but a small failing for Jonah to sit *passively* without protest when he was miraculously bestowed a kikayon which he did not merit. But it is a much more serious lapse for Jonah to protest *actively* the destruction of this kikayon and, by implication, to plead for its restoration. Jonah has thus failed his test. He himself proved unable to live up to the standards of integrity that he has set for others.

The erosion of Jonah's integrity is emphasized by the frequently utilized textual device of parallel phraseology. When the inhabitants of Nineveh are pardoned, Jonah pleads with God that he be allowed to die (4:3), and when the kikayon is destroyed, he again pleads with God that he be allowed to die (4:8). Jonah's first death-wish is a consequence of his *high standard of justice* having been compromised, whereas his second death-wish is a consequence of his *personal comfort* having been impinged upon. The text thus emphasizes the striking change in motivation. In both instances, God rejects Jonah's plaint (4:4 and 4:9), the first time because Jonah's ethic is unrealistic and the second time because Jonah's request is unjustified. The text dramatically accentuates the contrast between Jonah's two complaints by use of the *very same words* in both instances, first with regard to Jonah's complaint: *I prefer death to life* (4:3 and 4:8) and secondly with regard to God's response: *Are you justified in your anger?* (4:4 and 4:9). In this way, the text calls attention to the transition in Jonah's concern, from issues of justice and morality to matters of personal comfort. God has thus demonstrated to Jonah that even he, being human, is subject to lapses of integrity.

JUSTICE TEMPERED BY MERCY — THE DIVINE CONCEPTION

The lesson is now completed. Jonah has not measured up to the difficult test. The Book concludes with a restatement of its principal teaching. God reminds Jonah how much he had desired the kikayon to which he had no rightful claim. *You neither worked for it nor planted it; it sprang up overnight and disappeared just as suddenly* (4:10). God thus shows Jonah that despite his incessant demands for unmitigated justice for the inhabitants of Nineveh, he was unable to control his desire for the kikayon, however improper it was for him to benefit from this miraculous phenomenon. How then can Jonah expect God to withhold His mercy from “the more than 120,000 people of Nineveh who know not right from left” (4:11).

The contrast between Jonah's desire for the kikayon and God's desire to forgive the people of Nineveh is emphasized in the text by the device of describing both these attitudes with the identical root חוּס, which occurs in consecutive verses but with totally different connotations. God reminds Jonah that he *regretted the loss* (חָסַח) of the kikayon (4:10), whereas God had *mercy* (אָחוּס) on the people of Nineveh (4:11). The root חוּס signifies ‘sparing’ something or someone, whatever the motivation. However, one can ‘spare’ something for one of two significantly different motives: either for one's own benefit, as with Jonah and the kikayon (חוּס is used similarly in Genesis 45:20), or for the sake of the object being spared, as with God and the people of Nineveh (this is the common Biblical usage of חוּס). The Divine message is clear: mercy, forgiveness and Divine consideration are indispensable to all human beings — not only to the simple and the ignorant, such as the people of Nineveh, but also to individuals of great stature, such as Jonah.

The central theme, upon which the Book of Jonah concludes, is manifested in the body of the narrative in an especially illuminating manner. In his *stricture* of God for being indulgent of evil, Jonah uses the very words uttered by Moses (Exodus 34:6), by Joel (2:13) and by Nehemia (9:17) in their *exaltation* of God: *You are gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and full of kindness...* (4:2). It is with considerable irony that Jonah utters these well-known accolades with an intent *diametrically opposed* to that intended by all other prophets. The text thus

continued on page 50.

THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF GOVERNMENT

BY SHIMON BAKON

It is generally assumed that democracy was the Greek way of life, and that modern concepts of government owe much to the ancient Greeks. Plato, Aristotle, and other Greek thinkers wrote important treatises on government, suffrage and public interest: and majority rule had, in fact, become an inseparable feature of the Greek city-states. However, behind this impressive facade, there were great weaknesses in its structure that eventually undermined the very principles for which it had been established.

First, there was the city-state, which had such unlimited power over its citizens, and wherein public interest was of such overarching importance, that "liberty was unknown and individual rights were nothing when opposed to the will of the State"¹. This in itself, while causing misfortunes and growing disorders, did far less damage than mindless, irresponsible suffrage that led to permanent tensions between the rich (patricians) and the poor (plebeians). Democracy, when the rich were in power, became "oligarchy", while that of the poor a "tyranny". Aristotle states it thusly: "The popular party, having got the power into their hands, began by confiscating the property of the rich families... Finally the number of the rich who were despoiled or exiled became so great that they formed an army."² And so great was the hate of the rich toward the popular party now in power that they took the following oath: "I swear always to remain the enemy of the people (plebs) and do them all the injury in my power"^{2a}. The various forms of government the Greeks established "were all experiments which, owing to the fact that they were carried to their extreme logical conclusions, culminated in

1. *The Ancient City* — Fustel de Coulanges, Doubleday Anchor Book p. 339

2. *Politics* — Aristotle, VII, 4 2a. *Ibid*, VIII, 7:14

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absurdity.”³ Athens was spared due to the wise reformations of Solon⁴.

It was the biblical form of government that exerted a most profound influence on modern concepts of democracy, though credit is rarely given. Together with Monotheism, the biblical view of government has molded the mode of thinking and the way of life of modern society.

FOUNDATIONS

The Bible is for the Government of the People, by the People, and for the People. —John Wycliffe (Preface to his translation of the Bible — 1384).

What was it in the Bible that prompted John Wycliffe to make this remarkable statement which became the cornerstone of American democracy? No doubt, he had the Hebrew Bible in mind. Although it did not contain treatises on politics, it provided the basic guideline for Israel to organize life in such a way that the common people were party to theological, social, and political contracts, that the dignity, sacredness and freedom of the individual were safeguarded, and that social justice became the hallmark of its constitution.

THEOCRACY

The term theocracy coined by Josephus⁵ to describe to his Roman contemporaries the biblical concept of government, namely, the placing of sovereignty into the hands of God, has a bad connotation for modern man. This is due to its abuse by some priests, who arrogated to themselves secular leadership as well. Thus, to modern man, theocracy became the equivalent of “clericalism”. However, in its original pristine Hebraic meaning theocracy signified government by Divine guidance. The Jewish experience includes judges, whose charismatic leadership began with Moses and Joshua and ended with Samuel; monarchy, with king subject to law, and the astonishing leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah and the

3. *History and Destiny of the Jews*, Joseph Kastein, Garden City Publishing Co., N.Y., p. 89

4. Anyone wishing more information about Greek Government, should read the classic work “The Ancient City”, mentioned before.

5. Josephus, *Contra Apionem*

Men of the Great Assembly, who maintained a hold on the people's lives by sheer moral force and consent of the people to be governed. Theocracy became the true guarantor of social justice and freedom, as seen in the remarkable institution of the Jubilee⁶. Let us analyse just three verses:

<i>Proclaim liberty throughout the land</i>	וקראתם דרור בארץ
<i>unto all its inhabitants</i>	לכל יושביה
<i>and ye shall return every man</i>	ושבתם איש
<i>unto his possession</i>	אל אחזתו
<i>And the land shall not be sold</i>	והארץ לא תמכר
<i>in perpetuity</i>	לצמיתות
<i>for the land is Mine</i>	כי לי כל הארץ
<i>For they are My servants</i>	כי עבדי הם
<i>whom I brought forth from Egypt</i>	אשר הוצאתי אותם מארץ מצרים

The first verse spells out the purpose of the Jubilee year, and the second denies absolute possession of land by man because it really belongs to God. Thus there is periodic readjustment of property, lost through misfortune or mismanagement, and possession — אחוזה — can neither be sold nor lost for ever. Through God's institution of the Jubilee, possession and property assume a moral dimension⁷. The third verse contains the paradox of ultimate liberty by being "servants of the Lord" and not servants of a human master. Thus the Jewish slave who renounces freedom after the "seventh year", has his ears bored, for according to Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai, the ear that heard at Sinai *unto Me the children of Israel are servants* and yet preferred a human master, let that ear be bored.

HUMAN NATURE AND GOVERNMENT

Randall⁸ suggests that the "science of government derived its assumptions from the fundamental science of human nature". Thus Hobbes and Bodin, both of whom regarded human nature as fundamentally evil, favored a strong,

6. 'Lev. 25:10; 25:23; 25:42 also repeated in 25:55

7. The poignancy of the biblical story of Naboth's vineyard will now be appreciated.

8. *The Making of the Modern Mind* — John J. Randall, The Riverside Press, p. 334

absolute monarchy to bridle the individual. Rousseau, on the other hand, viewing man as essentially good, blamed education and environment for what is wrong with society, and called for a government by social contract, which guaranteed liberty through obedience to law, but a law that the individual freely accepts.

Then there is the biblical alternative, which represented man in two lights, both of which were destined to have a great impact on government and its purpose. The first is that *God created man in His image*, which led to the view of the sanctity and uniqueness of man, appearing later in disguised and secular form as the natural and inalienable human rights. The second regards human nature neither as good nor as evil from birth, but a battleground of conflicting inclinations — the two *יצרות*. Man can be moved either in one or the other direction⁹. How then does the Jewish Bible propose to incline man towards the good? First, it determines *what* is good and does not permit *man* to be the final arbiter in the sensitive area of morality. Moral laws remain a divine prerogative. Second, having determined those laws of human conduct, it proposes for man to freely accept them and live by them.

*See I have set before thee this day
life and good*

ראה נתתי לפניך היום
את החיים ואת הטוב

9. One could object to this statement by quoting two known verses from Genesis:

Every plan devised by his mind was nothing but evil all the time; (6:5)

Since the devisings of man's mind are evil from his youth (8:21)

But these passages do not necessarily point to an innate depravity of man, merely to a proclivity for evil which is not irreversible. On balance we have the verdict of the Bible itself, namely his being created in His image. This is reinforced by enlightening discussions of the Sages on this issue.

Thus R. Nahman b.R. Hisda suggests that ויצר ה' אלוקים את האדם (Genesis 2:7) spelled with two Yods indicates that man was created with two *יצרות*, a good and an evil inclination. R. Nahman b. Isaac demurred and, following Shimon b. Pazi, interpreted the two Yods in the following manner: "Woe is me because of my *יוצר* (Creator) if I follow my evil inclination, and woe is me because of my *יוצר* (my evil inclination) if I suffer the pangs of unfulfilled desire. That is, man is torn between the two Yods! (Talmud Berachot 61a).

In another discussion, the *יצר הרע* is even extolled when it is categorically stated: Behold it was very good, this is the evil inclination *היצר הרע טוב מאד זה יצר הרע*. "Is then the evil inclination very good? But were it not for the evil inclination man would not build homes, would not marry, would not bring children into the world and would not engage in business. Here we recognize that the (*לא נשא ונתן*) *יצר הרע* is a vital factor for progress and civilization.

*and death and evil...
Therefore choose life.*

ואת המות ואת הרע...
ובחרת בחיים
Deuteronomy 30:15,20

Thus the concepts of the supremacy of law and of a constitution freely accepted is clearly implicit.

CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

The supremacy of law made possible the remarkable phenomenon of constitutional self-government already in early Biblical times. In the beginning the שופט Judge was both leader in war and supreme judge. This was also true of the first Israelite kings, David and Solomon. With Jehoshaphat, approximately 850 BCE, we notice a strengthening of local courts and possibly the establishment of a Supreme Court in Jerusalem¹⁰. He went even farther bringing about a division between ecclesiastical and secular authority. We read¹¹:

And behold, Amaziah the chief priest is over you in all matters of the Lord, and Zebadiah, the son of Ishmael, ruler of the house of Judah, in all king's matters.

Rulers, be he king or judge, as well as the ruled, have to live by the law. That a king has limited power which is circumscribed by the Torah, of which he is obliged to write a copy, that indeed he must not raise himself above his fellow Israelites, is most explicitly stated in Deuteronomy¹². So strongly did this idea of constitution become entrenched in the Jewish mind that according to the Midrash even God Himself has to live, as it were, by His constitution. Thus He is portrayed as putting on Tefillin. And in a daring reversal of a verse in Jeremiah which complains: *Me they have forsaken and My Torah they do not keep* (Jeremiah 16:11), the Midrash has God proclaim: *Would that they forsake Me, but kept My Torah* (איכה רבתי פתיחה ב').

The Hebrew Bible, avidly read by the Calvinists, greatly influenced their political thinking and was behind the triumph of constitutional government in

10. See II Ch. 19:4

11. II Ch. 19:8

12. Deuteronomy 17:20

Holland and England. A similar service was rendered by the Puritans who brought it to the Western Hemisphere.

SELF-GOVERNMENT

After the destruction of the First Commonwealth and the Temple, supremacy of law reached a peak. Kastein (12) put it succinctly: "They were obliged to set up a general instrument of power to replace all these attributes of power. This they discovered in the law and in the observance of law, that is in the voluntary submission to all the precepts and regulations, rule of Faith". This added a new dimension to government. When, after the return from Babylonia, the Great Assembly was convoked by Ezra, the foundation for its proper functioning, both on the religious and the political level, was laid. If necessity dictated it, it also functioned as the highest Council of State. In the latter capacity, during the early Hasmonean period it "passed a decree of confirming the title and hereditary right of the Hasmonean rulers"¹⁴.

Sivan¹⁵, basing his judgement on William Irwin¹⁶, regards the Great Assembly as the model for England's parliament, while Irwin himself considers this "experiment" the most remarkable theory of government that came out of the ancient world. With the fall of the Second Temple, the Sanhedrin, heir to the Great Assembly, was reconstituted from members chosen for their erudition rather than for political acumen. Since the time of Ezra, the Torah, as the property of the entire people, became the binding force of law, based on consent and voluntary acceptance, which formed the basis of democratic states, and which provided Jews with the instrument for survival and creativity under the most abject and difficult conditions.

13. Joseph Kastein, opus cited before p. 75

14. *The Bible and Civilization* — Gabriel Sivan, Keter Publishing House, Jerusalem, p. 140

15. Opus cited, p. 175

16. William A. Irwin, *The Old Testament, Keystone to Human Culture*

ISRAEL A COVENANTED PEOPLE

In one of his lectures, Professor Elazar observed¹⁷ that three peoples of antiquity established three classical patterns of government. Egypt—the hierarchical-absolute; Greece—the organic-natural; and Israel—the covenantal people whose political cultures are informed by covenantal concepts, which in turn influence their political behavior. He furthermore asserts that there are two concentrations of such covenantal people, one in ancient Israel, and the other in northwestern Europe, and most significantly, that it was Israel's concepts of covenant that spread to northwestern Europe and eventually to North America.

THE THEOLOGICAL COVENANT AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

The Bible knows of three types of covenant: God as initiator Who establishes a covenant with Noah, the Patriarchs, and finally with Israel at Sinai. The ברית, an alliance of equal partners, usually referred to as בעלי ברית, for the purpose of furthering common interests¹⁹. There is a third, a covenant entered into by the king and the people, witnessed by the Divine Presence.

The concept of covenant was not strange to other peoples of antiquity, but its penetration to the very core of Israel's existence brought about the emergence of a specific civilization which embodied and reflected this idea. The Exodus, the most seminal event in Jewish history, already displayed some of the major features that, consciously or unconsciously, were eventually adopted by non-Jewish body politics having similar aspirations. Not only do we encounter *emancipation*, with God Himself as the Emancipator, but God enters into a *covenant* with Israel, after the latter has freely consented²⁰. This free *consent* underlies every covenant, even one between God and His people. Israel in turn proclaims the נעשה ונשמע, we shall do and obey, accepting of their own free will a *constitution*²¹. This constitution clearly delineates the basic terms and purposes of the

17. *Covenant and Freedom in the Jewish Political Tradition* — Daniel Elazar, Phila., 1981

18. *Ibid*, p.3

19. "Now he (Abraham) dwelt by the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol: and brother of Amer: and they were confederates — בעלי ברית with Abram" Gen. 14:15)

20. Ex. 19:8 Moses put before the Elders the words of God to keep His covenant — and all the people answered together and said: All that the Lord has spoken we shall do.

21. Ex. 24:7 And he (Moses) took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people. And they said: All that the Lord has spoken we will do and obey.

ברית: God's promises on one side and Israel's religious and moral obligations on the other. Shortly before Israel is to cross the Jordan and enter the Promised Land, another significant aspect of the covenant is revealed, namely the *creation of a people*²². *This day you have become a people unto the Lord thy God* היום הזה יהיה לעם לה' אלוהיך. It needs little imagination to see how these concepts, in concert or even separately, influenced political thinking and behavior.

A POLITICAL COVENANT

It must be stated that a clear separation between political and religious categories in the Bible is unthinkable. Yet, when monarchy was established in Israel, it created a serious challenge to theocracy. It was, I believe, thanks to the genius of the prophet Samuel that he was able to amalgamate seemingly conflicting ideals through the medium of a tri-partite covenant between king, people, and God. Samuel addressed the people as follows:²³

See him whom the Lord has chosen...

And all the people shouted and said:

Long live the king!

Then Samuel told the people the manner of kingship

and wrote it in a book,

and laid it up before the Lord.

The king is elected by God, symbolized by the anointment of Saul²⁴. The "shouting of the people, long live the king!" symbolized general acclaim by the people. That Samuel put the ברית in a book "before the Lord", was the solemnizing of a tri-partite covenant. God, as it were, not only witnesses the covenant, He is being brought in as a partner. A pattern is now set for future Jewish kings to follow. David, secretly anointed by Samuel, is then freely chosen king by the Judeans²⁵ and later by all Israel. This is how it is stated:

So all the elders of Israel came

to the king to Hebron

and King David made a covenant with them...

before the Lord.

ויבואו כל זקני ישראל

אל המלך חברונה

ויכרות להם המלך ברית

לפני ה'

22. Deut. 27:9

23. I Sam. 10:24, 25

24. I Sam 9:1

25. II Sam 2:4, 5:3

The ברית embodying the mutual rights and obligations of the ruler and the ruled is sealed "before the Lord".

This pattern is continued with the anointment of King Solomon²⁶, while its implications become painfully clear in the secession of Israel from Rehoboam so vividly described in I Kings 12. The tribes of Israel made relief of the heavy yoke which he (King Solomon) put on us conditional on acclaiming him as king. Rehoboam's enormous stupidity, having none of the political genius of his grandfather David, nor the sagacity of his father Solomon, caused the irreparable division of the united kingdom. With the shout *to your tents, O Israel*, the bond of consent that held Judah and Israel together, is dissolved.

The pattern of the tri-partite covenant is very explicit in the crowning of Jehoash by the priest Jehoiada²⁷:

*And he made him king and anointed him
and they clapped their hands and said: "Long live the king!"
...And Jehoiada made a covenant
between the Lord and the king and the people
That they should be the Lord's people
between the king also and the people!*

BIBLICAL IMPACT ON MODERN DEMOCRACY

We have before recorded the debt of British Parliament to the institution of the אנשי כנסת הגדולה the Great Assembly. There is also good reason to believe that the concept of a tri-partite covenant between God, king and subject greatly influenced constitutional government there, limiting the power of the monarch. Let us now briefly follow the process by which the biblical covenant idea evolved into that of Social Contract, so important for our understanding of modern political thought.

26. I K. 1:39

27. II K 11:12, 17

The concept of covenant was adopted by the 16th century Reformed Church as best expressing their burgeoning ideals of religious and political freedom²⁸. The Calvinists, and especially the Puritans, applying the daring idea that people are free enough to enter into covenant with God to their political aspirations, turned the covenant "as the basis for all peoples claims to liberty in relation to one another"²⁹. Later this concept of covenant, rediscovered by the Natural Philosophers, guided the great political thinkers, notably Locke and Rousseau, who turned it into the secular Social Contract, eliminating God as one of the parties.

THE PARADIGM OF EXODUS

The Puritans, from the start, clung to the biblical covenant idea. Let us examine the renowned Plymouth Compact (1642):

We doe by these presents solemnly and mutually in ye presence of God and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civill body politick.

This process of a deliberate coming together had an incalculable effect on the growth of ever-widening circles of groups who "covenanted" or federated into communities, states, and eventually the United States, all "under God", Who safeguards their "inalienable" rights of equality and liberty. It has been observed with a high degree of justification that the "early Protestant defenders of civil liberty derived their political principles primarily from the Hebrew Bible, while champions of despotism took theirs from the New Testament"³⁰. One could point to a direct line leading from the Exodus, as the classical example of emancipation, to the calls of a Mattathias or Bar-Kochba to resist tyranny, to the American or other wars for independence. It is characteristic that, as if duplicating the Jewish experience of the Exodus, the American one culminated in the Constitution, with the rightfully magnificent Preamble that evokes strong biblical echoes.

28. See more about it in an excellent exposition of this topic in Chapter two of *The Bible and Civilization*, an opus cited before.

29. *In the Jewish Tradition* — Elazar, p. 16

30. Viz. opus ct. *Bible and Civilization*, G. Sivan, p. 168

THE TWO SEASONS IN ISRAEL

BY LOUIS KATZOFF

An address given by the author at the beginning of the rainy season in Israel.

On the phrase *משיב הרוח ומוריד הגשם* the phrase *שמיני עצרת* is introduced in the Amidah prayer, and on the 7th day of Heshvan, in Israel, the phrase *ומטר לברכה* is added.¹

It is an expression of hope that the produce of the land will be plentiful during the coming year as a result of a good rain season.

I recall: It was last year on Purim, after a very poor winter rain season, when people in Israel were fearful that water would begin to be rationed as the result of the depletion of the reservoirs and the underground water reserves.

A report was given on the radio that aroused a great deal of excitement and anticipation. Experiments were going on for years but only now becoming realistic, to extend the rain season into the spring — and if the scientists were lucky, a breakthrough was imminent to bring down the rain in the spring, and possibly even into the summer months.

This announcement was made on the *גלי צה"ל* radio station by the then Minister of Agriculture. An objection was raised publicly on the radio by the Minister of Tourism that such scientific success would be a catastrophe for the tourist trade, which picks up its main business toward the summer months. No sooner was this backfire reported, when the two perennial friendly antagonists,

1. In the diaspora the prayer of *ומטר* is begun on December 4. See *מ' חנוכה*, page 10a, for the explanation.

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Yossi Sarid and Ehud Olmert, locked horns again for the upteenth time, in attributing political motives in what should rightfully stay in the realm of scientific endeavor and progress.

Finally, it was a member of the Knesset from the **אגודת ישראל** party who gave the culminating blow in this sudden polemic when he exclaimed — again on the radio — how dare anyone tamper with the laws of nature ordained by God — to bring rain when rain is not forthcoming, as set down by the Bible itself. Does it not say in the Book of Genesis that God promised the world never to inflict a calamity like the flood upon mankind: (8:21) *Never again will I doom the world because of man, nor will I ever again destroy every living being, as I have done.*

עוד כל ימי הארץ — זרע וקציר — וקור וחום — וקיץ וחורף — ויום ולילה לא ישבתו.
So long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.

By now you can guess that I, like many others, were taken in by the radio Purim hoax — a kind of April fool's day ploy — to believe, at least for the first few moments of the radio broadcast, that perhaps we might yet benefit by a little more rain after the dry winter season.

So here it is: cold and warm — summer and winter... And where is spring? And where is autumn? If you listen to the **רשת א'** open university program on the air, you will hear most often the opening and closing theme melody from one of the movements of Vivaldi's Four Seasons. All the world — certainly in Europe and America — knows of four seasons.

I recall the month of October back in the States: the oak, the maple and the sumac turning into their radiant fall colors — the brown — the yellow — the red. And by November, the leaves are already fallen — and it is leaf raking time.

That is autumn as we remember it back in the "old country." Here in Israel, there is hardly an autumn. We go — almost directly — from hot weather to cold — from **מוריד הטל** to **מוריד הגשם**, from a half year of clear skies to another half year of on and off rain clouds.

Grasping this basic phenomenon of two seasons, the rainy one and the dry, will help us understand many aspects of early and later Jewish history and life. I should like to point this out for three specific periods: the Biblical, the Mishnaic (or Second Temple period) and the modern.

Let us start with the Biblical period: 3000 years ago, before Joshua's con-

quest of ancient כנען, there were only a few Canaanite settlements located in the land — and that only sparsely, and mostly in the valleys. For a Canaanite city to be established, two indispensable factors had to be taken into consideration. It had to be located on a low hill — called in archeology a “tell” — for protection against an enemy attacking the walled city from the valley below; and it had to be near a living spring, to assure a constant supply of water. The water systems of מגידו, חצור and עיר דוד are classic examples.

A phenomenal change took place with the entry of the Israelites into the Promised Land. The landscape became dotted with Israelite settlements, entrenching themselves everywhere — especially in the hill country of Judea and Samaria — far from any מעין, far from any spring.

What happened in this period that enabled the Israelites to gain a steady foothold in the land? The answer lies in the fact that the people of that century learned to use a type of lime plaster which kept the water of the cisterns from seeping into the ground. No longer were they dependent upon the natural spring for their water supply. All they had to do was to direct the water flow during the half year rainy season into their large and small cisterns, which provided them with their water needs during the other half year of dry season.

We can rightly say that the discovery of water-tight cisterns was a revolutionary step in the progress of Near-Eastern civilization — which also left its mark in the shape of Jewish history. The conquest of כנען by the Israelites was facilitated by the newly found use of the cistern.

The concept of the cistern was even introduced into the ordinary language of the Jewish community, to become a figure of speech, with no connection whatsoever with water needs. When רבי יוחנן בן זכאי was asked to describe the talents of his five top students, he ascribed to אליעזר בן הורקנס the ability to retain everything he learned through his phenomenal memory. And what was the expression the learned master used to describe this facility? בור סוד שאינו מאבד טפה. His student Rabbi Eliezer was “like a lime covered cistern that does not lose one drop.” To this day this is the Hebrew expression for an extraordinary memory.

Let us now proceed to the Mishnaic period: 2000 years ago. With the remarkable archeological work done by נחמן אביגד since the Six Day War, we know now that the Jewish Quarter of the העתיקה עיר was the wealthy

neighborhood of ancient Jerusalem. It is a well established sociological fact that men of means usually dwell on the higher sections of the city — and this was apparently so on the western hill above the Temple Mount (the present Jewish Quarter) during the Second Commonwealth.

Avigad and his team of archeologists uncovered a large number of opulent homes, each one with its own cistern — and very often with its own מקוה. If you wish to see this combination of cistern and מקוה — when you are at the Kotel, leave the עיר העתיקה via the Dung Gate, and as you walk up the sidewalk outside the חומות העיר, read the legends describing the homes of these rich ancient families.

There were private cisterns, but there were also large public ones. Many of you know the Ziebensbergs, Theo and Miriam, among the early residents of the Jewish Quarter. Some digging was done under their home, and many precious ancient artifacts were found — but they also uncovered a very large cistern, certainly a communal one which, I understand, is now being fashioned into a small music auditorium for ancient Jewish music — plus three small cisterns and two מקוואות.

Such was the life of the ancient community in an area where water from rainfall becomes available only during some precious months of winter. It is carefully collected and used sparingly through the system of the cistern for the rest of the year.

And finally, we come to the importance of the cistern in our own day. On Nov. 29, 1947, the UN voted for the partitioning of the then Palestine into Jewish and Arab areas. It was a providential blessing that this took place early enough in the rainy season for the Jewish residents to prepare themselves for the crisis ahead.

During the period of the British Mandate — from 1919 to 1947 — the system of the cistern had largely gone out of use. Water was pumped up to Jerusalem from the spring at ראסל עין — better known today by its Hebrew name ראש העין, near פתח תקוה. But the leaders of the Jewish community knew that the first target of the Arabs would be the destruction of the pumping stations up the Judean Hill.

Before long, Jerusalem was under siege. No food? — solved partially by the building of the so-called Burma Road, engineered by Colonel Marcus. No water? — Yes, no water, since the pumping stations were in fact blown up. But measures had been taken from the very beginning to catch and preserve as much of the rain water as possible. Under the direction of Dov Yosef, the appointed governor of

the Yishuv in Jerusalem, the old discarded cisterns and water ducts on the roofs were put back into shape. The strict water rationing under the reconstituted system of cisterns saved Jewish Jerusalem in that crucial half year between the UN resolution and the Declaration of Independence.

The cisterns of Jerusalem are no longer in use. But here and there, one can spot the wells that used to be part of the general system of cisterns. Just several yards south of the American Consulate, on Agron Street, you can find one in the back yard of the home there. Walk through the narrow alley just south of Agrippas Street at **יהודה** and you can spot several wells. Not long ago, I happened to be there on my way home — and I saw a resident drawing water from his well.

The two seasons — **קיץ וחורף** — **קור וחום** are not some far away Biblical characterization. The verse in the Bible text is the very essence of our weather climate in which we live, and of the manner of our life resulting from it.

When we grasp this fundamental fact of **קיץ וחורף**, we can better appreciate the phrase which we have incorporated in our prayers, **ותן טל ומטר לברכה**, And give us, O God, the dew and the rain for a blessing.

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MOSES AT THE INN

NEW LIGHT ON AN OBSCURE TEXT

BY HERBERT RAND

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

Commentators have been baffled and have given many diverse explanations for the extraordinary events described in Ex. 4: 24—26 (the "Text"). Those three verses are regarded as enigmatic and obscure. Recorded by Moses from recollection many months or years after the occurrence, his account must have seemed clear and unambiguous to him. The difficulty, therefore, must stem from an erroneous and implausible interpretation by the reader.

The Text, as generally translated, reads: "And it came to pass on the way at the lodging-place that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him. Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet; and she said: 'Surely a bridegroom of blood art thou to me'. So He let him alone. Then she said: 'A bridegroom of blood in regard of the circumcision' ".

The Text gives rise to the following questions: a) Whose life — Moses' or the child's — was threatened? Neither the perpetrator nor the victim is clearly identified. b) What was the nature and effect of the attack? c) Assuming Moses to have been the target, why should the Lord try to kill his newly-appointed emissary? d) Assuming the child was the target, why would the Lord seek to kill an infant who bore no blame for his parents' failure to circumcise him? e) Since any requirement for circumcision was suspended during a journey, what was the sin that merited death? f) Why was Moses quiescent while his wife was performing the rite? g) What was Zipporah's motive and what actually took place? h) Why was the expression "bridegroom of blood" repeated in a somewhat different context — and whom was she addressing? i) Why would Moses, the meek and faithful servant of God, accuse his Master of wanting to kill him or his child?

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j) And why did Moses deem it appropriate to include the account of what happened at the Inn in the preamble to the story of the Exodus?

ON THE ROAD: ZIPPORAH REMINISCES

Two asses picked their way along the desert track on the first lap of the trip from Midian to Egypt. Moses rode the leading animal; he knew the way for he had but shortly returned from shepherding his father-in-law's flocks in the same area. His wife, Zipporah, followed; she carried her infant son while her elder son shared her saddle.

Her husband, she mused, had been acting strangely ever since he had returned from the last pasturage near the Mountain of God in the Sinai. There he was, riding up ahead obviously preoccupied and introspective, holding his old shepherd's staff as though it were a royal scepter or a standard at the head of a procession.

She remembered the first time they met — it was at the well. Indeed, he had protected her from aggressive herdsmen but he hadn't uttered one word. Then, when she brought him to her father's tent, he was uncommunicative except for giving his name. In silence he accepted Jethro's offer of employment and nodded his agreement to take Zipporah as his wife. Soon she learned that her husband was tongue-tied and that he preferred to be with the sheep: no doubt he feared embarrassment and ridicule because of his stammering.

At dusk, she turned her beast off the road to follow Moses into the hostel where they would spend the night.

AN UNWELCOME ASSIGNMENT

Along the way, Moses thought about his terrifying experience and his present predicament. Why, of all people, had he been chosen to hear the Voice coming from the burning bush, appointing him God's emissary? He had explained to God: "I am tongue-tied and not suited to the task of convincing Pharaoh to liberate the Hebrew slaves", and God had been flexible. All the talking would be done by his brother Aaron. The role of Moses would be merely to supervise and to perform signs with his staff to impress the Hebrews and Pharaoh.

The Voice had also supplied him with a new name for God to impart to the Hebrews — "Ehyeh Asher Ehyeh" — which Moses could pronounce without

stuttering.¹ (Of the eleven Hebrew letters comprising the Name, not one required the use of tongue, lips, or teeth).

He would miss his peaceful life as a shepherd but he could adapt to his new role as long as he didn't have a speaking part. Surely, he assured himself, if God had wanted him to be the spokesman, He would have removed his speech impediment on-the-spot.

The hostel was in sight when he heard the Voice again. It instructed him not to forget to perform the snake-change with his staff before Pharaoh. Then came the mind-shattering command: it directed Moses to speak in person to Pharaoh ואמר (2nd person sing.) and to threaten the King with the death of his firstborn should he refuse to set the Hebrews free.²

Inwardly, he railed against the latest instruction; God was being unreasonable in expecting him, with his stammering speech, to confront the ruler of a mighty empire. As the ass turned into the path to the Inn, Moses probably began to experience the panic of a person plunging into depression.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Most commentators agree that the expression, "the Lord met him", means that he contracted a severe illness while at the lodging-place. The word ויפגשו is used in the sense of a bad encounter. The early Hebrews related all action to its initial cause and conceived of God as the cause of all causes.

To comprehend the Text, one must first identify Moses' malady. Fear often disguises itself as an illness. Fear of failure, of ridicule, and the pressure of unreasonable demands, can bring the fear-ridden person to his breaking-point. Moses had reached an emotional crisis. I suggest that his malady was a sort of hysteria triggered by frustration and self-doubt.

Some of the causes for his problem may be traced to his early years. Children pick up fears and anxieties when they are separated from their parents. When Moses was weaned, he was taken from his parents to be raised as the adopted son of the daughter of the Pharaoh.

It must have been difficult for him to make the adjustment, particularly because he was viewed with distrust and suspicion by certain factions in the

1. Ex. 3:14

2. Ex. 4:22

palace. The Midrash has it that when he was still a youngster, he was forced to undergo a cruel test: Would he pick up an onyx stone, and die — or would he choose a glowing hot coal, and live? He passed the test but seared his tongue and lips.³ The trauma with its excruciating pain put the child under special stress. His first attempt to speak after that fright would produce stuttering. That, too, would make him self-conscious and tense.

Experts point out that as a stuttering child grows older, he will try to avoid speaking as “an ordeal which fills him with a sense of panic and disaster.” In technical language, a person who dreads to use his organs of speech which have previously sustained a painful injury is suffering from a traumatic neurosis.⁴

When he had grown to manhood, he became incensed one day at the cruelty of an Egyptian taskmaster to a Hebrew slave. A command to desist, coming from someone with the dress, bearing, and palace connections of Moses, should have sufficed. Since speaking was an ordeal, he said nothing and killed the perpetrator in hot blood. The following day, he tried to chide a Hebrew by asking: “Why are you hitting your neighbor?” למה תכה רעך (Those three words contained four consonants which are pronounced with the tongue, lips, pallet, and teeth — difficult sounds for a stutterer to produce.) His query brought him only mockery and the threat to disclose his crime.⁵ His flight across the desert to Midian may have been prompted by his need to withdraw from society as well as by his fear of being apprehended for homicide.

At the Inn, he was assailed by the fear that his newly-assigned speaking part was beyond his competence. As in the case of the unnamed woman in 2 Kings 4:27, his “soul was bitter” within him because, as it then seemed to him, he had been deceived by the false assurance that Aaron would be the spokesman. Overwhelmed by his burden, he lapsed into depression.

MOSES BEGS FOR DEATH, A GRAMMATICAL INTERLUDE.

Heschel notes that the call to prophecy and confrontation with God causes a burden of “shock, peril and dismay”.⁶

3. Ginzberg, L. *Legends of the Bible*, 1975, p. 294.

4. Goldenson, *Encycl. of Human Behaviour*, Psychology, Psychiatry, and Mental Health (1980) pp. 1266–1268; English & Pearson. *Emotional Problems of Living* (1963) p. 238.

5. Ex. 2:11–15

6. Heschel, A. *The Prophets* (1971) p. 138.

On first receiving a call from God, Jeremiah pleaded that he could not speak and was not suited to be a prophet. Later, when he had become a laughing-stock and an object of derision, he cursed the day he was born.⁷ On two occasions, a distraught Jonah besought the Lord for his death “for it is better to die than to live”.⁸

The first five words of the Text, ending with the word **ויפגשהו**, make a complete sentence. Although he is not named, it is clear that Moses is the object of that verb because God is named as the subject. The next two words **ויבקש המיתו** are by themselves a complete sentence with neither the subject nor the object expressly named. That sentence is introduced by the conjunction — the letter **vav** — which, in this instance, denotes the consequence or result of the previous sentence (in addition to converting the future to the past tense).⁹ That word **ויבקש** belongs to the semantic group of “ask” or “seek”. It is rarely used with God as the subject except in the future tense — as in Zech. 12:9. The next word in the text **המיתו** may be equated with causative verb **להמית**, namely: to cause to die.¹⁰ If, as I understand the Text, God was not the seeker, it must have been Moses who was seeking his own death (he was writing the statement about himself in the third person and doubtless did not realize that the absence of identifying names for subject and object might create ambiguity in the mind of a reader). I find it untenable to interpret the sentence to mean that God sought to kill Moses. Moses addressed his plea to **מלך ממית ומחיה**, the One with the power over life and death.

Moreover, his plea to God to cause him to die was understandable and compatible with his emotional breakdown. Had Moses intended to make the charge that God wanted to kill him, it would have been easy for him to make the statement clearly by writing either **להמיתו ה' ויבקש**¹¹ or **ויבקש להמית את משה**.¹²

There is a strong parallel between Moses and Elijah: Pharaoh sought the life of

7. Jer. 1:6; 20:14.

8. Jon. 4:3–8.

9. Examples: The dove could not find land so (**vav**) she returned to the ark. Gen. 8:9. And you will eat so you will be satisfied. Dt. 8:10.

10. Dt. 32:39. See also introductory paragraphs of the **שמונה עשרה** where the power over life and death is treated as an appellation of God.

11. Jeremiah 26:21.

12. Compare with I Sam 20:33.

Moses, Jezebel wanted to kill Elijah: each prophet fled into the wilderness; and each of them asked God for death.¹³

I suggest that the Text can be made clear by grouping those parts which relate exclusively to Moses (treating the Zipporah part as parenthetical) and by using the appropriate initial capitals — a device not available in Hebrew, viz:....*and God confronted him (Moses). So he (Moses) asked (of God) to cause him to die but He spared him.* Here, the word *but* is the adversative correlator *vav*: examples of such use are found in Gen. 6:8, in Isa. 42:20 and Psalms 135:17.

ZIPPORAH TAKES CHARGE

On hearing her husband's plea — "I want to die" — and convinced that his condition was grave and life-threatening, Zipporah acted without delay. As a daughter of a priest of Midian, she was familiar with various local sacrificial rites including circumcision of males.¹⁴ The peoples of the Near East regarded sacrifice as having the power to ward off plague, to consecrate, and to sanctify: the blood was the life.¹⁵ Surely she would need the blood of sacrifice to propitiate or to foil whatever demon or deity had Moses in his grip.¹⁶

As she touched Moses with the bloody foreskin, the Text has her saying: "Surely, you are my bridegroom of blood חתן דמים." Did she mean merely that he had just been bloodied? Or, did she mean that he was a murderer — a man of blood for he had slain a man in Egypt?¹⁷ Or, exasperated by his dejection, silence, and inaction, she may have hurled at him the words חתן דמם "you are my dumb (silent) husband"; and in that case, Moses or some careless scribe may have inserted the extra *yod* in דמם so that its meaning was changed; or, perhaps, the *yod* may have been inserted in good faith by a scribe in the belief that he was correcting an earlier error.

13. 1 Ki. 19:2–4.

14. Je. 9:24–25. Philo (Q&A on Gen.) 3:4, 8; Herodotus 2:35–36.

15. Lv. 17:11. Ex. 24:20–21. Ex. 12:13.

16. Buber; Moses, pp. 56–59 re Divine demonism in connection with the encounter at the Inn.

17. Suggested in *Dissertatio Biblico-Critico de Circumcisione a Zippora Facta*: Sadalinus (in Latin, Copenhagen, 1733; collection of Yale Univ. Sterling Library, New Haven, Conn.). Compare בית דמים bloody house; איש דמים man of blood; bloody or violent city עיר דמים. For examples of דמם see Is. 62:6–7 and Habak. 2:19.

Regardless of her actual words, her procedure was followed by an immediate improvement in his condition. It is significant that the Text, instead of using the word רפא for "cure", uses וירך ממנו, a phrase which has the literal meaning of "and He loosened from him". The root of the verb so used is רפה of which the last two letters פה mean "mouth". That verb usually takes the preposition *lamed* or requires a direct object.¹⁸ However, in the Text, the verb is followed by the preposition *mem* in the construct form with the personal pronoun (in the ablative case) indicating that Moses was loosened from some unspecified object.¹⁹ Therefore, I conclude that those words convey the thought that his mouth was loosened from his speech impediment, enabling him to talk without a stammer.

By her prompt action, Zipporah had reversed his direction from a wish to die to a will to get on with the job. His neurosis vanished when he became aware that his organs of speech had become unlocked.

ZIPPORAH RECONSIDERS HER WORDS

Seeing her husband's sudden recovery, she reviewed what she had said just before. If Moses had been alert enough to have heard her distinctly, he might well resent being called bloody (or dumb or homicidal) so it might be prudent for her to rephrase her earlier remarks in a manner which would be plausible, respectful, and inoffensive. Zipporah hastened to explain that what she had really meant before was: "You are my bridegroom of blood *because of the circumcision*".

When he met Aaron the next day, Moses was virtually loquacious. The flow of his speech was like the rush of water pouring through an open dam; he told his brother "all the words" which God had spoken, and described all the signs which they would display when they arrived in Egypt. Later, both he and Aaron spoke to Pharaoh at the initial meeting. Thereafter he had the courage to upbraid God for dealing ill with His people and to complain that his speech still lacked power and fluency.²⁰ But his eloquence improved with practice to the point where he

18. Compare II Ki. 4:27 with II Sam. 24:16. Contrast with רפא which requires את before the object, Gen. 20:17; or the preposition *lamed*, II Ki. 20:5, 8; Num. 12:13.

19. "leave me alone for two months" Jdg. 11:37, an example of the use of the preposition *mem* with an object.

20. Ex. 6:12, 30. His metaphorical complaint that his lips were uncircumcized did not imply any organic speech defect. Compare with expressions "uncircumcized heart" or "ear" Jer. 9:25; *ibid.* 6:10.

could speak defiantly to Pharaoh and, immediately after the crossing of the Red Sea, he could compose and extemporaneously intone a paean of nineteen triumphant verses before the assembled Israelites²¹

CONCLUSION

When viewed in the light of the foregoing exposition, the Text is no longer enigmatic. But, why did Moses introduce this episode, interrupting the account of his mission to Egypt?

His purpose, I believe, was to honor Zipporah. When he was in deep depression, she lifted his spirit and restored his strength and will to live. By her prompt and decisive action, she helped to shape the destiny of the Children of Israel. Such was her merit that God protected her some time later from being slandered by Miriam, the sister of Moses.²²

21. Ex. 15:1-19.

22. Num. 12:1-10. Gematria sometimes presents intriguing parallels. In one of his proverbs, Solomon asks: "A woman of valor *who* can find?" The incident at the Inn supplies an answer: He is Moses! The words **הוא משה** have the numerical value of 24 (using the method of eliminating zeros and adding the essential integers). The numerical value of the name **צפורה** is also 24.

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IS JOB AFTER ALL JEWISH?

BY DAVID WOLFERS

It seems common ground to all modern biblical scholars, Jewish and gentile, that the hero of the book of Job was not a member of the people of Israel. Some believe him to have been Arabian, some Edomite, some Syrian, but none Judean or Israelite. Their certainty in this regard rests on four rafts of evidence:

1. The land of Uz, Job's homeland, being named after one or other of the two Uz's in Genesis, must correspond in location to the patronymic of one of these families — either Aram or Edom.¹ In Lamentations 4:21, Uz is employed as a poetic synonym for Edom.

2. In Job 1:3, Job is described as "the greatest of all the Children of the East". The **בני קדם** do not include the Children of Israel, for they are the *locus* of reference from which the expression is derived.

3. None of the names in the Book of Job is Hebrew with the exception of Elihu, and the six chapters of the book attributed to him are in all probability a late interpolation. Similarly the specifically Israelite tetragrammaton name of God is carefully avoided throughout the work; where it does appear, it is a copyist's error.

4. There is no reference to "(law), the Temple, the priesthood, sacrifices, the Sabbath, the festivals, kashrut, the Messianic ideal of God in history, the election of Israel, etc."²

Before proceeding to the evidence for the Jewish identity of Job, let us attempt to sink these four rafts.

In Jer 25:20 the Land of Uz is referred to as **ארץ העוץ**. The presence in this phrase of the definite article rules out the possibility of an eponymic origin for it.

1. Genesis 10:23; Genesis 36:28.

2. As presented by R. Gordis, personal communication.

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The Hebrew language forbids double determination.³ As Maimonides in the 12th and Weiss in the 20th Century asserted,⁴ therefore, the phrase has some other significance, and has no relationship with either of the men called Uz in the Book of Genesis. The passage in Jeremiah is more informative than this, however, for it actually pinpoints the location of Uz, and emphatically rules out Aram, Edom and Arabia as possible locations. The Land of Uz occurs in the Jeremiah passage as part of a fully organized list of countries and districts arranged in three sweeping south-to-north arcs through the Middle East, each arc further to the East than its predecessor. Uz is in the first sweep between Egypt and the "mingled people" (the inhabitants of the Sinai), and Philistia. That is, it lies somewhere in the Negev of Judah. Edom, Ammon, Tyre, Sidon, etc. are in the second sweep, and sundry Arabian locations, Persia, etc. in the third.⁵

In the only other Biblical reference to Uz as a territory, Lamentations 4:21, the "Daughter of Edom that dwellest in the Land of Uz" is cursed. We well know, from the Book of Obadiah, the reasons for this curse. One of them is that Edom "entered into the gate of My people in the day of their calamity"⁶ and occupied "the cities of the South"⁷ that is of the Negev. It is at least equally valid to read the reference to Edom dwelling in the Land of Uz as a reproach for their occupying the territory of their neighbour as to read it as a pointless reduplication of the geographical designation of Edom. "Rejoice and be glad O daughter of Edom that dwellest in the Land of Uz" really means: "Make hay with your conquest of Judah while the sun shines."

The Hebrew phrase which is habitually considered to identify Job as one of the "Children of the East" is **ויהי האיש ההוא גדול מכל בני-קדם**.⁸ The correct rendering of this is: "So that that man was greater than *any* of the Children of the

3. Gesenius Hebrew Grammar (OUP, London, 1910) par. 125a: "It is to be taken as a fundamental rule that the determination can only be effected in *one* of the ways here mentioned; the article cannot be prefixed to a proper name..."

4. M. Maimonides, "Guide for the Perplexed" (Dover Pub. Inc., NY, 1956) p. 296. M. Weiss, "The Story of Job's Beginning" (Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 1983) p. 21ff.

5. The only authority who seems to have drawn this plain conclusion is Elzas in "The Book of Job" (Trubner & Co, London, 1872) p.5.

6. Obadiah 13.

7. Obadiah 20.

8. Job 1:3.

East",⁹ a designation which almost excludes the possibility that Job was a member of that group (cf. e.g. "She was fairer than any Scandinavian"). There is a similar designation for King Solomon in I Kings 4:10 in that "his wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the Children of the East, and all the wisdom of Egypt", with no suggestion that Solomon was a Son of the East. A possible secondary meaning for בני קדם in these contexts is "the people of former times".

3. The non-Hebrew names of Job's three friends are quite irrelevant to Job's national status, for they each travelled a considerable distance from their homes to visit him.¹⁰ Even assuming (and it is an unjustified assumption) that they were all three Edomites, this does not militate at all against Job being a Jewish inhabitant of the Negev which borders Edom on the West. On the other hand Elihu's name appears highly significant, for he is presented as an accidental witness to the debate, and therefore a co-inhabitant with Job of the Land of Uz. Even if he be dismissed as a late interpolation in the story, he testifies to the fact that someone much closer to the problem than we (Elihu's chapters are present in both LXX and QT) regarded Uz as a place peopled by Jews.

Job's own name, while unknown in other Hebrew sources, is equally unknown in the literature of the surrounding countries. It is entirely neutral as evidence of origin.

To draw inferences from the absence of יְהוָה as a name of God in the Book of Job¹¹ is to make deductions not from the evidence but in its teeth, for the name occurs in Chapters 1, 2, 12, and 42, and the *Q'ere* equivalent אֲדֹנָי in Chapter 28.

4. (a) Law: 31:26–28 describes the worship of sun and moon as עֲוֹן פְּלִילִי, "an offence for the judges", i.e. an offence against a published law with a stated penalty. Such a law is inconceivable in the ancient world save in a Jewish context.

(b) Temple and priesthood: 12:19 refers to God having led priests כֹּהֲנִים away barefoot and subverted אִיתָנִים (translated by Gordis himself¹² as "temple votaries").

9. Brown, Driver & Briggs "Lexicon", (OUP, Oxford 1977) p. 482: "In a comparative or hypothetical sentence כל is = any, and with a negative = none."

10. Job 2:11.

11. See, e.g., Driver & Gray. "Job" (T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1971) p. xxxvi.

12. R. Gordis, "The Book of Job" (Jewish Theological Seminary of America, NY, 1978) p. 128.

(c) Sacrifices: While it is true that only homespun sacrifices are referred to unambiguously in the Book of Job, even these are given a specifically Israelite flavour by reference to preliminary "sanctification" (Cf Job 1:5 and II Chron. 30). There is neither pagan nor pre-Temple Israelite mention of such a practice.

(d) Festivals and the Sabbath: There is certainly no reference to the Sabbath in the Book of Job, and unless it is suggested that the feasting of Job's children is in some way related to the festivals, there is none to them either. In a sense they achieve the fulfillment of Amos: "I will turn your feasts into mourning."¹³

(e) Kashrut: 18:4 refers to the principle that a "torn beast" is "unclean".

(f) Election: 17:5¹⁴ correctly translated runs: "He proclaims His portion as His friends while the eyes of His children long in vain", while 21:19¹⁵ with the same proviso reads: "God saves His strength for His own children. When He gives one his quietus, he knows!" The latter particularly conveys the authentic Jewish idea of election. In 31:2 Job asks the utterly Jewish question: "What is the portion of God above and the heritage of the Almighty on high?" The question is rhetorical but the directed response is "the undivided worship of His people".

(g) God in history: While I should assert that the entire Book of Job is concerned with just this question, specific references are also to be found in Chapter 12 which *in toto* is an argument that God Himself is responsible for the historic decline of the state described in vv. 17-25, in Chapter 24 which describes the state of the nation during the reign of "the day of the Lord", and in 34:20-30¹⁶ in which Elihu describes how God destroys the erring nation, finally chastising them "under the wicked (using the word as does Habbakuk to stand for Israel's idolatrous foes) instead of the prophets, which is because they turned aside from following Him and did not attend to any of His ways".

Once we are freed to consider the possibility that Job is Jewish, we can read many passages in the Book in an entirely new light. The "coincidence" that the afflictions of Job, the loss of his livestock, the death of his ten children, the affliction of his skin with "sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his

13. Amos 8:10.

14. לחלק יגיד רעים ועיני בניו תכלנה (17:5)

15. אלה יצפן לבניו אנו ישלם אליו וידע (21:19)

16. תחת-רשעים ספקם במקום ראים (34:26)

head" almost exactly correspond with the predictions in Chapter 28 of the Book of Deuteronomy of the fate which will overtake the Children of Israel if they do not hearken to the voice of the Lord¹⁷, and that the blessings which Job enjoyed before his downfall likewise echo word for word the blessings of Deuteronomy 28¹⁸, takes on deep significance for the interpretation of the whole work. An element of allegory becomes apparent in Job's story which confers on him an alternative identity as the people itself to whom the blessings and curses were directed.

It is not possible in a short article even to list all the passages in the Book of Job which take on a new and clearer meaning once the identification of Job as the representative Jew has been made. A few examples are:

Job 8:19,¹⁹ the climax of Bildad's parable of the wicked and the virtuous as plants is now to be seen as the promise of a prosperous future to the exiled nation: "Behold, this is the joy of his way — that from alien soil they will sprout anew".

Job 12:17-25, Job's description of the destructive acts of God, which he has characterised in 12:9 as נִסִּי — "this", i.e. the entirety of the catastrophe which has befallen him, is evidently a summary of the decline and fall of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah from the zenith of their power under Solomon.

Job 17:6²⁰ — "He exhibited me as a byword to the peoples and as Tophet of yore I have become" can now be recognized for what it is, a further quotation of the Deuteronomic curse (28:37) and a geographical reference to a Judaeon location of sinister repute.

Job 24 finally shows its relevance as a description of the land and its inhabitants after conquest and the exile of the leaders have left it subject to oppression and misrule.

17. Deut 28:31: "Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof; thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not be restored to thee; thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies; and thou shalt have none to save thee."

Deut 28:32: "Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day."

Deut 28:35: "The Lord will smite thee in the knees, and in the legs, with a sore boil, whereof thou canst not be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the crown of thy head."

18. Deut: 28:11: "And the Lord will make thee overabundant for good, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land."

Deut. 28:12: The Lord... will bless all the work of thy hand."

19. (8:19) הֵן-הוּא מְשׁוּשׁ דְּרָכּוֹ וּמַעֲפָר אַחֵר יִצְמָחוּ

20. (17:6) וְהִצִּיגְנִי לְמַשׁוּל עַמִּים וְחָפֵחַ לַפְּנִים אֲהִיָּה

Job 36 reveals its treasury of references to biblical incidents where Elihu draws his evidence for the justification of God למרחוק – “from times of old”, culminating in his beautiful description of the ending of the flood and the placing of the rainbow in the sky in v. 30²¹: “Then He displayed His light across it and stopped the sluices of the (upper) sea”.

At last we know why, when in 42:10-13 God undoes all Job's misfortunes and naively compensates him with a double indemnity for his losses, there is no reference made to the healing of his skin disease. Instead stands the phrase, “The Lord turned the captivity of Job”²². The poet drops his allegorical mask at this moment to show the identity of the events in Job 1 and 2 with the predictions of Chapter 28 of Deuteronomy.

Finally we can at last find firm ground on which to identify the two mysterious beasts of God's last speech, Behemoth and Leviathan, and to understand how God does in fact answer and console Job; but this must be the subject of another paper.

21. הן-פרש עליו אורו ושרשי הים כסה (36:30)

22. וד' שב אח שבות איונ (42:10)

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BIRDS IN BIBLE AND MIDRASH

BY S.P. TOPEROFF

Birds are often mentioned in Tanakh and they are designated either as עוף fowl or ציפור.

We find references to the nesting of birds. Thus the law of sending away the mother bird (Deut. 22:6) is referred to as קן ציפור. The Book of Proverbs writes: *As a bird that wanders from her nest is a man that wanders from his place* (27:8), whilst the Psalmist observes *wherein the birds make their nests* (104:17).

In addition to nesting, we read of the singing of birds: *compère and one shall start up at the voice of a bird* (Ecclesiastes 12:4) and *the time of the zamir is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land* (Song of Songs 12:4). The turtle is called תור in Hebrew because of the sound of the note it utters whilst it is natural to connect זמיר with 'zemer', song. Feliks observes that the name 'zamir' does not refer to a particular bird but is a generic name for a number of singing birds that are found in Israel (The Animal World of the Bible, p. 84). Feliks refers to a number of birds of song or warblers (ibid.).

We distinguish between the large and small birds; the large may attack with their claws at night but the small sleep at night and arise with the dawn. As the Aramaic of בוקר morning is צפרא we probably call the small bird ציפור by which we denote that it is a morning bird.

Halachically, birds are divided into two main group: the clean and the unclean, or better, impure. The clean birds like the dove and turtle-dove do not possess cruel habits; they are tame, docile and patient. The characteristic marks of identification are not mentioned in the Torah but are discussed in the Talmud. These include a projecting claw that is longer than the others, a crop and a stomach that has a membrane which can easily be peeled off. An additional qualification is that a bird which associates or dwells with unclean birds becomes

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unclean; compare the Talmudic dictum: "Not without reason does the starling go to the raven, they are of the same species" (Hullin 56b).

Rabbinical literature has provided us with detailed information which helps us to identify the unclean bird. Thus birds which handle their food with their claws whilst eating the victim are forbidden (Yoreh Deah, Chapter 79). Birds which perch on a pole or rope and stretch out their two toes to each side or a bird which snatches and eats pieces of food directly from the air instead of placing them on the ground, are forbidden (ibid.).

There are 29 classes of unclean birds; the clean are without number (Hullin 63a).

One of the most striking aspects of bird life is the migration of birds which takes them to warmer climes. They will travel only when the sky is clear, and when they are overtaken by mist or cloud, they will either rise above the cloud or descend and wait for better weather. It seems incredible how the migrates know their way over stretches of unknown land. Like experienced pilots, these birds seem to be equipped with computerised brains which instinctively guide them to their destination.

It is a puzzling mystery which is beyond our finite minds. Surely the finger of God is in nature. "How does the inexperienced migrant fly quite alone on its first migration thousands of miles across the equator, often at a confident speed of several hundred miles a day and adjust itself to the very different sky patterns in the southern hemisphere which it has never seen before?" ('Disputation', p. 41).

Migration of birds is explicitly referred to in the Tanakh. Thus the prophet Jeremiah writes: *The stork in the heaven knows her appointed times, and the turtle and the swallow and the crane observe the time of their coming but My people know not the ordinances of the Lord* (8:7). Jeremiah marvels at the innate wisdom of the birds who with precise knowledge observe the times of their coming and going to different lands.

Again in the Book of Proverbs we read: *As the wandering sparrow, as the flying swallow, so the curse that is causeless shall come home* (26:2).

We know that quails gather in large numbers on the shores of the Mediterranean in the months of September and October to migrate to Asia and Africa where the weather is warmer and they return with the wind (Ex. 16:13, Num. 11:31 and Ps. 105:40).

Comparable to migratory birds, we have carrier pigeons which carry letters fastened under their wings, and in Europe cover a distance of 300 miles in two hours. An interesting Midrash informs us that a homing pigeon will always return to its base no matter in which direction it has been sent (Song of Songs Rabbah 4:1).

Pigeon racing is mentioned in the Talmud and is treated as a form of gambling. The Rabbis frowned on this sport and those who indulged in it were ineligible to give evidence in a court of law (Sanhedrin 24b, 25a). Rashi interprets the Mishnaic expression "pigeon trader" to refer to people who train pigeons to fight one another. This would probably be a form of cock-fighting which is forbidden in Jewish law. All three types of birds, migrants, race-pigeons and carrier pigeons seem to exhibit a superior intelligence which may have given rise to the notion that birds possess souls. An echo of this idea is found in the Book of Psalms: *In the Lord have I taken refuge; how say you to my soul; flee you! To your mountain, you birds?* (11:1). Primitive man regarded the bird which flies through the air as a symbol of the soul, and on Egyptian monuments the soul of the king is represented as a bird (Farbridge, Biblical Symbolism p. 59).

Many are the customs, stories and parables surrounding the birds. We shall refer to a beautiful custom regarding the manna which our ancestors ate in the wilderness. When the heavenly food first appeared in the desert, Moses commanded: *Six days shall you gather it but on the seventh day is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none* (Ex. 16:26). Now a number of base and ungrateful people who rebelled against the authority of Moses endeavoured to prove him to be a false prophet. They therefore took their portion of manna and spread it on the ground early on the Sabbath day. Immediately the birds swooped down from the skies and cleared the fields so that there was not a vestige of manna left.

In response to this timely and miraculous intervention of the birds, the custom arose that on Shabbat Shirah when the story of the manna is read in the Synagogue, we remember with gratitude the prompt action of the birds and scatter gruel or any similar food outside our homes and feed the birds on the Sabbath of Song. In this manner we demonstrate our eternal appreciation to the birds of the field. Indeed some follow this custom throughout the year. This meaningful and pleasant custom is discussed in the 'Minhagei Yeshurun'.

The Hafetz Hayyim devoted his life to the writing of books on the dangers of

לשון הרע, the evils of slanderous talk. Referring to the leper and the ceremony of 'the two living clean birds' (Lev. 14:4), the Rabbi commented that these birds symbolise the leper's evil tongue: "As the birds chirp and chatter so did he (the leper) babble and prattle. The voice of the bird shall thus effect forgiveness for the words of calumny".

An interesting Midrash throws some light on the above ceremony. The Midrash (Exodus Rabbah 1:1) records that when Pharaoh was smitten with leprosy, he was advised by his counsellors and magicians to slaughter not birds but innocent Jewish children every day and bathe in their blood, to cure him of leprosy.

There is one aspect of bird life we have not yet treated; that is bird-watching. This is a popular pastime today, and it was not unknown in the early history of our people. The graphic description of bird life recorded in Bible and Talmud is proof that our ancestors closely watched the ways and habits of birds. Since the re-emergence of the State of Israel, there are many areas where bird-watching is indulged in. Near fish-ponds, lakes and rivers you will find a large variety of birds. A special treat is in store for those who visit the area north of Massada on the Dead Sea where you see birds of special varieties — red-winged glossy starlings are everywhere, and during migration Ein-Gedi teems with birds of passage. Israel is a small country but there are many areas which can claim to be a bird watchers' paradise.

Jewish literature is replete with anecdotes and parables regarding birds. Those interested in Kabbalistic doctrines should acquaint themselves with the famous parable of the birds as expounded and elaborated by R. Moses Cordovero, 1522 — 70, in his well known mystical work entitled 'Tomer Devorah'. The parable of the birds is found in the English translation by L. Jacobs p. 33.

For our purposes we shall turn to another classic of Jewish Literature, the letters and diaries of Gluckel of Hameln (1646—1724), who narrates the following story: A mother bird once set out to cross a windy sea with her three fledglings. The sea was so wide and the wind so strong that the bird was forced to carry her young one by one in her claws. When she was half-way across the sea with her first fledgling the wind turned to a gale and she said: My child, look how I am struggling, I am risking my life for you; when you are grown up will you do as much for me when I am old? "Oh yes, I will do everything you ask of me", the lit-

the bird replied, "Only bring me to safety", whereupon the mother bird promptly dropped her offspring into the sea. The bird then returned to the shore and set forth with her second fledgling. The mother repeated the same question and as she received a similar reply as the first, again she dropped it into the waters below. When the mother put the same question to the third fledgling, the little bird replied: "My dear mother, it is true that you are struggling mightily and risking your life for me and it would be wrong not to repay you when you are old, but I cannot commit myself. However, I can promise that when I am grown up and have children of my own, I shall do as much for them as you have done for me". The mother was satisfied and carried her ashore safely.

Finally a Hasidic story: A man once came to the Lekhivitzer Rabbi and admitted that he was aware of his imperfections; his only consolation, he said, was his knowledge that others were even inferior to him. The Rabbi would not accept this and told him a parable: A king had an orchestra which regaled him with music. He also possessed a nightingale which sang at intervals. The king found himself rejoicing more in the natural untutored melodies of the little bird than in the studied harmonies of his orchestra.

Similarly, the King of Kings has hosts of angels who sing before Him in perfect harmony, yet He prefers to hear the imperfect and even discordant prayer of mortal beings on earth. As long as we offer our services to the best of our ability, we need never feel disheartened at our inadequacies.

Proverbial Sayings

There is a bird in the coast towns whose name is 'kerum' (a bird of paradise) and as soon as the sun shines upon it, it changes into several colours.

The fabulous Phoenix called 'hol' in Hebrew is mentioned several times in Midrash.

Owls can spot a mouse with no more light than one candle half a mile away.

The skylark is a bird that brings the poet news of the land.

False friends are like migratory birds, they fly away in the cold weather.

'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush' is expressed in midrashic language as 'better one bird tied than a hundred flying.'

Be not like a bird that sees the seeds but not the trap.

He who ascribes things to mere accident is like a bird that sees the net and deems it of no special purpose.

Birds come down only when there are seeds to be picked.

It is said that birds never make so much noise as when they lay the first egg.

No bird can fly over itself.

As a bird wanders from its nest, so does a human being move from its place.

No bird is caught without the decree of heaven.

The ossifrage is a cruel bird, dropping its young from a great height to dash them on the stones below; the pelican preys on its own flesh, hence they are forbidden to Jews (Philo).

One should not erect dove-cots or pigeon houses near the town lest the birds should injure the plants, flowers and shrubs belonging to other people.

JONAH, by N. Aviezer, continued from page 15

demonstrates that Jonah's view is not reconcilable with the view of Moses and the Biblical prophets. Mercy is not regarded by the prophets as a necessary evil, a 'defect' of justice and a dilution of morality that must unfortunately be tolerated. Quite the contrary. Mercy and forgiveness are regarded by the prophets as the *culmination* of justice — the *supreme* form of morality and an expression of a most sublime ethic.

The very words of Jonah's protest have entered our prayer books, in the course of generations, in *praise* of God. Indeed, they constitute a major theme in the prayers for the Day of Atonement. It is basic to Judaism that repentance and forgiveness form an integral part of the Divine cosmic order. It is not without cause that the entire Book of Jonah is read each year towards the climactic end of the Day of Atonement.

Acknowledgements:

It is a pleasure to thank my wife, Dvora Aviezer, and my friend, Rav Getzel Ellinson, for their many helpful comments.

BOOK REVIEW

BY SOL LIPTZIN

Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays, edited by Tomoo Ishida, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, Indiana, 1983, Pp. 409, reviewed by Sol Liptzin.

This volume is a collection of studies presented at the International Biblical Symposium held in Tokyo, December 5—7, 1979. Except for the lectures on Ebla by David Noel Freedman of the University of Michigan and on Biblical Medicine by J.V. Kinner Wilson of Cambridge University, the remaining fifteen papers deal with the era of David and Solomon. The participants include German, British, American, Swedish, Italian and Israeli scholars, as well as researchers from the host country of Japan.

Since Christians formed less than one percent of the Japanese population and Jews only a negligible number, there was little interest in biblical studies before the Second World War. Interest has increased since then. The present volume contains significant contributions by four Japanese scholars: Masai Sekine on "Lyric Literature in the Davidic-Solomonic Period," Kyoshi K. Sacon on "The Literary Structure of the Succession Narrative," Yutaka Ikeda on "Solomon's Trade in Horses and Chariots in its International Setting," and the editor Tomoo Ishida on "Solomon's Succession to the Throne of David — A Political Analysis."

Masai Sekine, the author of a Japanese *History of Old Testament Literature* (Tokyo, 1978—1980), draws interesting parallels between the development of literature in ancient Japan and among the Israelites. Epics arose in Japan when the various tribes consolidated into a larger grouping. Only after national unity was achieved and stability set in, were individual feelings given free reign to express themselves and the result was a flowering of lyric poetry. Similarly, the finest masterpiece of epic literature in ancient Israel, "The Song of Debórah," arose during the unification of several tribes in a Tribal League when an imminent catastrophe threatened, but only after the unity of all twelve tribes into a single nation was achieved under Saul was the time ripe for lyric expression.

Lyric poetry matured and flourished during the reign of David. Typical examples were David's laments on the death of Jonathan and on the assassination of Abner, as well as the earliest Psalms. There were of course lyric outcries and lyric prayers to God in the pre-monarchical period, such as Joshua's anguished call: *Alas, O Lord God, why did you bring this people across the Jordan only to hand us over to the Amorites to be destroyed?* Similar outbursts and lyrical prayers have also been preserved from the earliest Japanese writings, but the florescence of Japanese poetry in its purest quality did not come until after Japanese tribal unity.

Sekine dates the lyric masterpiece of biblical writing, *The Song of Songs*, or at least its important components, to the time of Solomon, when the magnificent royal court and the intellectual class engaged in enlightened humanism and before mystical tendencies infiltrated and deflected human passion into spiritual love, a mystical communion with God.

The Japanese scholar, Tomoo Ishida, analyzes the political forces that brought Solomon, the younger son, rather than Adonijah, the older son, to the throne of David. He holds that most of Adonijah's supporters, including Joab and Abiathar, belonged to David's old guard who held prominent positions at the royal court since the early years at Hebron, whereas most of Solomon's adherents, including Benaiah and Zadok, came to the fore at a later time. There was general expectation that Adonijah would inherit the throne and he probably even had the approval of his father. There was no need for him to be in a hurry to claim the succession. Nathan was the master-mind in the court intrigue devised by the Solomonic clique. He fabricated the story that the feast of Adonijah at Ein Rogel was to set in motion the toppling of David. It was also Nathan who took advantage of David's dotage and got him to believe that he had earlier pledged the throne to Bathsheva's son, a pledge which even she herself could not recall. Solomon's adherents were the conspirators. They challenged the existing order. Solomon was the usurper who outmaneuvered Adonijah and who obtained the paternal blessing with the help of the beguiling Bathsheva. His behavior in exploiting the senility of David was not unlike that of Jacob who exploited the blindness of Isaac and, with the help of the beguiling Rebecca, snatched away the coveted blessing meant for Esau. The behavior of both Jacob and Solomon was reprehensible and immoral, but supposedly received divine sanction. Certainly

Solomon's throne was rather shaky at the outset and his legitimacy in doubt. Before he executed his bloody purges, he had neither popular support nor the approval of most senior officials. His blood-baths strengthened his insecure rule, especially after he eliminated Joab, the strong man of the opposition, and after he found a pretext to execute Shimei, thus putting an end to any possible royal claims by remaining adherents of the House of Saul. Ishida is convinced that the author of the Succession Narrative stemmed from the circle of Nathan, the prophet who engineered the entire political intrigue and the coup d'état.

Three Israeli scholars participated in the Tokyo Symposium: Miriam Tadmor of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, who describes in the volume the female cult figurines in Late Canaan and Early Israel, Abraham Malamat of the Hebrew University, who explores the relations of the Kingdom of David and Solomon with Egypt; Hayim Tadmor, also of the Hebrew University, who writes about the political and social tension in that period.

Hayim Tadmor points out that the power of the Elders who held the leadership in pre-monarchical days gradually weakened as the power of the kings increased and only surfaced during national emergencies. In the final catastrophe, when the monarchy and the monarchical institutions came to an end with the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile to Babylon, the dormant authority of the Elders reasserted itself. As leaders of local communities in the ever widening Diaspora, the Elders again assumed their ancient role and retained it on the Jewish scene for many centuries until almost modern times.

The overall impression conveyed by the fifteen studies is the extraordinary rich development of the political, social, economic, literary, artistic and religious thinking during the reigns of David and Solomon. Theirs was truly a Golden Age. Spiritual energies, which in preceding generations had been concentrated on the struggle for mere survival, could at last, in a period of comparative stability be unleashed for creative pursuits ranging from the building of magnificent architectural monuments to the refinement of lyric, narrative and wisdom literature. The consolidation of the twelve tribes in a united kingdom enabled the expanded territory to function as a bridge between the cultures of Egypt, Arabia, Mesopotamia and the Eastern Mediterranean, a bridge over which passed not only a wealth of material products but also a wealth of ideas which were as-

simulated, combined and transmuted by the People of the Covenant into the Biblical heritage that still nourishes us to this day.

Will Jewish history repeat itself? Contemporary Israel has rearisen from the fragments of Diaspora Jewry. It is engaged in a desperate striving for strong national unity. It is forced to concentrate its energies on mere survival as in the pre-monarchical generations more than three thousand years ago. Will it also ere long attain to comparative tranquility as in the days of David and Solomon which followed the turbulent era of the Judges? Will its energies again be liberated to resume creative expression of its unique national genius both in its own interest and in that of the world community?

The people of the Bible in the Land of the Bible most ardently long for the coming of an era as illustrious as that of David and Solomon.



A HEARTY "TODAH"

For thirteen years "Dor le Dor" has been appearing regularly and has been sent to all parts of the world to the English-reading students of the Bible. For the Editorial Board, this has been a labor of love, as we are volunteers in the editing and production of 'Dor le Dor.'

As the years went by and the Quarterly came off the press, the Editors had little inkling of how it was received by the reading public. Here and there, a comment was received expressing an encouraging and appreciative note. But in general, and as expected, the silent majority was faithfully reading the periodical without writing to us, favorably or unfavorably.

This past year — coinciding with our Bar Mitzvah year — our Bible Society has been burdened with overbearing debts as a result of reduced subsidies from the State of Israel and the Jewish Agency. After some hesitation, we sent out a call to our readership for special financial support. We were rewarded with a most surprising response, primarily in the number of our patrons who sent in cheques, large and small. The "silent majority" answered our call most gratifyingly.

To all of you who came forth, please accept our heartfelt thanks.

חנה רבה

Louis Katzoff, Editor

REFLECTIONS OF READERS

RELIGION BY THE RIVER

BY JOSHUA ADLER

In the book of Ezekiel we find that the prophet receives a Divine revelation at the River Chebar (Ch. 1). In the Psalms (137) we find that the exiles mourn and weep for Zion "by the waters of Babylon." And the Jewish leader Ezra proclaims a fast for the people who are about to leave Babylon and return to Jerusalem by the River Ahva (Ezra 8:21). The emphasis on religious activities which take place near river banks cannot be merely coincidental but must point to some special connection. Indeed, the Midrash in Yalkut Shimoni on Ezekiel gives us a direction.

The Rabbinic Sages were undoubtedly troubled by the fact that Ezekiel was a prophet who received some of his revelations outside of the Holy Land. (They apparently had a tradition that limited prophecy to the Land of Israel.) In order to surmount this problem the Midrash states: "Although he (Ezekiel) received Divine communication outside of the Holy Land it was granted him in a pure place", viz. near a body of water.

In order to solve the dilemma of prophecy outside of Eretz Yisrael, the Sages came up with the theory that since water serves to purify those who have been contaminated (presumably from idolatry which was rife throughout the land of Babylon) — even the area near a body of water can be considered as pure enough for a Divine revelation.

This may indeed have been how the Judean exiles solved their own dilemma while surrounded by idolatry, simply by gathering for Jewish religious activities near rivers or other bodies of water as canals. This was considered an unpolluted area and fit for Jewish worship.

Other possible explanations for this phenomenon may lie in the fact that Jews wished first to purify themselves by bathing prior to engaging in religious activity and that the gathering near rivers was simply a matter of convenience.

Joshua J. Adler, formerly Rabbi of Congregation Chizuk Emuna of Harrisburg, Pa., now resides in Jerusalem, and lectures on Judaic subjects at various institutions in Israel. He is now Managing Editor of Dor le Dor.

A third possible explanation may simply lie in the fact that Jews sought to get away from the prying eyes of their idolatrous Babylonian neighbors and sought river banks as places of isolation where they were free to conduct their own kind of rituals and where they could pray for the restoration of Zion without being accused of treason.

כִּי יָד עַל כֶּסֶּה

BY DAVID HOROWITZ

This is part of a letter written by Mr. David Horowitz to the former Prime Minister, Menahem Begin.

The above verse in Exodus 17:15 has, due to the improper translation: *The Hand upon the Throne of the Lord*, never been fully understood. Correctly translated it may serve as an answer to the reasons of continuous wars and why we the children of Israel have had to contend with negative forces ever since our beginning.

The passage should be translated in its literal meaning: (Because) there is a hand on the Throne of the Lord (there is) war unto Amalek in every generation (Midor dor, and not midor ledor).

This passage reveals a fundamental fact that there is a negative "hand" interfering with the Throne of the Lord. It will also explain why Moses was told at the Burning bush: **אֲנִי אֶשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה** *I will Be what I will Be* as being the Name and what Zechariah meant with this known verse, repeated in the Alenu prayer: *On that day shall the Lord be One and His Name One*. For on that day in days to come, the "hand" interfering with the Throne of the Lord shall be overcome.

Hence the Children of Israel-Jacob must be firm and strong, not give in nor relinquish the claim to the land which God swore would belong to them and their seed forever.

Mr. David Horowitz was elected president of the UN Correspondents Association in 1981

TWENTY SECOND YOUTH BIBLE CONTEST



Israel's 37th Independence Day was celebrated a day earlier than usual. As the fifth day of Iyar — the original date of Yom Ha-atzmauth — was on Friday (Erev Shabbat), the festivities — including the annual culminating World Bible Contest for Jewish Youth — were held on Thursday. But this did not detract from the enthusiasm and excitement sparked by the colorful display of biblical knowledge of the finalists at the Jerusalem Theater. This was the 22nd Jewish Youth Bible Contest, and was viewed by hundreds of thousands — perhaps millions — on Israeli television.

Surveys conducted in the last few years by the Israeli Institute for Social Research, indicate that close to 90% of the populace view this program and consider it to be a major part of the festivities that adds a spiritual dimension to Independence Day.

ELIAKIM KOENIGSBERG — DIASPORA WINNER

A student of Yeshiva University in New York, presently studying at the Yeshiva at Kerem B'Yavneh, was the winner of the Diaspora Section. Eliakim Koenigsberg, age 17, came in first in the Diaspora contest, held in Ashkelon, and

was as well the third runner-up in the final event at the Jerusalem Theater, surpassed by three Israeli participants. (The first runner-up of the Diaspora contest was Avigdor Blumenau of South Africa, followed by Arik B'chiri of France, and Zelig Aster of Canada.)

Eliakim, the second of seven children, studied at the High School and College of Yeshiva University before moving on to Kerem B'Yavneh Yeshiva in Israel, where he plans to study another year before completing his Bachelors of Arts degree back at Yeshiva University. He hopes to study onwards towards the Rabbinate or law — or both. His father is a physician and a member of the faculty at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. His mother is a psychologist, working with emotionally disturbed children.



*Eliakim Koenigsberg, diaspora winner, congratulated by Prime Minister Shimon Peres.
with Moshe Rivlin of K.K.L. in center*



Top winners, Ohed Zechariah(1), Ruth Bat-Meir(2), Jacob Shatz(3), Eliakim Koenigsberg(4). Next to them: Moshe Rivlin, World Chairman of Keren Kayemet l'Israel; Shimon Peres, Prime Minister; Prof Haim Gevaryahu, Chairman World Jewish Bible Society.

THE TOP FINALISTS

Thirty-three contestants came from many parts of the world to participate in the contest. After a preliminary written test, seventeen contestants were chosen to take part in the finals. Ohed Zechariah of the Midrashiat Noam Yeshiva High School in Pardess Hanna emerged as Bible Champion, with 125 points. Very close behind him — with only one point less — came Ruth Bar-Meir of Bat Yam, a student at the Horev High School for girls in Jerusalem. Ruth is the first girl in the history of the contest to have reached the position of first runner-up. After her came Jacob Shatz of Israel, and Diaspora champion Koenigsberg, as second and third winners.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S QUESTION

It has become customary that Israel's Prime Minister, who hands out the prizes to the winners, also presents the culminating and most difficult question to the finalists. In the final round, all seven contestants had to answer the same question in written form, which was read out by Prime Minister Shimon Peres. His question was: "In the Books of the Narrative Prophets (Sefer Nevi'im), certain people are recorded to have been successful, through their innate wisdom, in preventing civil war and subsequent bloodshed. Name three women and seven men who are recorded for such wisdom." (See the answers to this question on page 62).

CHAPLAIN ALEVITZKI OF "GADNA," COORDINATOR OF THE CONTEST

The Gadna, under the leadership of its Commander, Colonel Uri Manos, hosted the contestants. Major Samuel Alevitzki, Chaplain of the Gadna, served as coordinator of the contest. In his capacity of organizer and coordinator, Rabbi Alevitzki, is in contact with over a score of countries in encouraging participation in the contest. This year, representatives from 16 countries responded. The Gadna is the pre-military youth corps which has been administering the Bible Contest since the days of the founder of the State of Israel, Prime Minister David Ben Gurion.

JOSEPH SHAAR, COMPOSER OF CONTEST QUESTIONS

Joseph Shaar, noted writer and educator, was the author of the questions, having served as the coordinator of the Questions Committee for all of the 22-year history of the contest. He also served on the distinguished panel of judges, chaired by the Minister of Religious Affairs, Dr. Joseph Burg. Other judges included: Oded Cohen, Director of the Youth Division of the Ministry of Education; David Benvenisti, Israeli Biblical geographer; and Major Shimon Bar-Noy, Chaplain of the Israeli Defense Forces.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE WORLD BIBLE CONTEST FOR JEWISH YOUTH

Argentina

Ariel Rubinstein

Australia

Yossi Gestetner

Belgium

Pierre Hagendorf

Canada

Sh. Zelig Aster

Steve Mayer

Chile

Sammy Apt-Druck

Costa Rica

Luis Feinzaig

France

Maurice Assayag

Arik B'chiri

Moshe Temstet

Holland

Dan Raber

Ireland

Simone Fineman

Israel

Ruth Bar-Meir

Oren Eliahu

Nahshon Rabenstein

Jacob Shatz

Ohed Zechariah

Mexico

Zeev Bikas

Jorge Lotwin

Abraham Renner

Panama

Albert A. Attie

South Africa

Avigdor Blumenau

Talman Friedlander

Spain

Yosef I. Shorr

Martin Wainsztein

Uruguay

Jose Joskowicz

United States

Noa Jeselsohn

Larry Kauffman

Eliakim Koenigsberg

Etan Orlian

Shira Rodinsky

Jessica Rosenbaum

Sol Schneider



ANSWERS TO BIBLE QUESTION
PRESENTED BY
PRIME MINISTER SHIMON PERES

THREE WOMEN:

1. Michal, Daughter of King Saul. She prevented Saul's men from attacking David. (I Sam. 19:11)
2. Abigail. She prevented David and his men from committing bloodshed against Nabal, the Carmelite. (I Sam. 25:33)
3. The Wise Woman of Abel. She prevented Joab from attacking the inhabitants of Abel-beth-Maacha, when Joab was pursuing the rebel Sheba ben Bichri. (II Sam. 20:22)

SEVEN MEN

4. Gideon. He prevented a war amongst brothers against the tribe of Ephraim. (Judges 8:1-3)
2. Saul. He prevented an attack against "irresponsible men" who held him in contempt. (I Sam. 10:27)
3. Jonathan. He prevented Saul from attacking David. (I Sam. 19:11)
4. David.
 - a. prevented the killing of Saul when in the cave. (I Sam. 24:7)
 - b. prevented Abishai from killing Saul at the hill of Hachila (I Sam. 26:9)
 - c. prevented Abishai from killing Shimei ben Gera. (II Sam. 16:9-10)
5. Joab. He prevented continuation of civil war between the men of David and Saul. (II Sam. 2:26)
6. Shemaya, Man of God. He prevented a war between the kingdoms of Israel and Judea. (I Kings 2:24)
7. Ovadiah, the Prophet. He prevented the killing of 100 prophets by Jezebel. (I Kings 18:4)

September-October 1985

תשרי תשמ"ו

M	Genesis 21:1-34 Haftarah: Samuel 1-2:10	א 18 ראש השנה בראשית כ"א, אילך הפטרה: שמואל א א"ב, י
T	Genesis 22:1-24 Haftarah: Jeremiah 31:2-20	ב 17 ראש השנה בראשית כ"ב איכר הפטרה: ירמיה ל"א, ביכ
W	Jonah 1	ג 18 יונה א
Th	Jonah 2	ד 19 יונה ב
F	Deuteronomy 31	ה 20 וילך
	Haftarah: Hoseah 14:2-10 שבת	ו 21 הפטרה: הושע י"ד, ביי
S	Jonah 3	ז 22 יונה ג
M	Jonah 4	ח 23 יונה ד
T		ט 24 ערב יום כפור
W	Leviticus 16 Haftarah: Isaiah 57:14-58:16	י 25 יום כפור ויקרא ט"ז הפטרה: ישעיה נ"ז, יד"נ"ח, טז
Th	Ecclesiastes 1-2-3	יא 26 קהלת איביג
F	Deuteronomy 32	יב 27 האזינו
	Haftarah: Jeremiah 31:2-20 שבת	יג 28 הפטרה: ירמיהו ל"א, ביכ
S	Ecclesiastes 4-5-6	יד 29 קהלת דהיו
M	Leviticus 22:26-23:44 Haftarah: Zechariah 14	טו 30 סוכות ויקרא כ"ב, כרכ"ג, מד הפטרה: זכריה י"ד
October		
T	Leviticus 22:26-23:44* Haftarah: 1 Kings 8:2-21*	טז 1 סוכות ויקרא כ"ב, כרכ"ג, מד* הפטרה: מלכים א ח', ביכא*
W	Ecclesiastes 7, 8, 9	יז 2 קהלת ז, ח, ט
Th	Ecclesiastes 10, 11, 12	יח 3 קהלת י, יא, יב
F	Exodus 33:12-34:26	יט 4 שמות ל"ג, יביל"ד, כו
	Haftarah: Ezekiel 38:18-39:16 שבת	כ 5 הפטרה: יחזקאל ל"ח, יחיל"ט, טז
S		כא 6 הושענה רבה
M	Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17 Haftarah: 1 Kings 8:54-66	כב 7 שמיני עצרת דברים י"ד, כביט"ז, יז הפטרה: מלכים א ח', נד"סו
T	Deuteronomy 33-34** Haftarah: Joshua 1**	כג 8 שמחת תורה וזאת הברכה** הפטרה: יהושע א**
W	Joshua 2	כד 9 יהושע ב
Th	Joshua 3	כה 10 יהושע ג
F	Genesis 1-5	כו 11 בראשית
	Haftarah: 1 Samuel 28:18-42 שבת	כז 12 הפטרה: שמואל א כ', יחמב
S	Joshua 4	כח 13 יהושע ד'
M	Joshua 5-6	כט 14 יהושע ה"ו'
T	Joshua 7	ל 15 יהושע ז'

*רק בחוץ לארץ **In Israel on Monday *Only in the Diaspora

October-November 1985

חשון תשמ"ו

W	Joshua 8	16	א	יהושע ח'
Th	Joshua 9	17	ב	יהושע ט'
F	Genesis 6:9-11	18	ג	נח
	שבת Haftarah: Isaiah 54:1-55:5	19	ד	הפטרה: ישעיה נ"ד, אינ"ה, ה
S	Joshua 10	20	ה	יהושע י
M	Joshua 11-12	21	ו	יהושע י"א, י"ב
T	Joshua 13	22	ז	יהושע י"ג
W	Joshua 14	23	ח	יהושע י"ד
Th	Joshua 15	24	ט	יהושע ט"ו
F	Genesis 12-17	25	י	לך לך
	שבת Haftarah: Isaiah 40:27-41:16	26	יא	הפטרה: ישעיה מ', כדמ"א, טו
S	Joshua 16	27	יב	יהושע ט"ז
M	Joshua 17	28	יג	יהושע י"ז
T	Joshua 18	29	יד	יהושע י"ח
W	Joshua 19	30	טו	יהושע י"ט
Th	Joshua 20	31	טז	יהושע כ'
November				
F	Genesis 18-22	1	יז	וירא
	שבת Haftarah: II Kings 4:1-32	2	יח	הפטרה: מלכים ב' ד', אילב
S	Joshua 21	3	יט	יהושע כ"א
M	Joshua 22	4	כ	יהושע כ"ב
T	Joshua 23	5	כא	יהושע כ"ג
W	Joshua 24	6	כב	יהושע כ"ד
Th	Judges 1	7	כג	שופטים א'
F	Genesis 23-25:18	8	כד	חיי שרה
	שבת Haftarah: I Kings 1:1-31	9	כה	הפטרה: מלכים א' א', אילא
S	Judges 2	10	כו	שופטים ב'
M	Judges 3	11	כז	שופטים ג'
T	Judges 4	12	כח	שופטים ד'
W	Judges 5	13	כט	שופטים ה'

November-December 1985

דצמבר 1985

Th	Judges 6	F	Genesis 25:19-28:9	חג	מלאכי 1:11-2:3	14	א	שופטים	14
						15	ב	חולדת	15
						16	ג	חפזת: מלאכי א', יצחק א'	16
S	Judges 7					17	ד	שופטים	17
M	Judges 8					18	ה	שופטים	18
T	Judges 9					19	ו	שופטים	19
W	Judges 10					20	ז	שופטים	20
Th	Judges 11	F	Genesis 28:10-32:3	חג	מלאכי א', יצחק א'	21	ח	שופטים	21
						22	ט	חג	22
						23	י	חפזת: מלאכי א', יצחק א'	23
S	Judges 12					24	יא	שופטים	24
M	Judges 13					25	יב	שופטים	25
T	Judges 14					26	יג	שופטים	26
W	Judges 15					27	יד	שופטים	27
Th	Judges 16	F	Genesis 32:4-36	חג	מלאכי א', יצחק א'	28	טו	שופטים	28
						29	טז	חג	29
						30	יז	חפזת: מלאכי א', יצחק א'	30
Obadiah (S)									
(S) Obadiah									
December									
S	Judges 17					1	א	שופטים	1
M	Judges 18					2	ב	שופטים	2
T	Judges 19					3	ג	שופטים	3
W	Judges 20					4	ד	שופטים	4
Th	Judges 21					5	ה	שופטים	5
						6	ו	חג	6
						7	ז	חפזת: מלאכי א', יצחק א'	7
S	1 Samuel 1					8	ח	שופטים	8
M	1 Samuel 2					9	ט	שופטים	9
T	1 Samuel 3					10	י	שופטים	10
W	1 Samuel 4					11	יא	שופטים	11
Th	1 Samuel 5					12	יב	שופטים	12

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Bright Brackets