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דפוס רפאל חיים הכהן בע"מ

RUTH AND MEDEA

BY SOL LIPTZIN

HOW DIFFERENT A FATE

The biblical story of Ruth and the Greek story of Medea deal with the alien woman who forsakes her God, her people and her family in order to attach herself to a God, a people and a family of her own choice. Yet, how different is the fate of each!

Ruth the Moabite, though a mere peasant girl, is received with affection and as an equal in Bethlehem of Judah and becomes the ancestress of kings, the entire Davidic dynasty. Medea, on the other hand, though a princess of Colchis, is received with hostility in Greece, is looked upon as the racial outsider, hence inferior to those born into Hellenic culture, and ends as the distraught murderer of her own children. The contrast between the experiences of these two women after their fateful decision gives us an insight into the moral approach of the biblical people and the amoral approach of the Hellenic people.

Barbarian

It is an accepted truism that Western civilization owes its concept of beauty to the Greeks but not its concept of morality. The taming of the Occident by moral laws to the extent in which it has been tamed is in the largest measure an achievement of the Israelite tribes who were the first to accept the moral codes promulgated at Sinai.

MORAL BIBLICAL AND AMORAL HELLENIC LITERATURE

There are many themes and characters in the Bible that find their parallel in Hellenic literature and folklore, and all of them illustrate this basic distinction between the Israelites, whose behavior was grounded in ethical ideals toward which we are still striving and the Greeks who were not primarily motivated by ethical considerations. Let us call attention to a few.

The biblical story of Joseph, Jacob's favorite son, has often been compared with the Athenian story of Hippolytus, son of Theseus, best dramatized by Euripides and enjoying worldwide vogue in the versions of Seneca, Racine, and D'Annunzio. When Joseph is tempted by Potiphar's wife, he resists her and flees

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from her because to yield to her passionate overtures would have been immoral. His virtuous behavior and his temporary guiltless suffering because of it are ultimately rewarded by God and he is elevated to the position of royal viceroy at the court of Pharaoh. Hippolytus, on the other hand, who in a similar situation behaves in a similar way, fleeing from the passionate overtures of Phaedra, wife of Theseus, his stepmother, is condemned because of his chastity and suffers death because he refused to pay homage to Aphrodite, Goddess of sensual passion, when the opportunity to answer an erotic call presented itself to him. Obviously, the behavior of Joseph would not have evoked admiration among the Greeks. On the other hand, the behavior of Hippolytus, disparaged by the Greeks, would have been regarded by the biblical seers as a model of civilized conduct.

As another illustration of the striking contrast between the moral biblical and the amoral Greek approach, let us consider the contrasting fates meted out to Samson and to Hercules. Both Samson and Hercules are heroes who put their faith in their physical prowess. Samson, the mighty Danite, learns that mightiness alone does not ultimately lead to salvation, when his career comes to a tragic end as the blinded prisoner of the Philistines, but that submission to the supreme authority of God is the more desirable goal of human endeavor. Hercules, on the other hand, who roams through the world performing his heroic tasks with the help of his club and his mighty biceps, is elevated to the rank of a God or demi-God on Olympus. Only the aged, disillusioned Euripides dared to differ with the



Medea preparing to flee from her homeland with Jason and the Argonauts, by Anselm Feurbach, 1829–1880

accepted legend of Hercules and, in his play on this subject, showed that faith in physical prowess must lead to megalomania and ultimate disaster. But then Euripides was a maverick who had much in common with the biblical prophets and who was ever at odds with his own generation and his own amoral people.

RACIAL TOLERANCE OR RACIAL ARROGANCE

It is, however, in the treatment of Ruth by the biblical chronicles and of Medea by the Greek narrators of the Argonautic expedition that the contrast is most apparent between Jewish racial tolerance and the Jewish ethical doctrine of the equality of all human beings made in the image of God, on the one hand, and Greek racial arrogance, on the other hand, which characterized all non-Greeks as barbarians and which rejected their acceptance into the Hellenic cultural community on terms of equality.

Jason, the leader of the Argonauts, was able to accomplish his mission and to recover the Golden Fleece, because he was assisted by Medea, the princess of Colchis, who fell in love with him. She saved him from danger and death in this most perilous adventure. She followed him to his distant Hellenic homeland. She bore him two children. For him and his countrymen, nevertheless, she remains the foreigner, the racially unequal. He bears with her for the sake of their children and only until a respectable union with a Greek bride presents itself. Then Medea is cast aside and he acquiesces in her exile from Corinth, the seat of his anticipated bliss with his new mate. He does not understand why Medea should be so unhappy and so unreconciled to her coming fate, since he is prepared to provide magnanimously for her and since he will also see to it that his children are well cared for. She, however, will not accept her inferior position and her lonely exile, while the man for whom she sacrificed everything revels in a new union. To avenge herself for the inflicted hurt, Medea brings about the death of her rival and of the children she bore to Jason.

Effort!

How different was the life of Ruth after she too chose to leave her homeland for the foreign soil of her late husband's people! She followed her aging mother-in-law Naomi to Bethlehem. She accepted Naomi's people as her people and Naomi's God as her God. The inhabitants of her adopted homeland, in turn, accepted her as an equal. She was deemed by Boaz, the rich landowner, to be a fitting mate, even though she attemmed from Moab. Ruth and Boaz became the ancestors of King David. Her tale reverberated down the centuries as an example

of the equality of all human beings, regardless of their racial origin or of their social position.

GRILLPARZER'S *THE GOLDEN FLEECE*

Medea survived her tragic ordeal and her exile from Corinth, but her later life was of no interest to the many writers who depicted her before and during her hour of crisis. The most elaborate treatment of Medea in modern literature was the dramatic trilogy, *The Golden Fleece*, by Franz Grillparzer, Austria's finest dramatist.

Like his predecessors since Euripides, Grillparzer too was confronted with the problem of arousing our sympathy for the murderess and of reconciling us with her revolting deed. He therefore devoted the first play of his trilogy to Colchis, the dark home of the heroine, and showed her in her domineering splendor as princess in the barbarian land. In the second play he brought her face to face with Jason, soon after this hero's arrival to fetch the Golden Fleece, which her father had obtained through treachery and bloodshed. The Greek leader of the Argonauts saw in her the dazzling sun in a land of gloom and horror. She saw in him a God from some happier clime. She therefore could not successfully resist his impetuous wooing, and for his sake she brought down destruction upon her father, her brother, and her people. The final play of the trilogy depicted the aftermath in Greece. There Medea is no longer the reigning princess, but a helpless foreigner whose sole support is her beloved Jason. He must, however, regard her with different eyes, when he now sees her upon a background of Greek culture, and he must chafe under the burden of his liaison with the alien mother of his children. When Medea is banished from Corinth and he is allowed to remain and is even offered the hand of the king's daughter, he may for a moment feel that he ought to share Medea's exile, but he is not likely to persist in this feeling. Too great is the lure of freedom and a new love. Medea, scorned by the cultivated Greeks in spite of her efforts to adjust herself to her new environment, repudiated by her mate in spite of all the sacrifices she made for him, abandoned even by her young children, who, when given the choice, prefer her successor, hounded as a criminal and refused an hospitable refuge—Medea can revert to her original savage nature, can avenge and murder, without wholly forfeiting our sympathy. The trilogy concludes with her bitter, resigned insight: "What is joy on earth—a shadow! What is fame on earth—a dream!"

As in preceding versions, Medea does not end her life after her infamous deed. She continues to exist but only as a living corpse. Her later fate on earth fails to arouse further interest.

BEER-HOFMANN'S *DER JUNGE DAVID*

Ruth too ceases to attract the attention of creative writers after her marriage to Boaz. The biblical narrative merely adds that, after her marriage, she gave birth to Oved, who became the father of Yishai, the father of David. Indeed, her story may have been included among the biblical scrolls just because of her relationship to David, the founder of Judea's royal dynasty. Later versions of the idyllic tale continue to center about her loyalty to Naomi and to Naomi's God and people, a loyalty rewarded by a happy marriage. Only a single dramatist in our century, Grillparzer's countryman, Richard Beer-Hofmann, went beyond the biblical conclusion and presented her late in life when the romantic idealism of her years had been tempered by the experiences of mature decades and she had become the wise ancestress of generations who turned to her for guidance.

Beer-Hofmann was attracted to Ruth because he saw in her a prefiguration of his own wife Paula, who also came to him from alien hearths and who was renamed Ruth after she too cast in her lot with the Jewish people. In his dramatic masterpiece, *Der junge David*, completed in the tragic year of the Nazi ascendancy to power as his proud affirmation of his Jewish fate, he included as a prologue the *Book of Ruth* almost in its entirety and he painted Ruth's portrait in memorable verses in the first, third, and final acts of the play.

The scene of the drama takes place during the critical days before and after the Battle of Gilboa, which resulted in Saul's defeat by the Philistines and David's coronation as his successor. Ruth, David's great-grandmother, is still alive, an object of reverence and a source of strength to her young descendant, who turns to her for advice in hours of indecision and distress. During her long life, she has witnessed many ups-and-downs, Israel's victories and defeats, Samuel's judgeship, Saul's elevation to the throne of Israel by popular acclaim, and his replacement in popular affection by David, the glamorous slayer of Goliath and the secretly anointed coming ruler.

In the first scene Ruth is presented as a legendary figure who is rarely seen by day. Only now and then, when the fruit of the field ripens, does she venture out into the open towards evening and walks alone through the high-standing grain,



Ruth gleaning in the field of Boaz, by Gustav Doré

swathed in white linen that glistens in the fading light like the snow of Mt. Hermon. "Folks whisper that the stalks bend aside even before her foot skirts them, that the shy birds remain unafraid near their brood, and that butterflies, tired of winging, rest on her hand. Thus Ruth wanders silently through the blessed fields until the silver sickle of the moon comes up in the pale evening sky."

RUTH SPEAKS TO DAVID WITH WISDOM OF AGE

In the third act David, on the verge of despair, turns to Ruth for guidance. Earlier, he had fled before Saul, had found refuge with the Philistine king Achish of Gath, and had sworn allegiance to this protector. Now a war has broken out between the Philistines and the Israelites. David, as vassal of a Philistine king, is commanded to join the forces ranged in battle against the Israelites. He is thus faced with a cruel choice. To answer the summons of his liege lord means to join in the slaughter of his own people, whom he is later to rule. Not to answer the summons means to be disloyal to his oath of allegiance, an impossibility for one who demands loyalty of his own followers. In this dilemma, it is Ruth who speaks to him with the wisdom of age and who rouses him from his indecision by calling upon him to listen to the dictates of his heart. He must be faithful to the inner voice within him which registers every deviation from right and wrong and which is the moral seismograph implanted in him as in every human being by his divine creator.

In the final act, after the Battle of Gilboa has been fought and lost and after the defeated remnants of Israel turn to David to assume the crown, he is inclined to refuse the proffered coronation because of a personal tragedy. It is then that Ruth makes her final appearance. She impresses upon David not to surrender to despair in an hour of his own grief. To his anguished outcry "What is to become of me now?" she gives the sage reply: "That which becomes of all of us ultimately—dung of the earth, perhaps a song, but this too fades away." And yet, until our end we must all continue on our assigned course and live out our fate, no more eternal and no less transitory than the stars above us. An individual chosen for a unique destiny as David has been, a people chosen to be *am segula* as the Jewish people has been, may well lament: what is the meaning of our chosenness, what sort of blessing does it confer, what happiness does it bring? Ruth's answer is that beyond all blessings there is the supreme blessing of being a

blessing to others. Forgetfulness of self, escape from loneliness and personal tragedy, can best come about by immersion in something beyond self, by being faithful to the universal law that rules clouds, winds, creatures and constellations, and which manifests itself also as the life force that courses through us.

CHOSENNESS A BLESSING AND A BURDEN

Ruth's answer to David is also Beer-Hofmann's answer to his own people in their period of national agony. Chosenness is both a blessing and a burden. Happiness ultimately beams as a byproduct of living in harmony with the universal will, God's will, intuitively felt by us in the innermost layers of our complex being.

Medea and Ruth, in their many literary transformations since antiquity, confirm the basic contrast between the Hellenic, pessimistic, amoral contemplation of life and the Hebraic, optimistic, moral approach. This approach is rooted in faith in a divinely inspired order and in the concept of the Hebraic people as *am segula*. This approach contributed to Jewish survival in the generations when Ruth's descendants ruled over Israel, in the two millennia of Jewish dispersion over the face of the earth, and in our century of the Jewish Holocaust and of the Jewish homecoming to our ancestral land.

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JOAB, CAPTAIN OF THE HOST

BY SHIMON BAKON

No elegy was composed, no days of mourning were proclaimed, no words of regret were uttered at the death of Joab, captain of David's army. Benaiah had been sent by direct orders of King Solomon to strike Joab down in the Tent of the Lord, where he sought refuge from the wrath of the recently crowned king. Thus ended the life of Joab, who had helped in David's rise to power, had pacified the land, had united Israel and had expanded it to a size almost never again to be exceeded. He lived by violence and died a violent death.

There are historians who, in their adulation of David, see in Joab a devious, ruthless assassin; there are others who deprecate David, portraying him as a successful climber, a manipulating charmer who, together with Samuel, victimized Saul. They would shift their praise for most of David's achievement unto Joab.

The truth, as always, is with both and with none of these historians. Before our eyes is revealed by the pen of an unequalled artist the spectacle of two complex and complementary figures. By joining forces on some occasions and clashing on others, they helped shape the history of Israel up to our own times.

THE SONS OF ZERUIAH

Zeruiah, the sister of David, had three remarkable sons: Joab, Abishai and Asahel. It is strange that in the entire range of Scriptures the name of their father is not mentioned even once. The usual answer that they were sons of David's sister, and therefore only Zeruiah is mentioned, is not fully satisfactory. There was another sister, Avigail, whose son Amasa achieved prominence for a short period. In his case the name of his father, Jeter, is recorded more than once. It is equally puzzling that in the first book of Samuel, Joab's name is recorded only obliquely as the brother of Abishai, while the exploits of Abishai, one of the "heroes" of David, are told in some detail on two occasions.

Whatever the reasons for the omission of Joab's name in I Samuel, we find him

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catapulted to a position of prominence in one of the fateful encounters between the men of Judah (after the enthronement of David as King of Judah) and the men of Abner at the pool of Gibeon (II Samuel 2:13–14). At this stage there can be no question that Joab was already a leading military leader in David's camp. Abner challenged Joab to a military game between twelve champions from each camp. A battle is precipitated in which Abner's men suffered a crushing defeat and in which Asahel, pursuing Abner, is cut down by the latter.

Two comments are here in place. This encounter is told in some detail. It is obvious that the major purpose of relating this episode is the slaying of Asahel in fair battle with Abner. This was one of probably many independent actions engaged in by Joab, none of which is recorded except this one in which the death of Asahel occurred, touching profoundly on the life of David. Secondly, the narration is very specific on the manner in which Asahel died. Asahel, still quite young, had achieved a sufficient reputation by his personal courage and prowess to be included among the "valiant men" of David. But he was no match for the experienced Abner whom he insisted on pursuing, though the latter had asked him repeatedly to desist. Twice he asked him to "turn aside," imploring, "how then shall I hold up my face to Joab thy brother." Abner, in a backward thrust of the spear intended to stun him, killed Asahel.

THE ASSASSINATION OF ABNER

It was soon thereafter that Abner, tired of serving Ish-Boshet, a mere puppet and a shadowy son of the impressive Saul, and in consequence of a personal rift between them, decided to transfer his loyalty to David, thus ensuring the kingdom of Israel for him. Negotiations progressed satisfactorily. Joab, returning from one of his frequent forays, found to his dismay that Abner had been to see David. After a short hassle with the king, recorded in 3:24–25, he sent secretly for Abner and assassinated him.

Understandably, David's fury was great. Precisely at a moment when his dream to become king of a United Kingdom was to be realized, his ambition could have been shattered by the morally questionable and politically stupid deed of Joab. To protest his innocence in this assassination, David publicly cursed Joab, lamented the death of Abner by composing a dirge and imposed for himself a day of fasting: "So all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner" (3:39), and they crowned him king over all Israel.

Here we must stop and take stock of the emerging relationship between David and Joab. There can be no question that the first of other severe rifts between the two strong personalities occurred at this point, ending in the last charge by David to Solomon that Joab must not die peacefully. It must be mentioned that Abishai was party to Joab's plan and assassination of Abner. But nowhere do we find David's anger turned against him. Both Joab and Abishai, from their point of view, did what they thought was an honorable thing: Avenge the blood of Asahel. In fact Scripture stresses this point twice (3:27; 3:30). We need not doubt that there were ulterior motives for the assassination of Abner. Having done what they did, points to their almost unbelievable political immaturity. Perhaps out of gratitude to Abishai, who had personally saved the life of David in one of the previous campaigns against the Philistines, or perhaps viewing Joab as the leader of the two, the full fury was turned against Joab. But why did he not punish them? We get some glimpse for his reason: "And I am this day weak, and just anointed king; and the *sons of Zeruah are too hard* for me; the Lord reward the evil doer according to his wickedness" (3:39).

The Book of Samuel keeps silent concerning Joab's reaction to David's just anger. There may have been resentment, but if so, it was swallowed by a subordinate in the face of an unjust rebuke made by a superior. One may perhaps assume that, after the assassination of Abner, it dawned on Joab that by his act he had almost destroyed the chances for a United Kingdom. The only sign of outer regret, if there was such, was submission to the order by David for Joab and Abishai to "tear their garments and to wail before Abner."

We may surmise that Joab was deposed as "captain of the host." We get a hint of this from the conquest of Jerusalem which is told both in I Chronicles 11:5 and II Samuel 5:8. These two accounts differ in two significant but complementary details. In Samuel we are told: "And David said on that day: he who smites the Jebusites and getteth up to the gutter," there being an abrupt ending without mentioning the second part of the clause. Chronicles is more specific. And David said: "He who smites the Jebusites first shall be head and prince...and Joab, son of Zeruah, went up first and became head." From this account we adduce that Joab by his daring act captured or rather recaptured the position of captain of the host. The Book of Samuel, however, supplies a detail which points to David as the chief architect of the conquest of Jerusalem. It is David who, in both versions, conquers first the *מְצוּדַת צִיּוֹן* which he then renamed the City of David;

and it is he who suggested the צִינּוֹר as a likely approach to the heart of Jerusalem and the key to defeating the Jebusites.

URIAH THE HITTITE

The affair with Bat-Sheba, which had a profound influence on the life of David and the subsequent history of Israel, provided another point of contact and perhaps of rift, where the interests of the king and his chief of the army touched and crossed.

We are not told whether, after the conquest of Jerusalem, there occurred a reconciliation between the king and Joab. In all probability there remained some annoyance. Yet the king accepted, in pragmatic fashion, the special skill and the unquestioned loyalty of this capable military leader. It is characteristic of Joab that, in the affair of Bat-Sheba, he sacrificed Uriah because of the unfortunate consequence of what must have been considered by the king only a temporary liaison. If we figure that Solomon, when he succeeded David, was a young man, twenty of age, it follows that the event had occurred when David was approximately fifty years old, a fine psychological age for such escapades. Uriah, also enumerated amongst the "valiant men" of David—that special order of heroes whose exploits hearkened back to the time when David was not yet king over Judah—must have been a trusted fellow-in-arms, perhaps even a friend of Joab for at least twenty years. It is entirely possible that Joab was not too pleased with his grizzly assignment, transferring a repressed resentment to Solomon.

It is equally characteristic of Joab that his loyalty to the king remained untarnished. In fact, we are surprised to find a gentle streak in Joab, otherwise so ruthless in pursuit of his personal ambitions, and a sense of concern for the feelings of the king. When he, after a protracted siege of Rabbat Ammon, finally conquered the "city of waters" (apparently a vital part of the capital), making its fall imminent, he sent for David "to encamp against the city and take it; lest I take the city and it be called after my name" (II Samuel 12:28).

ABSALOM, MY SON

The tragedy of Absalom almost like a Greek tragedy, follows its necessary course, at the end of which David remains an old man, broken in body and in spirit. Absalom is killed, leaving in his wake a spirit of rebellion that was yet to trouble Israel. The tenuous relationship between David and Joab is shattered

perhaps precipitating thereby the death of yet another son, Adonijah. From here on, we find Joab still personally loyal to David but in direct opposition to the king on some vital issues.

The tragedy of Absalom had to occur because he was very much like his father: ambitious, charismatic, able to manipulate people by his charm.

Who is to judge what had priority, the heart of David whose fault with all his sons was that he loved them too much, or the cold judgement of Joab who decided that this handsome troublemaker had to be eliminated for the good of David and the indivisibility of a United Kingdom?

The story of Absalom is told in great detail and it represents story-telling at its best. Yet there are many questions left unanswered. Why didn't David punish Amnon for his brutal rape of Tamar, the sister of Absalom? The Book of Samuel merely tells that the king was very wroth, but he did not punish him. The Septuagint offers a suggestive clue "for he was the first-born" (II Kings 13:21). And when Absalom killed Amnon and then fled to Geshur, living there for three years, apparently at the court of his grandfather, it was Joab who served as an intermediary between father and son: "And the soul of King David failed with longing for Absalom... Now Joab...perceived that the king's heart was toward Absalom..." (II Samuel 13:39, 14:1). Understanding the pain of David, who is now to lose Absalom by forced separation, Joab takes steps to have Absalom returned. It is touching to observe that he, having succeeded by a ruse of the wise woman of Tekoah to obtain permission for the return of Absalom from his exile, thanks David: "And Joab said: Today thy servant knoweth that I have found favour in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath performed the request of thy servant" (II Samuel 14:22). And yet, he did not care for Absalom. For two years, though apparently his neighbor, he refused to see him or to intercede on his behalf with the king. Only when Absalom put fire to the fields of Joab, thus forcing an encounter, did the latter effect a final reconciliation between father and son. "וַיִּשָׁק הַמֶּלֶךְ לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם"—"And the king kissed Absalom" (II Samuel 14:33).

Through a strange sequence of events leading to exile and reconciliation and in a complete nonsequitur to this reconciliation, Absalom now begins his plans for a rebellion with the skill of an accomplished demagogue!

TO LOVE THOSE THAT HATE YOU AND HATE THOSE THAT LOVE YOU

"And it came to pass at the end of forty years" that Absalom, after careful

preparation, launched his rebellion from Hebron. We need not relate the events up to the fateful battle between the forces of David and Absalom, for they have no relevance for our basic thesis. Perhaps one fact should be noted. Anticipating a statement occurring later, "for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom" (I Kings 1:28), we take it for granted that Joab, in this period of major distress, remained unflinchingly loyal to the king. We are not told about the king's involvement in the plans for battle. We only know that he gave clear instructions to the three commanders, Joab, Abishai and Ittai: "Be gentle for my sake with the young man, Absalom." But it was Joab himself who put three darts into the body of Absalom who, caught in flight in the branches of a tree, had been sighted by one of the men of Joab. He returns to the king who is anxiously awaiting the outcome of the battle at the gates of the city.

What indeed did David expect? If victorious, what would he do with a captured Absalom? Exile him again? Try to effect a reconciliation? And what, if his forces are defeated? We are here confronted with the unexpressed inner conflict that must have been raging within the soul of David. And seen against



Absalom caught by his hair in the branch of the tree, France, c. 1250

the total background of the relationship between David and Joab, there occurred a total reversal of roles played by them in the tragic assassination of Abner. Joab, responsible for the killing of both Abner and Absalom, followed the dictates of his heart in the case of the former and the dictates of sound political judgement in the case of the latter. It was just the reverse with David.

And yet, we may have a fine hint, perhaps a slip of the tongue of what went on in the turbulent mind of David. We are told that Ittai of Gat had joined David on his flight from Jerusalem. And David said to him: "Why do you come with us? Return and abide with the *king* (Absalom), for you are a foreigner" (II Samuel 15:19). Did David resign himself to the fait-accompli of Absalom as king? Was he perhaps ready to abdicate, or to make Absalom heir-apparent? If this went on in his mind, we are told nothing of such plans.

And the victory that day turned into mourning when the people heard that the king was lamenting the death of his son: "And the people got them by stealth... into the city, as people that are ashamed steal away when they flee in battle" (19:4). Joab, seeing how his victory of his men turned into bitter disappointment by the irrational behavior of David, rebuked him with sharp words—"to love those that hate you and hate those that love you" (II Samuel 19:7)—and forced him to face up to reality.

A new dimension is now added to the complex relationship between these two personalities. To the grieving king Joab has now added insult to hurt. The breach between the two is final. When a new rebellion was fostered on the heels of Absalom's revolt by Sheba ben Bichri, David called for a new commander, Amasa, to put it down. The deposed Joab acted again in characteristic fashion. He assassinated Amasa, pursued with usual vigor and skill the army of Sheba, ending the revolt with a minimum of Jewish blood.

FOR JOAB HAD TURNED AFTER ADONIJAH

Who is to judge whether Joab's support for Adonijah, the next in line for succession was to be considered treason? It is true that David was not aware of the goings-on at En-Rogel where preparations were afoot to have Adonijah crowned king. But this had none of the marks of a revolt.

The sentence, "he exalted himself, saying: 'I *will be* king'" (and not: I *am* king), would lend credence to the assumption that no treason or overthrow of David was intended, as in the case of Absalom. Furthermore, "his father had not

admonished him all his life...and he was a goodly man; and he was born after Absalom" (I Kings 1:6), thus are summed up Adonijah's claims to succession. Why, then, did he not attempt to get the blessings of his father? Scripture offers a hint: the absence of Nathan and Solomon from the festivities at En Rogel. Nathan's choice of successor is already alluded to when Solomon was born. "And the Lord loved him," and Nathan called him *יְדִידָהּ*. Beloved of the Lord. The prophet was certain that Solomon was the one to whom it had been vouchsafed by God to introduce a reign of peace, to move forward with the building of the Temple and to establish firmly the dynasty of the House of David. These were matters of gravest concern to the dying king.

Knowing the feelings of Nathan and his powerful influence on David, Adonijah failed to invite Nathan and Solomon. He also omitted to notify the king. But he found ready accomplices in Joab and Abiatar for his ambitions.

But why the procrastination of David? He cannot be exempted from guilt. We are told of an oath that David had made to Bat-Sheba that "assuredly, Solomon thy son, shall reign after me" (I Kings 1:13). So old and sick at the age of seventy that he had to grant audiences from his bedchamber, why did he not officially proclaim his successor? His indecision towards his own sons not only cost the death of Amnon and Absalom but proved also fatal, in the last analysis, for yet another son, Adonijah.

And why, indeed, had Joab turned after Adonijah? It is strange that while the motives for the actions of Adonijah, Nathan, Bat-Sheba and Solomon are fairly clear to us, we are not told about the motives of the two major dramatic personae: David and Joab. One may perhaps venture the guess that the king postponed his decision since he did not wish to hurt Adonijah. Joab may have found in Adonijah a man more to his taste, more easily influenced to continue in war-like ventures. It is also possible, as mentioned before, that Joab carried a repressed resentment against Solomon from the time that he had become party to the "murder" of Uriah.

Whatever the reasons for Joab's support of Adonijah, the curtain was raised for the final act in his life. Suddenly fallen from power, probably the bitterest pill for him to swallow was when Benaiah and his "valiant men" stopped following him: "and Benaiah...and the mighty men that belonged to David, were not with Adonijah" (I Kings 1:8). Thus he remained a mighty hero without an army, without backing and out of grace.

AND YOU ALSO KNOW WHAT JOAB DID TO ME

Shortly before he died David charged Solomon: "And you also know what Joab, son of Zeruiah did unto *me*, even what he did unto Abner...and unto Amasa...whom he slew and shed the blood of war in peace... Do therefore according to your wisdom, and let not his grey head go down in peace" (I Kings 2:5–6). We are nagged more forcefully by the questions raised in the beginning. Was this the proper reward for his unquestioned loyalty to the king and to Israel, his singleminded devotion to them and his accomplishments? And if deserving of death, why the search for some pretext to do away with him "according to thy wisdom?" And why did not David himself give direct orders for his execution?

A variety of answers have been put forward to some of the questions. Professor Gevaryahu* proposes the theory that Joab's most heinous crime, in the eyes of the ancients, was the vile breaking of a "covenant" David had made with Abner. To prevent a bitter curse attending such a breach from following his dynasty, Joab had to be eliminated. A strong and cogent case is made for this supposition. But it fails to answer the troubling question of why Abishai, equally implicated in this crime, was not included in his order to Solomon. And why did he also add Amasa, with whom no covenant was made?

Others suggest that David's act was vengeance, pure and simple. But vengeance for what? If David was so deeply disturbed by the assassination of Abner and Amasa, why did he not find good cause himself for direct orders to execute Joab? And in all fairness to the great king, was he so guiltless in matters of shedding innocent blood?

If one takes a good look at the last charge to Solomon, one discerns elements of three considerations that coursed through the mind of David and that found open and hidden expression. There were considerations of statesmanship, a desire for a firm establishment of his dynasty through Solomon, through whom God would "establish His word which He spoke to me: ...there shall not fail thee...a man on the throne of Israel" (I Kings 2:4). And if his line of kingship was to be continued through Solomon, there could be no room for Joab.

Having been prevented "because thou has shed much blood" (I Ch 22:8), to build the Temple, and with the death of Uriah and its consequences still disturbing him even on his deathbed, David himself did not wish to have one

* Haim Gevaryahu: ברית דוד ואבנר וגורלו של שר הצבא יואב, חדשים מתוך ספר שמואל י"ב, ירושלים

more death on his conscience, though deserved, and thus delegated this assignment to the "wisdom of his son."

And there was also an element of settling accounts with Joab. This is contained in the "hidden" meaning of "what he did unto *me*", namely the wanton killing of Absalom.

BECAUSE HE FELL UPON TWO MEN MORE RIGHTEOUS THAN HE

The fervent wish of David: "Be thou strong...and show thyself a man," came true. Solomon, seizing upon the pretext of Adonijah's wish to marry Avishag the Shunamite (was it innocence or clever pretence?), acted decisively. Declaring it to be a dangerous plot, he executed Adonijah forthwith, exiled Abiatar and gave special orders to smite Joab.

As the curtain closes, we see him in the Tent of the Lord, holding on to the horns of the altar. Benaiah, sent by Solomon to "go and fall upon him" returns to the new king reporting Joab's refusal to move from the Tent and his challenge that he be killed there. One feels the hesitation of Benaiah. Was it the fact that he could not withhold respect for one who had been his superior for so many years and, next to David, the most powerful man in Israel? Was it the fact that he now confronted the once mighty Joab in deep distress? Was he assailed by doubts as to the propriety of killing a man in the Tent of the Lord who was holding on to the horns of the altar in accordance with custom sanctified from time immemorial?

The narration skips what went on in the mind and heart of Benaiah as it is tactfully silent about the feelings and thoughts of Joab preparing to die a violent death. We are only told that Benaiah returned to Solomon for further instructions.

We are treated to a short speech by Solomon, reiterating his father's last charge: "that thou mayest take away the blood which Joab shed without cause, from me and from my father's house" (I Kings 2:31). The instructions, demanding quick action, seem entirely too long. He protesteth too much. One still feels that Benaiah is not too pleased with the role of executioner of Joab. But then follow Solomon's shrewd words: "because he fell upon two men more righteous and better than he," words not charged by his father. The hint is clear, and Benaiah understands. A live Joab will never tolerate a new captain of the host.

And so Benaiah, son of Yehoyada, went up and fell upon him and slew him. And the king put Benaiah in his stead over the host.

Even his burial at his house in the wilderness, and not in his family's tomb (as in the case of Ahitofel), is interpreted by Gevaryahu as a final insult to the memory of Joab.

One is tempted, though, to apply the very finest words of David to his memory: "How are the mighty fallen."

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MOBY DICK AND THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

BY MARTA BERL SHAPIRO

DUALITY IN LIFE

"The truest of all men was the Man of Sorrows and the truest of all books is Solomon's, and Ecclesiastes is the fine hammered steel of woe."¹ In this remarkable sentence, Melville asserts his principle of the balance and the duality in life. Man, nature, and all the world about us, says Melville, is composed of a light side and a dark side. Life and light and their ramifications are coexistent with death and darkness and their ramifications. In *Moby Dick*, Melville refers to the biblical texts Isaiah, Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes which present these same dualities of life.

The book of Isaiah is a book of prophecies exposing the vice and crime of Isaiah's time: the pleasure-seeking, the wantonness, the enslavement of human beings, the idolatry, the selfish greed of the rich, the bribery of rulers and the corruption of judges; for Isaiah is a prophet who makes judgments and seeks justice. But, at the same time that he condemns his corrupt age, he presents for consolation a picture of the ideal moral age. While he judges the present actions of his listeners, he promises justice for them in the future, *if* they repent. During his lifetime, his exhortations and warnings were not heeded; the ill-fated people of Israel went on their monomaniac way of evil and were punished. Exile, a life of alienation among other nations, and partial destructions was their lot.

In *Moby Dick* we see many kinds of prophets who similarly exhorted and warned Ahab. Gabriel the fanatic archangel of the Jeroboam explicitly replies to Ahab's demanding question: "Hast thou seen the white Whale?"² His perceptive prophecy was not the answer Ahab longed for: "Think, think of thy whale boat, stoven and sunk! Beware of the horrible tail!"³ The Manxman similarly makes

1. Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, ed. Charles Feidelson, Jr. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc.), pp. 542-43.

2. Melville, p. 411.

3. Melville, p. 411.

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numerous prophecies warning Ahab about the whale-line: "Sir, I mistrust it; this line looks far gone, long heat and wet have spoiled it."⁴ Ahab makes light of his words, but they are quickly fulfilled. No sooner is the log heaved than the overstrained line snaps, and the log goes down into the deep. Pip's philosophical thoughts are discarded as nonsense: "Man's insanity is heaven's sense."⁵ His scrutiny of the doubloon results in seemingly unconnected mad phrases – a gibberish of English grammar. What he is really saying, by means of the inflection of the verb "look," is that each person sees in the doubloon a reflection of his own mind. Pip goes on to say: "And I, you and he; and we, ye, and they, are all bats; . . ."⁶ Seemingly as aimless as bats, the Pequod proceeds along because Ahab believes he must pursue Moby Dick. As stiffnecked as the Jewish people in his belief, Ahab continues his monomaniac journey to doom.

DUALISMS IN SONG OF SONGS AND MOBY DICK

The Song of Songs, that "truest of all books," presents dualisms and parallels to the story of *Moby Dick*. An immediate and obvious dualism is that of the literal meaning of the text and the allegorical meanings preached by the Rabbis and the Church Fathers. Its many allegorical meanings are possible because the plot of the text is communicated through a series of explicit love lyrics. Simply but eloquently the author sings of the irresistible power of love: "For love is as strong as death."⁷ The moral of the book is that love, in addition to being one of the strongest of emotions in the human heart, should also be the holiest of emotions. Love can transfigure; love can hallow. Note how the Shulamite maiden's love for her shepherd is constant despite many obstacles; she proves that love is capable of heroic endurance as she remains true to her betrothed. Because of love, her pursuit of happiness is successful.

Ahab is not motivated by love although he deludes himself that his pursuit of Moby Dick is, for him, the pursuit of happiness. Because he is driven by the emotions of hate and revenge, he is doomed to be unsuccessful. His hate causes him to be untrue to his contract with Pelge and Bildad as he subordinates the search for whale oil to his demonic compulsive search for Moby Dick. He is

4. Melville, p. 657.

5. Melville, p. 530.

6. Melville, p. 556.

7. Song of Songs 8:6.

similarly untrue to his responsibilities for the welfare of his crew exposing them to his monomaniacal illness and, by persuasive propaganda methods, infecting them with his disease. He endangers their lives constantly and needlessly until finally, he leads them to their doom. He feels hate and revenge: both are products of his intellectual probings, the creation of his mind. He feels no love, and having eliminated love, he has, similarly, eliminated his heart, not knowing that without a heart he can sustain only a tragic view of life. How little Ahab thinks of the heart is demonstrated in the chapter "Ahab and the Carpenter." Ahab suggests to the carpenter that he would like to order from him a man fashioned without a heart. Seemingly, he is speaking in jest, but he is thinking in earnest. He sincerely would, if he could, will himself to be a man with "no heart at all . . . and about a quarter of an acre of fine brains."⁸

Ahab is one of the first of our modern alienated men and it is self-alienation stemming from his lack of love. He begins by imprisoning himself in his cabin and isolating himself from his crew. There is no society to which he can belong with the exception of his crew. The gams upon the high seas are infrequent, but even during the gams Ahab finds communication with the captains either impossible or severely impeded. When Ahab is offered the allegiance and love of the God-fearing man of conscience, Starbuck, he instead allies himself with Fedallah, a Satan-like agent, or with Pip, the mad childish negro. Both Pip and Fedallah are, in a sense, non-persons, for Fedallah cannot cast his own shadow and Pip resides in a special world of his mad mind. But Ahab clings to them because he does not have to give of himself with a non-person; love is not a necessary part of such a relationship. Ahab could not permit himself to accept the Song of Songs' message of love.

THESIS AND ANTITHESIS IN ECCLESIASTES AND MOBY DICK

Ecclesiastes is a book of dualisms; at all times it broadly proclaims skepticism and piety, futility and faith, predestination and free will; these and all its other motifs are akin to the many theses and antitheses of *Moby Dick*. Both books are spiritual journeys for life's meaning and both present the problems of life along with moral suggestions.

The more one probes into the possibilities of comparison between these two texts the more one is amazed and confounded by the number of incidents and

8. Melville, p. 599.

similarities which seem to proliferate. The narrators of both books are introduced early in their respective texts and both narrators tell their stories using the "I" pronoun. Never is this pronoun intrusive to the reader; on the contrary, both narrators efface themselves so well that at times they are almost invisible. Nevertheless, the reader is well aware that in each instance the point of view belongs respectively to Ishmael and to Solomon. Neither Solomon nor Ishmael ever voice any dogmatic certainties; instead, both are philosophers of the doctrine of tentativeness. Both are rebels who go in search of truth and wisdom. Both are bitterly dissatisfied with the establishment and its Creator because of the paradoxical nature of the establishment. Nevertheless, neither denies God, and Ishmael even makes room in his heart and mind for tolerance and understanding of other people's gods. Solomon as author of Ecclesiastes is often a cynic, but just as often he displays humor, satire, and irony. Comparable to this is the sardonic humor evident in Ishmael's first meeting with Queequeg: "Even as it was, I thought something of slipping out of the window, but it was the second floor back."⁹ Ishmael's sense of humor enhances the chapter "The Decanter." There he recalls a gam on board the Samuel Enderby after the death of Ahab, and he describes in detail the social meal he shared with the sailors of the Enderby. His humor is as fine and as tough as the meat he describes: "Indestructible dumplings. I fancied that you could feel them, and roll them about in you after they were swallowed. If you stooped over too far forward, you risked their pitching out of you like billard-balls. The bread — but that couldn't be helped; besides, it was an anti-scorbutic; in short, the bread contained the only fresh fare they had. But the forecabin was not very light, and it was very easy to step over into a dark corner when you ate it."¹⁰

Early in Ecclesiastes Solomon says: "I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold all is vanity and a striving after wind."¹¹ He sees all the work of man as fruitless and therefore life is a mockery. This is similar to the lesson learned by Ishmael early in his career. In the first chapter of *Moby Dick*, he explains why he never goes to sea as a Commodore, Captain, or Cook: "I abandon the glory and distinction of such offices to those who like them. For my

9. Melville, p. 48.

10. Melville, pp. 567-68.

11. Ecclesiastes 1:14.

part, I abominate all honorable respectable toils, trials, and tribulations of every kind whatsoever.”¹²

MAXIMS OF SOLOMON ECHOED BY ISHMAEL

Ishmael is so like Solomon in his thinking that he easily adopts Solomon’s maxims to sum up his own thoughts. We find him quoting: “All is vanity.”¹³ “The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead;”¹⁴ and “There is nothing new under the sun.”¹⁵ Both Solomon and Ishmael advocate judicious use of the heart and the head; this is in direct contrast to Ahab’s actions.

Although Solomon admires wisdom and was famous for his wisdom, at the same time he establishes his belief that the search for wisdom is fruitless: “And I applied my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly — I perceived that this also was a striving after wind. For in much wisdom is much vexation; And he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.”¹⁶ His experiences in life make him see that the search for knowledge leads nowhere; this search only makes more visible the imperfections of the world and increases the unhappiness of the individual. In the chapter, “The Try-Works,” Ishmael echoes the words of Solomon as he disavows excess probing and meditation saying: “There is a wisdom that is woe; but there is a woe that is madness.”¹⁷ Many times Ishmael expresses his belief that the physical hard knocks of life may not be as destructive as the metaphysical thumps one brings upon oneself. Nowhere is this more explicit than in the chapter, “The Mast-Head.” Ishmael confesses that once, when it was his duty to man the mast-head, he kept a poor guard, and he fell into a meditative trance. Ishmael not only warns, but exhorts us against such excess meditation because it is a disassociation from reality that is self-destructive. It begins with “opium-like listlessness,”¹⁸ and then deteriorates into a loss of identity leading to doom.

Similarly Solomon exhorts the reader not to perplex himself with the mysteries

12. Melville, p. 26.
13. Ecclesiastes 1:2.
14. Proverbs 21:16.
15. Ecclesiastes 1:9.
16. Ecclesiastes 1:17-18.
17. Melville, p. 543.
18. Melville, p. 214.

of the universe, but to attempt to live in accordance with God's will. God has made good and evil in the world and one must accept both without complaint.¹⁹ He who cannot accept this and would seek to change things is headed for destruction. He will, by virtue of being overrighteous and overwise, live a solitary life, will alienate his fellow-man, and he will find that such isolation and alienation leads to ill health and destruction. Not only wisdom in excess is dangerous, but it leads to folly: "Be not righteous over-much; neither make thyself overwise; why shouldest thou destroy thyself? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou foolish; why shouldest thou die before thy time?"²⁰

BE NOT RASH WITH THY MOUTH

In *Moby Dick*, we see how Ahab, in his reach for wisdom, becomes more and more alienated from the society of the Pequod; he participates in nothing, not even the night festivities. And, although Ahab is aware that he is no longer the master of his quest, that *it* controls him, he can do nothing. He cannot appreciate or enjoy the beauty of the world which Solomon maintains is a sensible and wise way to maintain balance: "Yea, it is comely to eat and to drink, and to enjoy pleasure for all his labour."²¹ In contrast to this, Ahab says: "Oh! time was, when as the sunrise nobly spurred me, so the sunset soothed. No more . . . all loveliness is anguish to me, since I can never enjoy . . . enjoying power, damned, most subtly and most malignancy, damned in the midst of Paradise . . . but I'm demoniac, I am madness maddened!"²² This awareness and partial insight into himself is horrendous, but Ahab refuses to give in. He cannot pay heed to the warnings of Solomon. He castigates God in opposition to Solomon's advice: "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter a word before God; for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few."²³ Ahab also refuses to accept the inscrutability, the unknowable aspect of God or of His creature the White Whale. Ahab does not believe that any efforts to comprehend the incomprehensible are doomed and he makes naught of Solomon's warning: "That which is far off and exceeding deep; who can find it

19. See Ecclesiastes 7:13-14.

20. Ecclesiastes 7:16-17.

21. Ecclesiastes 5:17.

22. Melville, p. 226.

23. Ecclesiastes 5:1.

out?"²⁴ He refuses to accept man's helplessness before the infinite greatness of God's universe, he refuses to believe that fathoming the universe is beyond him. Instead he challenges the universe: "Come forth from behind your cotton bags! I have no long gun to reach ye. Come, Ahab's compliments to ye; come and see if ye can swerve me. Swerve me? The path to my fixed purpose is laid with iron rails, whereon my soul is grooved to run. Over unsounded gorges, through the rifled hearts of mountains, under torrents' beds, unerringly I rush! Naught's an obstacle, naught's an angle to the iron way!"²⁵ Ahab feels answerable to no one; he flies in the face of Solomon's penultimate conclusion that man must always act and use his God-given powers bearing in mind that he is answerable to God.

FAST FISH AND LOOSE FISH

Chapter four of Ecclesiastes corresponds to the chapter "Fast Fish and Loose Fish" in *Moby Dick*. In Ecclesiastes, Solomon discusses the injustice of his world. He refers to the masses of people who suffer at the hands of the rulers who abuse their powers. He sees social injustice in man's competition with his fellow man, in man's desire to out-do the other man's accomplishments and he somberly comments: "But I returned and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power. . . . Again, I considered all labour and all excelling in work, that it is a man's rivalry with his neighbour. This also is vanity and a striving after wind."²⁶ These same themes of competition and rivalry, and oppression of the weak by the powerful, of the common people by the kings, presidents, landlords, bankers, church officials — these themes are discussed by Ishmael in a humorous sarcastic fashion in "Fast Fish and Loose Fish." To prove his point, Ishmael begins with an analog between whaling and an adulterous woman, giving illustrations from the whaling laws of fast and loose fish. Then, he goes on to discuss human greed in terms of fast and loose fish. Ishmael suggests that all of us are fast or loose fish as it suits us in different circumstances. His point of view is that the whaling laws are universal and applicable to life.

In a sense, Ishmael is a latter-day Solomon. He is willing to accept that some

24. Ecclesiastes 7:25.

25. Melville, p. 227.

26. Ecclesiastes 4:1-3.

aspects of life must remain unknowable and unreachable by man. His attitude on life reflects the doctrine of balance and duality. He postulates that for man to live a healthy life and avoid destruction, he must avoid imbalance. For Ishmael there are no final conclusions, no answers to the enigma of life, because such a stand would lead *away* from the infinity of possibilities and *to* imbalance. Anything that leads to imbalance is vanity. Melville's text leads us to understand that Ishmael is the only man saved from the Pequod on that fated search for Moby Dick *because he accepts the words of Solomon: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity;"*²⁷ *because he lives Solomon's doctrine of balance: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven."*²⁸

27. Ecclesiastes 1:2.

28. Ecclesiastes 3:1.

מ. אליועיני

מחקרים בקהלת ובמשלי

יצא לאור על-ידי החברה לחקר המקרא

בהוצאת קרית ספר בע"מ

ספר מיוחד במינו, שכתב תלמיד חכם מליטא, שהוגלה על לא עול בכפו לכפר נידח בסיביר. הוא משמש שם כמורה ומקדיש כל שעת פנאי לעיון ולחקר המקרא. המחבר מצטיין בהבנתו העמוקה בלשון המקרא ובמחקרו זה הוא מעלה רעיונות מקוריים על ספרות החכמה בישראל בימי בית ראשון.

מחיר הספר כולל משלוח — 10 דולר

WHO IS AFRAID OF EDOM

Reflections on a Theme in Lamentations

BY LOUIS KATZOFF

*Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom,
Thou who dwellest in the land of Uz;
The cup of punishment will also be passed over to thee
And thou shalt become debased and exposed to contempt
The punishment of thine iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion,
He will no more carry thee away in captivity;
He will punish thine iniquity, O daughter of Edom,
He will uncover thy sins.*

Lamentations 4:21–22

WHY WAS EDOM SINGLED OUT

What strikes one as he reads the Book of Lamentations is the absence of the name of the conqueror of Jerusalem and despoiler of the Temple, Babylon. Edom, however, comes in for a sharp condemnation and forecast of doom. Egypt and Assyria¹ are mentioned (Lam. 5:6), referring to their refusal to help Judah when her hand was stretched out to them. Yet, it is surprising that Edom, the small and insignificant neighboring country of Judah, rather than the cardinal military power, Babylon, is the object of the sharpest denunciation in the Book.

CONTRADICTIONARY TRADITIONS ABOUT EDOM

Edom appears in a rather favorable light in the Pentateuch. Edom was a blood brother of Israel, the descendant of Jacob's brother Esau (Genesis 25:30), and is to be accorded fraternal friendship: *Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother* (Deuteronomy 23:8). As the Israelites set out for the Promised Land near the end of their forty year sojourn in the desert, they asked Edom's permission to pass through her territory, promising to stay strictly on the main road—the King's Highway—avoiding the slightest trespassing upon the adjoining fields; likewise, to pay for whatever food or water they needed. Rather than

1. Babylon is meant by the name Assyria, according to the Soncino commentary on this verse.

challenge the Edomite refusal by waging war, as they did soon after under similar circumstances against Sihon, the Amorite king, the Israelites turned aside, preferring to extend their journey considerably by going around the territory of Edom toward their destination (Numbers 20:14–21). In his address to the Israelites, recounted in Deuteronomy, Moses recalls this experience, accounting for the peaceful denouement of an ominous confrontation in the divine injunction to him: *Contend not with them (Edom), for I will not give you of their land...because I have given Mount Seir unto Esau for a possession (Deut. 2:5).*²

This peaceful stance toward Edom is not at all evident in the prophetic books. Edom is castigated by the major prophets. Isaiah and Jeremiah, in oracular fashion, denounce it, forecasting utter doom and oblivion (Isaiah ch. 34, Jeremiah 49:7–22).

IN OBADIAH WE HAVE THE CLUE

But the bitterest words of contempt are expressed by a very “minor” prophet, Obadiah, who left us only one chapter of his utterances (the smallest book in the Bible), entirely devoted to a denunciation of Edom.

Obadiah saw the sack of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and was witness to the treachery displayed by the Edomites toward the helpless Judeans. As a kinsman, Edom should have stretched forth her hand to lend refuge and succor to the despondent victims. Instead, she took gleeful part in the spoliation and even cut off the escape routes from the fleeing refugees.

*Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord
Destroy the wise men out of Edom,
And discernment out of the mount of Esau?*

*For the violence to thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee,
And thou shalt be cut off for ever.*

*In the day that thou didst stand aloof,
In the day that strangers carried away his substance,
And foreigners entered into his gates,*

2. Some commentators understand the reference in Deuteronomy to imply that the Israelites actually passed through Seir, ordinarily meaning Edom, but here referring to the eastern portion of Edom, (now Trans Jordan) inhabited by free bedouins (Rashbam).

*And cast lots upon Jerusalem,
Even thou wast as one of them.*

*But thou shouldest not have gazed on the day of thy brother,
In the day of his disaster,
Neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah
In the day of their destruction;
Neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly
In the day of distress.*

*Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of My people
In the day of their calamity;
Yea, thou shouldest not have gazed on their affliction
In the day of their calamity,
Nor have laid hands on their substance
in the day of their calamity.*

*Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway,
To cut off those of his that escape;
Neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his
That did remain in the day of distress.*

*For the day of the Lord is near upon all the nations;
As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee;
Thy dealing shall return upon thine own head.*

Obadiah 1:8—15

This deep hurt of a kinsman's wrong sank deep into the heart of the Judean. As he weeps over Zion, he seems to be little conscious of the part played by the imperial power, Babylon. Empires conquer for the sake of conquest. The poet can lament the loss of his beloved city, Jerusalem, bemoan the suffering of his people in the hunger and devastation of the siege, cry out to the Almighty his pain and agony, and even flagellate himself for his backslidings which brought about the tragedy, yet desist from casting his imprecations at his destroyer. But can he overlook the perfidy of his neighbor in his hour of trial? The words of Lamentations 4:21—22 reflect the poet's pain and Edom's debasement.

This contempt for Edom settled deeply into the consciousness of the Judean. Years later, as the Psalmist joins his brethren at the rivers of Babylon (Psalm 137), weeping and remembering Zion, swearing allegiance to his unforgettable Jerusalem and setting his beloved city above his chiefest joy, he recalls as well

Edom's turpitude: *Remember, O Lord, what the Sons of Edom did on the day of Jerusalem* (i.e. her destruction), *how they exclaimed, raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof* (Psalms 137:7).

EDOM THE ENEMY OF ALL GENERATIONS

In our literature, two nations emerge most readily as the Enemy to be remembered—Amalek and Edom. Twice in the Pentateuch we are enjoined to remember Amalek (Exodus 17:14–16, Deuteronomy 25:17–19)³ as our eternal enemy. In Talmudic and medieval Jewish literature, however, Edom is the prototype of the enemy. Why is this so?

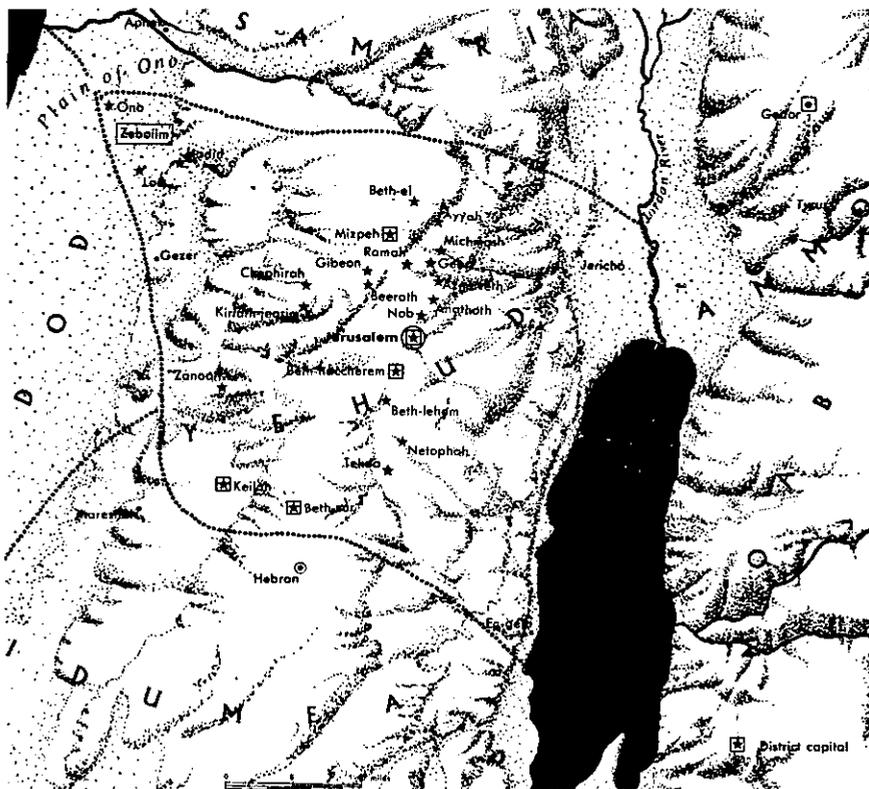
It seems that differing dimensions have occurred to the respective images of these two peoples in the sub-conscious of the Jew. Amalek was the first people to attack the Israelites as they embarked upon their difficult wanderings in the desert after their exodus from Egypt. This naturally struck a deep chord in the consciousness of our people, especially in the circumstances in which the Amalekite attack took place, namely, upon the last section of the Israelite camp, consisting of the faint and weary stragglers who were enfeebled by the march. Thus, Amalek comes down through the ages as the arch-foe who suddenly and out of nowhere rises up to molest and threaten the Jew.

It is different with the image of Edom. Imperial and tyrannical Rome is Edom in Talmudic literature. The persecuting Church is Edom in medieval literature. Edom is not just the Enemy who rises up against the Jew. Edom is the tyrant against whom the Jew is powerless. The Jew can only clench his fist and grit his teeth in futile anger. On Purim, Jews could gloat over the disappearance of Amalek — precisely by remembering him — but there was no holiday when Jews could give vent through graggers and other noise makers to their bitterness toward imperial Rome or the medieval Church. Were it not for the eternal spring of Messianic hope, this anger would have destroyed the Jewish people in surrender to the inevitable power of Edom. As it turned out, anger toward Rome during the Hadrianic tyranny and toward the Church during the medieval persecutions could be displaced upon an ancient enemy — Edom — whose decline was forecast by the prophets and realized in history.

3. We read the passage in Deuteronomy 25:17–19 each year on the Sabbath before Purim (Shabbat Zachor) because of the tradition that Haman was a descendant of Amalek.

Edom saw its day of doom; so would imperial Rome and the medieval Church. Thus the “Daughter of Zion” and the “Daughter of Edom” (Lam. 4:22) are in a see-saw position in their relationship. Edom may be up and Israel down, but the poet of Lamentations and the prophet Obadiah see the respective positions reversed in time to come: You may be glad, O daughter of Edom, but your cup will pass over you also (4:21). And when? When the punishment of your iniquity is accomplished, O daughter of Zion (4:22). The prophet Obadiah sums up this relationship in his concluding verse. *And saviors shall come up on Mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau, and the kingdom shall be the Lord's* (Obadiah 1:21).⁴

4. Obadiah's utterance was incorporated in our daily prayers: ועלו מושיעים בהר ציון לשפוט את הר עשו והיתה להו המלוכה.



Bible Atlas

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE IN THE BIBLE

BY REUBEN EFRON

INTELLIGENCE A FACTOR IN MILITARY OPERATION

Intelligence is an essential factor in the conduct of any military operation. This has been a well known axiom in modern as well as in ancient warfare. Valuable lessons in intelligence and military strategy can be found not only in modern military textbooks and literature but also in many ancient sources. A most fascinating source of such information is the "Book of Books"—the Bible.

Many a military leader in sleepless nights before battle has turned to the Holy Scriptures not only for spiritual solace but also for guidance to be found in the descriptions of military campaigns and strategy contained therein. For example, the Israeli Defense Forces command in the Sinai campaigns of 1956 and 1967 used most advantageously the information on the terrain, roads, ancient localities, etc., of the Sinai desert described in the Bible.

THAT THEY MAY SPY OUT THE LAND OF CANAAN

An intelligence operation in a real military sense is related in detail in Numbers 13. The Israelites, under the leadership of Moses, after having been freed from the Egyptian bondage and after having traversed the desert, were approaching the Promised Land. Moses was now faced with the problem of leading an army of inexperienced, undisciplined former slaves against seasoned soldiers of the people who inhabited the land of Canaan. His initial step was to send a reconnaissance team into the enemy territory in order to obtain a firsthand report on the land, the people and their military capabilities. As the Bible puts it:

And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying: 'Send thou men, that they may spy out the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel; of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, every one a prince among them'.

Numbers 13:1-2

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Thus, Moses selected twelve men, each representing a tribe. Included in this group were two men whom Moses trusted implicitly: Joshua, son of Nun, who represented the tribe of Ephraim, a devoted disciple and assistant who was eventually to succeed him as leader, and Caleb, who represented the tribe of Judah. The selection of tribal chiefs for this reconnaissance task seems to have been motivated by the psychological impact that an expected favorable report brought by highly respected tribal leaders would have on the frightened, partly disillusioned people. The purpose and aims of the mission are spelled out in the following terms:

And Moses sent them to spy the land of Canaan and said unto them: 'Get you up here into the South, and go up into the mountains; and see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they are strong or weak, whether they are few or many; and what the land is that they dwell in, whether it is good or bad; and what cities they are that they dwell in, whether in camps, or in stongholds; and what the land is, whether it is fat or lean, whether there is wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land'.

Numbers 13:17–20

In other words, the Commander instructed the team to bring intelligence data concerning the military potential of the people facing the Israelites, characteristics of the terrain, type of fortifications, etc. Furthermore, he ordered his men to bring a sample of the fruit of the land, “the first-ripe grapes,” apparently sensing the uplift that such tangible evidence of the richness of the land would give to his people.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED SUCCESSFULLY, YET...

The mission, on the surface, was accomplished quite successfully. The men penetrated the enemy territory and roamed the land for forty days and also managed to bring back samples of the fruit of the land. However, being leaders of their tribes, the men reported back not to Moses alone (as they should have done) but to the entire assembly of Israelites, “to all the congregation of the children of Israel,” (13:26) who apparently had waited impatiently for their return. In the beginning the report was quite favorable. The scouts showed the assembly the fruit that they had brought back and confirmed that the land “floweth with milk

and honey” (13:17). But after this initial encouraging statement came the great disillusionment. With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, all the scouts announced unequivocally the impossibility of conquest of the Promised Land. The militarily inexperienced scouts apparently had been unduly impressed with the prowess of the enemy and, as is frequent among Easterners, exaggerated his capabilities. They reported “the people that dwell in the land are fierce, and the cities are fortified, and very great” (13:28).

The loyal followers of Moses, Joshua and Caleb, sensing the danger of such negative assertions, tried to instill confidence in the people and assure them of ultimate victory. Thus, “Caleb stilled the people toward Moses, and said: ‘We should go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it’” (13:30). However, this contradictory statement irked the other ten and inflamed their imagination even more. “And they spread an evil report of the land...saying: ‘The land through which we have passed to spy out, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof: and all the people that we saw in it are men of great stature...and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight’” (13:32–33). The scared scouts saw the enemy facing them as a race of giants and themselves as pygmies in comparison.

FAILURE IN TEST OF COURAGE

The result of this devastating testimony by respected tribal leaders was catastrophic. The Israelites became panicky, highly distressed and emotional, and near rebellion. Joshua and Caleb tried in vain to calm them down and to appeal to reason and trust in God, stating: “If the Lord delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it unto us—a land which floweth with milk and honey” (14:8). The people refused to listen and were ready to revolt against Moses: “Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt,” they cried (Numbers 14:4).

According to Rabbinic interpretation, a Divine Purpose caused the tribal leaders to bring back such a negative report which resulted in this disaffection of the Israelite forces. The recently liberated slaves were not yet fit for a life of freedom. The people and their leaders failed the test in courage and determination in face of the imminent battle for their own independent land. They were therefore punished by being condemned to wander in the desert for forty years until the first generation of ex-slaves had been extinguished. Only the second

generation, born in freedom, merited the privilege of settling in its own country.

THE FLAW IN THE RECONNAISSANCE MISSION

From the military point of view, however, one can discern a serious error in this reconnaissance mission which, in general, was well conceived and its purpose of aims clearly defined. From preliminary reports Moses knew that the land of Canaan was rich and fertile and the people living there prosperous but softened by affluence and weakened by inner strife. Consequently, they were vulnerable to an attack by a have-not nation determined to win. Moses wanted to strengthen the will and courage of his people by bringing tangible evidence of the fertility of the land and feasibility of its conquest. He thought that by sending well respected tribal leaders "to spy the land," he would greatly enhance in the eyes of the Israelites the report brought back, which he was certain would be favorable. Herein, however, lay his mistake. The men he selected proved, with only two exceptions, to be disloyal to their leader and, because of their high position within the tribes, they felt quite independent. They apparently were also insincere and jealous of Moses. Instead of coming to Moses directly and reporting to him their adverse findings, assuming they honestly believed in them, which is quite unlikely, they went to the people and stirred them to rebellion. Had Moses chosen the members of the reconnaissance team not on the basis of social standing but according to military skill, ability, trustworthiness and loyalty, the outcome would have been entirely different. Even if the reports of some of the men had been unfavorable, Moses would have had a chance to discuss the information with them in privacy, to evaluate the data vis-a-vis the favorable reports of the others and possibly to convince the dissidents that their conclusions were wrong, then to make his own decision. He would thus have avoided having an intelligence report evaluated by a mass of confused, emotional people.

JOSHUA'S PLAN OF INTELLIGENCE

Joshua the son of Nun, who took over the leadership of the Israelites after Moses died, learned his lesson well from the failures of the intelligence operation of his predecessor. When he was faced with the necessity of obtaining intelligence information on Jericho, the city he had to capture since it barred the route of the Israelites to the Western plateau of the Promised Land, he mounted a military intelligence operation which had all the attributes of a modern intelligence

mission. It was planned and executed in accordance with present day accepted rules for such operation, i.e. strict secrecy, contact and recruitment of a knowledgeable agent, planning escape and evasion, concealment, establishing recognition signals, etc.

Thus, Joshua selected two trusted men for this mission who were given a detailed plan for accomplishing their task. As related in the Book of Joshua, he "sent out of Shittim two spies secretly, saying: 'Go view the land, and Jericho'" (Joshua, 2:1). Biblical commentaries explain that "secretly" means, unknown to the Israelites. Joshua acted this way in order to prevent a repetition of what had occurred in Moses' time when the people had advance knowledge of the intelligence operation. Joshua also sent only two men, who could more easily disguise themselves and penetrate the target than a group of twelve. Indeed the Midrash points out that the Hebrew word שְׁתֵּי mentioned in the text beside meaning "secretly" also denotes earthenware. Therefore the Midrash interprets the above paragraph meaning that the two spies were disguised as potters, or sellers of earthenware. Such a disguise, if actually used, would greatly facilitate the entry of the two men inconspicuously into Jericho, via the busy gates of the wall surrounding the city.

The two men then proceeded to the house of a local agent, a courtesan named Rahab, evidently a prototype of a Mata Hari, with the difference that unlike the latter, Rahab remained loyal to the Israelites and supplied them with valuable information. According to some Biblical commentators the better translation of the Hebrew word זונה would be "innkeeper" or purveyor of food instead of "harlot," stemming from the verb זָן "to feed" or "to provide." Be it as it may, the two Israelites evidently chose a very knowledgeable and reliable intelligence agent.

SURVEILLANCE OF COUNTER INTELLIGENCE

It appears, however, that Rahab and her premises were under surveillance of a counter-intelligence team of the king of Jericho who soon established that the two men visiting Rahab were actually Israelite spies. "And it was told the king of Jericho, saying: 'Behold, there came men in hither tonight of the children of Israel to search out the land'" (2:2). Upon receipt of this report, the king acted swiftly ordering to apprehend the dangerous spies. "And the king of Jericho sent unto

Rahab saying: 'Bring forth the men that are come to thee, that are entered into thy house; for they are come to search out all the land' ” (2:3).

Facing the danger of being arrested as a spy together with the Israelites, Rahab acted as an experienced intelligence agent to confuse and mislead the adversary. She had already taken the precautionary measure of hiding the men, prior to the arrival of the king's messengers. She then admitted to the messengers that two unknown strangers came to her, but had already left and therefore suggested that they pursue the strangers without delay. This conversation and Rahab's diversionary tactics are vividly described as follows:

And the woman took the two men and hid them; and she said: 'Yea, the men came unto me, but I knew not whence they were; and it came to pass about the time of the shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out; whither the men went I know not; pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.... And the men pursued after them the way to the Jordan unto the fords; and as soon as they that pursued after them were gone out, the gate was shut.

Joshua 2:4-7

After Rahab convinced herself that her scheme had worked, that the king's men followed her advice and that the Israelites were safe in the hideout on the roof, she went up to see them. Rahab first gave them a detailed intelligence report as to the state of affairs in the kingdom of Jericho. She indicated that the people of Jericho were well aware of the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt, their conquest of the Amorites and were terrified of what might happen to them. She concluded her report with the following spirited description: "And as soon as we had heard it, (meaning about the fate of the Amorite kings Og and Sihon), our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more spirit in any man, because of you; for the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above, and on earth beneath" (2:11).

ASSURANCE FOR PERSONAL SAFETY

Rahab then proceeded with the second part of the conversation, namely to receive assurance from the Israelites for the personal safety of herself and her family members after the Israelites' capture of Jericho. She asked for a quid pro quo:

Now therefore I pray you, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have dealt kindly with you, that ye also will deal kindly with my father's house...and save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethern and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.' "

Joshua 2:12–13

Rahab thus requested not only to guarantee the safety of all enumerated family members, but also of all their possessions.

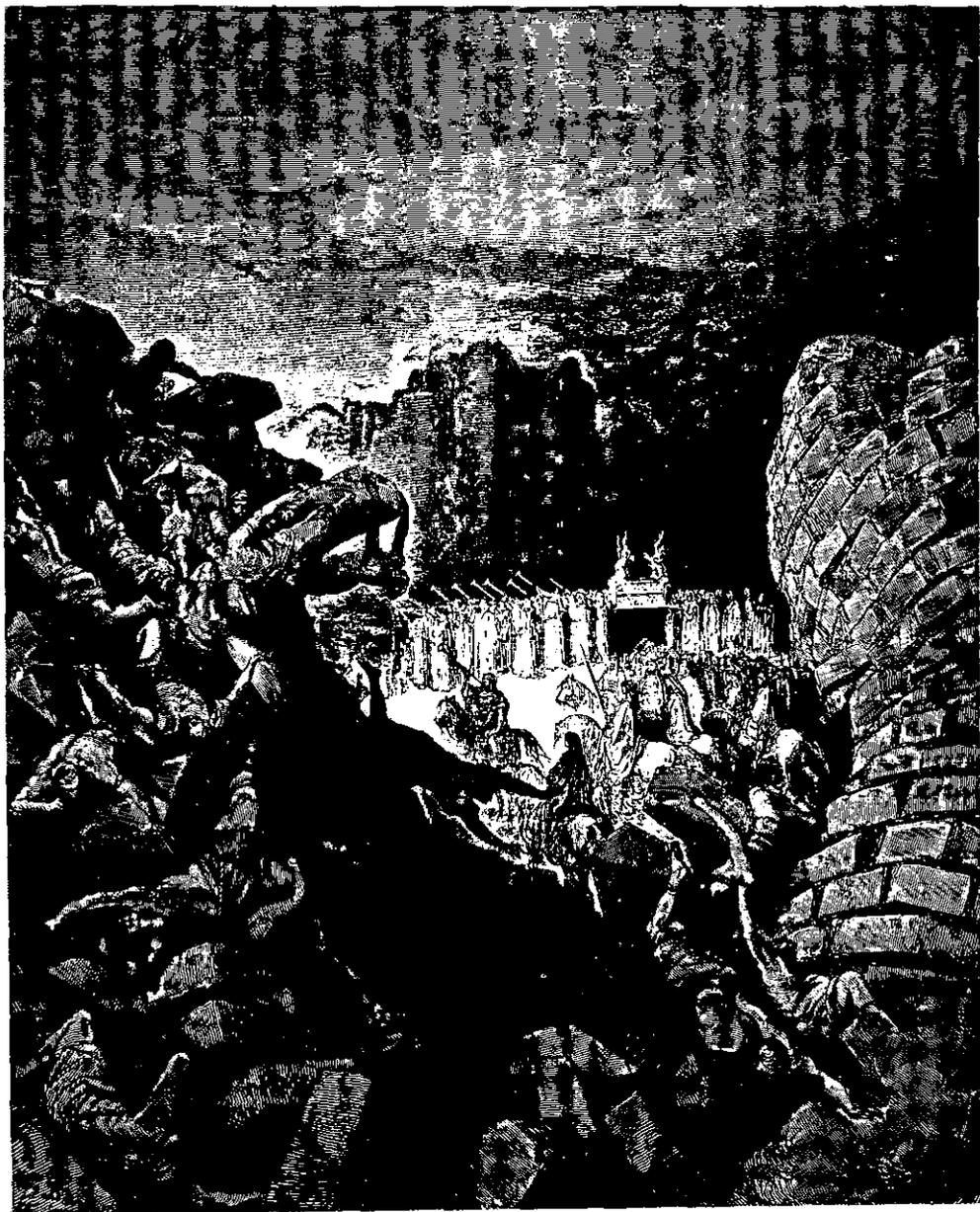
The Israelites agreed to give Rahab such safety but specified certain conditions that Rahab and her family must adhere to: First, Rahab must remain loyal to the Israelites and not become a double agent; second, the entire family must gather and remain in Rahab's house; thirdly, Rahab should place an agreed upon recognition signal in the window—a scarlet cord—so that the Israelite soldiers could identify the house and save it from destruction. The corresponding passages read as follows:

And the men said unto her: 'Our life for yours, if ye tell not this our business; and it shall be, when the Lord giveth us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee... Behold when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this scarlet thread in the window...and thou shalt gather unto thee into the house thy father and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household... But if thou utter this our business, then we will be guiltless of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear.'

Joshua 2:14–20

The next step in this intelligence operation was planning for the safe return of the two Israelite spies to their headquarters. Rahab once more demonstrated her ingenuity and resourcefulness. The men had to escape the same night for fear that in the morning the king's police will come again to search the house. It so happened that Rahab's dwelling leaned against the inner face of the main city wall and the windows faced the outside. In the darkness of the night, Rahab let the men down through the window by a rope, instructing them to go to the mountain ridges northwest of Jericho and hide in one of the limestone caves there for three days until the pursuers who went looking for them will return:

Then she let them down by a cord through the window... And she said unto



The walls of Jericho crumbling, by Gustav Doré

them: 'Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers light upon you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned; and afterwards may you to your way' (2:16)

The scheme worked exactly as planned:

And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned; and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not (2:22).

The two spies then returned safely to Joshua and delivered an encouraging and inspiring report:

And they told him all that had befallen them. And they said unto Joshua: 'Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; and moreover all the inhabitants of the land do melt away before us (2:23).

This statement, upon being made public, thrilled the people with the assurance of the victory which awaited them. The subsequent fall of Jericho may be considered, in large part, the result of an intelligence mission well accomplished.

The spectacular capture of Jericho, related in Joshua 6 as the miraculous event of the city walls tumbling down, caused by the blasts of horns of the assembled priests and the shouts of the people, can also be interpreted as a cleverly conceived operation of psychological warfare. As previously described by Rahab, the entire Jericho population and their king were in mortal fear of the Israelites, whose God led them from victory to victory. The elaborate procedure of circling the city walls seven times, accompanied by the shouts of the multitude of the Israelites, convinced the Jericho defenders that the end was near and consequently they dropped their guard, opened the gates and ran in panic for their lives. As described in Joshua 6:

And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the horns, that Joshua said unto the people: 'Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city'... And it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the horn, that the people shouted with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him and they took the city (6:16–20). □

THE LAWS OF MOURNING

BIBLICAL SOURCES

BY HYMAN ROUTTENBERG

Part IV

We print here the fourth and concluding part of the Laws of Mourning by Rabbi Routtenberg.

R. Abba b. Zabda said in the name of Rav: A mourner is bound by all the commandments of the Torah with the only exception of that of Tefillin, since the word "beauty" is applied to them. Since the All Merciful said to Ezekiel (who was in mourning), "Bind thy beauty (headline) upon thee" (Ezek. 24:17), the implication must be, 'Thou art under this obligation of putting on the Tefillin, but other people who are in mourning are free.' This exemption from putting on the Tefillin, however, applies only to the first day of mourning, since of that day it is written, "And the end thereof as a bitter day" (Amos 8:10). (Since 'day' is used in the singular, it follows that actual mourning is limited to one day.)

—Sukkah 25b

The technical meaning of a 'hesped', said Ulla, is lamenting with striking upon the breast, as it is written: "Tremble...and gird sackcloth upon your loins, striking upon the breast" (Isa. 32:11–12).

—Moed Katan 27b

א"ר אבא בר זבדא אמר
רבי: אבל חייב בכל מצות
האמורות בתורה חוץ
מחפילין שהרי נאמר בהן
פאר; מדאמר ליה רחמנא
ליחזקאל "פארך חבוש
עליך" וגו' (יחזקאל כ"ד,
י"ז), את הוא דמייבת,
אבל כולי עלמא פטירי,
והני מילי כיום ראשון
דכתיב "ואחריתה כיום מר"
(עמוס ח', י).

— סוכה כ"ה:

אמר עולא: הספד על לב
דכתיב "על שדים סופדים"
(ישעיה ל"ב, י"ב).

— מועד קטן כ"ז:

Dr. Routtenberg, ordained rabbi from Yeshiva University, Ph.D. degree from Boston University, has a distinguished career in the U.S. rabbinate before retiring in Israel. He is the author of *Amos of Tekoa* in which he explored the rabbinic interpretations of the prophet.

When one bids farewell to the dead, he should not say to him, 'Go unto peace', because it is said unto Abraham "But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace" (Gen. 15:15). When one bids farewell to the living, he should not say to him, 'Go in peace,' but 'Go unto peace,' because there was David who said to Absalom 'Go in peace' (II Sam. 15:9) and he went and was hanged (Ibid 18:9ff), whereas, Jethro said to Moses, 'Go unto peace' (Ex. 4:18), and he went and succeeded.

—Moed Katan 29a

If a death occurs in the king's family, the king is not permitted to go out of the door of his palace. R. Judah said: If he wishes to follow the bier, he may, even as we find in the case of David who followed the bier of Abner, as it is written, "And King David followed the bier" (II Sam. 3:31). But the Rabbis answered: This is no proof for that was but to pacify the people.*

—Sanhedrin 20a

* i.e. to dispel the suspicion that Abner had been killed by him.

Said R. Abbahu: How do we know that the mourner reclines in the foremost place at the meal? From what is said by Job: "I chose out their way, and sat as chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners" (Job 29:25). "As one that comforteth the mourners"? Does not that convey, rather, that he was at the head in comforting others? Said R. Nahman b. Isaac: Not necessarily, as it is written 'ynahem', it may be rendered, 'as when one

הנפטר מן המת לא יאמר לו לך לשלום אלא לך בשלום שנאמר "ואתה תבוא אל אבותיך בשלום" (בראשית ט"ו, ט"ו). הנפטר מן החי לא יאמר לו לך בשלום אלא לך לשלום שהרי דוד שאמר לאבשלום "לך בשלום" (שמואל ב' ט"ו, ט). הלך ונתלה. יתרו שאמר למשה "לך לשלום" (שמות ד', י"ח). הלך והצליח. -מועד קטן כ"ט.

מת לו מת אינו יוצא מפתח פלטרין שלו. רבי יהודה אומר: אם רוצה לצאת אחר המיטה יוצא שכן מצינו בדרך שיצא אחר מיטחו של אבנר שנאמר "והמלך דוד הולך אחרי המיטה" (שמואל ב', ג', ל"א); א"ל לא היה הדבר אלא לפייס את העם.

— סנהדרין כ'.

א"ר אבהו: מנין לאבל שמיסב בראש? שנאמר "אבחר דרכם ואשב ראש ואשכון כמלך בגדוד, כאשר אבלים ינחם" (איוב כ"ט, כ"ה) "ינחם" אחריני משמע? אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק ינחם כתיב. מר זוטרא אמר מהכא "וסר מרוח סרוחים" (עמוס ו',

comforteth mourners,** Mar Zuta said: The deduction is made from here: "V'sar mirzah seruhim" (Amos 6:7), he who is in bitterness and distracted becomes the chief of those that stretched themselves (those who came to offer their condolence).

—Moed Katan 28b

** which is the equivalent of the passive "as when mourners are being comforted."

Said R. Helbo: One who sees the cities of Judah in their state of ruin, recites the verse: "Thy holy cities are become wilderness" (Isaiah 64:9), and rends his garment. On seeing Jerusalem in its state of ruin, one recites: "Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation" (Ibid), and rends his garment. On seeing the holy temple in its state of ruin, one recites: "Our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised Thee, is burned with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste" (Ibid 64:10) and rends his garment.

—Moed Katan 26a

ז), מרוח נעשה שר
לטרורים.

— מועד קטן כ"ח:

א"ר חלבו: הרואה ערי
יהודה בחורבן אומר "ערי
קדשך היו מדבר" (ישעיה
ס"ד, ט) וקורע; ירושלים
בחורבנה אומר "ציון מדבר
היתה, ירושלים שממה"
(שם) וקורע; בית המקדש
בחורבנו, אומר "בית קדשנו
וחפארתנו אשר הללך
אבותינו היה לשריפת אש
וכל מחמדינו היה לחרבה"
(שם ס"ד, י) וקורע.
— מועד קטן כ"ו.

UN DISCOVERS BIBLE!

United Nations, (JTA) — For the first time in history, an agreement made almost 4000 years ago and recorded in the Bible, has been issued as a United Nations document. At the request of Israeli Ambassador Chaim Herzog, Secretary General Kurt Waldheim circulated the contract between the Hebrew Patriarch Abraham and Ephron the Hittite for the purchase of the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, the West Bank City which is at the center of the current debate in the Security Council.

Herzog's letter was in response to the Islamic Conference's claim that "all Jewish association with the city of Hebron, both religious and historical, are completely brushed aside, if not denied outright."

PRESIDENT KATZIR'S ADDRESS AT THE YIZKOR ANNIVERSARY OF DAVID BEN GURION

The ninetieth anniversary of Ben Gurion's birthday was marked by the World Jewish Bible Society at its annual gathering at Sde Boker.

David Ben Gurion was one of the most active participants of the World Jewish Bible Society, serving as its president for a number of years. The remarkable facet of his personality was his dedication to Bible study, even during his most active years as Prime Minister of the State of Israel. His interest in Bible prompted him to establish a special study group of scholars who met regularly in his home and engaged in Bible research. This study group, called at first the Prime Minister's Bible Study Circle, grew into a well-established institution which has existed to this day with the successive Presidents of the State of Israel as the official hosts— now called the President's Bible Study Circle. It is presently in its twentieth year.

After leaving office and retiring to his Negev Kibbutz, Sde Boker, his connection with the World Jewish Bible Society was kept active, primarily through his periodic appearances at the Society's public functions and by an annual "Day of Bible Study" held at Sde Boker which was attended by many of the veteran members and representatives from a number of Bible study groups in all parts of Israel. Since his demise, the leaders of the Society have made annual pilgrimages to his eternal resting place on the day of the Yahrzeit, each time programming a day of lectures and discussions at the library building of the Midrashat Sde Boker.

The following is an address delivered on that occasion by Professor Ephraim Katzir, President of the State of Israel, which we are publishing in the original Hebrew text.

ויוקדת בשליחותו של עם ישראל בארצו
איפינה את מחשבתו ואת מעשיו של
בן-גוריון בכל צעדיו. אמונה זו ינק בראש
וראשונה מספר-הספרים, בו ראה לא רק
נושא בשורה לעם ישראל, אלא לאנושות
כולה, כדבריו "ספרי התנ"ך הורישו לעם

התכנסנו כאן היום — חברי החברה
לחקר המקרא — לציון יום הולדתו ה-90
של דוד בן-גוריון. חלפו כשלוש שנים מאז
הלך לעולמו, אולם הגותו, תורתו וחזונו
ממשיכים ללוות אותנו במאמצינו לביצור
המדינה וגאולת עם ישראל. אמנה עזה

היהודי ולאנושות כולה ערכים דליגיוזיים ומוסריים שאין ערוך להם”.

בתנ”ך ראה בן-גוריון את התגלמות הגניוס היהודי ואת “עליונות הרוח”, מבלי שראה ברוח מושג ערטילאי. לדבריו “הגניוס היהודי, מימי הנביאים ועד איינשטיין לא הכיר בשניות של חומר ורוח”. בעיניו היתה זו עליונות שתכליתה עיצוב פני החיים, כמאמרו “סגולות הרוח מכריעות בשניו פני ההיסטוריה ובפילוס נתיבות חדשות בהליכות אנוש”. רק כך ניתן להבין את חזונו ואת פועלו, שהליכותו לשדה-בוקר ורצונו להיקבר דוקא כאן, בלב המדבר בואך נחל צין, הוא אחד מסימניה המובהקים.

“אני” — כתב בן-גוריון — “מאמין אדוק בחזון. אני מאמין כי החזון הביא אותנו הנה. אני מאמין שבכוח החזון בנינו המפעל, החזון הקים המדינה, נתן לנו צבא-הגנה והנחיל לנו נצחון. החזון מוסיף לחולל נפלאות”.

אף שבכוח מרצו ואמונתו זכה בן-גוריון לראות בהתגשמות חזון תקומת ישראל בארצו, חש הוא — אולי יותר מרבים אחרים — שאין זו אלא אתחלתא ושעוד ארוכה הדרך לגאולה השלמה. עוד רוב העם היהודי יושב בארצות נכר ועוד רוב הארץ שממה מאין יושב. אולם בכוח החזון המתבטאים בדברי הנביא “ישושן מדבר וציה ותגל ערבה ותפרח כחבצלת” האמין הוא ומאמינים אנחנו, שגם מציאות זו סופה להשתנות, אם אך נדע ללכת לאור החזון ולא נאבד את אמונתנו בעם ובארץ. קברו כאן, במקום מלא הוד זה, חייב להיות

לנו — ובעיקר לנו — בחינת צוואה מתמדת הקוראת לגאול הישימון; גאולת האדמה שסופה להביא גם את גאולת האדם היהודי.

ואכן, באדם בכלל, וביהודי בפרט, ראה בן-גוריון ערך עליון. “יקר האדם קודם לכל ערך אחר”, שכן, כדברי התורה, נברא האדם “בצלם אלהים”. דימוי זה של האדם לאלהים הוא בחינת “אצילות מחייבת”. אין בו משום יהרהר והתנשאות כלפי מעלה, אלא דוקא הכרה באחריות ובכובד העול המוטל עליו, עול שאותו קיבל עליו עם ישראל משחר קיומו. בן-גוריון האמין כי בכוח הכרה זו זכאים אנו לשאת בתואר של עם סגולה, שסופו להגשים את החזון המשיחי של גאולת ישראל ואפילו האנושות כולה.

חיים אנו בעולם של אוכדן ערכים ושל אכזבה מחורות שונות. תהליך זה, הנתון עתה בעיצומו, עבר כבר על בני-דורו של בן-גוריון ועליו עצמו. כך כותב הוא “לא מארכס ואנגלס, לא לנין וסטאלין, אף לא קאוטסקי ו’ורס — מאווינו האנושיים העמוקים לעולם של צדק, אחווה, שלום וחסד, כמאווינו היהודיים לקוממיות ישראל וריכוז העם במולדת, נובעים ויונקים מן התנ”ך” ובשל כך “רק עם מצפן החזון בידינו נמצא דרכנו בתוך הגלים הסוערים של תקופתנו המסוכסכת”. ואכן, אם נוהג היה בן-גוריון לומר כי נולד מחדש כשעלה לארץ-ישראל, ניתן לומר שגם רוחו ומחשבתו עברו טרנספורמציה מרגע שחש בקשר העמוק והטבעי שבין המקרא לארץ. הפאתוס הסוציאלי של בן-גוריון,

שראשיתו בהשקפת העולם הסוציאליסטית, שינה כחוצאה מכך את מקורו והועמד על בסיס הנבואה הישראלית, כדבריו "הנבואה העברית היתה לאומית, כלל-אנושית וקוסמית ומהנבואה למדנו שלא תיתכן גאולה לאומית, בלי צדק חברתי". ובצורה תמציתית עוד יותר ניתן רעיון זה לסיכום כדבריו "ואהבת לרעך כמוך" — "בשלוש מלים אלו נתגבשה התורה האנושית והנצחית של היהדות".

כך באשר לרעיונות הנצח שמקורם במקרא וכך גם באשר להבנת הריאליה של ספר-הספרים. זו נחגלחה לו לבן-גורין באור חדש לחלוטין, מרגע שהחל קורא בתנ"ך בארץ-ישראל. כך הוא כותב "רק עם תקומת ישראל נוצר הרקע הטבעי להבנת אותה התקופה. דברי יהושע בן-נון, השופטים, כמלכים... יובנו עכשיו בשבתנו קוממיות בארצנו, יותר מאשר באלפיים השנים האחרונות. אנו חיים שוב באותו האקלים בו התחוללו העלילות, גם המדיניות וגם הנבואיות".

וכשהוא נושא דבריו בפני קציני צה"ל, חודשים אחדים לאחר הקמת המדינה, הוא אומר להם: "רק העם שיאחז מחדש בארצו ויתערה בנוף המבהיק מכל עמוד של ספר הספרים — ולשון הספר תהיה לשונו הטבעית שבה יהגה ויחלום, בידעים ובלא ידעים — רק עם זה פתח לפניו הספר את סגור-לבו ונפשו הפנימית ונשמת הספר ונשמת העם יהיו לאחת".

וכאן במקומה הטבעי, כך האמין, גם

עתידה רוח ישראל להתחדש במוקדם או במאוחר. "שיכת ציון שבימינו אינה שיבה גיאוגרפית בלבד, אלא גם שיבה היסטורית... ושיבה היסטורית פרושה שיבה לכושר יצירה עצמאית, חומרית ורוחנית, ויציקת דפוסי חיים וחברה ומחשבה חדשים, המשתלבים בערכים הגדולים של התנ"ך ויעודיו היהודיים — האנושיים".

חזרנו, איפוא, לא רק אל נחלת אבותינו הפיזית, הלא-היא ארץ-ישראל, אלא גם אל צור מחצבתה של נחלתנו הרוחנית, אל מולדת התנ"ך, כדברי בן-גוריון "תקומת ישראל לא היתה תקומה מדינית וחומרית בלבד. אין קיום לישראל בלי חייל וכוח. אולם עדיין אנו מחזיקים באמונה אשר ליוחה עמנו אלפי שנים, האמונה בעליונות הרוח".

היום, כשאנו עולים על קברו של בן-גוריון ובאים להתייחד עם זכרו וללמוד מתורתו, מן הראוי שדברים אלה יהדדו באוזנינו ויאירו לנו את דרכנו ולוואי שנהיה ראויים לכך. שכן — כדבריו — "האמונה והאדיקות בעליונות הרוח ליוו העם היהודי במסעו ההיסטורי הארוך ממעמד הר-סיני ועד מלחמת ישראל בימינו. אמונה זו היתה נחלת כל אותם בני ישראל, אשר עיצבו דמות האומה העברית מבראשיתה ועד היום הזה, אשר יצרו וטיפחו תורתה, שירתה, משאה הנבואי, ספרותה וחוקיה, חזונה לאחרית הימים ואמונתה המשיחית".

TO THE BIBLE READERS' UNION — ENGLAND

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We shall be concluding the Book of Psalms for the sixteenth time in July 1977. Those of you who have been members from the beginning and have kept old copies of the Bulletin of the Bible Readers' Union, will doubtless recall with pleasure the Messages of the Month by our first President, the late Rabbi Dr. Isidore Epstein, and his masterly series of five articles on the Religious Teachings in the Psalms which he began in March 1940, less than a year after the founding of the Union, and concluded in August of the same year, and which was subsequently published as a booklet, Jewish Educational Publications No., 2.

The Psalms reflect every mood and thought in life, but underlying them all is one central theme. There is a righteous God on earth, as in heaven, and men ignore him at their own peril. Such men are wicked when they say that there is no God (Ps. 14 and 53). And they will have no permanence on earth. It is more than a pity that the United Nations Organization, set up with such high hopes after the end of the Second World War in 1945, should have degenerated into a machine controlled by such men, who know not God. But we as Jews, in Israel and throughout the world,

must make our voices heard and proclaim in no uncertain terms that God created the world for men to live in it in peace and amity. And by our actions we must demonstrate this truth in fact. And we shall prevail. It was left for Dr. Epstein to underline the profound lesson that the pages of the Bible are speaking to us no less urgently today than in the past, and bidding us to order our lives in accordance with the divine will—or perish utterly from the earth. That is the terrible alternative facing us just a generation after the Second World War, as nations pile up weapons for their mutual destruction. Will we heed the warning?

Joseph Halpern

LIGHT AND REJOICING, by William W. Simpson, Christian Journals Ltd., Belfast, 1976, pp. 138.

The book is dedicated "for my grandchildren, in the hope that it may one day help them to understand why their grandfather was so involved with Jews." The author is a Methodist minister, who is the international secretary for the Council of Christians and Jews, and he was the moving spirit in

the organization of the first-ever International Conference of Christians and Jews which took place in Oxford in 1946. Thirty years later, the second Conference was held, in Jerusalem in June 1976. Both were helpful in promoting a better understanding between Christians and Jews, and in his Foreword, Simpson says that "this book is intended as a kind of thank offering for the enrichment that has come into my life as a Christian through my contacts, extending now over many years, with a host of Jewish friends and with their ways of life and worship."

The title of the book comes from Esther (8:16), and its purpose is "to explore something of the meaning of Jewish life and history for the average Jew, particularly through the medium of his religious observances, both in his home and synagogue" (pp. 13-14). Most of the book is devoted to a description of the Jewish way of life in home and synagogue, with copious quotations from the Bible and Jewish literature. Of special interest is his division between the historic festivals and fasts on the one hand and the "three other major festivals: the Sabbath, New Year, and the Day of Atonement. Though celebrated in a Jewish way, and primarily with a Jewish intention, their real concern is with man's universal desire for peace within himself, for reconciliation

with his neighbour, and the feeling of being at one with his God" (p. 94).

A final chapter on Guidelines for the Future deals with antisemitism and the long road ahead before its spirit can be exorcised.

A book to be warmly recommended.

Joseph Halpern

ECHAD MI YODEA, WHO KNOWS ONE, by Rabbi S.P. Toperoff, B.A.

The author, Rabbi Toperoff, was a Regional Minister in the North of England and, after a span of forty years, settled in Israel with his wife in 1974. The book consists of Questions and Answers on Bible and different aspects of Jewish life. Members of the Bible Readers Union will doubtless remember with pleasure how we introduced a Bible Quiz in the Bulletin in November 1959, basing ourselves on the remarkable success of the First Bible Quiz in Israel in 1958. In every issue from then on we published a series of ten questions, offering a reward of a Book Token for the first winning entry opened before the appearance of the next issue with the answers. The first quiz-master was the late Rabbi J. Heshel of Edgware, England. A number of others took his place, but the most prolific was Rabbi Toperoff, no less than 190 questions out of the 400 set in the Bulletin coming from

his pen. All these re-appear in *Echad Mi Yodea*, which has a total of 925 questions. These with the answers, which are full of interesting information collected from voluminous reading of a life-time, fill the 150 pages of the book.

A short introduction of three pages points out that questions and answers were one of the earliest methods of education; rather dangerous, in fact, as we know from the story of Socrates, who was indicted and convicted on a charge of corrupting the youth of Athens by the questions he asked them in answer to their first innocent question. The Bible is replete with examples of teaching by question and answer, as Rabbi Toperoff points out, and the same method was followed in the Talmud and, to this very day, in the Responsa Literature, which is a subject in itself.

Our author says that he is not writing for the expert or leader of Jewish thought, but for the ordinary Jew. Besides the Bible, the questions cover a variety of topics ranging from Books to Words and Language, well-classified under such headings as Death, Discrimination Against Jews, History, Law and Custom, etc. We will conclude with a few of the questions. No reward is offered for the answers, which are a

reward in themselves and can be found in the pages of the book.

No. 10. On what verse are the seven sciences of the mediaeval University based?

No. 116. At which battle did the land and the climate help the Israelites to victory?

No. 250. How many Biblical references are found in Shakespeare?

No. 294. Which book was so bulky that it needed two men to carry it?

No. 313. When was the Jewish calendar deliberately used to torment the Jewish people?

No. 337. How did man first learn of burial?

No. 374. Which famous Sunday newspaper will not allow a Jew or a Catholic to become its editor?

No. 398. What is the real name of the Dead Sea?

No. 577. Does the Torah sanction the idea of blood donor?

No. 654. What early examples of health and hygiene are found in the Bible?

Joseph Halpern

Copies may be obtained from the author, Rabbi S.P. Toperoff, 24 Rehov Tirza, Ramat Gan, Israel

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We have received many favorable responses to the two recent articles of Professor Sol Liptzin: Noble Jonathan (Vol. V, no. 1, Fall 1976) and The Rehabilitation of Lilith (Vol. V, no. 2, Winter 1976-7). We take pleasure in presenting excerpts of a few of these comments.

As always I was glad to receive the latest issue of Dor le-dor. Dr. Liptzin's article on the "Rehabilitation of Lilith" was especially interesting, with a wonderful combination of knowledge and insight.

Walter Eytan
Jerusalem

I have just read Dr. Liptzin's article on the "Rehabilitation of Lilith." Like everything from his pen, it unites learning with charm.

Dr. Israel Goldstein
Jerusalem

I wish to express my appreciation of the last two issues of Dor le-Dor. The two essays "Noble Jonathan" and "Rehabilitation of Lilith" were marked by that combination of scholarly analysis with original approach for which he is justly famous. I was especially interested in the Lilith comments, and see that he has other sources than those of Louis Ginzburg!

Professor Howard Harrison
State University of New York
Oneonta, New York

This morning's mail brought me the Winter issue of Dor le-Dor. I am glad to have this magazine. I read it practically from cover to cover and find the articles very instructive and informational. I liked the fall issue especially. I liked Dr. Liptzin's articles on "Rehabilitation of Lilith" and "Noble Jonathan."

Fr. Martin Schoenberg
Adrian Dominican Sisters
Adrian, Mich.

Dr. Liptzin's article on "Noble Jonathan" is an excellent portrayal of a Jonathan I never knew before. It is quite a novel portrayal that he has painted. Yet it is most persuasive. His touching dedication of the article to heroic Jonathan Netanyahu added a poignant dimension to the article.

Dr. A. Alan Steinbach
Miami, Florida

Dr. Liptzin's article on "Noble Jonathan" is, as all his literary works, instructive, delightful and inspiring, according to the ancient triad: Docere, delectare, permovere.

Professor S. Rapaport
University of Witwatersrand
Johannesburg, South Africa

Dr. Liptzin's articles "Noble Jonathan" and "Rehabilitation of Lilith" are real contributions in the realm of comparative literature and I learned a great deal from his research about "Lilith" in world literature.

Dr. Curt Wormann
Jerusalem

NEWS FROM WJBS CHAPTERS AROUND THE WORLD

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

The Greater Hartford Bible Study Groups, together with the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Hartford, sponsored a talk of "The Bible's Impact on the Ideas of the Founding Fathers" by Rabbi Reuven Kimelman, at the Hartford Jewish Community Center. Rabbi Kimelman, who is Professor of Judaic Studies at Amherst College, was the scholar-lecturer at the annual Bible Conference here last June in memory of Abraham Sachar.

He examined the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the Connecticut Constitution and other American documents for Biblical sources and content.

TEL AVIV, THE MOSHE GUTENTAG BIBLE AWARD

The late Moshe Gutentag lived the last seven years in Tel Aviv. He was an active member of the Tel Aviv branch of the Israel Bible Society, and of the scholarly J. Braslavsky Bible circle.

The Tel Aviv branch together with his family established the annual Bible Award in his memory.

ANTWERP, BELGIUM

Dr. Harry Patcas, who is the head of the Orthodonture Department of the University Hospital at Liege, is also the Chairman of the Antwerp Bible Society. He reports on an exceptionally successful and active year of the Belgium Chug Tanach. The year opened with a talk on Le Message Biblique by Rabbi Eisenberg of Paris. Rabbi Eisenberg participates in a weekly Parisian television program on Biblical themes that is heard throughout Europe.

Throughout the year lectures were also given by Dr. Bolz, Chief Rabbi of Luxemburg, Rabbi Dreyfus, Chief Rabbi of Belgium, Dr. Medalia, Chief Rabbi of Antwerp, and Rabbi Warshawsky of Strassburg. Many European communities cooperate in the study of Bible.

ARGENTINA

The Bible Organization of Argentina, which was organized by the late Moshe

Gutentag and now chaired by Professor Zvi Bronstein, is very active in making Bible study available to as many Argentinian Jews as possible. It conducts Bible sessions of a high quality, encourages the formation of small Bible Study groups, and helps in the formation of study groups in other cities and towns where Jews live. Dr. Gevaryahu, during his recent visit to South America, was called upon to help in the latter project.

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER, NORRISTOWN, Pa.

The chapter is by no means new. It has been meeting regularly for the last twenty years under the capable leadership of Rabbi Harold M. Kamsler who also has contributed to our Dor le-Dor.

TORAH STUDY GROUP, BETH EMET—THE FREE SYNAGOGUE, EVANSTON, ILL.

The group has been meeting for over ten years under the guidance of Herbert Hubert, its leader, and Sidney Levine, secretary. The approach to Bible study is a depth analysis of the text, similar to the methods used in the Great Books Study developed by the University of Chicago. Mr. Hubert, a lay student of the Bible, studied this method under the tutelage of the attorney Harry Ruskin, vice-President of the Society, who led similar Bible groups in the past three decades and conducted special seminars in this novel approach to Bible study.

MILBURN, SHORT HILLS, NEW JERSEY

I am enclosing checks in the amount of \$80 for memberships in the World Jewish Bible Society. Also enclosed are the names of the members with their addresses and preference for either Hebrew or English periodical. That means either Dor le-Dor or Beth Mikra.

This Bible Study group of ours is in existence for ten years. We are glad now, in accordance with Dr. Haim Gevaryahu's suggestion, to join the World Jewish Bible Society. At some future time I shall send you a description of the history of this group.

With best wishes,

Frieda Pusin, Secretary

JERUSALEM, AMERICAN EDUCATORS TENAKH CIRCLE

Under the initiative of Dr. Mordecai Sochen, formerly of Minneapolis, a group of American educators, members of the NCJE, now living in Jerusalem, have formed a חוג ללמוד חג"ך. This is a study group which meets each month at the home of a different member. It is usually the host who leads in the discussion of chapters assigned for study. In the first year and a half of its existence it has completed the study of the Book of Joshua.

ISRAEL JEWISH BIBLE SOCIETY CONVENTION

The seventh convention of the Israel Bible Society was held at the Institute for Bible Study in Emek Hefer.

About 150 representatives from Bible Study groups throughout Israel met to review the accomplishments of the Society to date and to devise ways and means to increase the number of Bible study circles in Israel. Representatives came from the urban centers, such as Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa, and from numerous small communities, moshavim and kibbutzim.

BIBLE STUDY GROUPS – WHERE ARE YOU

To paraphrase Mark Twain's remark about a classic, "The Bible is a book most people praise but never read." It is the purpose of this section of Dor le-Dor to highlight the efforts of Jews everywhere to have the Bible read, studied, appreciated and understood. If your city, community or synagogue is doing anything to promote Bible study, please let us know and we will be happy to spread the information to the rest of the world. Knowledge of your activity may encourage the emulation of others.

If you have more Bible Groups in your community, please fill out the information below and send it to our office.

Name of Bible Study Group _____

Chairman or Secretary _____

Address _____

City, Zone, State _____

World Jewish Bible Society
18 Abarbanel Street, Jerusalem, Israel

QUIZ ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS

PREPARED BY HAROLD D. HALPERN

During the summer months, our Triennial Bible Reading Calendar prescribes readings from the Book of Psalms. This beautiful poetic volume is surely read more than any other part of the Bible. This is by virtue of the fact that many chapters form a large part of our liturgy. About 25 different Psalms are read during the normal Sabbath worship services and a few are added in Hallel on festivals and Rosh Hodesh.

The Psalms are also turned to on special occasions in life — joyous and sad. It is a book that reflects our many moods from despair to hope and form meditative to lyrical. In short, it is a book for all seasons.

Because of the size and variety of the book, most of the questions are general or deal with overall structure. Check your answers on the next page.

1. Though the name of the entire book in Hebrew is "T'hillim," only one Psalm is titled "T'hilla." Which?
2. The Psalms deal with universal human emotions and attitudes. They express the feelings of individuals of every religious belief and ethnic group. There are, however, particular references to Israelite history in the book. Can you cite at least four of these, not including the ones in the introductory verses.
3. Tradition attributes most of the Psalms to King David. Name at least three other people or groups to whom chapters are ascribed.
4. Psalms are used extensively in regular worship services. On what other occasions are they recited?
5. Jewish tradition regards "Psalms" as a compilation of five divisions. Find at least two smaller distinctive collections in the book.
6. Which chapter, recited as part of Hallel, is the briefest in all the Bible? Can you recite it by heart?
7. Which two words, found frequently in Psalms, are usually not translated in the English versions of the book?
8. In which Psalm is the same phrase repeated in each of 26 verses?
9. In the liturgy, each day has a special Psalm assigned to it, but in the actual text, only one is given such a specific designation. Which one?

10. List at least five of the musical instruments mentioned in the Book of Psalms.
11. Psalm 119 is quite distinctive in form and content. What can you tell about this chapter that makes it so different? When and how is it recited in some Jewish circles?
12. Who is referred to as the "Sweet Singer of Israel?"
13. There are apparently many technical musical terms used in the Psalms, especially in the opening verses. They may refer to instruments, styles, musical keys or even particular melodies. Name at least five of these terms.
14. The Psalmist lovingly refers to Jerusalem many times. How does he extol the beauty of Zion?
15. What does Psalm 50 say about ritual sacrifice and righteous living?

ANSWERS TO QUIZ ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS

1. Psalm 145 is recited very frequently in the liturgy. It is the prayer we know as "Ashrei." The opening lines are from other Psalms.
2. The sojourn in the wilderness (Psalms 68: 8-9; 78).
 Crossing the Reed Sea (Psalms 77:20-21).
 The Destruction of the Temple (Psalms 74 and 79).
 An attack upon Judea by a confederation of enemies, perhaps the event described in II Chronicles 20 in the time of King Jehoshaphat (Psalms 83:3-9).
 Victorious events in the era of the Judges (Psalms 83:10-12).
 The Egyptian plagues, the Exodus and victories in Canaan (Psalms 135:8-11; 136:10-20).
 The Destruction of Jerusalem and Babylonian exile (Psalm 137).
3. Asaph (Ch. 50:73-83), Solomon (72:127), Moses (90), The Sons of Korah (42-49), Heman (88).
4. Before the Birkhat Hamazon (Psalms 126 and 137), at funeral services, in times of illness, stress and danger; also at memorial services and on numerous other occasions.
5. The Asaph Psalms (73-83); the Songs of Ascents (124-134); the Halleluyah Psalms at the end of the book (146-150).
6. Chapter 117: "Praise the Lord all nations. Laud Him all peoples, for His mercy is great toward us. The truth of the Lord endures forever. Halleluyah."

7. Halleluyah and Selah.

8. In Psalm 136 the expression, “for His mercy endures forever,” is reiterated 26 times.

9. Psalm 92. It begins: “Mizmor[^]Shir Leyom Hashabat.”

10. See Psalms 92 and 150 where we have the following mentioned: *Asor* (10 stringed instrument), *Nevel* (lute), *Kinor* (Harp), *Shofar*, *Tof* (tambourine), *Minim* (stringed instrument), *Ugav* (harp), *Zelzelim* (cymbals). Of course, we are not certain exactly what these instruments were. The English equivalents are theoretical.

11. It is an octuple (8) acrostic which means that each group of eight verses begins with the consecutive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This psalm is also the longest in the book and in its entirety is devoted to praise of the Torah. Nearly every verse in the chapter refers to Jewish law. When someone is ill or is being memorialized, verses beginning with the letters of that person’s Hebrew name are recited.

12. King David (from II Samuel 23:1).

13. *Mizmor* (57 times); *Shir* (30 times); *Maskil* (Psalms 32, 42, 44); *Michtam* (Psalms 56–60); *Neginot* (Psalms 4, 6, 54, 55); *Sheminit* (Psalms 6 and 12); *Gittit* (Psalms 8, 81, 84).

14. “Splendid in location, joy of all the earth” (48:3). “Zion, the perfection of beauty” (50:2).

15. In this chapter, reminiscent of Prophets like Amos and Isaiah, the Psalmist declares, in God’s name, that goodness is a more desirable form of divine worship than animal sacrifice. “Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats? . . . To him that order his way rightly will I show the salvation of God.”



THE WORLD JEWISH BIBLE SOCIETY

mourns the loss of

MOSHE GUTENTAG

and

PROFESSOR SOLOMON ZEITLIN

We print here an account of memorial meetings held in Buenos Aires in memory of Moshe Gutentag, Chairman of the Latin American Section of the World Jewish Bible Society, and of the Shloshim in memory of Dr. Solomon Zeitlin, observed in Jerusalem.

טרויער-זיצונג פון דער תנ"ך געזעלשאפט נאָך ר' משה גוטענטאג ז"ל

ווי נאר עס איז דערהאלטן געווארן די טרויעריקע בשורה וועגן דעם פלוצימדיקן טויט פון ר' משה גוטענטאג, אין תל אביב, האט די תנ"ך געזעלשאפט אין ארגענטינע תיכף פאררופן א טרויער זיצונג נאך איר מיטגרינדער, לאנג יאריקן פארזיצער און ערן פרעזידענט. די פארוואלטונג פון דער תנ"ך געזעלשאפט און פונעם תנ"ך קרייז אין דער ישראל אמבאסאדע האט אין א געדריקטער שטימונג איבער דער אבידה באערט דעם השובן נפטר מיט אויפשטיין, און דער פארזיצער פרפ' צבי בראנשטיין האט געהאלטן א רירנדיקע הספדרעדע, אָפּשאצנדיק די ווערטפולע לייסטונגען, מידות טובות און אלזייטיקע פּערווענלעכקייט לטובת דער פארשפרייטונג פון תנ"ך-לימוד, פון דער העברעיִשער שפראך און פון דער יידישער קולטור אין אלגעמיין. אַלס פארליבטר אין דער תנ"ך פּאַרשונג האָט ער דערמעגלעכט די צוגרייטונג און דערשיינונג פון וואַכיקע אויסגאבעס געווידמעט דער דאזיקער טעמע, ספּעציעל די צייטשריפטן "מקרא" און דאס בוך "ירושלים עיר הנצח". מיט זיין פטירה האט אונדזער אינסטיטוציע. ווי אויך די קולטור וועלט סיי דא סיי אין ישראל פארלוירן א ווערטפולע פּערווענלעכקייט מיט וועלכער אונדזער ישוב האט זיך געקענט גרויסן.

ז"ל PROFESSOR SOLOMON ZEITLIN

The shloshim (thirty days after the death) of Dr. Solomon Zeitlin was observed in Jerusalem when leading historians and Bible and Talmud scholars met in the Zalman Shoken library to honor his memory. Professor Zeitlin's educational activities encompassed a span of more than sixty years, mostly at Dropsie University in Philadelphia. He was a leading Jewish historian and contributed to our understanding of the Second Commonwealth, the canonization of the Bible, Apocryphal and Talmudic literature, and particularly of the various sects extant in ancient Israel. He raised a generation of scholars, many of whom were present at the memorial meeting.

TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

With these pages we are continuing the second triennial Bible reading calendar, beginning with the first chapter of Joshua and concluding with the Book of Chronicles at the end of the third year. The sequence of the daily chapters is interrupted in order to allow for the readings connected with the Sidra of the Week and the holidays.

| June—July 1977 | תמוז תשל"ז | July—Aug 1977 | מנחם אב תשל"ז |
|------------------|------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| F 17 קרח | א | Sa 16 מטות - מסעי שבת ראש חודש | א |
| Sa 18 קרח | ב | Su 17 Psalms 70 | ב |
| Su 19 Psalms 50 | ג | M 18 Psalms 71 | ג |
| M 20 Psalms 51 | ד | T 19 Psalms 72 | ד |
| T 21 Psalms 52 | ה | W 20 Psalms 73 | ה |
| W 22 Psalms 53 | ו | Th 21 Psalms 74 | ו |
| Th 23 Psalms 54 | ז | F 22 דברים | ז |
| F 24 חקה | ח | Sa 23 שבת חזון דברים | ח |
| Sa 25 חקה | ט | Su 24 מנילת איכה צום תשעה באב | ט |
| Su 26 Psalms 55 | י | M 25 Psalms 75 | י |
| M 27 Psalms 56 | יא | T 26 Psalms 76 | יא |
| T 28 Psalms 57 | יב | W 27 Psalms 77 | יב |
| W 29 Psalms 58 | יג | Th 28 Psalms 78 | יג |
| Th 30 Psalms 59 | יד | F 29 ואתחנן | יד |
| F 1 בלק | טו | Sa 30 שבת נחמו ואתחנן | טו |
| Sa 2 בלק | טז | Sa 31 Psalms 79 | טז |
| Su 3 Psalms 60 | יז | M 1 Psalms 80 | יז |
| M 4 Psalms 61 | יח | T 2 Psalms 81 | יח |
| T 5 Psalms 62 | יט | W 3 Psalms 82 | יט |
| W 6 Psalms 63 | כ | Th 4 Psalms 83 | כ |
| Th 7 Psalms 64 | כא | F 5 עקב | כא |
| F 8 סינחם | כב | Sa 6 עקב | כב |
| Sa 9 סינחם | כג | Su 7 Psalms 84 | כג |
| Su 10 Psalms 65 | כד | M 8 Psalms 85 | כד |
| M 11 Psalms 66 | כה | T 9 Psalms 86 | כה |
| T 12 Psalms 67 | כו | W 10 Psalms 87 | כו |
| W 13 Psalms 68 | כז | Th 11 Psalms 88 | כז |
| Th 14 Psalms 69 | כח | F 12 ראה | כח |
| F 15 מטות - מסעי | כט | Sa 13 ראה | כט |
| | | Su 14 Psalms 89 | ל |

TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

| Aug—Sept 1977 | | אלול תשל"ז | Sept—Oct 1977 | תשרי תשל"ח | | | |
|---------------|----|--------------|---------------|------------|----|----------------|-------------|
| M | 15 | Psalms 90 | א | T | 13 | ראש השנה | א |
| T | 16 | Psalms 91 | ב | W | 14 | ראש השנה | ב |
| W | 17 | Psalms 92 | ג | Th | 15 | Psalms 110 | ג צום גדליה |
| Th | 18 | Psalms 93 | ד | F | 16 | וילך | ד |
| F | 19 | שופטים | ה | Sa | 17 | שבת שובה | ה וילך |
| Sa | 20 | שופטים | ו | Su | 18 | Psalms 111 | ו |
| Su | 21 | Psalms 94 | ז | M | 19 | Psalms 112 | ז |
| M | 22 | Psalms 95 | ח | T | 20 | Psalms 113 | ח |
| T | 23 | Psalms 96 | ט | W | 21 | ערב יום כפור | ט |
| W | 24 | Psalms 97 | י | Th | 22 | יום כפור | י |
| Th | 25 | Psalms 98 | יא | F | 23 | האינו | יא |
| F | 26 | כי תצא | יב | Sa | 24 | האינו | יב |
| Sa | 27 | כי תצא | יג | Su | 25 | Psalms 114 | יג |
| Su | 28 | Psalms 99 | יד | M | 26 | ערב סכות | יד |
| M | 29 | Psalms 100 | טו | T | 27 | סכות | טו |
| T | 30 | Psalms 101 | טז | W | 28 | סכות | טז |
| W | 31 | Psalms 102 | יז | Th | 29 | חול המועד סכות | יז |
| Th | 1 | Psalms 103 | יח | F | 30 | חול המועד סכות | יח |
| F | 2 | כי תבוא | יט | Sa | 1 | חול המועד סכות | יט |
| Sa | 3 | כי תבוא | כ | Su | 2 | חול המועד סכות | כ |
| Su | 4 | Psalms 104 | כא | M | 3 | הושענא רבה | כא |
| M | 5 | Psalms 105 | כב | T | 4 | שמיני עצרת | כב |
| T | 6 | Psalms 106 | כג | W | 5 | שמחת תורה | כג |
| W | 7 | Psalms 107 | כד | Th | 6 | Psalms 115 | כד |
| Th | 8 | Psalms 108 | כה | F | 7 | בראשית | כה |
| F | 9 | נצבים | כו | Sa | 8 | בראשית | כו |
| Sa | 10 | נצבים | כז | Su | 9 | Psalms 116 | כז |
| Su | 11 | Psalms 109 | כח | M | 10 | Psalms 117 | כח |
| M | 12 | ערב ראש השנה | כט | T | 11 | Psalms 118 | כט |
| | | | | W | 12 | Psalms 119 | ל |

עשה תורתך קבע

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