

דור לדור

DOR Le DOR

Our Biblical Heritage



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DOR le DOR

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WE MOURN THE LOSS OF

LOUIS KATZOFF

Editor of DOR le DOR



אריה לייב ב"ר ראובן שרגאי

was the

Founder of Dor le Dor and its Editor from 1972-1987

When Volume X of Dor le Dor was published in 1981, special tribute was paid him for ten years of dedicated and voluntary service to Dor le Dor.

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO HIS MEMORY

יהי זכרו ברוך

IN MEMORIAM: DR. LOUIS KATZOFF

On July 21st, Dr. Louis Katzoff, founder of Dor le Dor, and its editor from 1972–1987, was taken from our midst. He was truly an exceptional man, who made Aliyah at the age of 65, when others think of retirement, to begin a new “career” in Israel. Within a short time he had built up a respected quarterly devoted to Biblical Scholarship, with a readership that is spread all over the globe. He was privileged to see the sixtieth issue of Dor-le-Dor, rounding out fifteen years of its publication under his leadership.

This was only a part of his multifaceted activities and accomplishments here, after a lifetime as a leading educator in the United States. The many, many friends, who came to say their last good-bye, moved to tears, is some measure of his personality. He will be sorely missed by all those who both loved and respected him; members of the synagogues where he worshipped, the participants in the Shiur Talmud which he faithfully attended, the Gerei Zedek, to whose spiritual needs he catered through his personal Tzedakah appeal, the Keren נשמה, his colleagues, the directors of Dor le Dor, and the many readers who over the years had come to look forward to his thoughtful and scholarly articles. Of course, his loss will be felt most keenly by his devoted family, his gifted wife Adina, and his sons Ranon and Jonathan, and their children, who were a source of great pride and joy to him throughout the years.

As I part from Louis Katzoff, whom I admired and loved as an elder brother, the following verse comes to mind: “May I die the death of the upright”, for this was Louis Katzoff, in life and in death; those who were close to him will understand and find some consolation. Not only is his memory a blessing, but his life’s work has not come to an end, and his influence will long be felt.

The organizations he inspired will continue their good work; the books and articles he wrote will be read; and we, from Dor le Dor, will make every effort to make the magazine worthy of him.

Shimon Bakon
Associate Editor

חזון תחית העצמות היבשות

מאת: חמ"י גבריהו

למוד פרק ל"ו ביחזקאל לזכרו ולעילוי נשמתו של ר' אריה לייב קצוף ז"ל ביום השלושים לפטירתו

נפתח ברקע ההיסטורי הריאלי. יחזקאל חזה חזונו זה לפני כ-2550 שנה. הנביא ישב יחד עם קהל גולים בתל שנקרא בעברית "תל-אביב" (על פי האכדית תל-אבובו) היינו תל ישן נושן א-בובו — עוד מלפני המבול. המקום נמצא כנראה סמוך לעיר המקדש הבבלית ניפור, התעלה "נהר כבר" לא זוהתה עדיין זיהוי ברור.

יחזקאל הוגלה יחד עם השכבה המנהיגה מירושלים וארץ יהודה בגלות המלך יהויכין (598). בשנה החמישית לגלות יהויכין זכה יחזקאל להתגלות נבואית ולמינוי כ"צופה לבית ישראל", תפקיד שנשא בו כעשרים שנה ויותר. יחזקאל היה נביא יושב בית, ולביתו התכנסו גולים המייחלים לגאולה. בזה היה שונה מישעיהו ומירמיהו שהיו משמיעים דבר אלוהים בשער בת רבים.

במשך הזמן של כעשרים וחמש שנה נפטרו לעולמם מספר יהודים וביניהם גם מתלמידי הנביא. דומה שנתעוררה שאלה קשה: מה יהיה הגורל של עצמות היהודים הצדיקים הללו, שהיו מייחלים ומצפים לגאולה ולשיבה לציון.

חושבני שהנביא יחזקאל מסר לבני החבורה שהתכנסה בביתו את החזיון הנבואית שהיתה לו כאשר התהלך בבקעת בית הקברות: "היתה עלי יד ה' ויצאני ברוח ה' ויניחני בתוך הבקעה והיא מלאה עצמות. והעבירני עליהם סביב סביב והנה רבות מאד על פני הבקעה והנה יבשות מאד". הנביא מתאר דיאלוג: האל השולח שואל אותו "ויאמר אלי בן אדם התחיינה העצמות האלה?" הנביא השיב בעונה: "ואומר אתה אלהים ידעת".

בנבואה זו ממלאת הרוח תפקיד במובנים שונים, "הנה אני מביא בכס רוח וחיותם". יש "רוח" המשפיעה על חיבור עצמות גידים ובשר עד כדי התכוננות גוף אדם. "רוח" גדולה מזו מכניסה נשמת חיים: "כה אמר ה' מארבע רוחות בואי הרוח ופחי בהרוגים האלה ויחיו". ולבסוף "רוח" ניצוץ אלוהי של שכל תבונה ודעת לכלל ישראל: "ונתתי רוחי בכס וחיותם והנחתי אתכם על אדמתכם".

כיצד הבינו שומעי החזון את משמעות הנבואה? האם ראו בחזון זה מעשה מוחשי או סימן "שעתיד ה' להחיות מתי ישראל בעת הישועה כדי שיראו גם הם את הישועה" (רד"ק). מאות שנים לאחר מכן נחלקו בכך חכמי ישראל. ר' אליעזר אומר: מתים שהחיה יחזקאל

(המשך בעמ' 85)

FROM THE EDITOR

As if seized by a premonition that his days were numbered on this earth, Dr. Katzoff offered me this piece shortly before he passed away, with the request of having it published as his special editorial. It is like a last will he left for his reader — something he wished to be remembered by.

SH.B.

Rashi comments on the first verse of פרשת משפטים which starts with the words: ואלה המשפטים אשר תשים לפניהם. *These are the laws which you shall set before them..* The latter “Vav” of the word ואלה is a connective form, meaning “and,” thus tying it in with the previous Sidra, when we read about the Ten Commandments pronounced at Har Sinai.

Rashi raises a proper question: Why the החיבור ו', the conjunctive word “and.” He answers with a rabbinic statement from the מכילתא: Just as the preceding Ten Commandments of the previous Sidra יתרו were revealed at Sinai, so were the succeeding regulations of the Sidra משפטים, dealing with civil, physical and religious laws part of the revelation at Sinai. This would mean that not only were the Ten Commandments accepted by Am Yisrael in the covenant of Sinai, but the entire system of Jewish legislation has equal sanctity, all stemming from the revelation at Sinai.

I might go one step further. Have you ever asked yourself the question: How is it that such an important declaration as the עשרת הדברות is not part of our liturgy? Does it not seem odd that the Ten Commandments are not part of our daily prayers, like the Shema Yisrael?

Indeed the Talmudic sages had a problem with the Ten Commandments. This dilemma is recorded in the tractate ברכות מסכת ברכות (12a) where we read: וקוראים עשרת הדברות, שמע, והיה אם שמוע, ויאמר, ועוד. אמר רב יהודה אמר שמואל אף בגבולות Originally the Cohanim would recite the Ten Commandments just before the “Shema.” This was so, only in the service in the Beit HaMikdash. When the Sages wanted to introduce this passage into the liturgy — outside the precincts of the Temple — that is, wherever Jews lived, they were constrained from doing so — and why? מפני תרעומת המינים — because of the insinuations of the מינים.

Who were the מינים? They were the sectarians (especially the early Christians)

who would try to convince the uneducated Jews that only the Ten Commandments had validity, having been declared at Mount Sinai, but the rest of the legal system of the Torah had no significance. Proof? By reciting the Ten Commandments in the prayers each day, the sectarians claimed, the worshippers were manifesting the only binding legislation of God's word, since this was the only law heard at Sinai. All other laws were not given at Sinai and are therefore not binding. Proof? They are not recited in the daily prayers. And thus, it was ruled by the Sages to omit the Ten Commandments from the Tefillot (prayers) outside the Temple.

The same problem arose in the great academies of Babylonia. רבה בר בר חנה, of the Academy of Sura, wanted to introduce the reading of the Ten Commandments in the prayers, but he was overruled by רב חסדא. In the Academy of Nehardea, the Talmudic sage, אמור tried to insert it into the "Shema" but he was overruled by רב אשי by virtue of the fact that כבר ביטלום מפני תרעומת המינים. It was already taken out of the liturgy some time ago.

The essential reason for keeping the Ten Commandments out of the liturgy was to emphasize the connection of the *entire* corpus of the 613 Mitzvot with the revelation at Sinai, rather than just one segment (Ten Commandments) — important as it may be.

When we think of the laws of the Torah and of the Talmud, too many of us are prone to limit the scope of Judaism to ritual observance. This is not so. Judaism consists of ritual law and ethical ordinances.

When you hold a coin in your hand, you wouldn't rule out either side of the coin as being meaningless. Judaism relates, both in its positive injunctions (מצוות עשה) and negative prohibitions (מצוות לא תעשה) to both categories of behavior: to מצוות בין אדם למקום, to our relationship to God, primarily ritual practices, and מצוות בין אדם לחברו, the commandments pertaining to human relationships.

We always refer to the set of laws in the Bible as תרי"ג מצוות — 613 commandments. Maimonides, the greatest codifier of Jewish law, enumerates these 613 Mitzvot in a special order called Sefer HaMitzvot, derived from the verses of each Sidra of the Pentateuch. They deal with civil, criminal, ethical, and ritual law. Perhaps the majority of the laws are purely related to human interaction.

One can claim that you can arrive at the proper moral conduct by human

reasons. Why bring God in to the picture?

Perhaps there is some truth to this ideology.

But it seems to me, that with God's concern about human behavior, our ethical religious laws take on a greater cogency. Allow me to point out how this is possible. In Chapter 23:4 of Parashat Mishpatim, we read: *כי תפגע שור אויבך או חמורו חורגה, השב חשיבנו לו*. "Should you chance to find your *enemy's* ox — or his donkey going astray, you must take it back to him." The Torah is not talking in global terms. It is quite specific. It is your neighbor, in your own back yard. But he is your enemy. What should you do?

Those of us who live in co-op buildings know a little bit about making enemies — strife among the dwellers — more heat — too much heat — not enough hot water — shut off the hot water during most of the day — and so on. "House committee" meetings are so very lively!

So here is your neighbor — who makes a bloody nuisance of himself at every meeting — and then you see his "Time" magazine or letter from his bank on the floor instead of in his mail box. How will you react? Certainly your rational mind tells you: Pick it up — put it back into the mail box — or bring it to him. But your heart prompts you otherwise. "This neighbor won't even say good morning to me, and I should bestir myself to help him!?"

Or shall we take the following verse: *כי תפגע חמור שונאך רובץ חמה משאו, וחדלת מעוזב לו, עזוב חעוב עמו*. "If you should see your *enemy's* donkey lying helpless under his burden — and you would pass him by!? No! You must surely help him raise it."

Transposing this into our modern circumstances: Should you see your "detestable" neighbor having some trouble with his car, and you know that you can help him — How will you act?

Our rational humanistic mind tells us: Of course, help him — (though he may curse you out later, on any slight pretext). But our heart may prompt us otherwise. "All I have to do is, make myself scarce, he won't even know that I know about his predicament."

It seems to me that the exclamation in our verse — *וחדלת מעוזב עמו* — *And you would pass him by!!* — this would have greater potency in determining the right and noble behavior.

It is to counteract the selfish promptings of the heart, that we are required by a religious imperative to do the noble thing. This becomes even clearer in the Book

of Leviticus. There is one verse in particular which underscores the religious moral stance as we read: 'אני ה' *Do not place a stumbling block before the blind. You shall fear your God; I am the Lord.* (19:14)

This has a wider meaning than just the literal sense. Tripping up an inexperienced person — by giving false advice — in business, in social affairs, in bank investments — or what have you.

Of course, rational humanism might point to the correct moral behavior. But as Hertz puts it in his commentary: "Alas for the prevalence of human callousness and cruelty that render the formulation of such a precept necessary."

Here, Rashi's comment takes on a special import: לפי שהדבר הזה אינו מסור לבריות דעת אם דעו של זה לטובה או לרעה, ויכול להשט ולומר לטובה נחונותי, לפיכך המכיר מחשבותי, *Since such behavior is not given to people to observe and to judge, and a person can easily claim that his intentions were pure, therefore the verse declares: He who knows the innermost thoughts of man, He knows — ויראת מאלקיך. You shall fear your God; 'אני ה', I am the Lord, who will hold you to account for the evil promptings of the heart.*

There are many amongst us who extoll the "universalistic" ordinances pertaining to the relationship between man and man, but demean "particularistic" ones, which pertain to the relation between God and man.

The fact, however, is that the majority of Torah laws contain both elements. Thus, as we have seen before, putting a stumbling block before the blind is not only a heinous sin against fellow man but also a serious sin against God. By the same token the observance of the Sabbath, on the face of it a religious obligation signifying acceptance of God as our Creator and Sovereign, has tremendous social implications. This interrelation of religion and ethics is not so obvious in prayer. To many it means communion between man and God. But this is erroneous: The preferred way in Judaism is praying with a minyan, for we don't only pray for our individual but for our community needs. Furthermore, even individual prayer is designed to impose upon us a sense of humility which, it is hoped, will also find expression in our relation to fellow man.

Judaism offers us clear guidelines to ennoble our lives. ואלה המשפטים אשר חשים לפנייהם *These are the ordinances which you will set before them* — the ritual ones and the ethical ones.

Louis Katzoff

ISAIAH AND HEZEKIAH

Prophet and King

BY HAIM GEVARYAHU

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

From the end of the 8th century to the beginning of the 7th century BCE the Assyrian Empire reached its zenith, ruling all of Babylonia, Mesopotamia, and all the lands roundabout. It now set out to conquer Egypt, as part of the ambitions of Tiglat Pileser III, who reigned from 747–727, to become a “world conqueror”. It is his arrogance to which Isaiah refers

For he hath said: By the strength of my hand, I have done it and by my wisdom, for I am prudent. In that I have removed the bounds of the peoples and have robbed their treasures..

And as one gathereth eggs that are forsaken

Have I gathered all the earth

And there was none that moved the wing

Or that opened the mouth, or chirped.

Isaiah 10:13–15

THE MAJOR PERSONALITIES

Hezekiah (726–697 BCE) was the 14th king in the Davidic dynasty. The biblical narrator views him as one of the great kings of Judah, after the United Kingdom of David and Solomon had split into two kingdoms: the northern, with Ephraim at its head, and the southern, containing in the main the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

He was a religious person, and was determined to concentrate worship in the Sanctuary in Jerusalem, which prompted him to remove the “high places.” Archeologists have found in Arad signs of an effort to remove local cultic

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worship there. He had some poetic talents which can be noted from the style of his message to Isaiah, (see Kings II 19:3-4) from his prayers and the Song of Thanksgiving after he was cured of a serious illness (Isaiah 38).

Hezekiah, a freedom-loving king, rebelled against his status as a vassal, a status which had been accepted by his predecessors, Uzziah and Achaz. To strengthen Jerusalem, he fortified it. It is he who, by a remarkable engineering feat, dug the tunnel that brought the water from the Gichon springs outside the city, to the pool of Shiloah inside the city. This ancient tunnel, almost 2,800 years old, is operative to this day.

Isaiah ben Amoz — This great prophet founded prophecy in Jerusalem. It is his disciples and the disciples of his disciples who gave Jerusalem the title of the City of Prophecy. It was he who had a great vision of the Latter Days — the Aharit ha-yamim — in which all the peoples of the earth will go up to Jerusalem to accept the Torah, and which will usher in a period of peace between all living creatures. The Lord, God of Israel, known to Israel alone, will become the God of all peoples.

Jerusalem is of focal importance in Isaiah's prophecy. When Jerusalem was in a state of turmoil, uncertain whether to submit or to fight, it was Isaiah's vision which encouraged the king and his people to take a firm stand. From the praises of Shimon ben Sira, a Jerusalem sage who lived two or three generations before the Hasmoneans, we learn that the nation gave Isaiah the title of "savior".

These two personalities, the prophet Isaiah and King Hezekiah, a man of action, were the ideal complementary leaders in all the history of prophecy and kingship.

Sennacherib (705-681 BCE), was one of the great kings of Assyria. He continued the tradition of conquest. He destroyed the city of Babylon, and took captive the golden idol of Bel-Maraduk. From his wars against the Land of Israel, the "siege of Lachish", a graphic depiction still exists in the British Museum. Sennacherib appeared before Jerusalem, accompanied by his supreme military leader, Tartan, and by two princes, one of whom, Rab-Shakeh, was later destined to fulfill a major role in the war.

The Book of Kings gives us some insight into the events that brought the two antagonists, Hezekiah and Sennacherib, into focus:

...In the fourth year of King Hezekiah did Sennacherib, King of Assyria, come up against all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them. And

Hezekiah, King of Judah, sent to the King of Assyria to Lachish, saying: I have offended you; return from me, that which thou puttest on me, will I bear.

And the King of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave him all the silver found in the House of the Lord, and in the treasures of the King's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the Temple of the Lord, and from the door-posts which Hezekiah had overlaid, and gave it to the King of Assyria.

II Kings 18:13-16

In this fashion did Hezekiah attempt to atone for the sin of his rebellion. The Assyrians received the tribute, yet for reasons of their own, they suspected Hezekiah of having approached Egypt for the purpose of conniving with her and so decided to make an end to the independent existence of Judea and its kingdom.

THE ASSYRIAN ARMY AT THE GATES OF JERUSALEM

...The king of Assyria sent Tartan, his commander-in-chief, and Rabshakeh and Rab-saris from Lachish to King Hezekiah, with a great army unto Jerusalem... They came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool which is the highway of the fullers' field...

II Kings 18:17

From this account it becomes clear that Sennacherib established headquarters in Lachish, sending his army from there with some of his major officers, who encamped in the Valley of Kidron and the Valley of Hinnom. It seems that the officers approached the walls of Jerusalem by the side of the Pool of Shiloah, south of the city, at a spot near the upper pool where the rainwaters collected. At this particular site the women of Jerusalem were wont to gather to wash their clothes — thus the name: the fullers' field. It is from here that the major leaders of Assyria faced those of Judea.

RAB-SHAKEH — A LESSON IN PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

Rab-shakeh, though not very high up in the hierarchy of Assyria, assumes a central position in further developments by virtue of his being conversant in Hebrew. There are scholars who believe that he served in the Assyrian intelligence, assigned to the "desk" for Judean affairs. There are others who assume that he

was a converted Judean. I myself guess that Rab-shakeh was an officer in the king's personal guard, in which the descendants of exiles from Ephraim served. It is from them that he may have learned to speak Hebrew. At any rate, he had some knowledge about the religious life in Judea. It is this Rab-shakeh who leads the negotiations with the leaders of the besieged city. He opens with a speech that has become a classic in psychological warfare, taught in military academies. He ridicules the usefulness of Egyptian military aid. In order to confuse and to confound the leaders and soldiers standing guard on the walls, Rab-shakeh moves from topic to topic. Now he ridicules the military prowess of the king of Judea:

...Make a wager with my master, the King of Assyria and I will give you two thousand horses if thou be able to on thy part to set riders upon them. How then canst thou turn away the face of one captain, even the least of my master's servants?

II Kings 18:23-24

The Assyrian empire won its many victories due to innovative military tactics. Horsemen, on trained and fighting horses, were skilled in shooting arrows, throwing spears and swordsmanship. The Judean army, on the other hand, was trained to fight on chariots. Certainly in the hilly countryside of Jerusalem they were of limited use. This weakness was understood by Rab-shakeh and thus his sarcasm: Hezekiah is not capable of furnishing horsemen.

Rab-shakeh speaks "Jewish" (Yehudit) all the time, namely Hebrew, the spoken language in Judea. The embarrassed Judean princes beg of him that he address them in Aramaic, the lingua franca of that time, so that only the princes would understand him.

Then said Eliakim... and Shebna and Joah unto Rab-shakeh: Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Aramean language, for we understand it; and speak not to us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.

II Kings 18:26

To which Rab-shakeh responds, crudely, in the gutter language of soldiers:

Hath my master sent me to thy master and to thee to speak these words?

Hath he not sent me to the men that sit on the wall

To eat their own dung, and to drink their own water with you?

II Kings 18:27

Now that he has touched the sensitive nerve of his opponents, he raises his

voice, addressing the soldiers in the "Jews" language, in order to undermine their loyalty to Hezekiah:

*Hear, ye, the word of the great king of Assyria:
...let not Hezekiah beguile you
for he will not be able to deliver you out of his hand.
Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord, saying:
the Lord will surely deliver us.
and this city shall not be given into the hands of the king of Assyria.*

II Kings 18:27-30

Now Rab-shakeh reaches the height of his message. He proposes submission and "sweet" exile:

Thus saith the king: Make your peace with me, and come out to me. And eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern...

Until I... take you away to a land like your own land a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive trees and honey that you may live and not die.

And do not hearken to Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying: the Lord will deliver us.

II Kings 18:31-32

Rab-shakeh entices the people to capitulate, and describes exile in rosy colors. To be sure, the bitter fate awaiting Hezekiah is not mentioned, nor the fact that such a step would signify the irreversible end of the Judean State. The alternative is to fight and die, and in the case of an Assyrian victory, the women and children would be divided up among the rioting soldiers as concubines or slaves, or to be sold into slavery.

The Assyrians knew that the Judeans had a abiding faith in the Lord, therefore they attempted to weaken this faith by claiming that the gods of other conquered peoples had been helpless:

Hath any of the gods of the nations ever delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

Where are the gods of Hamath, of Arpad... of Hena and Ivvah?

Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?

II Kings 18:33-34

THE REACTION

The reaction to this powerful harangue was shock. The princes, soldiers and the people on the wall who had listened, kept silent on orders of King Hezekiah. Let us read what Scripture has to tell us about what transpired:

Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiash... to Hezekiah with rent clothes and told him the words of Rab-shakeh.

And... when Hezekiah heard it — he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.

And he sent... unto Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz...

II Kings 18:37; 19:1-2

In this hour of crisis they turn to Isaiah. It is clear to them that only God can save the city and Judah.

The King's palace adjoined the Temple. Isaiah was in his house, close to the pool of Shiloah. He was thus able to see the camp of the Assyrian army, in the Valley of Kidron, and opposite his home, in the Valley of Hinnom. It is to the steps that lead from his palace down to the prophet's house, that Hezekiah sends his delegation. These steps were called afterwards the "Steps of the City of David".

By the message he sent to Isaiah, Hezekiah emerges not only as a great king, but one poetically gifted. This is the way he expressed the tragic situation of Jerusalem:

This is a day of trouble and of rebuke...

For the children are come to the birth

And there is no strength to bring forth

II Kings 19:3-4

Hezekiah thus compares the situation of Jerusalem to a woman who is overcome by birthpangs but has no strength left to give birth. He gives human expression to a crisis, when one is overwhelmed "by a day of trouble and of rebuke", like the woman about to give birth but unable to do so.

The king furthermore senses that this confrontation is not only between two unequal foes, but also between a living God, the God of Israel, the Lord of the Universe, and between the idols of Assyria. And so his message to Isaiah continues:

It may be, the Lord thy God will hear all the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria has sent to taunt the living God...

Wherefore make prayer for the remnant that is left...

II Kings 19:4

Isaiah, on his part, is not rattled. He exudes power and encouragement, coming from his unshakeable faith. And Isaiah sends back this message:

Thus shall ye say to your master (Hezekiah):

Thus saith the Lord: Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me.

Behold, I will put a spirit in him

And he shall hear a rumor, and shall return to his own land.

And I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land!

II Kings 19:6

In other words, because Sennacherib has blasphemed the Lord, he will be duly punished.

JERUSALEM AND NINEVEH

By divine miracle, the vision of Isaiah became a fact. Sennacherib and his army did not enter Jerusalem. The Assyrians had succeeded in conquering every capital of the ancient world, except Jerusalem. Thus the words of the prophet were fulfilled: "He will not enter this city."

A truly historic event occurred. The king, princes and elders, and all warriors listened to the prophet Isaiah. It is a unique phenomenon, never repeated in history, wherein prophetic influence reached its pinnacle.

What did occur? A plague broke out among the Assyrian army. It is true, plagues often do strike military camps. The miracle was the precise timing of its occurrence. What is more, Sennacherib, not in keeping with his forceful nature delayed, unaccountably, a direct attack on Jerusalem. Realistically speaking, Sennacherib whose real target was Egypt, did not wish to leave the formidable fortress of Jerusalem in the hands of Hezekiah who was not his vassal. Instead he attempted to demoralize the defenders through verbal and written messages. In the meantime, the Assyrians laid siege to the city. According to an account of the chronicler Herodotus, mice, who had multiplied on the plentiful food of the Assyrian soldiers, caused that plague. Yet, again, it is the confluence of all these natural phenomena at a critical juncture, which makes for a miracle.

When we read today the precise developments of this unequal struggle between King Hezekiah, a confirmed monotheist, and between the imperial power of

Assyria, confirmed idol worshippers, we can sense the strength and eternal existence of the Jewish people. It is this unswerving faith in the Lord, *God alone of all the kingdoms of the earth*, which has established the people of Israel as an eternal people.

Only a great poet and thinker is capable of portraying the drama of a people, small in numbers whose land had been conquered, and now was enclosed within the tiny territory of the city of Jerusalem, probably smaller in size than the present-day Old City. This small people, and its king, holding tenaciously to the walls of the city and to its Sanctuary was the only one in the world believing in the Oneness of God. And this tiny territory was surrounded by a most powerful enemy. The king and the people feared for their fate. Yet, they knew that the God of Israel is the God of Truth, while the overwhelming majority of the rest of the world were pagans.

From an historical point of view it can be asserted that the belief in Jerusalem the Eternal City stemmed from the prophetic message delivered by Isaiah to King Hezekiah amidst the turmoil of a siege by the Assyrian hordes under Sennacherib in the year 701 BCE.

Nineveh, the capital of the mighty Assyrian Empire, was destroyed in the year 612 BCE by a joint assault of Medes and Babylonians. Both, the people of Assyria and Nineveh entered the torchlight of history, losing their identities in the course of a short period, never to rise again.

(המשך מעמ' 73)

עמדו על רגליהם ואמרו שירה. ר' יהודה אומר באמת משל היה. ר' אליעזר בנו של ר' יוסי הגלילי אומר מתים שהחיה יחזקאל עלו לארץ ישראל ונשאו נשים והולידו בנים ובנות. ר' יהודה בן בתירא עמד על רגליו ואמר אני מבני בניהם והללו תפילין שהניח לי אבי אבא מהם. נבצר מאתנו מלהכריע במחלוקת זו. הדברים הם סוד מסודות היצירה. לפנינו הדים על ויכוח נצחי בקרב קהל המייחלים לגאולה. יש שרואים את הגאולה ראיה מוחשית ויש שרואים בה משל אות ומופת רוחני. חברנו המנוח ר' אריה לייב ז"ל, איש רוח ראה הרמוניה בין חזון גדול למציאות והאמין שהמבחן המכריע הוא מבחן הרוח. תהא נשמתו צרורה בצרור חי הנצח.

ABRAHAM PLANTS THE FLAG

BY ERNEST NEUFELD

The Bible provides many examples of Abraham's astuteness, his knowledge of men, but nowhere does he exhibit these qualities more brilliantly than in the matter of the purchase of the cave of Machpelah. There he stars as a statesman with a master "hondler's" skill.

We have indications in Genesis of Abraham's resourcefulness, his readiness for direct action, his wisdom (the pursuit of the four kings to free Lot, suggesting to Lot that they go their separate ways), along with his shrewdness and readiness to resort to ruses in the face of overwhelming danger (presenting his wife as his sister in Egypt and to Abimelech, King of Gerar).

So we should not be surprised that Abraham pulls off the deal for the cave in artful fashion. We have prior notice of the patriarch's perspicacity. We are told in Gen. 18:16-33 how Abraham interceded with God on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah. The manner in which the dialogue proceeds is revealing. Abraham does not come directly to the point. He does not say, as he does subsequently, *Suppose there are in the city fifty who are innocent, would you still level the place* (Ib. 24). Instead he asks: *Will you stamp out the innocent with the guilty?*, a question to which he knows the All Merciful will give but one answer. Abraham then successively scales down the minimum number of innocent required to spare the cities.

A man who can deal with God this way might well be expected to conduct himself with equal perspicacity, and if need be, with subtlety in hondling with mere men.

Confronted with the need for a burial site for Sarah, Abraham does not directly approach the owner of the place he has in mind. Instead, he appeals to the inhabitants of that portion of Canaan through their town council — "the children of Heth." They offer him any of their sepulchres. But no' he requests that they intercede on his behalf with Ephron, whose cave at Machpelah he has had his eye

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on all along — for he was well prepared for his proposal of purchase (Gen. 23:6-7).

Clearly, Abraham knew the property he wanted to buy. His prompt specification of Ephron's cave as the site he desired, so indicates. But aside from the inference we may draw from Abraham's ready reply, the Bible seems to stress the patriarch's ties to the area in which Ephron's field and cave were situated. Ephron's holdings are described as being "near Mamre" (Gen. 23:11). We know that after Lot's capture by the four kings, a fugitive brought the news to Abraham "who was dwelling at the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite" (Gen. 14:13). Abraham's long association with this section of the Promised Land is further evidenced in Gen. 35:27, where we learn that upon his return from Laban's service, "Jacob came to his father at Mamre, at Kiriath-arba — now Hebron — where Abraham and Isaac had sojourned."

As noted above, Abraham dwelt at the terebinths of Mamre, evidently in a grove of native trees, which provided shade and probably firewood. The trees on Ephron's property — of which we learn only at the close of the sale transaction (Gen. 23:17-18), very likely were an additional attraction to Abraham. The passages cited tell us that the sale comprised *the field and cave which was thereon, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the border thereof round about...*

We do not know the species of trees in Ephron's field, whether terebinths, fruit or olive trees. In any case, they added to the value of the land. Those along the edges may have served as wind breaks beside clearly defining the borders. The whole layout — cave, field, grove, tree-lined borders, combined to identify the property as unique, leaving no doubt in anyone's mind as the piece of land and its extent being transferred to the new owner.

As a legal matter, there can be no question but that everything permanently attached, affixed to the land — growing or man-made — would devolve upon its sale to the purchaser. So the cave, which was at the end or edge of the field (Gen. 23:8) and to which access may have been possible only through the field, was the peg on which Abraham swung the acquisition of the whole.

Abraham's opening move is both bold and subtle. He speaks only of the cave, and he makes the courtly, princely offer expected from one in his position. He offers a blank check to the seller. He offers to pay "the full price," for the cave.

Ephron in turn makes the courtly gesture of offering to give the cave *and* the

adjoining field as a gift. Abraham counters that he will pay the full price for the field also, whereupon Ephron names a full price indeed — a very high price of four hundred shekels of silver.¹ It is not the price that Abraham is interested in dickering for. He agrees on it immediately and weighs out the silver according to the current standard of value of the shekel (Gen. 23:3-20).

The transaction has the familiar ring of bargaining in an oriental bazaar, except, remarkably, about the price. It is a lengthy negotiation, repetitious in language, phrases repeated again and again by Abraham, Ephron and the narrator.

Why did Abraham appeal first to "the children of Heth" for a burial place instead of going at once to Ephron? Why an oral transfer of ownership when he might have gotten a written deed?

The reasons may be that Abraham saw in the need for a burial ground a long-sought opportunity to establish a foothold in the Promised Land. He wanted to establish rights as full owner, hence the rights of a citizen, for himself, his dead, and his descendants, for up till now he was, as he described himself to the town council, but "a stranger and sojourner" in Canaan (Gen. 23:4).

A shrewd trader, Abraham speaks only of buying the cave at first, but we may be sure he wanted the field as well. We recall his unhesitant offer to pay for the field the full price, too, when Ephron tenders its sale. Ownership of the cave, Abraham realized, would not give him incontestably permanent resident status — not the status of full ownership of real property required to qualify as a citizen of the land. In modern legal terms, ownership of the cave limited to burial purposes, could be considered an easement, which could be extinguished, whereas ownership of the field also, would confer on the buyer all the rights pertaining to such ownership, including the right of inheritance by his children and descendants.

Abraham made sure that the sale was in the presence of "all the children of Heth" so as to have as many witnesses as possible to assure that his legal title to the property would be unassailable. He does not want a gift, for a gift to an alien easily can be dismissed and revoked. He wants to pay the full price, however high it may be — the higher the better — because its exorbitance in itself will be

¹ *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, p. 157, note to v. 15.

noteworthy, remembered by the witnesses. Furthermore, none could say that the alien took advantage in the transaction.

The repetition by Abraham, Ephron and the narrator of certain phrases, notably *in the presence, in the hearing* of the children of Heth, is no mere verbosity in the Torah. It is necessary to effect the formal transfer of title to the land. When Abraham says to Ephron: *for the full price give it to me in the midst of you* (Gen. 23:9), and *Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the hearing of the children of Heth...saying, the field I give it to thee, in the presence of the sons of my people* (v. 10-11), the text refers again to the presence of all the people in connection with payment of the price (v. 16). The Torah does not indulge in superfluities. It reflects accurately the formalities attending the legal transfer of land in the Near East of ancient times.

Ephron's cupidity, which Abraham practically invited, plays into the patriarch's hands. He thinks it clever belittling the huge sum he asks. We can picture his self-satisfied smile as he makes light of the amount, declaring, *four hundred shekels of silver — what is that between you and me?* (Gen. 23:15). Abraham does not haggle. He jumps at the chance to close the deal.

While Israel's right to the land of Canaan was established spiritually in the promise of God to Abraham, Abraham understood that to crystallize that right in the eyes of men, he needed clear title to a piece of that land. Seizing the moment of his sorrow and need for a burial place as a means as well to advance his aim, he is able to play on the disarmed sympathies of the inhabitants even though he is an alien in their midst.

Referring to the story of the purchase of the cave and field at Machpelah, Prof. Nahum M. Sarna states: "Perhaps... the whole episode was regarded as being of historic importance in that the patriarch acquired possession of land in Canaan, the first in Israel's history."²

Thus did Abraham establish his hand by collaborating with God to possess the Promised Land. He did not leave it to God alone to fulfill His promise. A "foothold" legally established, would be sufficient to plant the flag around which national sovereignty could be created by succeeding generations.

2 *Understanding Genesis*, Shoken Paperback ed. 1970, p. 170.

ELIHU: THE PROVENANCE AND CONTENT OF HIS SPEECHES

BY DAVID WOLFERS

We may accept as a succinct statement of a large majority consensus Vawter's judgement of the place of the Elihu speeches, Chapters 32-37, in the Book of Job¹: "They were composed not by someone who understood Job but by one to whom the book was a puzzlement and perhaps a scandal, who thought that the conventional wisdom expressed by Job's friends had not been fairly and evenly dealt with, and who, therefore, in his unimaginative way concluded that the balance could be redressed by the addition of another half dozen long-winded chapters of sermonizing."

Here I propose to present anew a case for the minority view — that the Elihu speeches are an integral part of the original Book of Job, composed by the author of the rest of the work at the same time and to fulfill an essential function.

It is true that the book itself interposes difficulties in the way of acceptance of Elihu as "original". His appearance suspends the action in a way which is irritating, at least for modern readers, and no references are made to him either before or after the six chapters which comprise his contribution to the debate and the introduction to his words. Certain other difficulties which have on occasions been advanced may safely be disregarded, particularly linguistic evidence based on the frequency of "Aramaisms" in his speech (such evidence requires to be weighed by mathematical statistical analysis, and when this is done, it is found to be wanting), and the evidence of the quality of the poetry of the speeches, a matter of subjective judgement in a field in which biblical scholars *per se* are neither by training nor natural aptitude well qualified.

¹ B. Vawter, *Job & Jonah*, Fowler Wright Ltd., Leominster, 1983, p. 47.

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

Elihu appears as a spectator to the debate who, at its conclusion is dissatisfied with the way in which the three friends have handled Job's dilemma. He is on their side as far as theory is concerned, but is disappointed, indeed angry, at the content and manner of their approaches to Job and their failure to convince him.

Elihu begins his speech with what is certainly a long-winded and prosy introduction, essentially an apology for his youth and an explanation of why he nonetheless felt it imperative to make a contribution. Parts of this introduction display a crude pit-humor similar to Shakespeare's, and it is perhaps noteworthy that to the modern reader the Shakespearian scenes which cater to the pit also seem long-winded, prosy, and tedious. Apart from the apologium and the wit, the only substance in the first chapter is the declared intention to try his hand at persuading Job (of God's righteousness) and, taking note of the hostile adversary relationship which the comforters have generated, he determines on a calm, rational and sympathetic approach (32:14).

In Chapter 33 he invites Job to engage in a debate with him, pointing out his and Job's equal status in the eyes of God as encouragement to Job to speak uninhibitedly. All this delicate jockeying for a point of entry into serious discussion has contributed to Elihu's reputation for long-windedness, but it would be unfair not to point out also that a vivid character-portrait is at the same time being built up. Now Elihu turns to the business at hand and, quoting some of Job's words of self-justification and condemnation of God, assures him that this will not do — God is greater than man. The argument misses the point altogether and is clearly on a level too naive to have any effect. But it is only a trial run. Elihu proceeds to expound a theory of the purpose of dreams and of physical suffering — that they are God's means of warning men that they are standing into hazard because of their works and their pride.

We are, I suggest, at liberty to interpret dreams and suffering here also on a national level as prophecy and defeat, both in the light of what is to follow in Chapter 34 and because the specifics of the sufferings which Elihu justifies in this way are not the skin eruption with which Job has been afflicted according to a literal reading of the Prologue², but precisely those symptoms which we find commonly described in Psalms usually held to record national danger and disaster — Psalms 6, 31, 32, and 38.

2 For the allegorical significance of Job's skin affliction, see D. Wolfers, "Is Job after all Jewish?" *Dor le Dor*, Fall 1985, p. 39ff.

After expatiating on dreams and physiological and physis disorders at some length, Elihu now in 32:33 introduces a novel and very self-revealing suggestion: *אם יש עליו מלאך, מליץ אחד מני אלף, להגיד לאדם ישרו* — “If there be one to speak for him, An intercessor, the one in a thousand, To declare to Man His rightness,” and then, “Then He will be gracious to him and say, “Save him from going down to the Pit; I have found a ransom!”

The meaning of the Hebrew verse has been disputed, but considering Elihu's manifest intention throughout his address of convincing Job of God's righteousness, it is fairly certain that the *מליץ מלאך* he has in mind is himself and that he sees himself performing the function there described — telling man of God's righteousness, and surely not the quite supererogatory (see 34:21–23) reverse (as in JPS, NJPSV, Gordis, Pope, NEB, etc.). Elihu thus has the immodesty (surely the motive for the modesty of his introductory disclaimers) to see himself as an intercessory prophet, a man in a thousand, for Job, the man of the hour. It is, I suggest, because of this pretension that neither during nor after his speeches will Job or God give him the time of day. Just how, in the end, Elihu does succeed in performing the intercessory function of which he daydreams here, will become clear.

From the end of Chapter 33, Elihu gains confidence and stature, and his speech gradually develops majesty and authority until there is nothing left in common between the hesitant yet arrogant introductory lines and the splendid and poetic climax. Elihu throughout, however, pursues his one stated objective — to demonstrate God's righteousness to Job.

Chapter 34 opens with the proposition that it is unthinkable that God should commit wickedness or pervert justice — if He were so inclined He could bring the whole of mankind to an end with one indrawn breath. He treats high and low, rich and poor, impartially, and He “requites man according to his works”. From v. 20 to v. 30 Elihu appears to become more specific and, as with so many passages in the Book of Job, we are faced with the alternatives of believing that there is a background (a foreground rather) of national disaster to Job's plight or of doing violence to the text.

In v. 20 it is the *עם*, the nation, the people collectively, that “is convulsed and passes away”, but the crux arrives in vv. 25–30:

לכן יכיר מעבדיהם: והפך לילה וידכאו
תחת רשעים ספקם: במקום ראים

אשר על-כן סרו מאחריו: וכל-דרכיו לא השכילו
 להביא עליו צעקת-דל: וצעקת עניים ישמע
 והוא ישקט ומי ירשע? ויסתר פנים ומי ישורנו?
 ועל-גוי ועל-אדם יחד
 ממלך אדם חנף: ממקשי עם

To whatever extent one has been convinced that vv. 20–24 are intended to describe the habitual practice of God, and not a specific event, it is difficult to deny that verses 26 and 27 are written in the *tempus historicum*, the plain perfect tense denoting finite historic events. The most important verse for understanding and pinning down the drift of this passage is v. 26: “He chastised them under the wicked”. There is no need to read תחת as anything but “under”. The sense is clear, God employed the wicked to punish them — the old scourge of God theory once more. The “wicked” here, as so often in the Bible and *always* in the Book of Job are the fierce idolatrous enemies of Israel. “He chastised them under the wicked Instead of the prophets”. ראים without object, explicit or understood is never anything else but “prophets”, so we can have no truck with the strange renditions of most translations — “In the open sight of others” — JPS; “In the sight of all men” — Gordis; “where people can see” — NJPSV.

Because this people (certainly the Israelites) had not heeded the warnings of the prophets, He brought down “the wicked” upon them, and crushed them “under” their heel ... “Because they turned aside from following Him And did not attend to any of His ways, Causing the cry of the poor to come to Him — And He *does* hear the wail of the afflicted”.

Again in vv. 29 & 30 we encounter verses which have been poorly understood. Elihu is still, as it were, *apologising* for God —

*If He held His peace, who would condemn?
 Or if He averted His gaze, who would observe it?
 —And this applies to nation and to man alike—
 From * the rule of a godless man,
 From * the seduction of His people.*

Here he is almost pleading with Job to understand that God had no choice but

* The *ms* of v. 30 are prepositions to follow יסתר פנים — “averted His gaze”. The third line is entirely parenthetical.

to visit the nation with destruction — it is not even as though there were any sign or prospect of reform or repentance by this “ruler”: —

For has he said to God, ‘I have been arrogant;

I do not wish to act badly.

What I do not understand, You teach me;

If I have done wrong, I shall do it more.’?

In Chapter 35, Elihu’s defence of God takes another novel turn. Picking up and quoting Job’s challenge to God (7:20) “Suppose I have sinned. What have I done to You, The gaoler of man?”, he asks “If you are righteous, what do you *give* Him? And what does He gain at your hand?”, and then in 35:8 justly remarks: “Your wickedness relates to men like yourself And your righteousness to human beings”. This is unanswerable, and serves Job right for, as it were, seeking immunity “supposing” he had sinned, on the grounds that his sin does no harm to God. It does not, however, in any way bear upon the question of the justice of God.

The remainder of the chapter seems to be a riposte to Chapter 24 where Elihu explains God’s indifference to the cry for help of the oppressed multitude as being due to their failure to call specifically upon God — “because of the pride of evil men”, and a reproach for sundry extravagant complaints of Job’s — “But Job opens his mouth in vain And reels off words without thinking.”

Chapter 36 tries another new tack — there is in fact no lack of originality in this sequence of speeches. “There are yet things to be said for God. I shall bring my evidence from times of old (למרחוק) While I ascribe righteousness to my Maker.” The word למרחוק implies distance in space or time, but only the latter can possibly apply here. We must therefore expect to find old stories depicting God’s justice in what follows this announcement, and indeed we do.

The first incident described is recognizably the imprisonment of Joseph, the baker, and the butler in Egypt and their subsequent separate fates which depended scrupulously upon their respective deserts (vv. 5–15). From v. 16 - v. 21 Elihu draws the moral, enjoining Job against making the same mistake as the baker,

³ Presumably this refers to the lowing of cattle which Elihu affects to regard as acknowledgement of the God to whom they are to be sacrificed. I do not think this verse should be considered as any sort of confirmation of the theories which see the origins of the Hebrew religion in some form of bull-cult.

allowing anger to deflect him from penance. The passage is notoriously difficult, containing a wonderful periphrase for the Underworld — רחב לא-מוצק תחתיה — “The broad place whose depths are without form”, a grammatically untranslatable word-play with the verb הסיח and a variable preposition which changes its meaning, and the most daring use of quotation imaginable in the phrase כִּי-חמה taken from 19:29. I think it fair to say that no poet represented in the Bible other than the author of the Book of Job, unless perhaps the first Isaiah, was capable of the verbal prestidigitation found in this passage.

There follow some general remarks in praise of God's power, works, justice and capacity as a teacher, and then in v. 27 the creation itself is recalled with the first watering of the earth. There should be no doubt as to the specificity of this reference which employs the word, otherwise unique to Gen. 2:6, אֶד, in the form אֶדוּ — “His mist”.

Immediately following this comes a powerful description of the great flood, again resurrecting the true flavor of Genesis with a spectacular image of the “upper sea” (Gen. 1:7 and 8:2) to follow the rainbow in v. 30: “Then He displayed His light across it, And stopped the sluices of the sea”.

“By these means”, continues Elihu, reverting to prosy didacticism, “He executes judgement on peoples And provides food for the multitude.” “He swathed His hands in lightning, And commanded it to be His agent” leads to the gently reproachful conclusion to this trip backward in time — “His friend would tell of Him, As do even the cattle when offered on the altar!”³

It is in his final chapter, 37, that the integration of Elihu into the “plot” of the Book of Job is most apparent. The chapter begins with four verses in which Elihu responds to the sound of distant thunder — the precursor of the whirlwind from which God will speak to Job in Chapter 38. Elihu then takes advantage of this fortuitous phenomenon to expatiate on the power and versatility of God as attested by rain, snow, ice, thunder and lightning. Then in vv. 14–18 there is a direct appeal to Job to “stand still and consider the wonders of God” as manifest in the now all-enveloping turmoil of thunder and lightning. At this point obscurity blankets the poetry as well, and without a geographical locus for Job⁴, we cannot make sense of vv. 16–18:

4 See D. Wolfers, *op. cit.*, where it is argued that the Land of Uz was in the northern Negev of Israel.

law⁵ no defendant can be brought to trial on the complaint or evidence of one supplicant alone. Elihu therefore performs a vital technical function in bringing about the denouement of the book, the confrontation between the real protagonists of the drama. He also defines the formal relationship between them in that confrontation. Job appears as accuser and God as defendant — though He turns the tables in a single sentence!

Shall it be explained (told, related) to him if I speak out? When men say he is being destroyed?

This version respects the correct understanding of the sequence ה...אם...כי, as a question with two conditional clauses, the second more specific than the first. Again the hubristic dream that he will be recognized as a prophet.

Verse 21, beginning with the word ועתה, 'and now' or "and then", continues the "quotation" of what men are saying in the same way as the same word served this same function in 35:15.

And now, that they cannot see "the Light".

"It was once bright in the skies,

Till a wind swept by and purified them"

In the first line, "the Light" is God or a manifestation of Him. The conjunction of בהיר (translated here as "bright") and [ת]טהר[ם], "to purify" is strongly suggestive, for the only other Biblical use of the root בחר is in the word בהרת, a skin blemish which may be טהר (clean) or טמא (unclean) (Lev. 14:57). Thus the verse could be an even more extreme expression of revulsion against God (not Elihu's, of course, but that of the witnesses to Job's downfall), suggesting that His presence in the heavens is now being regarded as a blemish. The wind that purified them is the conquering army (presumably Assyrian) which defeated the Israelite nations.

The next verse follows up on this logically with a neat inverted idiom in the second stitch which evokes 12:6⁶, and gold, the product of a purification process

5 Deut. 19:15: "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth; at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall a matter be established."

6 In 12:6, Job is quoting the derision to which he is being subjected by erstwhile true believers — God's "friends". He claims that they say of the righteous man that

"His dwellings are safe— for robbers,

And his fortresses — for those who provoke God,

For whomsoever can subdue God to his hand."

(Mal 3:3) in the first:

*From the North (the path of invasion) emerges the gold —
A majesty more awe-ful than God.*

(Alternately: "From Zaphon the gold (the home of pagan gods) there comes A majesty more awe-ful than God's")

Then the final words of grief and condemnation —

*"The Almighty — we cannot find Him — mighty in power
And justice and great righteousness, Who does not oppress."*

"That is why men have feared Him

He perceives none of the wise in heart."

To be wise of heart is the equivalent of fearing God (28:28).

So in the end Elihu becomes spokesman for Job to God, begging him to explain, as much for his own sake as for Job's one suspects, the theologically unaccountable destruction of His own most faithful servant.

If the translations and interpretations in the above are correct, even approximately, then I would suggest there remains no real reason for suspecting the Elihu chapters of being anything other than an original part of the Book of Job.

7 This verse is very difficult, and adapted to several different, including some contradictory, interpretations. With a slight change of vocalization it transmutes into the extraordinary: "The 'Almighty' is no more powerful than His flock, And does not respond to justice and great righteousness." which perhaps fits the context better than any other version.



TRIVIA — *Continued from p. 121*

and different kind of translation. Aquila was a member of a wealthy and influential family. He converted, first to Christianity, then to Judaism. He became an adherent of Rabbi Akiba, who believed that every word and letter of the Hebrew text has a special meaning, and he wrote a literal word-for-word Aramaic translation, following only traditional, rabbinic interpretation.

ON DARWIN'S THEORY OF EVOLUTION

BY NATHAN AVIEZER

Editorial Comment

We think it is important for readers of Dor le Dor, and indeed for every serious student of T'nach to be aware of the important recent scientific developments that are presented in this article. Even though the T'nach is not mentioned explicitly, the implications of the scientific facts for the Book of Genesis are quite obvious. Professor Aviezer has assured us that the scientific evidence presented is not disputed by professional biologists whom he has consulted.

A comment on the recent Dor-le-Dor symposium on Bible and Science characterizes Darwin's theory of evolution in the following terms: "The evidence for biological evolution is simply overwhelming".¹ This quote is an example of the widespread misconception that the theory of evolution has been conclusively proved. In fact, the current scientific evidence totally contradicts Darwin's theory of evolution.

Before discussing the scientific evidence, one must carefully distinguish between the *fact* that many species have become extinct and many new species have appeared and the *theory* proposed to explain this change in species. The fact that species change was known from the fossil record long before Darwin's famous book *On The Origin of Species* appeared in 1859. Darwin's book introduced the *theory* that species gradually evolve from one to another through such agencies as the survival of the fittest, the struggle for existence, natural selection and adaptation. The key point of Darwin's theory of evolution is that these agencies work in small cumulative steps through vast periods of time to make primitive species evolve into more complex species. However, if his theory is correct, then all the intermediate forms between one species and another must

1 M.S. Goldstein, Fall 1986, *Dor-le-Dor*, Vol. XV, p. 62.

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also appear in the fossil record. The fact is that these predicted intermediate forms have not been found.

Darwin was well aware of this problem to which he devoted an entire chapter of his book (Chapter X), writing "Why then is not every geological formation full of such intermediate links?this, perhaps, is the most obvious and serious objection which can be urged against the theory."² His answer was: "The explanation lies, as I believe, in the extreme imperfection of the geological record."³

Darwin's answer may have been plausible in 1859, but surely not in 1987. The geological record of fossils has been vastly improved during the last century and it has become abundantly clear that the predicted intermediate forms between species do not exist. The decisive importance of this scientific fact for Darwin's theory was clearly stated by Darwin himself: "He who rejects this view of the imperfection of the geological record, will rightly reject the whole theory."⁴

A second serious difficulty with Darwin's theory of evolution is that the "small cumulative steps" that are the backbone of Darwin's theory never occur. The fossil record shows that species appear suddenly, disappear just as suddenly and hardly evolve at all. The scientific evidence has been clearly summed up by Professor Steven M. Stanley of Johns Hopkins University, one of the world's leading paleontologists in his recent book *The New Evolutionary Timetable*: "The fossil record reveals that species typically survive for a hundred thousand generations, or even a million or more, without evolving very much..... After their origin, most species undergo little evolution before becoming extinct."⁵

The sudden, non-evolutionary, indeed catastrophic disappearance of many tens of thousands of species at the same time has become an accepted fact to every professional biologist. The prestigious *Scientific American* has summarized the evidence in two recent articles, entitled "Mass Extinctions in the Late Mesozoic"⁶ and "Mass Extinctions in the Ocean".⁷ Indeed, all the world's dinosaurs, together with most other existing species, disappeared so suddenly that Professor Luis W.

2 C. Darwin, 1859, *On The Origin of Species* (Mentor Edition, New York), p. 287.

3 *ibid.*, p. 288.

4 *ibid.*, p. 336.

5 S.M. Stanley, 1981, *The New Evolutionary Timetable* (Basic Books, Inc., New York), p. xv.

6 D.A. Russell, January 1982, *Scientific American*, Vol. 246, pp. 48-55.

7 S.M. Stanley, June 1984, *Scientific American*, Vol. 250, pp. 46-54.

Alvarez, Nobel laureate from the University of California, and his colleagues have suggested that a giant meteor from outer space collided with the earth to cause this worldwide catastrophe. It should be clear that the idea that most extinct species were killed off by meteors contradicts Darwin's theory of evolution.

Recent research has revealed that no fewer than *nine* such mass extinctions have occurred.⁷ *Physics Today*, bulletin of the respected American Institute of Physics, discusses this recent scientific evidence in an article entitled "Astronomical Causes of Biological Extinctions".⁸ The article concludes by pointing out that "The idea of astronomically caused catastrophes....is a tremendously important one to evolutionary biologists." In other words, if species become extinct primarily because of extraterrestrial causes, then Darwin's theory of evolution is irrelevant.

Darwin himself would have undoubtedly agreed with the above assessment. He emphasized that according to his theory, "The extinction of old forms is the almost inevitable consequence of the production of new forms."⁹ And if this proves not to be the case, as the well-documented mass extinctions have now established, Darwin concludes that it would be "a *fatal* objection to the belief in the transmutation of species.... the fact would be *fatal* to the theory of evolution through natural selection" (emphasis added).¹⁰

It is worth elaborating on this important point. A central feature of Darwin's theory is that certain species die out while others survive because the surviving individuals are on the average more successful ('survival of the fittest') in coping with the local environment than those who perish ('natural selection'). Moreover, Darwin emphasized that the mechanism he proposed to explain evolution is a *gradual* one, working in "small cumulative steps" over very long periods of time, typically *millions of years*. The opposite point of view is embodied in the above-mentioned 'impact theory' of Professor Alvarez, according to which the mechanism for the mass extinctions of species is due to extraterrestrial causes (the impact of meteors or comets colliding with the earth). Not only is this destructive process *unconnected* with the local environment (*no* natural selection,

8 H.L. Shipman, January 1985, *Physics Today*, Vol. 38, pp. S10-11.

9 C. Darwin, *loc. cit.*, p. 336.

10 *ibid.*, p. 305.

no survival of the fittest), but the times during which the mass extinctions occur are exceedingly *short*, on the scale of only a few years.

The evidence in favor of the impact theory of Alvarez is accumulating rapidly. The anomalously large (100-fold) concentrations of iridium in sediments at the Cretaceous-Tertiary boundary, the recent osmium data and the mineralogy of the quartz grains all provide important scientific evidence in support of the impact theory.^{11,12}

The proposal of Darwin that species gradually evolve into each other is being attacked on all fronts. Professor Stephen J. Gould of Harvard University and his colleagues have become so convinced by the fossil evidence against gradualism that they introduced the concept of 'punctuated equilibria' to describe the fossil record. The sudden appearance of new species, their existence for very long periods of time without undergoing any significant evolutionary changes and their sudden disappearance have become accepted facts to a growing number of scientists.¹³

In view of all this scientific evidence, it is difficult to understand the biologists' determined defense of Darwin's theory of evolution, often by attributing to Darwin modern ideas that are the direct opposite of what he wrote. Ironically, among the ardent 'Darwinists', one finds the very scientists who have contributed the most to establishing the evidence that undermines the theory of the gradual evolutions of species.

Finally, it is in place to comment briefly on the 'evolution of Man'. Here, too, the scientific evidence is totally against Darwin's theory of evolution. Modern Man (*Homo sapiens sapiens*) appeared suddenly about 40,000 years ago and has "persisted to the present with no apparent change".¹⁴ (Incidentally, the two oldest known skeletons were both found in Israel.) Thus, Modern Man has undergone no evolutionary change. The species most closely related to Modern Man is Neanderthal Man who disappeared suddenly shortly *before* the appearance of Modern Man. Are there any signs of evolutionary change in Neanderthal Man? Professor Stanley points out that "*Homo neanderthalensis* existed for perhaps 65,000 years with no visible change."¹⁴ Finally, is there any

11 W. Alvarez et al., March 1984, *Science*, Vol. 223, pp. 1135-40.

12 L.W. Alvarez, July 1987, *Physics Today*, Vol. 40. pp. 24-33.

13 N. Eldredge, 1985, *Time Frames* (Simon & Shuster, New York).

14 S.M. Stanley, *loc. cit.*, p. 153.

connection between Modern Man and Neanderthal Man? Stanley emphasizes that Modern Man appeared "out of nowhere....with particular features that are utterly unpredictable on the basis of what preceded them."¹⁵ This recent evidence is also discussed in the *Scientific American* article entitled "The Neanderthals".¹⁶

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that no one is attacking Charles Darwin. One need only read *On The Origin of Species* to realize what a great scientist Darwin was, producing a new comprehensive theory that admirably accounted for almost all the evidence known *at that time* — in the best scientific tradition. But 130 years have passed, our store of knowledge has vastly increased and Darwin's theory of evolution will simply no longer do. Men such as Alvarez, Gould and Stanley are serious scientists of the first rank. When they tell us that the current scientific data are completely different from the 'old facts', we would do well to lay aside our biases and to listen. It is time to move forward.

15 *ibid.*, p. 151.

16 E. Trinkhaus and W.W. Howells, December 1979, *Scientific American*, Vol. 241, pp. 94-105.



HUMOR IN THE BIBLE

Dr. Abraham Katsh, president of Dropsie College tells about three Bible students who were discussing which profession is found first in the Bible. "Obviously medicine", said one, "because Eve was made from Adam's rib and that surely is surgery. "Not so," countered the second, "because in the beginning order was made out of chaos, and that's engineering." "Both wrong", announced the third "The answer is *law*. Who do you think created the chaos in the first place?"

— David Harrison, *Philadelphia Jewish Exponent*

QUESTIONS BY THE SERPENT AND THE ASS

Analysis and Parallels with Classroom Teaching

BY RONALD T. HYMAN

PART II

In the first part of this article appearing in the Fall issue, 1987, Professor Hyman has examined the questions raised by the two speaking animals of the Bible, the serpent (Genesis 3) and the ass (Numbers ch. 22) and the exchanges with Eve and Balaam respectively, as an intriguing pedagogical method of gaining insight in classroom teaching.

Analyzing the exchanges, Prof. Hyman used the concepts of Interaction patterns, Intent, Fielding and Congruence.

In the second part he now examines the fourth concept of Tactical Clustering, before seeking parallels for classroom teaching.

TACTICAL CLUSTERING

There is another, alternate way to view the exchange between the ass and Balaam in Chapter 22 of Numbers. This alternate approach utilizes the concept of tactical clustering of questions. In no way does using this concept detract from the four concepts of interaction pattern, intent, fielding, and congruence in responses used in the previous part of this article. Rather, the use of the concept of tactical clustering only adds to the insights we gain and yields a richer basis for parallels with classroom teaching.

In the Tanakh, critical/corrective questions often appear combined with yes/no questions, or imperatives, or both yes/no questions and imperatives. When critical/corrective questions appear together with other questions or imperatives,

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it is possible to conceive of them as constituting a tactical clustering or tactical argument. The tactical clustering consists of two parts: the initial position as set forth by the critical/corrective question and the convincing reasons as set forth by the yes/no questions.¹

To explicate the ass's tactical argument the sequence of the ass's three questions appears in Figure 1. Note, that as with all questions which do not inquire after new information, it is necessary to transform the interrogative form into declarative form in order to explicate the meaning of the question.² The left column shows the three questions as they appear in Numbers. The middle column shows their intent. The right column shows the questions fleshed out and transformed to yield their functional meaning. Two connectives ("in that" and "Moreover, as you well know") are inserted and underlined with dashes to show how the three questions are tied together to create a tactical argument. The contrast between the left and right columns shows the power and compactness of the ass's three questions.

<i>Ass's Questions</i>	<i>Intent</i>	<i>Transformation Fleshed out</i>
1. What have I done to you that you have beaten me these three times?	critical/corrective statement	I have done nothing to cause you to beat me three times. You should not have beaten me
2. Am I not your ass that you have been riding on all along until this day?	convincing reason statement	I am your trustworthy ass which you always have ridden without any trouble.

1 This phenomenon of combining question types occurs in Ruth 1:11-13 when Naomi seeks to dissuade Ruth and Orpah from accompanying her on her trip from Moab to Bethlehem. Similarly, it occurs in I Samuel 1:8 when Elkanah speaks to Hannah, trying to stop her from weeping because she is childless. See also Genesis 44:4 and 44:15. For a treatment of the tactical argument in the Book of Ruth see Ronald T. Hyman, "Questions and the Book of Ruth."

2 The transformation is a triple one: valence of the question from positive to negative or vice versa; form of the question from interrogative to declarative and/or imperative; and phrasing of the sentence in order to arrive at the affective tone and functional meaning of the question. For more on this see Ronald T. Hyman, "Questions and the Book of Ruth."

3. Have I been in
the habit of doing
this to you?

convincing reason
statement

Moreover, as you well know,
it's not my usual behavior
to cause you any danger or
trouble (such as, turning
aside off the road, causing
your leg to be crushed
against the wall, and
lying down on the ground
under you).

It does not matter from this perspective of tactical clustering that Balaam speaks after the first and third questions. The key point is that there is a sequence of critical/corrective and yes/no questions which the ass speaks. We can conceive of the ass starting her series of three questions and Balaam speaking over her or even interrupting her since he is impatient to understand what the ass is trying to convey to him. In any case, the ass asks three questions in a clustering, not uncommon in the Tanakh. The tactical argument is so convincing that Balaam concedes his error in beating the ass. Upon Balaam's concession, the scene appropriately shifts to a related matter.

Such an analysis yields the recognition that there are two cycles of question and response in the exchange between the ass and Balaam. Because the intent of the first cycle initiated by the ass is apparently not clear to Balaam, the ass continues to ask questions. The intent of the second cycle is perfectly clear, however, when the ass combines two leading questions — the first one in the negative form and the second one in the positive form — with a critical/corrective intent. The tactical clustering creates power for a synergistic effect, and Balaam concedes.

To summarize, neither the serpent nor the ass asks a question of a human being in order to discover information it does not know. While the serpent seeks to trap the respondent, the ass seeks to criticize/correct. The serpent uses a different pattern or cycle (question/response/reaction) from the ass (question/response). In addition, the ass's manner of fielding an incongruent response is quite different from the serpent's. What is more, only the ass gets a congruent response, and she fields it by being silent. Only then does the scene shift from the ass to the Angel of the Lord. An alternative approach views the ass's three questions as a clustering which constitutes a tactical argument against Balaam. Upon the conclusion of

this argument, Balaam admits his error. It is then that God opens Balaam's eyes so he can see the Angel of the Lord.

PARALLELS AND INSIGHTS

Let us use our analysis so far to seek some parallels with and insights for classroom teaching.

First and most obvious is the parallel of the animals' interaction patterns (cycles) with classroom teaching. The animals use the same two most common and dominant patterns that classroom teachers use. Teachers need to consider, then, how these patterns suit teaching in light of their use by the animals since the animals definitely were not seeking to teach but rather to manipulate Eve and Balaam. In addition, teachers must recognize that these two patterns, though consuming very little time, are powerful in their effects on the respondents. A brief exchange based on the question/response/reaction pattern or the question/response pattern is not to be dismissed easily as a "mere" exchange of little consequence. On the contrary, these two interaction patterns, especially when used repeatedly, can and do have a strong effect on the respondents. Recall here the effects on Eve and Balaam. Teachers must then devote their attention to consider what the actual explicit and hidden effects are of these two common and dominant interaction pattern.

It is important to recognize that the question/response/reaction and the question/response patterns can be used for a variety of questioning purposes. These patterns of interaction need not be restricted to trap questions or critical/corrective questions, as asked by the serpent and the ass. Such questions may anger or humiliate a student, causing him to shut down cognitively or to act improperly, as does Eve subsequently toward Adam. No one likes to be manipulated or humiliated. Simple *derech erez* prohibits a teacher from treating a student in such an inappropriate manner. Hillel put it well when he told the impatient heathen who wanted to learn the entire Torah while standing on one foot, "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor."³

Whatever the interaction pattern, the teacher must consider the intent of his question. Questions do have a host of intents in the classroom. Most classroom questions come from the teacher. The teacher's questions can serve the purpose, for example, of diagnosing a student's understanding of the subject matter and his

3 Talmud, Shabbat 31A.

level of achievement. It is also true that the teacher's question can have the intent of attracting the attention of a distracted student or of quizzing a student. Viewed in this way the question is a **pedagogical** tool which the teacher must use with discretion. They must consider whether the intents of their questions are appropriate to the situations which are arising in the classroom at all times.

While the teacher considers which intent to convey when asking questions, it also happens that the student does not perceive the intent of the teacher's question in the same way as the teacher. Such a situation is similar to the mismatch of intention and perception which occurs in the ass-Balaam exchange and where the results are negative. The student may feel that a question is intended to trap him, especially in the context of a Socratic-like dialogue, though the teacher may intend the question for diagnostic purposes only. Such a mismatch between intention and perception may well lead the student to ill feelings. Teaching relies on effective communication to occur between teacher and student, and it does not occur when mismatches are present, causing a build-up of negative feelings in the student.

Once he is aware of the parallel with the mismatch in the ass-Balaam exchange, the teacher needs to seek to clarify the intent of his questions as he asks them. Also, the teacher should seek to analyze a student's response for clues revealing a mismatch of intention and perception because the responsibility for promoting the proper atmosphere is the teacher's. Incongruence between intention and perception can and often does result in the student disclaiming responsibility for not learning as expected. This is true no matter how many times the teacher alters the syllabus, time schedule, or textbook. The student may claim, as did Eve, that he was ensnared. If so, he will consider the teacher as questioner to be the blameworthy person for his embarrassing, inadequate, or incomplete response.

QUESTIONS SEEKING INTERPRETATION

It is possible for the teacher to go beyond trap and critical/corrective questions (these two types constitute a negative use of the question as a pedagogical tool); to go beyond even the diagnostic question (this type yields a positive use of the pedagogical tool), and to go beyond the use of review and quiz questions which are so common in today's classrooms and are often identified by the words "what" and "why." For example, it is desirable to ask questions which genuinely *seek interpretation* from the student concerning a text being studied. The

student's responses may not be totally new, fresh, unexpected, or different from those of previous students. It only means that a question can convey to them that the teacher expects and values some personally interpretive response. This pedagogical tool need not control the content in any way. The teacher can expand the use of the question so that it can rightly be the most versatile and powerful pedagogical tool he has.

As does Eve in her response to the serpent, the student who is caught off guard and gives an incongruent response may say more than is needed to the teacher. The teacher, by analyzing the response as an incongruent one, may be able to field the student's remarks in such a way as to bring the student in line with expectation. By recognizing extra, unneeded comments as a symptom of being unaware of the teacher's intent and of being uneasy, the teacher can field the student's response so as to assure the student that the question was not intended to threaten, trap, or embarrass him. The teacher can use his subsequent fielding move tactfully just as he can use a question to further the aim of promoting productive thinking. Though fielding is not as well known and researched a pedagogical tool as is questioning, its potential is great.

The ass serves as an example of tactical questioning. That is to say, the ass demonstrates that questions can be grouped into clusters within a context in order to obtain maximum impact. Similarly, teachers can cluster their questions within the contextual flow of classroom interaction. The impact of any question is determined not by its own separate meaning, structure, or intent but by its relationship with the questions which precede and succeed it. It is the context which gives meaning and power to a question whether or not the student is aware of it. Whatever pedagogical power a given question has, it is enhanced when that question appears within a sequence of questions designed to achieve a particular educational goal. If the sequence of several questions together is haphazard, then pedagogical power is lost. If the sequence is tactical, then power is gained.

The power of the ass's three questions is noteworthy when we see them as a cluster constituting a tactical argument. Balaam at the end of the ass's cluster acknowledges his error both by what he says and by the brevity of his remark. He is beginning to feel penitent by the time he begins to speak with the Angel of the Lord. When the angel asks him in a critical way why he beat the ass, Balaam is now able to say contritely, "I have sinned."

Granted that a teacher should not emulate the ass by using a cluster to chastise

a student. Nevertheless, the teacher can emulate the ass by recognizing the importance of asking questions in a deliberate cluster which has a particular objective. Such tactical clustering of questions is not difficult to achieve when the teacher prepares *key questions* carefully in advance of the actual teaching situation. By questioning tactically the teacher can lift the quality of the interaction with students. A small cluster may move from facts to comparison to interpretations. This cluster can be used when studying the Tanakh, history, or literature. There are other possible clusters, but whatever the cluster is, the tactical grouping of questions will lead the teacher to more meaningful interaction with the students.

Finally, the questioning episodes involving the serpent and the ass are parallel to classroom teaching exchanges in that there is questioning by one party only. The result of single party questioning in the classroom may be, as with the serpent and the ass, not the most desirable. The teacher must encourage his students to ask questions because questions are the best indicators of the thinking a person does and may develop the spirit of inquiry which is fundamental to education.

In this regard it is worth noting that Maimonides comments on the saying of Rabbi Judah who said, "I learned a great deal from my teachers, more from my colleagues, but most of all I learned from my students."⁴ Maimonides states that students increase a teacher's wisdom and broaden the teacher's mind. He uses a parallel from his everyday life to explain the idea of a teacher learning from students, and he explicitly calls for student questions: "Even as a small piece of wood kindles a large log, so a small student sharpens the teacher so that by his questions he elicits glorious wisdom."⁵

In summary, the exchanges between the serpent and Eve and between the ass and Balaam have their parallels in the interaction between teacher and student. These exchanges structurally are the two most common interaction patterns occurring in classrooms. Their parallels with classroom interaction can help us to see the effects in the classroom of a mismatch between a teacher's intention and a student's perception in terms of the intent of a question directed to a student. The parallels lead to a recognition that there is power in tactical clustering

4 Talmud, Makkot 10A; also see Taanit 7A.

5 Maimonides, *Mishne Torah*, "The Book of Knowledge," section on The Laws Concerning the Study of Torah, 5:13, quoting Taanit 7A.

questioning, that structural form need not limit the nature of a question, that fielding of responses deserves careful attention, and that questioning in the classroom by one party only can have undesirable effects. It is possible to look to the Tanakh and in particular to the questions by the serpent and the ass to gain some insights into classroom teaching.



SPECIAL MEETING OF THE "DOR LE DOR" EDITORIAL BOARD

Following the tragic losses, within the short span of two months, of Chaim Abramowitz, Z"l, and Louis Katzoff, Z"l, Assistant Editor and Editor respectively, the Editorial Board met in special session and reached some of the following decisions:

EDITOR

Dr. Shimon Bakon, heretofore Associate Editor, was appointed to serve as the Editor.

LOUIS KATZOFF ANNUAL MEMORIAL LECTURE

To perpetuate the memory of the Founder of "Dor le Dor," and its Editor from 1972–1987, the Board will sponsor an annual L. Katzoff Memorial Lecture, to be held on the approximate date of his death.

The "Dor le Dor" offices, PO Box 7024, 29a Rechov Keren Hayesod, Jerusalem Israel, will gratefully accept donations in his memory, to help us to establish such an annual lecture.

CHAIM ABRAMOWITZ TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

Chaim Abramowitz, among his many contributions to "Dor le Dor," also compiled the Triennial Bible Reading Calendar. The forthcoming ones will be dedicated in his memory.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Ranon Katzoff, David Rosen, Jacob Rosenberg, Pessach Schindler, and Barbara Specter. More details about these persons will appear in a forthcoming issue.

THE FOX IN BIBLE AND MIDRASH

BY S. P. TOPEROFF

It is conjectured that the Hebrew שועל — “shual” is connected with “shaal” meaning hollow, “who has measured the waters in the hollow of his head” — (Isaiah 40:12), comp: I Kings 20:10.

We also find the same word used of a narrow road or path “then the angel of the Lord stood in the hollow way between the vineyards” — (Numbers 20:24).

The connection between “shual” and something hollow is due to the fact that the fox likes holes or narrow paths.

Another obvious association in the above verse is the fondness of foxes for grapes. This is confirmed by the Song of Songs: “Take us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vineyards, for our vineyards are in blossom” (2:15). In the U.S.A. “fox-grape” is the name for a special species of wild grapes.

The first reference to foxes in Scriptures is found in Judges 15:11 where we learn that Samson took 300 foxes, tied them by their tails and placed a fire-brand between each and let them loose in the corn fields of the Philistines. Many commentators suggest that the Bible here refers to jackals and not foxes, because jackals gather in packs and were more numerous than foxes which usually move around singly. It should be noted that the jackal and fox resemble each other and are therefore mistaken for one another.

The Soncino Bible informs us that the Hebrew “Shual” is derived from the Persian “shagal”, the origin of the English jackal.

When the Psalmist claims, “they shall be hurled to the power of the sword; shall be a portion for foxes” — (63:11), he was probably referring to the jackal which is known to feed on dead bodies.

An echo of this confusion between fox and jackal is reflected in the Talmud which records that a fox tore a lamb. When the case came before the Rabbis they

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decided that the lamb was not bitten by a fox, but a dog; some scholars believe that the jackal is an ancestor of the dog (Hullin 53a).

From Lamentations 5:18, we know that foxes prowl in ruins and desolate places, "for the mountains of Zion which is desolate the foxes walk upon it". And the prophet Ezekiel observes that "thy prophets have been like foxes in ruin," (13:4).

In Rabbinic literature the fox plays a prominent part especially in the Agadah, the section of the Talmud that deals with folk-lore and legend. Thus it is reported that R. Meir had a collection of 300 fox fables but only three are in existence (Sanhedrin 38b). Rashi in Sanhedrin 39a, combines and summarizes them into one story. However, in addition to these, there are many more fox fables scattered throughout the Talmud.

We shall choose one, the beautiful Midrash in Ecclesiastes Rabbah 5:14 on the verse "as he came forth out of his mother's womb naked, so shall he return":

"A Babylonian teacher named Geniva compared man in this world to a fox that has found a vineyard surrounded on all sides with a high fence except for a small opening at one point. The fox attempted to enter, but finding the hole too narrow to squeeze through he began to starve himself for three days until he was thin enough to enter. Once in the vineyard, he indulged to such an extent that he regained his weight. In desperation, the fox was compelled to fast another three days to enable him to leave the vineyard, then he exclaimed: O vineyard, how pleasant are you and how desirable are your fruit, but of what benefit are you to me since I depart from you as thin as when I entered; such, says Geniva, is the fate of man in this world, as man came forth so he returns."

R. Johanan Ben Zakkai was complimented by the Rabbis for including in his studies the fables of the foxes (Bava Bathra 134b).

The following incident illustrates the absolute faith and optimism of R. Akiva and is worthy of repetition. Rabban Gamliel, R. Eliezer ben Azariah, R. Joshua and R. Akiva were going up to Jerusalem together. As they reached Mount Scopus they saw a fox emerging from the Holy of Holies. Only R. Akiva seemed to be merry but the other Rabbis wept. They asked Akiva why he was merry? Akiva asked them why they wept? They said to him: A place of which it was once said, "and the common man that draws near will be put to death" — (Numbers 1:51) now becomes the haunt of foxes, and should we not weep? Said Akiva to them therefore am I merry, for it is written, "and I will take to me

faithful witnesses to record, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberchiah — (Isaiah 8:2).

What connection has Uriah with Zechariah? Uriah lived during the time of the First Temple, while Zechariah lived and prophesied during the Second Temple. But Holy Writ linked the later prophecy of Zechariah with the earlier prophecy of Uriah. In the earlier prophecy it is written, "therefore shall Zion for your sake be ploughed as a field". In Zechariah it is written, "thus says the Lord of Hosts, there shall yet old men and old women sit in the broad places of Jerusalem" — (8:4). So long as Uriah's threatening prophecy has not had its fulfillment, I had misgivings lest Zechariah's prophecy might not be fulfilled. Now that Uriah's prophecy has been fulfilled it is quite certain that Zechariah's prophecy also will find its literal fulfillment. They said to him, "Akiva you have comforted us" — (Makoth 24b).

The famous proverb, "better to be a tail to lions than a head to foxes" is found twice in the Talmud, once in the Mishna Pirkei Avot 4:20, and again in Sanhedrin 34a. But each reference has a different connotation.

The proverb in the Mishna seems to be associated with leadership. The lion is the king of the beasts, the leader and head of the family. The fox is noted for its sly and cunning nature. Man should not aspire through cunning and dishonest means to become a leader and in the process bring ruin and destruction on those who trust him. Rather be a tail to the lion, a loyal and trustworthy follower, but do not aspire to become a corrupt and cunning leader.

To understand the full import of the proverb in Sanhedrin 34a, we must realize that in the ancient academy of learning, scholars sat in rows and when the head of the row was promoted all scholars moved forward. Here therefore the proverb "better a tail to lions than a head to foxes", conveys the meaning that it is better to be placed at the tail of the first row, than at the head of the second row.

In post Talmudic literature, Berachia Hanakdan (19th cent.) wrote a work entitled "Mishle Shualim" which was a collection of fox fables.

Shiboleth Shual, one of the substances that can be used to make matzoh for Passover, are ears of corn which are foxtail in shape — (Pes. 35a).

We find that the Egyptians are compared figuratively to foxes. R. Eliezer ben Simon said: The Egyptians were cunning and therefore compared to foxes, as the fox always looks behind him, so the Egyptians always looked behind them, examining their past — (Ex. R. 22:1).

The great chassidic master, the Besht (1700–1760) once said: the lion became enraged at his subjects, the animals of the forest. He asked the fox to placate the king of the beasts by relating to him an appropriate fable. The fox replied that fear caused him to forget his fables. Hence the beasts were compelled to wait on the lion themselves. In the same manner said the Besht, when we approach the High Holidays, the congregation should not depend on their Rabbi to pray on their behalf; each one should pray for himself.

PROVERBIAL SAYINGS

- 1) I have never seen a fox as a shopkeeper, yet it is sustained without trouble (Kiddushin 82b).
- 2) The lion has become a fox (Bava Kama 117a).
- 3) A fox in its hour, bow down to it (Megillah 16b).
- 4) A fox does not die from the dust of its den (Ketuboth 71b).
- 5) A lion son of a fox, is a distinguished man son of an inconspicuous father (Yerushalmi — Shabbat 10, 12c).

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Dr. Bakon:

Your message about the death of our beloved Dr. Katzoff came absolutely unexpected, especially because I have right here on my desk a just half-finished letter to him, dealing with the "problem" of "Shatnez."

What a loss for all those many people who knew him personally, and those thousands who knew him through his blessed work! And I belong to the latter category.

I have to get slowly accustomed to the idea that he is not around any more. I only hope he did not suffer bodily before he passed on.

May he rest in eternal peace!—

To honor his memory I am enclosing a check, made out to "Dor le Dor".

Edmund Berg
Chicago, Illinois

ISAAC TELLS THE AKEDA STORY

BY SHELDON FEINBERG

The Torah Reading for the second day of Rosh Hashanah creates yearly the predicament of dealing with a seeming contradiction in the way God chooses to deal with his chosen servant Abraham.

Many interpretations have been proffered for this enigmatic situation. Through the attached piece, written with the voice of Isaac as narrator, the writer offers a new way to look at our time-honored story. At the least, it offers an innovative answer to a very complex question.

My father Abraham was a good man... attentive to me, my mother, our servants, the flocks we owned, the herdsmen we hired, and our neighbors. But one night he spoke to me in a strange way, informing me that in the morning we were to travel to Moriah, a town three days riding from the area in which we dwelt. The purpose for our visit there, he said, was to offer a sacrifice to God.

In the morning we rose, had our donkey saddled by two of our servants, and with them left for Moriah. On the third day of our trip, my father announced to us that we had reached our destination. He then instructed the two servants to wait with the donkey while he and I would go a short distance ahead to "worship". Though his face usually reflected his calm demeanor, that day I noticed a certain agitation in it, and wondered to myself why this was present. Could offering a sacrifice so affect one's "piece of mind"? (The answer did not appear until a short time later).

When we reached the spot for which he was looking, my father removed the firewood we had brought with us for the sacrifice from the back of the *donkey*, and transferred it to *my* back, for the short climb to the sacrificial site ahead. A torch which he had lit from our morning campfire, he carried in his right hand, and a sacrificial knife in his left. I then s-l-o-w-l-y spoke these words to my father:

Cantor Sheldon Feinberg studied for his Hazzanut with Cantors Louis Lipetz, Moshe Nathanson, and David Kussevitsky. He is both Hazzan and concert artist. He is the biographer of Moshe Nathanson, in the book "Song without Word."

"Father — *you* have the flame and the knife, and *I* have the wood. But where is the *sheep* for our burnt-offering"? And my father, just as s-l-o-w-l-y answered me, in a voice filled with confidence, "My son... *God* will provide the sheep for us".

Unbelievable pride was in my soul, as he and I walked together toward the sacrificial site. For what son was there who had a father who not only spoke to God but had moved God on several occasions to speak to *him*! So, with certainty that that which my father *said* would take place, I helped my father build an altar.

(The rest of my story — as I remember it — seems almost impossible to relate, for I know not whether what I remember was a *dream* or *reality*!) For instance, at the moment when we finished building the altar, did my father *actually* turn and say to me in a tone I could *never* forget... "My son. God has directed me to make *you* the sacrifice?!"... And did I then *allow myself willingly* to be tied to the pyre, ready to be consumed by the flame? Or was this grotesque idea simply a nightmare imposed upon my mind one dark dismal night during the khamsin season... that period when the desert wind engulfs one both physically and mentally, turning one's natural thoughts into hallucinations? And if that situation *were* real — could a father, even by the direction of God, place his only son on a pyre ready for slaughter by his *own* knife? And would *my* father — or *any* father — be able to *carry out* the slaughter?

My mind, to this day, carries the dilemma of determining whether this happening in my life was real or a delusion! (And if it *were* real — and seemingly a test of my father's subservience to God's will, was that not too much to ask of a human being?) The next act in this most bizarre drama, neither cleared up the matter, nor made it more obscure. *Neither* did it properly prepare me for the surprise ending ahead!!

As I lay trembling on top of the wood, my father, (may God erase *this* memory from my brain!) took his knife and leaned forward toward me. And then, *was* it an angel of the Lord who called to my father from the heavens, saying, (as God had said to him before) "Abraham, Abraham!"... and *did* he answer... "*Here I am!*"... and did the angel continue with... "Do not lay hands on the lad. God knows now the extent of your obedience!!" And then, *did* my father, at close hand, perceive a ram, caught in the thicket by his horns? ...and *did* he sacrifice this animal to God? (All that had preceded before was only a test of the measure of my father's allegiance to God, and my own obedience to my father!) And finally, did the angel — as I seemed to hear — speak to my father again, saying...

"It is the *word* of God, that because in good faith you carried out the *will* of God...like the stars of the sky...like the sands of the shore, shall your children be multiplied and blessed among the children of the earth!" Then my dream... *or* reality, (to this day I know not which) came to a close, and my father and I, arm in arm, went back from the sacrificial site to our servants, for the return trip and a new dwelling place in Beersheva. And my father lived there with us for almost another generation.

חג שמחה

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BOOK REVIEW

BY JOSEPH HALPERN

TANAKH, A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, According to the Traditional Hebrew Text, Jewish Publication Society of America, pp. XXVI, 1-1624.

"The J.P.S. joins the members of the committees of translators in the hope that the results of our labors will find favor with god and man"

ערב ר"י חשמ"ו Sept. 15, 1985

So runs the conclusion of the Preface to the new volume of the Tanakh. Besides the text, which we shall deal with later, it opens with a Table of Weekly Sabbath Readings, Sidra and Haftara: Readings for Special Sabbaths, beginning with Rosh Hodesh and ending with Hannukah; the Days of Awe, beginning with Rosh-Hashanah and ending with Yom Kippur; Readings for the Festivals, beginning with Tabernacles and ending with Shavuoth; Readings on Weekday Occasions, beginning with Purim and ending with Public Fast Days; and the Five Megilloth.

This is a new translation. The Preface, in its section "On the History of Bible Translation", starts with the Septuagint, produced in Alexandria, Egypt, over 2,200 years ago; goes on to the Targum in Aramaic in the last few centuries BCE for the Jews who lived in North and East of Judea; when a translation of the Bible into the Judeo-Arabic vernacular was deemed necessary for Jewry in Moslem countries towards the end of the first millenium, the noted philologist, philosopher, and community leader Saadia Gaon (1882-942) produced a version that incorporated traditional Jewish interpretations (Written and Oral Law), but was not bound on word-for-word translation; at the same time it was a model of clarity and stylistic elegance. The present version is in the spirit of Saadia.

With the growth of Christianity in the first century, the Church adopted the Septuagint as its Bible. As Greek began to give way to Latin in the Roman Empire, it was only a matter of time before a Latin translation of Scripture became the recognised Bible of the Church. The Church father Jerome (c. 340-420) produced the official Latin version. Drawing on Jewish tradition, and consulting Jewish teachers, he achieved what became known as the Vulgate, the

Bible in the language of the common people. The Vulgate, the Bible of European Christianity until the Reformation, is clearly the most significant Bible translation after the Septuagint.

With the rise of Protestantism in Europe, by 1526 the first parts of two notable translations began to appear, Martin Luther's in German and William Tyndale's in English. The latter became the King James Version of 1611. The more modern English versions — such as the Holy Scriptures by the American Rabbi Isaac Leeser (1856), the British Revised Version (1881–1885), the American Standard Version (1901), the Jewish Publication Society's The Holy Scriptures (1917), and the American Revised Standard Version (1962) — make extensive use of the King James.

After World War II the concept of a completely new translation gradually took hold. In 1935 the Jewish Publication Society announced its intention to proceed with the project, and in 1955 the committee of translators began their task. Harry M. Orlinsky served as editor-in-chief of the new translation, along with H.L. Ginsberg, and others who died before the work appeared, including Solomon Grayzel, editor of the Jewish Publication Society.

Although the committee profited much from the work of previous translators, the present rendering is essentially a new translation. The translators avoided obsolete words and phrases. For the second person singular, the modern "you" was used instead of the archaic "thou", even when referring to the Deity ("You"). The Hebrew particle *vav*, which is usually translated "and", and also as "however", "but", "yet", "when", is very often completely left untranslated.

The preface to the first edition of the Torah was dated September 26, 1962. The complete translation of The Prophets (Nevi'im) was published in 1978. Like the translation of The Torah, the present translation of the prophetic books adheres strictly to the traditional Hebrew text. The complete translation of The Writings (Kethuvim) appeared in 1982.

With the publication of the *one-volume* translation of the entire Hebrew Bible, the Jewish Publication Society culminates its historic project, offering the Jewish community a new complete English Bible that is as eloquent as it is accurate. Now, for the first time in over 2,000 years (when the Septuagint was produced) a committee of Jewish scholars has completed the task of rendering the Hebrew Bible into another language. It does not depend on the wording of past translations. Instead, the translators looked directly to the Hebrew tenth century Massoretic text as Judaism's standard.

BIBLE TRIVIA

THE FIRST BIBLE TRANSLATION

BY CHAIM ABRAMOWITZ

For one thousand years after the Jews received the Torah at Mt. Sinai, it remained an open book only to the Hebrew speaking world. It remained incomprehensible to a majority of the Jews living in Alexandria and other Greek provinces whose spoken, and in some case, native language was Greek, until the third century B.C.E. when the Septuagint appeared. Septuagint, the Greek word for "seventy," was the name given to the Greek translation of the Bible, the first in any foreign language.

There is an interesting story, perhaps partially legendary, but twice repeated in the Talmud of this "Translation of Seventy." The Greek king Ptolemy Philadelphus built a large library in Alexandria, to house all the literary treasures of the world. When he was told about the Hebrew Bible, he requested the High Priest, Eliezer, to send him seventy scholars to translate the Torah into Greek. To guarantee a true translation, he placed each of the scholars in a separate room with instructions to translate the Torah. As scholars they were acquainted with Greek culture, and as translators they were anxious not to mislead the reader. They felt it necessary to make certain changes. To quote one example: The Greeks believed that the world was formed from some primeval material. The translators were therefore afraid that the Greek reader will misconstrue the opening sentence in Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" as "with the Beginning God created etc." So they translated it that "God created the Beginning." The miraculous, or legendary part of the story is that each one of the seventy, made this, and other changes without consulting the others, resulting in seventy *similar* translations.

Even though the Septuagint served as *the Bible* to the Greek-speaking and Hellenized Jews, it was never given the meticulous care that was given to the Hebrew Bible. Many of the early Christians, in their efforts to entice Jews and pagans to join their new sects, retranslated, or defined, parts of the Septuagint to conform with their new ideas. This inspired Aquila the Convert to write a new

(Continued on p. 98)

REFLECTIONS OF READERS

INHERITANCE – HERITAGE

BY JOEL LITKE

For traditional Jews the right to the Land of Israel is ultimately derived from the Divine promise made to the patriarchs and their descendants. Though repeated often in the Bible, it was not until the advent of the Exodus from Egypt that this promise was given a clear definition. Then God instructed Moses to tell the people of Israel that the land was to be to them a *morasha*, a heritage. "And I will bring you into the land concerning which I lifted up my hand to give it to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob; and I will give it to you for a *morasha*; I am the Lord." (Exodus 6:8)

To *morasha* a very specific meaning is attached. It is not *yerusha* (inheritance) a related yet different word, which normally signifies something given by descent, over which one enjoys unrestricted ownership to do with the bequest as desirable, including the right of disposal. Rather the land is *morasha*, a gift that adds to ownership an additional dimension. Here the emphasis is not so much on the right of proprietorship, as conveying the idea of relationship. An

inviolable bond between receiver and legacy is being formed, that turns the gift into a patrimony, over which the heir becomes a trustee, charging him with the duty to preserve and enhance the estate received, as its grammatical form, *Hiphil*, also indicates. While *yerusha* confers the right of disposal, *morasha* stresses the obligation of preservation.

Once more do we find this term in the Bible. In his farewell blessing Moses called the Torah the *morasha* of the congregation of Jacob. "Moses commanded us the Torah, a *morasha* of congregation of Jacob." (Deuteronomy 33:4) Here too the use of this word is deliberate and precise, as can be seen from the counsel of Rabbi Yose who declares "apply yourself to study Torah, for she is not yours by *yerusha*." (Pirke Avot 2:17) The Torah is emphatically not *yerusha*, though patently called *morasha*.

Thus Torah and Eretz Israel stand in parallel relationship to the Jewish people. In the case of the Torah this implies that we are to embrace and preserve her,

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study and understand her as a sacred trust, explore her wisdom and discover her truth as the nation's possession, in testimony to God's special grace to Israel.

The same transcendent significance is conveyed by the concept of *morasha* in connection with *Eretz Israel*. The land not only is source of life and nourishment, but fountainhead of the people's soul and hope, arena of its destiny, linking them to the glories of the past and the vision of prophets and sages and to the as yet unrevealed glories of the future, as the tangible evidence of their

bond with God and the foundation of the covenant.

This exposition is of more than exegetical interest. It can well serve as the basis for a political platform, and bear on our attitude to the land. As *Yerusha* the land is ours to be enjoyed and developed, but also ours, if need be, to be disposed of. If the land, however, is embraced as *morasha*, having value beyond its utilitarian benefit, then it will imbue its people to build and develop it, beautify and sanctify it and possess and preserve it, as a holy trust.

JUDAH AND TAMAR

BY MARTIN GREENBERG

The Torah interrupts the narrative of Joseph to tell of *Judah and Tamar* (Genesis Ch. 37 and 38). The story of Judah and Tamar seems so out of place. In Ch. 43:9-11, Jacob accepted the pledge of Judah to be responsible for Benjamin after rejecting the offer of Reuben (Gen. 42:38). Perhaps the food situation had become desperate? But then why the assignment of Benjamin to Judah? Why not take up Reuben, the eldest, on his offer? The traditional comments on these various verses did

not satisfy me because their rationality had gaps.

The main thrust of the story of Judah and Tamar was that Judah acted against his own self-interest to follow the honorable course of action with Tamar. (He had tried to keep his sexual liaison secret, yet, at a critical moment, he proclaims to all the truth.) Because it was the right thing — he honored his pledge to Tamar. Thus Jacob would take the chance of entrusting Benjamin to him. It is thus connected to the story that it

Dr. Martin Greenberg, a 1959 graduate of Columbia Law School, practiced law for twenty years in N.Y.C. At present he is a Business Executive, and a member of Yorktown Jewish Center.

"interrupts" by telling how the family of Jacob came down to Egypt. (Joseph by being sold and the rest as a result of Jacob trusting Judah.)

Why not Reuben? The Torah earlier related the incident of Reuben (the oldest son) and Bilhah (sexual encounter — Reuben violating trust); and followed it with the story of Simeon and Levi (second and third sons) at Shechem in which they "avenged" Dinah (sexual encounter — violated trust contract). Then comes Judah and Tamar. I have not previously known any commentator to connect those three stories as part of a single message, yet the perspective gives answers the question of why Jacob trusted the word of Judah.

All parts of the story of Judah and Tamar are significant.

The story related how Judah had two sons die; their death clearly pained him; thus when he comes before the disguised Joseph (Gen. 44:18) and pleads for Benjamin by describing how greatly his father will be pained by the loss of a second son we can greatly imagine how genuine must have been his emotion since he had that event happen to him. The result: *Joseph could not refrain himself...* (Gen. 45:1). He reveals himself to his brothers! The family is reunited.

I came to wonder why, in the story of Judah and Tamar — at the end — Judah says "She is more righteous than I?" Why not "She is right" or "I was wrong." His statement necessarily implies that he considers that he was not

wrong in not giving his third son to Tamar in a levirate union. Yet wasn't that the law? Apparently not. Why? Because the purpose of such a marriage is to provide for the next generation. His first two sons had met their death through Tamar. It would risk cutting off a generation by giving her his last son, the opposite of his intent. But she used Judah to provide for the next generation — so she was more righteous — by providing for another generation without threatening the generation after Judah.

At this point I come to think that certainly there could be nothing left "to discover" from the "positioning" of the story of Judah and Tamar in the midst of the narrative of Joseph.

Then I noticed that Potiphar's wife does not seek to seduce Joseph until after Potiphar makes Joseph head of his household (Gen. 39:4). That was strange since desire is usually aroused from the first. There was a definite implication that sprung to mind. Our father Abraham says to the Lord: *What wilt thou give me O Lord seeing I go childless ... and he that shall be the possessor of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?* (Gen. 15:2)

The Lord answers Abraham: *No Abraham, this man shall not be thine heir; but he shall come forth from you shall be thine heir.* (Gen. 15:4) So we learn the law of inheritance at that time in Egypt: where a married man dies without children, the head of his household, not his wife, inherits. Could it be that Potiphar's wife was practicing

deception, to be made pregnant, just as Tamar did with Judah to secure her economic position? Consistent with such a view is the fact that when Potiphar's wife is unable to persuade Joseph to have sexual relations, she frames him so that he is removed from his position. Her

conduct with the men of the place — she slanders Joseph — is to be compared with Tamar — who would not tell the servants of Judah; further she used Joseph's garment to deceive the men, while Tamar used a veil to fool Judah.

BIBLICAL TEACHINGS OF PEACE

BY ELLIOT A. GREEN

Chaim Pearl's letter in response to Yosef Green's article on "Tiles and Bricks in Biblical Poetry"* contains a number of political presumptions with questionable implications for contemporary policy, presumptions which, in my view, are vitiated by explicit biblical teachings. Indeed, as Pearl writes, we are taught to pursue peace in many places through the Scriptures. However, this leaves open two main questions: 1) What constitutes peace, What is the essence of peace? and 2) How is peace to be pursued and achieved? A third question might be: with whom is one justified in making peace, with whom are we permitted to make peace?

As I understand the various biblical descriptions, peace implies a sense of security, a feeling on the part of the people that their land will not be attacked or

that, if an attack comes, Israel will have the strength to ward it off easily. Further, Isaiah's description of peace as a time when war will not be taught and when swords will be beaten into plowshares (in distinction to Joel's call to war) clearly implies that our erstwhile enemy, our supposed partner in peace, will considerably reduce his armaments and not increase them, nor will he continue to teach hatred of the State or people of Israel. A peace agreement that does not provide for these items would not fit Isaiah's prescription.

But stipulations in a treaty are not enough. At this point, the issue of the enemy's credibility comes into play. Without a partner in good faith no agreement is worthwhile. This is always a central question in our very Orwellian Twentieth Century C.E. It has to be

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answered on the basis of our past experience with him and knowledge of him. And it leads us back to the warnings of Jeremiah and Ezekiel about the false prophets who cried "Peace, peace" when there was no peace, and who thus led the people astray (Jer. 6:14, 8:11; Ezek. 7:25, 13:10, 13:16). The American poet Whittier was inspired by these biblical passages to write of his own time:

"Great peace in Europe! Order reigns
From Tiber's hills to Danube's plains!"
So say her kings and priests; so say
The lying prophets of our day.
Speak, Prince and Kaiser, Priest and
Czar!

If this be Peace, pray what is war?

A general description or definition of peace is provided in several places in the Bible. But I am not aware of any biblical passage that equates peace with territorial compromise or that prescribes territorial compromise as the way to peace, as Rabbi Pearl does.

As to territorial compromise, could it

really lead to peace if it grants the enemy strategic-territorial advantages making his victory more likely in a planned, future war? Our own good will is hardly enough to ensure that the other side will reciprocate. Or that he will give up his own long-sought goals once he is in a better position to obtain them by force. The French scholar Julien Freund has stated that is an error "to believe that good will eliminates an enemy... (since) it is not you who designate the enemy. Rather it is he who designates you" (*Valeurs Actuelles*, 22 December 1980).

This returns us to the question of what is meant by peace. It means something different to different parties to a conflict. For instance, after Vespasian destroyed our Temple in Jerusalem, he took the menorah and other sacred objects and deposited them in a so-called "Peace Temple" which he erected in Rome (Jos. War, VII, V, 7). This is not the peace that we want.

* See Dor le Dor XV-4 and XVI-1.

SING TO ME

BY DAVID WEINTRAUB

“And his brother’s name was JUBAL — he was the father of those who handle harp and pipe.”¹ With this terse statement the Bible pinpoints the progenitor of *instrumental* know-how and artistry. Nary a mythical mention of the *vocal music man* here. Ancient civilizations credit gods with the creation of music. India features its goddess Saraswātī in that stellar role, while Greek mythology pictures Bacchus, Apollo and the nine Muses presiding over the invention of the liberal arts — especially music.

The Jewish view postulates the creation of music only as a concomitant of God’s creation of man. Adam and Eve did not invent music — they merely vented it. They possessed musical gifts built in and patented with their very formation.

*And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life — and man became a living soul.*²

This appears to be the origin of vocal music, of singing — breathing. The Italian maestros of the art of bel canto concur when they proclaim: “Singing is breathing and breathing — singing.”³

“Ràbbi Levi said in the name of Rabbi Chanina: It is our obligation to sing to God for every breath we take. Why? Because it is written: Let every being that has breath praise the Lord!”⁴ And with this quote, King David concludes the Psalter.

It seems a fitting summary of the entire philosophy of life Judaism stands for. There is no direct quotation to support the view that Adam and Eve sang. But the orally transmitted Law reveals the following insight:

The Bible states: “And Cain went out from before the Lord.”⁵ Whence did he come? Rabbi Chama said in the name of Rabbi Chanina Bar Ràbbi Yitschok:

1 Gen. 4:20.

2 Gen. 2:7.

3 V. A. Fields *The Singing Voice*, N.Y. pp. 75–78.

4 Ps. 150:6.

Dr. David Weintraub, currently on the musicology faculty of Bar Ilan University, is a previous contributor to Dor le Dor.

"He went out, rejoicing. Adam chanced to meet him and asked Cain: What verdict was handed down to you? and Cain answered: "I repented of my evil deed and I will be able to atone for it." — Adam thereupon slapped his own face in amazement and called out: "Is it possible that repentance packs such power? And I was not aware of it! — He forthwith intoned the 92nd Psalm, for the Sabbath Day. "It is good to give thanks unto the Lord and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High." The goodness inherent in singing to the Lord becomes even more apparent if we slightly pause before the last Hebrew word in this verse — *Elyon*. The rendering — without textual tampering — would then read "...and to sing praises unto Thy name is *The most sublime thing imaginable!*"

It is surely an understatement when Kraeling and Mowry declare that "music, and especially song, played an important part both in the secular and religious life of the Hebrew people."⁶ Gressman comes closer when he says that Music was designed to beautify the life of man. "Now, since religion pursues the same goal, it follows that service to God is unthinkable without music."⁷ Quintilianus calls music the "Science of Vocal Art." Kraeling and Mowry may place their observation in late Temple times, but they stand on biblical ground in stating that music was well entrenched in Temple worship so that the Psalmist naturally associates the act of coming into the Divine Presence with that of making a joyful sound to Him with vocal utterance: "*Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving and sing joyfully to Him with Psalms.*"⁸

From the innumerable references to music in the Bible Carl Engel concludes that "sacred Music in Divine worship was evidently regarded as of the highest importance by the Hebrews."⁹

HEBREW HAS NO WORD FOR MUSIC

And yet — with all these innumerable references ours to draw upon we find out to our amazement that the Hebrew language has no word for music! Expressions denoting singing or playing abound, but the general concept *music* is lacking.

5 Gen. 4:16.

6 *Oxford History of Music* Vol. I p. 284.

7 Hugo Gressman, *Musik und Musikinstrumente im alten Testament* giessen 1903, p. 19.

8 Ps. 95:2.

9 Carl Engel, *The music of the most ancient nations*, London 1864, p. 311.

Today we call a learned man a scholar. In olden times a learned man was called *Musicus* (Greek). An ignoramus was called *Amusus*. The *Amusement* pages in today's newspapers still recall echoes of the implications of the original Greek meaning — people who, for the time being at least, choose not to entertain themselves and resort to outside stimulation.

Hebrew language, even Biblical language, was never so much concerned with conceptualizing terminology as it was with the call to *action*. The “doing” always came first. Even at the foot of mount Sinai the Israelites pledged themselves **וַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע** “to do, to obey the commandments”¹⁰ and to “conceptualize” them at a later time.

The term “*Music*” may have undergone semantic transformations — since it was originally not specifically associated with music, but the term “singing” has not undergone radical changes of meaning — even though the degree of polish associated with performance may leave something to be desired on occasion. Already in mankind's infancy the greatest name that could be bestowed on a child was *Mahalalel*.¹¹ **מַהֲלֵלֵל** may he be a child who will sing praises to the Lord! The most meritorious way to praise God was, as we have seen, with every breath, that is, vocally. And, in effect, if we scan the Bible we find that references to vocal music greatly outnumber references to instrumental music.

Even before the times of *Mahalalel* people gathered to “call on God”. “And to Seth, (Adam's third son) to him also there was born a son and he called his name *Enosh* — then men began to call on the name of the Lord”¹² **אֲזַחֵל לְקֹרֵא בִשְׁם ה'.** The first “lull” of the infant answers the question which came first — singing or instrumentalizing. A child will “compose” a tune much earlier than it is able to formulate a sentence or play an instrument.¹³

SHIRAH

What the Bible thought of the importance of singing can be easily surmised when we hear God identify sections of the Bible with *Shirah* — singing. “Now therefore write ye this *Song* for you and teach it to the children of Israel — put it in their *Mouths*, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.”¹⁴ **וְעָתָה כְּתוּבוֹ לָכֶם אֶת הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת**

¹⁰ Ex. 19:9.

¹¹ Gen. 5:12.

¹² Gen. 4:26.

¹³ Aron Friedman *Der Synagoge Gesang*, Berlin 1908, p. 1.

¹⁴ Deut. 31:19.

The word *Shirah* — song — occurs twice in the same sentence. Then again: “And Moses delivered into the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this *Song* until they were ended.” And again: “And Moses wrote this *Song* on that day and taught it to the children of Israel.”¹⁵ Singing is essential when serving the Lord. The Bible in effect records God’s displeasure if the voicing of gladness is missing: ...“because you did not serve the Lord with gladness and with a goodly heart.”¹⁶ What kind of service finds its fulfillment through gladness and a goodly heart? Singing!¹⁷ King Solomon entreated the Lord to listen to his sung entreaties “Please turn to the prayer of your servant and to his pleading, O Lord my God, and hear the *Singing* and the prayer which Thy servant prays before thee.”¹⁸

In his Song of Songs Solomon asks: “let me hear your voice”!¹⁹ and the Midrash comments: That is the sweet chanting of the Hallel, of the hymns of praise; when Israel chant the Hallel their voices soar heavenwards.²⁰ Praising God in song pleases God but bountifully benefits man by vouchsafing to him gladness of heart even while he is searching for God.²¹ When we praise Him our features partake of an immediate face-lift, as it were, and our utterances become refined: “Your lips are to me like a thread of scarlet and your speech is comely.”²² When? At the time you sing songs of praise to Me.²³

SONG IN TALMUD

According to the Talmud, Israel rises even higher than the angels by virtue of its singing to God. The people of Israel is especially privileged regarding song. “Beloved is Israel to the Lord over and above the angels, — for Israel can sing praises at any hour, whereas the angels can do so only once daily, once on Sabbath and once during New Year”.²⁴

This dichotomy might be understood if we picture angels as already possessing harmony. They are not exposed to conflict like common mortals and thus singing comes naturally to them. Mortal man, however, undergoes trials and tribulations without number. If man nevertheless reaches out towards harmony, his

15 Deut. 31:30.

17 Arachim 11a.

19 Cant. c. 2:7.

21 1 Chron. 16:10.

23 Shir Hashirim Rabbah on 4:3.

16 Deut. 28:47.

18 2Chron. 6:19.

20 Shir Hashirim Rabbah 2:14.

22 Cant. c. 4:3.

24 Chullin 64.

achievements ranks many notches higher than the easy come singing of the angels. Need we wait for rewards until other-worldly gratifications are bestowed upon us? Not really. Rabba said:²⁵ The diligent private study of the Torah will be publicized for you as a reward — for it is written: “Wisdom will sing joyously in the open — in public places it offers its voice” (Proverbs 1:20).

This “publicity stunt,” as it were, seems difficult to justify in view of the Rabbis admonition to us to practice modesty and to avoid unnecessary touting of our horn. Should good deeds not be carried out secretly and anonymously, if at all possible? We might say that wisdom publicizing our achievements with fanfare symbolizes God’s reward to us for studying Torah singingly in seclusion. We will have earned the privilege to appear publicly with our achievements with justifiable pride, albeit without arrogance: “Even in the presence of Kings he will appear unruffled, self-assured and confident”²⁶ The Talmud concurs: God will reward whosoever studies Torah at night (privately) by suffusing his face with grace by day.²⁷

IS THE LORD IN NEED OF PRAISE?

Does the Lord really require all this singing? After all, the great doxology of Judaism, the *Kaddish* specifically proclaims:

*Exalted and honored be the name of the Holy one, blessed be He, whose glory transcends, yea, is beyond all praises, hymns and blessings man can render unto him.*²⁸

It is not He who is in need of our praises. It is we who are required to channel our praises to Him for His bounties. This holds true especially for gifts He bestows upon us gratis. Man’s fortunes favor him in two ways: He can apply himself and by dint of hard labor — and God’s help, naturally — reach rungs of achievement. Or he might be touched by the magic wand of the so-called stroke of luck — an outright gift of God. How can we pen the proper thank you note for this extra dividend? We are told to “honor the Lord with our wealth.”²⁹

The Rabbis take “*HON*” to mean the dividends we are receiving without actually working for them. While we are bidden to thank God for every breath of

25 Pessachim 112.

26 Prov. 22:29.

28 Liturgy.

27 Chagigah 8.

29 Prov. 3:9.

life. It behooves us to show special gratitude for the extra gifts of God. That's why the Rabbis suggest we substitute גְּרוֹנְךָ "*Groncha* for "*Honcha*" הוֹנְךָ. If He granted us a singing voice we are bidden to use this very instrument to respond antiphonally, as it were. Without cloaked inferences, allusions or hints we are specifically instructed as to the form of our fealty to Him. God proposes a quid pro quo: he chose to give us the Torah תּוֹרָה בְּחוֹרָה and we in turn are invited to respond with *Habocheyr beshirey zimroh* הַבּוֹחֵר בְּשִׁירֵי זִמְרוֹה. In Torah He speaks to us. In song we sing to Him.

The expression "*Habocheyr*" "He is choosy" refines our obligation: Separate the grain from the chaff, the sacred from profane! It is true that we revel in *Bchirah Chofshit* we can freely choose, but bidden to choose the *right* way. We get some help along the way from the Torah bastion: "*It is a tree of Life to those who hold fast unto it.*" But just as He wants us to keep the Torah free from corrupt influences, our singing response should equally stress the pure strains of authentic cantillation — chorded, original and authentic tradition-sanctified synagogal modes of Jewish Music.

BIBLE READING PLEDGE FORM

I undertake to participate in the Triennial Bible reading cycle sponsored by the World Jewish Bible Center, 29A Keren Hayesod Street, Jerusalem.

Please enter my name in the Book of Honour and send me a copy of the Triennial booklet.

My Name:

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Please let us know if you need any extra Pledge Forms.

November-December 1987

בסלר תשמ"ה

S	Psalms 121-122	22	א	תהילים קכ"א-קכ"ב
M	Psalms 123-124	23	ב	תהילים קכ"ג-קכ"ד
T	Psalms 125-126	24	ג	תהילים קכ"ה-קכ"ו
W	Psalms 127-128	25	ד	תהילים קכ"ז-קכ"ח
Th	Psalms 129	26	ה	תהילים קכ"ט
F	Genesis 28:10-32:3	27	ו	ויצא
Shabbat	Haftarah: Hosea 12:13-14:10	28	ז	הפטרה: הושע י"ב, יג-יד, י"א (א)
	Hosea 11:7-12:12(S)			הושע י"א, י"ב, י"ג (ס)
S	Psalms 130-131	29	ח	תהילים קל"ק-קל"א
M	Psalms 132	30	ט	תהילים קל"ב
December				
T	Psalms 133-134	1	י	תהילים קל"ג-קל"ד
W	Psalms 135	2	יא	תהילים קל"ה
Th	Psalms 136	3	יב	תהילים קל"ו
F	Genesis 32:4-36	4	יג	וישלח
Shabbat	Haftarah: Hosea 11:7-12:12 (A)	5	יד	הפטרה: הושע י"א, י"ב, י"ג (א)
	Obadiah (S)			עובדיה (ס)
S	Psalms 137	6	טו	תהילים קל"ז
M	Psalms 138	7	טז	תהילים קל"ח
T	Psalms 139	8	יז	תהילים קל"ט
W	Psalms 140-141	9	יח	תהילים קמ"מ-קמ"א
Th	Psalms 142	10	יט	תהילים קמ"ב
F	Genesis 37-40	11	כ	וישב
Shabbat	Haftarah: Amos 2:1-3:8	12	כא	הפטרה: עמוס ב', אג', ח
S	Psalms 143	13	כב	תהילים קמ"ג
M	Psalms 144	14	כג	תהילים קמ"ד
T	Psalms 145	15	כד	תהילים קמ"ה
W	Psalms 146	16	כה	חנוכה תהילים קמ"ו
Th	Psalms 147	17	כו	חנוכה תהילים קמ"ז
F	Genesis 41:44:17	18	כז	חנוכה מקץ
Shabbat	Haftarah: Zechariah 2:14-4:7	19	כח	הפטרת חנוכה: זכריה ב', יד-ד', ז
S	Psalms 148	20	כט	חנוכה תהילים קמ"ח
M	Psalms 149-150	21	ל	חנוכה תהילים קמ"ט-ק"ן

December 1987-January 1988

טבת תשמ"ח

T	Proverbs 1	א	22	חנוכה משלי א'
W	Proverbs 2	ב	23	חנוכה משלי ב'
Th	Proverbs 3	ג	24	משלי ג'
F	Genesis 44:18-47:27	ד	25	ויגש
שבת	Haftarah: Ezekiel 37:15-28	ה	26	הפטרה: יחזקאל ל"ז, ט"ז, ט"ח
S	Proverbs 4	ו	27	משלי ד'
M	Proverbs 5	ז	28	משלי ה'
T	Proverbs 6	ח	29	משלי ו'
W	Proverbs 7	ט	30	משלי ז'
Th	Proverbs 8	י	31	צום י' טבת משלי ח'
January				
F	Genesis 47:28-50	יא	1	ויחי
שבת	Haftarah: I Kings 2:1-12	יב	2	הפטרה: מלכים א ב', א"ב
S	Proverbs 9	יג	3	משלי ט'
M	Proverbs 10	יד	4	משלי י'
T	Proverbs 11	טו	5	משלי י"א
W	Proverbs 12	טז	6	משלי י"ב
Th	Proverbs 13	יז	7	משלי י"ג
F	Exodus 1-6:1	יח	8	שמות
שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 27:6-28	יט	9	הפטרה: ישעיהו כ"ז, ו"ח
S	Proverbs 14	כ	10	משלי י"ד
M	Proverbs 15	כא	11	משלי ט"ו
T	Proverbs 16	כב	12	משלי ט"ז
W	Proverbs 17	כג	13	משלי י"ז
Th	Proverbs 18	כד	14	משלי י"ח
F	Exodus 6:2-9:35	כה	15	ו"ארא
שבת	Haftarah: Ezekiel 28:25-29:21	כו	16	הפטרה: יחזקאל כ"ח, כה"כ"ט, כא
S	Proverbs 19	כז	17	משלי י"ט
M	Proverbs 20	כח	18	משלי כ'
T	Proverbs 21	כט	19	משלי כ"א

January-February 1988

שבט תשמ"ח

W	Proverbs 22	משלי כ"ב	20	א
Th	Proverbs 23	משלי כ"ג	21	ב
F	Exodus 10-13:16	בא	22	ג
שבת	Haftarah: Jeremiah 46:13-28	הפטרה: ירמיה מ"ו, יג' כח	23	ד
S	Proverbs 24	משלי כ"ד	24	ה
M	Proverbs 25	משלי כ"ה	25	ו
T	Proverbs 26	משלי כ"ו	26	ז
W	Proverbs 27	משלי כ"ז	27	ח
Th	Proverbs 28	משלי כ"ח	28	ט
F	Exodus 13:17-17	בשלח	29	י
שבת	Haftarah: Judges 4:4-5:31	הפטרה: שופטים ד', ד"ה, לא	30	יא
S	Proverbs 29	משלי כ"ט	31	יב
February				
M	Proverbs 30	משלי ל'	1	יג
T	Proverbs 31	משלי ל"א	2	יד
W	Job 1	ט"ו בשבט איוב א'	3	טו
Th	Job 2	איוב ב'	4	טז
F	Exodus 18-20	יתרו	5	יז
שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 6-7:10	הפטרה ישעיה ו' ז', י	6	יח
S	Job 3	איוב ג'	7	יט
M	Job 4	איוב ד'	8	כ
T	Job 5	איוב ה'	9	כא
W	Job 6	איוב ו'	10	כב
Th	Job 7	איוב ז'	11	כג
F	Exodus 21-24	משפטים פ' שקלים	12	כד
שבת	Haftarah: II Kings 11:17-12:17	הפטרה: מלכים ב' י"א, יז"ב, יז	13	כה
S	Job 8	איוב ח'	14	כו
M	Job 9	איוב ט'	15	כז
T	Job 10	איוב י'	16	כח
W	Job 11	איוב י"א	17	כט
Th	Job 12	איוב י"ב	18	ל

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