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DOR LeDOR

They shall beat their swords into ploughshares (Isaiah 2:4)

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מִיצְּבוּ בְּנוּ מ שׁ ה ז"ל

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EDITORIAL

The year 1990 marks the 950th anniversary of the birth of the most famous Bible and Talmud commentator, Solomon ben Isaac, known as Rashi.

Born in 1040 in the town of Troyes in Northern France, he lived all his 65 years in the general area of the Rhineland – Troyes, Mainz and Worms – yet his influence was immediately felt and in due course became world wide. Even the medieval Spanish Jewish thinkers and sages, who had no great love for Franco-German scholarship, held Rashi in highest esteem. He was the *Parshandata*, the Commentator par excellence.

Students of Rashi readily appreciate the truth of the oft-quoted opinion that without Rashi the Talmud would have remained a closed book; at least for a long time. For Rashi's lucid commentary goes far to clarify and explain the difficult language, the complicated subject matter and the convoluted discussions of the talmudic sages. No student of the Talmud would attempt a page of the text without Rashi's commentary. It is always there; on the inside column of the page.

While a similar claim is not made in praise of the indispensability of Rashi's Bible commentary, it is true that this latter work, specifically on the Five Books of Moses, achieved universal popularity among Jews that was second to none. It is significant that the very first book ever to be printed was Rashi's commentary on the Pentateuch, even without the Bible text itself! (Reggio, Italy, 1475). From then on Rashi's commentary became a basic subject in all Jewish schools. Even elementary school children were introduced at an early age to the *Humash* (Pentateuch) together with Rashi's commentary. And the subject has never lost its popularity with the Jewish Bible reader. Rashi's commentary also had an influence on Christian scholarship. Nicholas de Lyra (c.1270-1340) leaned heavily on Rashi, and this was a line of influence which extended to

Luther and the Reformation scholars for whom a mastery of the Scriptures was of central importance.

For the Jewish Bible reader the secret of this universal and enduring popularity lies in Rashi's twin methods of *peshat* and *derush*. The first method purports to explain the simple meaning of the text. The second draws upon the vast treasury of rabbinic literature in an attempt to uncover the deeper meaning and lessons of the text. The Bible reader certainly needs to know the *peshat*, and Rashi's uncanny skill is always evident in his explanation of the proper sense of the biblical word or phrase. Often however, the Bible reader needs to know much more than that, for the Bible has another dimension in which it spells out an eternal message of profound importance. The rabbis of Talmud and Midrash were masters of this deeper meaning of the Bible. But their comments and teachings are dispersed in a voluminous literature that is beyond the range of all but a few extraordinary scholars. Rashi's grasp of this massive literature was unique. He was a living encyclopedia of the vast scope of the classical rabbinic heritage. Then with his wise, sensitive and judicious selection he submits a rabbinic parable or saying to expose the deeper meaning of the Bible text thus bringing into focus an eternal lesson which enhances the power of the Scriptures as a life-giving force for the Bible reader.

All students of the Bible, including readers of this journal, might appropriately mark this anniversary year to honor the name and immortal influence of the *Parshandata* by devoting some time to study a work which has enriched Jewish life and thought for nearly 1000 years. To assist our readers to follow this suggestion a selected English bibliography is appended at the end of this issue.

Chaim Pearl
Associate Editor

(*See bibliography on page 228*)

WE MOURN THE LOSS OF
PROF. HAIM GEVARYAHU
חיים מ. י. גבריהו

דור לדור ישבח מעשיך
One generation shall laud thy works to another . . . (Ps. 15:4)

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO HIS MEMORY

I had heard of the name of Haim Gevaryahu many years before I actually met him. This was in connection with the annual Bible contest held on Israel Independence Day, and the Bible study sessions which took place on Saturday nights at the home of the Israeli prime ministers and/or presidents. After I came on Aliya in 1972, I also heard of Gevaryahu in relation to the annual three day Bible Conference held each spring.

However, it wasn't till 1982 that I was finally introduced to him in person by my late colleague and friend, Dr. Louis Katzoff, who many years earlier had been recruited by Professor Gevaryahu to launch an English language Bible quarterly which was then called Dor LeDor. Dr. Katzoff wanted me to meet Gevaryahu in order to win his approval for me to become the managing editor of the magazine and perhaps also to become involved with the international World Jewish Bible Society founded by Professor Gevaryahu. Our

first meeting already showed that there was the right chemistry between us and that is how I became his assistant for "foreign affairs and special projects" as well as managing editor of Dor LeDor now called The Jewish Bible Quarterly.

When one works closely with another individual one learns a great deal about him. Gevaryahu was not only a walking encyclopedia of biblical knowledge but was also well versed in other areas of Judaic subjects. I would turn to him often for sources when I had to write an article or give some talk. It was a special divine grace that permitted his phenomenal mind to remain with him to the end.

Although Gevaryahu could have devoted himself to scholarly research (his main contribution to scholarship was in the area of biblical colophons) he was not the usual academic personality. Unlike most academics, he did not consider his own research to be his main concern or goal in life; unlike academics he did not consider the minutes he spent away from research as waste of time. Rather he was an extrovert who loved all people and always welcomed their intrusion. People with all kinds of questions and even personal problems would drop by at any hour (usually without an appointment or advance warning) and even in the middle of writing an article or composing a letter he would drop everything and listen to the personal problem. These intrusions could involve such non-academic themes as the release of one imprisoned unfairly, finding a suitable job or husband for the daughter of an acquaintance, or getting financial assistance for someone in need. No matter how busy he was whenever someone would drop into our Dor LeDor editorial office (which was next door to his) he would always ask us not to let the guest leave without meeting him as well. During such a meeting with Gevaryahu we knew that the guest would not be able to leave without being recruited for some task in line with furthering the goals of the Society. At the very least he would be asked to pledge to become a daily Bible reader if he was not one already.

Gevaryahu was an orthodox religious Jew who counted among his good friends all types of Jews and Gentiles, great scholars as well as

simple people. Many of these scholars have contributed articles to the book which was originally to be a Festschrift but which is now a volume dedicated to his memory.

Gevaryahu was proud of his family and of his garden in Neve Sha'anan; all those who worked at the offices of the Bible Society were often treated to the fruits of his garden which he himself would cut and then personally distribute to all of us. In October 1989, Gevaryahu celebrated his 75th birthday and was selected to receive the Ben Gurion prize at the Tel Aviv home of Israel's first prime minister. A month later he was honored by the chairman of the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency, Mr. Simcha Dinitz, in a special ceremony held at the chairman's office. As it turned out, this was Professor Gevaryahu's last public appearance. Soon afterwards he was hospitalized for an illness from which he subsequently died on December 20th. With his death we have lost not only a person whose life embodied Torah in all of its aspects but a close friend whose warm Jewish heart will continue to inspire me as well as all others who were fortunate enough to know him. May his memory forever bless us.

Joshua Adler

ISAIAH: HOW THE BOOK ENTERED HOLY WRIT

BY HAIM GEVARYAHU

In the previous issue of the J.B.Q. an article by Prof. Gevaryahu appeared, entitled "The School of Isaiah". It was meant to be the first of a two-part series. Here we present the second part, which to our regret, Prof. Gevaryahu was not privileged to see while alive.

Approximately in the middle of the 6th century B.C.E., during the ascendancy of King Cyrus of Persia, an outstanding follower of the Isaianic school appeared. He remained anonymous, and is now designated Deutero-Isaiah. He describes himself as a *limmud*, or disciple, using features and phrases belonging to the folklore of Babylonian scribal schools. In 50:4-6, Deutero-Isaiah says:

The Lord God hath given me
The tongue of them that are taught,
That I should know how to sustain with words him that is weary;
He wakeneth morning by morning,
He wakeneth mine ear
To hear as they that are taught — **Ka-limmudim**
. . . I gave my back to the smiters,
And my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair . . .

The prophet here uses folkloristic themes popular in scribal schools, where some teachers were very harsh in the disciplining of their pupils. Here, of course, the imagery is used metaphorically. It is the Lord himself who opens the ears of the deaf (pupils).

Martin Buber felt that Deutero-Isaiah, by describing himself as a *limmud*, wanted to identify himself with the disciples — *limmudim*

The late Professor Haim Gevaryahu was the founder and chairman of the World Jewish Bible Society and the Israel Committee of Biblical Research. He wrote and lectured extensively on biblical subjects especially on biblical colophons.

of the old prophet Isaiah. But Deutero-Isaiah was also very humble, refraining from recording his name. So also was the very humble Trito-Isaiah who was the last follower of the Isaianic schools. I believe that all three great prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, were actually founders of schools. One outstanding follower of Jeremiah was Baruch ben Neriah, the scribe, who was, as far as I know, the first author to write a biography of a man of spirit. The school of Isaiah flourished longer than the others.

Before proceeding to the matter of the emergence of the canonical book of Isaiah, let us consider the remarkable phenomenon that the later visions of Deutero-Isaiah were attributed to the first Isaiah. How could this happen without leaving any literary sign or evidence?

Here we should first look to the international ancient and modern scribal custom of ending a text. Hermann Hunger, in his *Babylonische und Assyrische Kolophone*, states that the old Babylonian scribes used to mark on the tablets their respective place in the "tablet series". "Ob eine Tafel innerhalb einer Serie steht oder an deren Ende, kann durch die Angabe 'zu End' bezw. 'nicht zu Ende' mitgeteilt werden. Die entsprechenden akkadischen Wörter sind *'qati'* bezw. *'ul qati'*." Hunger lists nearly eighty colophons so designated.

A typical old Egyptian example is: "It has come [to its end, from] its beginnig to its end, like that which was found in writing."

In the Hebrew Bible remnants of this type of colophon can be found in a few passages which originally served to close a book, but after which new material was added later, so that in the present form of the massoretic text they appear to be situated in mid-text. For example,

Jer. 48:47, *Thus far is the judgment of Moab.*
Jer. 51:64, *Thus far are the words of Jeremiah.*
Psalm 72:20, *The prayers of David, son of Jesse are ended.*
Job 31:40, *The words of Job are ended.*

In the various manuscripts of the Septuagint all biblical books conclude with a remark including such words as *telos* or *tetelestai*, meaning the book of this prophet has come to an end. For example: Codex Alexandrinus: *Ēs. prophētēs* ([end of] the prophet Isaiah); Minuscule 51 (11th century): *telos prophēteias Ēsaiou* (end of the prophecies of Isaiah); and Syrohexapla, "the prophecies of Isaiah have come to an end (*tetelestai*) according to the translation of the 70." The Greek translators translated these remarks from the Hebrew *Vorlage*. A good example is retained in the Hebrew Geniza manuscript of Ben Sira. At the end of the book we read, "Up to here the words of Simon son of Jeshua who was called Ben Sira."

But all of these colophons, indicating the end, were omitted by later editions of the canonized Scripture. Only the few above-mentioned colophons (located at the end of once independent literary units) were retained inadvertently.

On the basis of this background, let us now try to suggest a solution to the Deutero-Isaiah problem. We may assume with some certainty that there was once at the end of the first book of Isaiah the present superscription, in addition to the colophonic ending: *Up to here are the words of Isaiah ben Amoz*, as is the case in Jer. 51:64. But when the biographical data about Isaiah and his time were transferred to the beginning of the book, and the colophon of the type "up to here . . ." was omitted, the division marks between the two Isaianic books disappeared.

Eventually, after a few generations, the names of Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah were forgotten and the entire book was attributed to Isaiah ben Amoz. It seems that the names of Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah were first kept orally, but these oral traditions did not last very long. We must remember that at this time the concept of authorship was almost unknown. In any event, Ben Sira attributed the entire book to Isaiah (Sirach 48:22-25). Ben Sira praises Isaiah ben Amoz, stating, "By his powerful spirit he looked into the future and consoled or comforted the mourners of Zion."

Josephus relates the legend that the Jews had shown to king Cyrus of Persia the book of Isaiah, in which the gracious act of Cyrus was foretold of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem. Josephus also presented another legendary story that Onias the priest had shown to Ptolemy Isaiah's vision (19:18) that there would be erected one day an altar in the land of Egypt; it is on this basis that Onias received permission to build a Temple in Leontopilis.

THE CANONIZATION PROCESS OF THE BOOK OF ISAIAH

Having established the fact that Isaiah ben Amoz founded a school of followers, let us survey the history of the so-called canonization of the book of Isaiah. To begin, I prefer the term "adoption" or "mainstream" over the term "canonization", because it better describes the process by which the Bible in its various parts was circulated and finally accepted as the authoritative Word of God. I share the conclusion of those who hold that such acceptance was not imposed by the decision of a synod. The century and a half from the beginning of the Babylonian Exile to the time of Nehemiah was the decisive period in the final formation of the Hebrew Bible as we know it, and in the molding of Judaism into the spiritual community which has survived to this day. During the fifty years of exile in Babylonia and the first hundred years of the Second Commonwealth, the biblical books were compiled, collected, concluded, circulated, and finally acclaimed by the Jewish nation as their Holy Scriptures. It is impossible to write a history of this "canonization" process, since we have only a few glimpses of it; therefore, practically everything that has been written on the matter is a matter of speculation.

The talmudic tractate Baba Batra (14b) contains an ancient catalogue of the order of all the biblical books to wit "the order of the scroll of the prophetical books is Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah," followed by the names of the twelve minor prophets. The rabbis discussed the

problem why "Isaiah, which was the earliest, is not the first" in the order of the books, but their explanation is purely homiletical.

The *Sifre* to Deuteronomy 34 contains a list of biblical texts which illustrate the custom of opening a prophetical book with an admonition and closing with a note of consolation. Finkelstein thinks that this Midrash stems from the time of the Babylonian Exile, and asks why this does *not* include the book of Isaiah, which in its *present* form begins with admonition and ends with consolation. According to Finkelstein such a conspicuous absence as this constitutes evidence that the book of Isaiah (in the form in which we know it) was not yet canonized by the time of the Babylonian Exile.

Placing together these vairous data, let us see what insights they offer into an understanding of the historical process by which biblical books were "adopted" into the mainstream of Holy Writ. My cautious suggestion for the solution to this problem is that the Isaianic school existed in the form of a semi-closed circle. The best typological parallel for this is provided by the Pythagorean school in Greece, which remained a closed circle for 200 years. It may be, therefore, that the members of the Isaianic school did not themselves disseminate the recorded visions of Isaiah; thus the first prophetical book to be "canonized" was Jeremiah.

Even so, this proved to be a most remarkable rehabilitation for Jeremiah, whose visions were rejected during his lifetime (or accepted only by Baruch ben Neriah, the scribe, and a small group of followers) to be accepted by "all Israel" only at the beginning of the Babylonian Captivity. It seems that Ezekiel, on the other hand, was accepted by the nation as a whole by the end of his own lifetime, midway through the period of the Babylonian Exile. (Yet the rabbis wanted to exclude Ezekiel!)

The first of the Isaianic writings to be circulated was the complex of chapters 13-23, The Visions on the Nations, as demonstrated by the superscription *massa Babel* (13:1), which took place during the *second* part of the Babylonian Exile. Sometime later, the first part of the

book of Isaiah was compiled and circulated and received the superscription of chapter 2. Then, a little later, the anthological first chapter and the historical appendix (chapters 36-39) were added, the latter taken from the already circulating book of Kings.

A scribal custom should be noted in which additions of new material are always placed at the end of the existing book. This system of additions is clearly shown in the book of Ben Sira where chapter 50 concluded with a colophon, still retained in 50:27-29; then chapter 51 was added after the first book was already concluded.

We also believe that the same phenomenon occurred in the book of Isaiah. All the additions were made at the end and not interspersed or put somewhere between the various chapters of the already compiled book. This conclusion is valid for all biblical literature, especially the book of Isaiah.

Returning to the assumption that the present superscription in Isaiah 1:1-4 was originally placed at the end of the fist collection, or library edition, of the so-called first Isaiah (chapters 1-39), the book developed by a process of additions after additions of the later visions of members of the Isaianic school. The first added material includes the visions of Deutero-Isaiah (chapters 40-55), following the opinion of those scholars who assume that Deutero-Isaiah was one person. Again, some time later, the material of Trito-Isaiah (or the Trito-Isaiahs) was added. According to general scribal custom, the additions of the "Trito-Isaiahs" would have been successively added to the end of the collection. It is apparent that Deutero-Isaiah comes from one hand, in which case the Servant Songs would not have been a separate entity. If that were so, they would not have been interspersed throughout Deutero-Isaiah. Scribal custom did not permit interspersal of additional material. It would rather have been added to the end of Deutero-Isaiah.

The Isaianic collections were concluded some time at the end of the sixth century but not later than the first part of the fifth century B.C.E. According to a tradition preserved in II Maccabees,

Nehemiah, in the middle of the fifth century, already had a collection of prophetical books.

The book of Isaiah, with its vision of a united mankind, served as the main channel of communication between Jews and Judaism and proselytes and Gentiles who were interested in Judaism. In addition, it is one of the most quoted books in Western Literature.

With these remarks, our consideration of the "life-story" of Isaiah and the Isaianic book collections has come to an end. Following the nearly 4000 year old scribal school tradition, I conclude with an originally colophonic doxology:

תם ונשלם שבח לאל בורא עולם

RACHEL: A WOMAN WHO WOULD BE A MOTHER

BY JUDITH ZABARENKO ABRAMS

The biblical figure of Rachel brings to mind a beloved beauty. But is this really the case? Was she truly beloved? And did her beauty bring her satisfaction? Or was she a passive and frustrated person, seen as an object by those who supposedly loved her? In contrast to accepted interpretations of her story, I contend that the latter is the case. From its beginning to its end, Rachel's story is one of disappointment, desperation, and the indifference of others to her needs.

Rachel's introduction into the biblical narrative exemplifies her passive role vis-a-vis Jacob. Jacob's theft of Esau's birthright has provoked his flight from home. Before entering into exile, Jacob's father enjoins him to marry a wife from *the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother* (Gen. 28:2).

Upon arriving in Laban's territory, Jacob quickly inquires about him of some shepherds. They know him and point out, *Behold, Rachel his daughter comes with the sheep* (Gen. 29:6). This is our first mention of Rachel.[1] She does not speak for herself. Rather, she is the object of someone's distant observation. Even the style of the Hebrew subtly reflects her passive role. No normal active verb forms are yet ascribed to Rachel; rather, participal clauses describe her in Gen. 29:65 (above), and in Gen. 29:9 *While he still spoke with them, Rachel was coming with her father's flock because she was a shepherdess.*[2] Rachel's introduction into the narrative reflects her two primary roles: first, as the agent of Jacob's fate at the hands of Laban, and second, as a woman who tends to the young . . . be they sheep or children.

1 See Robert Alter's analysis of this "type scene" in his book *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York, 1981), especially page 52.

2 Rashi and Ibn Ezra note the unique verb forms in their comments on Gen. 29:6.

Rabbi Judith Zabarenko Abrams received an MHL and was ordained at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati in 1985. She currently serves as the rabbi of Congregation Ner Shalom in Woodbridge, Virginia.

How does Jacob see Rachel?[3] As a beauty? As a good shepherdess? Perhaps, but this isn't indicated in the text. Rather, the narrative underscores her relationship to Laban. The biblical style here is too emphatic to miss. *And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel* ***the daughter of Laban his mother's brother,*** *and the sheep of* ***Laban his mother's brother,*** *that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of* ***Laban his mother's brother*** (Gen. 29:10). Jacob sees Rachel as an object. Her value, like the sheep's, derives from her relationship with Laban, not her intrinsic worth.[4]

After watering the flock, Jacob finally focuses on Rachel, kisses her, then identifies himself. At last, Rachel performs her first action in the story, typifying much of her subsequent role. When Jacob tells her he is Rebekah's son, she runs and tells her father (Gen. 29:12). She serves as a messenger between Laban and Jacob, bringing them together. She is the bait that draws Jacob into the jaws of Laban's trap.

For Laban is laying a snare for Jacob, to serve both the needs of justice, and literary symmetry. Laban will mete out the punishment Jacob so richly deserves for depriving Esau of his birthright. As Jacob tricked Esau, so now Laban will trick Jacob. As Jacob spurned the rights of a first-born child, so now will Laban uphold their legitimacy. As Jacob cheated his sibling, so now will he be cheated by a sibling.[5]

Laban asked Jacob to work seven years for Rachel's hand in marriage, and then gave him Leah, Rachel's older sister, instead.

3 Our examination of Rachel's life presupposes a modern perspective on women's roles in society. Doubtless, this is not how previous generations viewed Rachel's character, or how women viewed themselves in biblical times. For a new perspective on women's roles during the biblical era, see Jo Ann Hackett, "In the Days of Jael: Reclaiming the History of Women in Ancient Israel" in *Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality*, Clarissa W. Atkinson, et al., ed. (Boston, 1985).

4 Note that the sheep get more attention than Rachel!

5 The rabbis, recognizing this symmetry, assumed that Rachel and Leah were twins (Seder Olam 2) and that Leah was intended to be Esau's bride. Tanchuma Vayetsei cited in *Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation* (New York: American Biblical Encyclopedia Society), 1959, vol. 4, page 91.

The Hebrew text highlights the retributive nature of this forced marriage: it is Jacob's punishment for having exploited Esau's hunger to obtain the birthright (בכורה). When Jacob angrily confronts Laban with his trickery, Laban answers pointedly, *Giving the younger before the elder - (הבכירה) is not done among us* (Gen. 29:26). Laban calls Leah *ha-b'khirah*, literally 'the birthright child', emphasizing her rights as the eldest daughter.[6]

Through all these machinations, Rachel is not only passive, but silent. At this point in our tale she is barely a real character . . . more a necessary prop in the story: if Jacob were not attracted to her, he could never receive his due punishment. Her father certainly views her as an object and refers to her as such. He tells Jacob, *Fulfill another seven years, and this one too will be given to you* (Gen. 29:27). Laban neither consults her nor calls her by name. She is an object: "this one too."

Though Rachel is silent, we may deduce that she does not object to the trick played on Jacob. She *had* to be aware of what was taking place. (After all, she could have stopped the wedding.)[7] Yet, the text gives no indication that Rachel envies Leah's role as Jacob's wife.

What role *does* Rachel desire then? If losing a husband is not enough to make her speak, what will? What will trigger action within her? Up to this point she is still passive, an object, a necessary literary figure. She is defined by her relationships: Laban's daughter, Leah's sister, Jacob's object of desire. But one important relationship is missing. Where is Rachel's mother? Rashi, the medieval biblical commentator, assumes she had died many years before.[8] And perhaps her mother's death affected

6 Compare the use of *ha-b'khirah* here opposed to *ha-ts'irah* contrasting oldest and youngest children) versus *rav* (literally "the elder" or "the bigger one") and *tsa-ir* in Genesis 25:23.

7 While Rachel is merely indifferent in the biblical text, the Midrash turns her acquiescence into a virtue. In Lamentations Rabbah, Proem 24, Rachel reveals that she had known about the plot to substitute Leah for herself, and had even told Jacob about it. Rachel gave him a sign so that he would know it was she, but then suppressed her desire and taught her sister the sign so that she might not be publicly shamed. Rachel even went beneath the bridal bed and spoke in reply to Jacob's questions so that he might not catch on!

8 Rashi on Gen. 29:12 from Midrash Bereshit Rabbah (70:13).

Rachel's attitude toward motherhood. For it is *this* role that consumes Rachel's energies and passions.[9]

Almost all of Rachel's actions reflect her drive to become a mother. Her first words — after more than fourteen years of narrative have elapsed — is a desperate plea for children.

> *And Leah conceived, and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben; for she said: Because the Lord hath looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me. And she conceived again and bore a son; and said: Because the Lord has heard that I am hated, He has therefore given me this son also. And she called his name Simon. And she conceived again, and bore a son; and said: Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have borne him three sons. Therefore was his name called Levi. And she conceived again, and bore a son: and she said: This time will I praise the Lord. Therefore she called his name Judah; and she left off bearing. And when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and she said unto Jacob: Give me children, or else I die* (Gen. 29:32-30:1).

This long series of sentences emphasizes both Leah's active fruitfulness and Rachel's barren passivity. In each, Leah conceives, bears and names a son with a speech touting her rejected, but fertile, status. With each son's birth, Rachel's envy of Leah

9 Adin Steinsaltz explores this aspect of Rachel in his chapter, "Rachel, The Unfulfilled Dream" in *Biblical Images* (New York, 1984), pp. 49-54. Poetess Amy Blank, in *"I Know Four" and Other Things* (Cincinnati, 1981) also captures Rachel's maternal frustrations in her poem "Rachel", page 45.

". . . It was small comfort when I gave my slave-girl
to Jacob to raise us children.
I gave her willingly but I could not fool myself.
When rounded to the birth, the girl
with lowered eyes before me spoke of 'your' son:
when 'my' child suckled at her breast
I did not feel less barren, less unfulfilled.

must have grown deeper and deeper. (Note, it is not Jacob's love she covets, but his children.)[10] Finally, she bursts out in frustration: *Give me children, or I shall die!* to which Jacob answers primly, *Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?* (Gen. 30:2).[11] Rachel may be hurt by Jacob's tart remark, but she does not reply to the rebuke. Instead, she single-mindedly pursues her goal of motherhood and offers Jacob her handmaid, who bears him two sons. But Leah quickly evens the score when her maid also bears Jacob two sons. The tension remains: Rachel's barrenness continues.

By now, Rachel is so desperate to become a mother that she yields her conjugal rights to Leah in return for her son's mandrakes. Apparently she believed that this "love apple" could cure her barrenness.[12] But the mandrakes do not help. Leah has born five sons and one daughter. Rachel has still born no children.

Finally, God remembered Rachel, and hearkened to her and opened her womb (Gen. 30:22). At last Rachel bears a son, Joseph. It is a relief to her, *God has taken away (אסף) my reproach* (Gen. 30:23). But she is not yet satisfied. She wants more sons and so gives Joseph's name a second meaning, *The Lord shall add (יוסף) to me another son* (Gen. 30:23).

During these years of barrenness, Rachel must have speculated on the cause of her infertility. Was she guilty of some misdeed or

10 Here it is Rachel who seems to be viewing Jacob as a mere object. She does not desire his company, but rather his ability to impregnate her. However, she may already have had his love, and so had no need to covet it.

11 Robert Alter notes the acerbity of Jacob's response: "Jacob in his rejoinder says neither son (ben) nor child (yeled) but instead uses a rather formal locution, the kenning 'fruit of the womb.' Perhaps he chooses this term because of the theological context — God's withholding from her — of his statement; perhaps, also, it sharpens the rebuke to Rachel by stressing her condition of barrenness through the implied image of the childless woman as a plant that yields no fruit. (loc. cit. page 187)." In Bereshit Rabbah (71:7) God rebukes Jacob for his harsh reply. "Said the Holy One, blessed be He, to him: 'Is that a way to answer a woman in distress? By thy life, thy children will one day stand [in supplication] before her son [Joseph], who will answer them, Am I in the place of God? (Gen. 50:19)."

12 "Rachel", Encyclopedia Judaica, (Jerusalem, 1972) vol. 13, p. 1487.

omission?[13] Or was she barren because Laban delayed her marriage seven years; years in which she might have been bearing children? Perhaps Rachel blamed Laban for her infertility.

At any rate, there is certainly no love lost between Rachel — or for that matter, Leah — and their father. When Jacob tells the sisters he must leave Laban and return to his homeland, they are quite willing to go along. *'Is there yet any portion of inheritance for us in our father's house? Are we not counted as strangers by him? For he has sold us, and has quite devoured also our money?'* (Gen. 31:14-15). Here Leah and Rachel testify that their father has treated them like chattel: they are strangers; pieces of property that were sold and exploited.[14]

As they take their leave of him, both Rachel and Jacob repay Laban for the pain he's caused them. Rachel avenges her years of lost fertility; Jacob his years of lost labor. The text plays on this parallel action by using the same verb to describe both their deeds. Rachel steals (ותגנב) her father's idols and Jacob outwits (literally steals [ויגנב] the heart of) Laban. Let us examine each of their actions in turn.

Rachel clearly reproaches Laban with her infertility by the way she hides the idols. She takes his idols, puts them in the camel's saddle and then sits on the saddle. When Laban comes to search the tent, she says to her father, *Let it not displease my Lord that I cannot rise up before you, for the way of women is upon me* (Gen. 31:35). Even Laban, as insensitive as he might have been, must have known how painful it was for Rachel to be infertile. Now, she uses her perpetual infertility to trick him. She cannot rise because she is having her menstrual period: she has failed to conceive a child yet again. Her father does not disturb her, either out of sensitivity to her plight or out of concern that she might be impure. In either case, Rachel has taken her vengeance on her father. It will, however, cost

13 Bereshit Rabbah (71:6) states that Rachel envied Leah for her good deeds, reasoning that she could not have born children if she were not righteous.

14 See footnote #3.

her dearly in the end, for Jacob unwittingly curses her during *his* confrontation with Laban.

After Jacob flees with his family and herds, Laban chases him, catches him and confronts him with his 'theft'. Jacob replies, not only that he has taken only what is rightfully his, but that Laban has become a scoundrel. *'Thus have I been twenty years in your house. I served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your cattle, and you have changed my wages ten times. Were it not that the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely you would have sent me away empty now'* (Gen. 31:41-42).[15] Jacob and Laban argue, and during this altercation, Jacob condemns the one who stole the idols to death (Gen. 31:32). Jacob's word comes to be fulfilled; Rachel dies prematurely.

Ironically, Rachel perishes giving birth to another son. The dramatic scene is presented without any introduction. It begins, *And Rachel travailed, and she had hard labor* (Gen. 35:16). We are not even told, as is customary, that Rachel conceived (ותהר). Instead, we are thrust precipitously into the moment of birth and death, as if to underscore Rachel's pain rather than her nine months of happy expectation.

Rachel dies in bitterness, alone except for a solitary midwife. She names her son Ben-oni, the son of my affliction. But Jacob denies her even this posthumous expression of her pain. He renames the boy Benjamin. The rabbis are frankly puzzled by this switch. They try to reconcile it by saying that Ben-oni was Aramaic and Benjamin Hebrew,[16] but this seems implausible. A more likely explanation is that Jacob simply did not recognize the depth of Rachel's anguish either in life or at the moment of her death. Thus, Rachel died as she lived: straining toward fruitfulness and fulfillment.[17]

15 Note the ornate trope which accents Jacob's indignant tone in this speech.

16 Bereshit Rabbah (82:9).

17 Compare Rachel's death scene with Gen. 37:33-35 where Jacob refuses to be comforted for Joseph's alleged death.

If Jacob could not appreciate Rachel's anguish, later generations surely could. The prophet Jeremiah saw Rachel in all her maternal sadness:[18]

> *Thus says the Lord: a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted for her children, because they are not* (Jer. 31:14).

Here Rachel weeps for the children of Israel, exiled to Babylonia. While saddened by her children's fate, Jeremiah's Rachel has fulfilled her one desire: in his vision, she is the mother of a nation.

Rachel is also seen as the fruitful, nurturing mother in proem #24 of Lamentations Rabbah. In this proem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Jeremiah all plead with God to save the Jews from the horrors of exile in Babylonia, but to no avail. Finally Rachel speaks up and appeals to the Almighty, saying,

> "If I, a creature of flesh and blood, formed of dust and ashes, was not envious of my rival and did not expose her to shame and contempt (see footnote #6), why should you, a King who lives eternally and who is merciful, be jealous of idolatry in which there is no reality, and exile my children and let them be slain by the sword, and their enemies have done with them as they wished!" Then the mercy of the Holy One, blessed be He, was stirred and God said, "For your sake, Rachel, I will restore Israel to their place." And so it is written, *Thus saith the Lord: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are not* (Jer 31:14). This is followed by *Thus saith the Lord: Refrain your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears; for your work shall be rewarded . . and there is hope for your future, saith the Lord, and your children shall return to their own border* (Jer. 31:15ff).

18 Jeremiah 31:14 and Ruth 4:11 are the only other places in the Bible where Rachel is mentioned outside of the book of Genesis.

In the rabbi's vision of the messianic era, Rachel's dreams finally become reality: she is an active advocate for her children. No longer infertile, no longer an object, she has become mother to a nation, taking up their cause before God's throne.

The figure of Rachel stands clearly before us now. Was she a beloved beauty? A privileged, treasured person? Or a sad, frustrated woman, treated as a mere object by her father and husband? The biblical text tells the story of a woman, perhaps beloved, but not understood by her husband . . . a woman sadly straining toward motherhood till the very moment of her death.

What can we learn from this new interpretation of Rachel's character? First, when seen in this new light, she may become a role model for those families struggling with the problems that infertility causes; the frustration, the disappointment, the jealousy of those with children. Rachel's perseverance in the face of continuous disappointment may be a source of inspiration to them. Second, the Torah text captures the many dimensions of Rachel's character. By focusing only on her role as a beloved beauty we miss much of what she has to teach us: that even those who seem most blessed may be unhappy. Their pain is no less intense because of their blessings. All her beauty could not obtain for her the fulfillment that her less attractive sister found in motherhood. When seen in this light, Rachel can help us empathize with those whom we previously envied. Rachel was not fulfilled in life. She was a wistful character whose only fulfillment was posthumous; part of the messianic vision of the rabbis who understood her plight.

WHY DID GOD WANT TO KILL MOSES?

BY JOSIAH DERBY

The three verses, Ex. 4:24-26, are among the most mysterious and enigmatic in the Bible. The difficulty in understanding this text does not derive from words whose meaning is unknown or uncertain nor from possible scribal errors that suggest emendation, but rather because of the uncertainty of the plain meaning of a simple third person suffix. Because of this, the commentators both traditional and modern have offered a variety of answers to the questions raised in these verses: who is doing what to whom, and why. Consequently, any translation, even in Hebrew, becomes an interpretation. It is the purpose of this article to present yet another interpretation which, hopefully, will answer some of the questions that other interpretations raise.

For the purpose of placing before the reader a ready frame of reference, I shall quote from the New J.P.S. Bible.

> *At a night encampment on the way, the Lord encountered him and sought to kill him. So Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin, and touched his legs with it, saying, 'You are truly a bridegroom of blood to me!' And when He let him alone she added,'A bridegroom of blood because of the circumcision'.*

A note at the bottom of the page indicates that vv. 25, 26 (the last two sentences of the translation) are obscure! Since this is a translation and not a commentary, the text offers no explanation as to why the Lord wanted to kill Moses, and why He "let him alone", assuming that "him" refers to Moses.

A brief account of the events that preceded what is told in our text is necessary.

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Moses had fled to Midian in order to escape from the wrath of Pharaoh for killing the Egyptian task master. There he met Zipporah, a daughter of Jethro, the priest of Midian. Jethro gave Zipporah to Moses in marriage and they had a son whom Moses named Gershom (Ex. 2:21, 22).

The Lord appears to Moses in the burning bush, informs him of His plans for the future of the children of Israel, and orders Moses to return to Egypt, to confront Pharaoh in His name and demand that Pharaoh allow the children of Israel to leave Egypt. Should Pharaoh refuse to do this, Moses is to tell him that God will slay Pharaoh's first-born son. The Lord also informs Moses that Pharaoh will, indeed, refuse to obey this demand because He will harden Pharaoh's heart (Ex. 4:21-23).

Moses is most reluctant to accept this heavy responsibility and offers a number of reasons why God should select someone else. The Lord becomes irritated with Moses, and insists that Moses accept this mission, but in order to ease his burden, he will be accompanied by his brother, Aaron.

Moses now has no choice. He *takes his wife and his sons whom he mounts on a donkey and he sets out to return to Egypt* (Ex. 4:20). Then, the events in our text follow.

Now the Hebrew text tells us, "The Lord met him at the encampment (at night?) and wanted to kill him." Whom? The last person to be mentioned prior to the use of the third person here is Pharaoh's first-born, the very last words in v. 23. Obviously, this cannot be the person whom the text has in mind. One would assume, as nearly all commentators do, that the reference is to Moses. But the ambiguity of the pronoun "him" leads at least one commentator to identify it with someone else. Moreover, the text says not a word nor does it offer the slightest hint as to the reason why God was doing this.

It is clear that Zipporah circumcised her son, but which one? We are told that Moses had taken "his sons" on this journey, but at this point in the Torah we have only read about one son, Gershom. It is not until Ex. 18:4 that we learn that Zipporah had given birth to a second son who had been named Eliezer. Which of these sons, then,

did Zipporah circumcise, the older or the younger? Again, the third pronoun defeats us. Following the circumcision, Zipporah took the foreskin and touched "his feet" with it. Whose feet?

When that happens, and Zipporah makes two statements, the text tells us that *he let him alone*. The presumption is that "he" refers to the Lord, but who is the "him"? The reason for this happening is also not given, even though the juxtaposition of this deliverance with Zipporah's action seems to indicate that the former was a consequence of the latter.

Now I should like to offer first a brief sampling of the commentaries on this text, beginning with the three great Jewish classic commentators, Rashi (11th century, France), Ibn Ezra (12th century, Spain) and Sforno, Rabbi Obadiah ben Jacob (16th century, Italy).

Rashi says that God came to kill Moses because he had not bothered to circumcise Eliezer. This opinion assumes that Eliezer was born at the time Moses received the order to return to Egypt, and he was hurrying to prepare for the journey. Apparently, this was the view of the rabbis of the Talmud, for Rashi quotes R. Jose: "Heaven forbid that Moses didn't bother with the circumcision. Rather, Moses did not circumcise the child because the law forbids endangering the child's life by circumcising him while on a journey. And Moses would not delay fulfilling God's command by having to wait at home three days after the circumcision. But Moses was to be punished because he delayed too long at the inn."[1]

Sforno and Ibn Ezra tell us it was an angel that came to kill Moses. (There are other places in the Torah where God and an angel appear interchangeably). What happened at the inn was that on the eighth day after Eliezer's birth, the angel who comes to bless a child at its circumcision was angry that Moses had failed in his duty. That is why Zipporah hastened to perform the circumcision, touching the feet of Moses with the foreskin as if Moses himself had done it. (Ibn Ezra offers the idea that Moses was shaking because of

1 Our text is discussed at length in B.T. Ned. 32a, though the rabbis mentioned here are not the same as those quoted by Rashi and Ibn Ezra.

a fever that had overcome him and hence could not do the circumcision himself). With Zipporah's action the angel was appeased and departed, thus permitting Moses to return to health.

However, Ibn Ezra does not hesitate to cite an altogether different view. R. Samuel ben Hofni asks why should God want to kill Moses whom He had chosen for the vital mission of redeeming His people? We must therefore conclude that it was Eliezer whom God wanted to kill; and that since "her son" refers to Eliezer, all the other third person suffixes must refer to him also. Having circumcised Eliezer, Zipporah touches *his* feet with the foreskin, and then God departs from him. R. Samuel does not explain why Zipporah did this. Nor is there any explanation given as to why the failure to circumcise or to be circumcised is punishable by death.

Let us take a brief look at some of the moderns. First, U. Cassuto.[2] Pursuing his method of literary analysis, he argues that since in v. 23 there is reference to Pharaoh's first-born and to Israel as "the Lord's first-born", "her son" in v. 25 must also refer to a first-born, namely, Gershom.[3] Cassuto believes that this entire story is told to emphasize the great importance of the *mitzvah* (commandment) of circumcision; that their arrival at the inn occurred on Gershom's eighth day, and since Moses was deathly ill, Zipporah performed the circumcision on his behalf in spite of the fact that being on the road they were absolved from this *mitzvah*.[4]

As to why God came to kill Moses by causing him to become deathly ill, Cassuto draws a parallel between this event and the story of Balaam. God sent an angel to obstruct Balaam's passage (Num. 22:22ff.) in order to warn Balaam not to say anything other than what God would tell him. Similarly, by bringing this illness

2 U. Cassuto, "The Book of Exodus" (Hebrew) Hebrew University, 1954, pp. 37-39.

3 Cassuto doesn't say so but he must assume that Eliezer was not yet born, and that the word "his sons" (whom Moses took with him on his journey) should read "his son", with the omission of the "yod" that denotes plural.

4 *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Prentice-Hall 1968, Vol. I, p. 50 opines that this text may be an effort by a "fervent traditionalist" to connect the practice of circumcision to Moses thereby, perhaps, bestowing upon it even greater importance than if it were only associated with Abraham.

(attempt to kill) upon Moses God meant to warn him to do exactly as He had told him when he appears before Pharaoh. In my humble opinion this interpretation is not acceptable because the two incidents are not comparable. The angel who obstructs Balaam holds a conversation with him explaining to him what had happened and why. Neither Moses nor Zipporah receive any explanation from the Lord, who does not communicate with them at all.

Furthermore, the argument that Cassuto offers in his effort to connect the threat to Moses' life with Zipporah's actions does not succeed either. He goes on to suggest that the reason why this text resists understanding is because it is only a fragment of a longer story, well-known to the people, which the Torah decided to abridge and introduce at this point in the narrative of the Exodus. This is probably correct, but it does not answer the question why the Torah did it. In fact, the story of Moses' mission reads very smoothly if we omit these three verses altogether. Indeed, none of the interpretations noted thus far offers a significant reason for the inclusion of our text at this point.

S. R. Driver[5] presents a view which flies in the face of Jewish tradition which suggests that Moses was born circumcised,[6] or that his parents circumcised him. Driver however suggests that Moses *was* uncircumcised[7] and that is why God came to kill him.[8] Zipporah circumcises her son as a vicarious act, thus appeasing God. Driver does not explain why God would want to kill Moses because of his being uncircumcised.

5 S. R. Driver, *Book of Exodus*, Cambridge Bible 1929, p. 53.

6 L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, Vol III, p. 468, Vol. V Note 51.

7 B. Z. Lurie, *Bet Mikra* (Hebrew) Jerusalem Vol. Tevet-Adar 5749, p. 112 claims that Moses did not know about the *mitzvah* of circumcision (and hence he was *not* circumcised — my addition) but Zipporah knew of its importance since the Midianites followed the Abrahamic laws.

8 The Talmud discusses such a possibility and what should be done about it in order for the father to fulfill the commandment. This tadition presumes that if Moses had had to be circumcised, he would have cried, drawing the attention of the Egyptians who then would have cast him into the Nile. The opinion in Pirke D'Rabbi Eliezer, on the other hand, suggests that the infant Moses did not cry when he was circumcised.

Finally, the Interpreter's Bible[9] dips into mythology and suggests that our text is a much revised version of an ancient tale in which Moses is uncircumcised, and that on their bridal night Zipporah swiftly circumcises him in order to save his life from a demon who had come to claim the bride for himself by virtue of primus noctis. Zipporah touches the *demon's feet* with Moses' foreskin saying to *him* (the words of our text), "Surely, you are a bridegroom of blood to me", the demon is satisfied and leaves. (Her second statement in our text she then addresses to Moses).[10] But of course this goes counter to the fact itself which explicitly states that Zipporah cut off her son's foreskin.

I understand this text somewhat differently from both the traditional and the modern interpreters. The Torah is telling us a story, in its own idioms and in terms of its own universe of discourse, which must have significant implications for the entire drama of the Exodus that is unfolding in the preceding and following chapters in the book. It is a story which we must translate into our universe of discourse.

As we know, Moses was a very reluctant emissary. Not only the awareness of his speech impediment but his natural humility caused him to cringe before the idea of appearing in Pharaoh's presence and addressing the mighty monarch in the stern tones that he had been instructed. His self-confidence, even with the staff of God in his hand, must have been at a very low ebb. On top of all that, he is told in advance that Pharaoh will not listen. But he must also threaten this enslaver of the children of Israel, telling him that should he not free them, the Lord will kill Pharaoh's first-born son. How could he, Moses, dare throw down such a gauntlet to Pharaoh? What would prevent Pharaoh, whose heart had been hardened, putting Moses to death?

Did Moses discuss these thoughts with his wife as they were travelling to Egypt? What else could they talk about? Moses must have

9 *The Interpreter's Bible*, N. Y. 1952, Vol. I, p. 882.

10 In T. B. Ned. 31a we read of a demon who tried to swallow Moses.

already known the stuff that Zipporah was made of; she was no timid and submissive woman, as she was soon to demonstrate in abundance.

Moses brooded over his own future as well as over the fate of his brethren. In fact, his doubts and apprehensions were deepened later by the disastrous results of his first encounter with Pharaoh, and he does not hesitate to express himself. *Why did You worsen this people's plight? To what end did you send me . . . ?* (Ex. 5:22).

Resting for the night, Moses becomes gravely ill, an illness that psychiatrists and physicians could doubtless explain. Zipporah is distraught, but not helpless. She must do something to bolster her husband's morale, to strengthen his faith in the God of Abraham, the God who had made an everlasting covenant with Abraham's descendants. Words alone would be powerless; only some meaningful, powerful act could make its impression upon Moses. And so she performs the act of the covenant itself – she circumcises her son (in this scenario, which son is not significant). To bring the full implications of her act to bear upon Moses, she takes the child's foreskin and touches Moses' male organ with it.[11] Moses comes out of his state of depression and is able to continue his journey and proceed with his mission, even though he was not yet completely convinced of the ultimate success of his undertaking.

Zipporah's statement to Moses (v. 25): "You are a blood bridegroom to me" is a sort of oral explanation to Moses of the meaning of what she has done, a further source of encouragement to him. And the repetition of this statement in v. 26, in the form of an impersonal, undirected formulation is doubtless a term commonly applied to a circumcised child, as Cassuto asserts.[12]

11 "His legs" (or his "feet") in the text is a euphemism for the male sex organ, one that appears several times in the Bible, viz. Isaiah's sixth chapter in which the Seraphim are described as having six wings. With two they cover their faces (from the glory of the Lord), with two they cover their "legs", and with two they fly. The Jerome Biblical Commentary calls attention to this euphemism, although all the other commentators are surely aware of this fact which modesty prevents them from stating.

12 The word *lamulot*, according to Cassuto, is another form of the plural, which ordinarily should have the masculine plural ending. Sforno suggests that this word refers to the two steps in the circumcision process required by the *halakhah*.

This interpretation of the text not only gives it a *raison d'être* but adds a significant dimension to the entire story of the Exodus. It is the vital link between Moses the reluctant emissary and the Moses who is courageous enough to appear before Pharaoh. It depicts Moses as a man with profound emotions. It sheds light upon a corner of the Bible which is shrouded in mystery.

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HOW MANY HEBREWS LEFT EGYPT?

BY DAVID FAIMAN

INTRODUCTION

According to Ex. 12, 600,000 adult males were led out of Egypt by Moses, after a sojourn there of 430 years. Talmudic sages addressed the problem of how these figures might be reconciled with the four generations from Jacob to Moses (Levi - Kohath - Amram - Moses). They concluded that the 430 years are to be counted from the date that Abraham set out from Ur (Ibn Ezra), 400 of them being from the birth of Isaac (Rashi). That is to say, only 210 years are to be reckoned to have elapsed from the time that Jacob went down to Egypt until the Exodus. This kind of reasoning is characteristic of the manner in which biblical puzzles of a numerical nature are often explained. In the present case these interpretations are a plausible answer to the problem of how the Bible can refer to the same interval as four generations (Gen.15:16), 400 years (Gen. 15:13), and 430 years (Ex. 12:40).

Another problem that Rashi attempted to solve was the puzzle of how the seventy "souls" who accompanied Jacob to Egypt (Ex. 1:5) could have multiplied so greatly in only 210 years. Unfortunately, Rashi – inquisitive mathematician that he was – lived long before the principles of exponential growth were understood. Accordingly his conclusion that the Hebrew women gave birth exclusively to sextuplets may strike modern readers as somewhat bizarre.

The purpose of the present note is to show – without recourse to sextuplet births – that the population "explosion" indicated in the Book of Exodus is more or less what might have been expected in the circumstances. The reader will have to excuse a modicum of mathematics for this task.

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POPULATION GROWTH FORMULAE

Biological populations, undisturbed and unconstrained, increase by amounts which are directly proportional to their numbers at any given time.[1]

The most readily understood way in which this may be expressed mathematically is in terms of the "doubling time", (D), of the population.[2]

In the case we are examining the inital population, N(0) = 70; the time available for growth, t = 210 years; and the final population, N(t) = 600,000. Fitting these values to equation (4) yields the value of D, the population doubling time, of 16.1 years.

The problem therefore reduces to the simple question: is 16.1 years a reasonable value for the doubling time of Jacob's descendants in Egypt?

It may be argued that the figure of 600,000 includes only adult males, whereas the 70 included (Gen. 46:8-27) two female (three according to Rashi), and some children of uncertain ages. Thus the above estimate for D is possibly an over-estimate in that we should have calculated it using N(0) = 68 or fewer. However this result is relatively insensitive to the exact size of the initial population.

1 This may be stated mathematically:

$$N(t) = c\ N(t) \quad \ldots\ldots (1)$$

where N(t) is the growth rate at time t expressed as "people per unit time". N(t) is the number of people alive at time t, and c is a constant characteristic of the particular population.

The equation has the simple exponent solution:

$$N(t) = N(0)\ \exp\ (ct) \quad \ldots\ldots (2)$$

That is to say, if we know the value of the constant c and the number of people alive at the starting time t = 0, the equation (2) allows us to calculate the number alive at any subsequent time t.

2 Instead of the abstract constant c in equation (2), it is perhaps more down-to-earth to refer to the "doubling time" D of the population; i.e. the time it takes for the particular population under study to double itself. From equation (2) it is evident that this is:

$$D = 1n(2)/c \quad \ldots\ldots (3)$$

Since 1n(2) approximately = 0.6931, equation (2) may be re-written using D instead of c:

$$N(t) = N(O)\ \exp\ [(0.6931)\ (t/D)] \quad \ldots\ldots (4)$$

Thus, using N(0) = 65 instead of 70 would reduce the doubling time only to 15.9 years, a value very little different from the 16.1 years obtained from N(0) = 70.

THE DRUSE VILLAGE OF HURFEISH IN THE GALILEE

The next stage of the investigation is to seek some contemporary population which might have demographic features in common with the ancient Israelites, and for which appropriate vital statistics are available. By chance the author was so fortunate as to attend a most illuminating lecture given by a Druse gentleman resident in Hurfeish, Israel.

The Druse are one of the minority groups resident in Israel. They keep their religion a strict secret, little more being known to outsiders than that they claim to trace their ancestry back to Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. Among the Druse exogamy is strictly forbidden, and they do not allow conversion to their religion.

One of the Druse settlements in Israel is the Galilee village of Hurfeish whose population grew from between 700 and 800 souls in 1948 to about 4000 in 1988.

Fitting these figures to the variables of equation (4), we derive a doubling time D of 15.9 years for an initial 700 Druse or 17.2 years for an initial 800. We note that these doubling times are remarkably similar to the results of the calculations performed on the biblical data.

CONCLUSIONS

It is not my intention to draw any parallels between the Druse in modern Israel and the Hebrews in ancient Egypt other than that they both represent sub-populations for which some numerical data are available for comparison. It emerges, however, that the doubling time estimated above for the population of Israelites in Egypt is strikingly similar to the recent growth of the Druse in Hurfeish.

We may conclude, therefore, that the figures given in the Book of Exodus are fully consistent with what we know about the pace of growth of one modern-day "clannish" community. There is thus no need to postulate sextuplet births in order to understand the population growth that tradition has handed down to us regarding the Israelites in Egypt.

As an amusing corollary to the mathematical calculation, we note that Rashi ruled out the possibility of 430 years in Egypt proper on the basis of what is known of the ages of Kohath, Amram and Moses. The exponential growth formula with a doubling time of 16 years would have increased the original 68 males to some 8.36 billion after 430 years! Or, put the other way around, growth from 68 to 600,000 in 430 years would imply a doubling time of some 47 years – hardly a figure to worry Pharaoh!

Another observation is the possible insight exponential growth gives us into the biblical statement (Ex. 12:41):

> *It happened on that very day, that all . . . went forth from the Land of Egypt.*

Rashi remarks that not a moment was to be lost now that the time for redemption was at hand. But perhaps there was also a more mundane reason to get moving as quickly as possible. On *that very day* the Hebrew male population was increasing, according to equation (4), at a rate of about seventy per day. It would only take another sixteen years for the 600,000 to double again. And Moses wasn't getting any younger!

EDITORIAL COMMENT

The conclusions of this paper are fair and reasonable in respect of the time period of 210 years. Not so with respect to only four generations. Calculations based on this figure show that the average number of surviving children (surviving to the end of their childbearing ages) per couple has to be about 19! — an impossible figure. The average length of a human generation, however, is not fifty but twentyfive years, so there are in fact about eight generations in 210 years. For growth at the postulated rate, only six surviving children per couple are required over eight generations.

THE VOLCANO IN JOB 28

BY DAVID WOLFERS

Chapter 28 differs from all other parts of the Book of Job in that it is clearly constructed as a strictly formal and regular poem. With the exceptions to be noted, it comprises three regular stanzas punctuated by a refrain; each verse consists of two lines in close "synonymous parallel." The exceptions are the following. As the text stands at present there are 11 verses in the first stanza; only 7 in the second, and 8 in the third. If we add the refrains to the second and third we get 11, 8 and 9. Verses 3 and 4 each have three lines, and the tripling is not supported by any parallelism extending to the third line of either verse. Apart from these irregular verses, verse 5 does not exhibit synonymous parallel, and vv. 10 and 11 have the parallel form abab rather than aabb.

The evidence of the nature of the poem itself very strongly suggests that the major anomalies of arrangement — the existence of two tristiches, and the discrepancies in the lengths of the stanzas — are flaws which have developed during the transmission of the work, and not irregularities in the original composition. That is to say that the poem has every hallmark of a strict formal composition, like the acrostics of Lamentations, but fails to fulfill our expectations because of these anomalies. Additionally, the anomalies introduce definable deformities into the poem apart from those of structure. Thus the two tristiches, read as tristiches, not only disappoint our expectations of parallelism, the essence of Hebrew poetry, but they are truly incomprehensible as tristiches. The absence of proper parallel in certain verses of Hebrew poetry is, of

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course, no anomaly in itself; there are scores of verses in the Book of Job which have no trace of parallel. But when we have a poem of 29 verses in which almost every verse exhibits the simplest form of parallel, the anomaly becomes a real one, as if we were reading a rhymed poem and encountered a verse without rhyme. We should suspect a scribal error, as we are entitled to do here.

A somewhat similar situation exists with regard to the discrepancy in the lengths of the stanzas. The three stanzas deal with different aspects of the one theme, expressed in the refrain — *Where shall Wisdom be found? And what is the place of Understanding?* With the exception of vv. 7 and 8, the first stanza shows how human exploration of the earth, its surface and its depths, has been comprehensive and exhaustive. The second stanza relates how man has failed to find Wisdom and Understanding, cannot buy them or exchange goods for them. The third stanza reveals who has the secret and what it is. Now verses 7 and 8 read:

No hawk knows the pathway,
No falcon's eye has seen it;
Conquerors (or proud beasts) have not trodden it down
The mighty (or the lion) has not plundered it.

It seems almost certain that the "pathway" to which this refers is the way to Wisdom — indeed v. 21 *Seeing it (Understanding) is hid from the eyes of all the living and concealed from the birds of the air* has only this verse to justify it. But if the pathway is that to Wisdom and Understanding, the verses are misplaced in the first stanza and belong in the second. In the first they are doubly out of place, contradicting the whole theme which is the comprehensiveness of human exploration and the demonstration that there is no (physical) hiding place on earth which man is unacquainted with. We have to conclude (see translation of full poem at the conclusion of this article) that vv. 7 and 8 actually belong after the present verse 12. This reduces the first stanza by two verses and correspondingly increases the second.

We shall now examine the as yet undeciphered verses 3 and 4:

קץ שם לחשך
ולכל-תכלית הוא חוקר
אבן אפל וצלמות
פרץ נחל מעם-גר
הנשכחים מני-רגל דלו מאנוש נעו

The first two lines make a perfectly satisfactory parallel pair, introducing the theme of man's exhaustive exploration.

He (man) puts an end to darkness
And he explores to every frontier.

The third line is a great mystery — *The stone of thick darkness and gloom* (or *and the shadow of death).* Gordis[1] is, I think, the only translator who has come near to understanding it, but even he missed the significance of the image, presenting a situation to which men never come, rather than one to which, despite its remoteness and danger, men nevertheless are witness. The expression אפל וצלמות occurs in the Book of Job twice in Chapter 10, vv. 21 and 22 (q.v.). These verses state that the Underworld is אפל וצלמות . *Mutatis mutandis,* אפל וצלמות *is* the Underworld. The line therefore says simply "The stone of the Underworld", and means the one word "Lava".

The next two words state what lava does — פרץ נחל — it erupts a stream, and at this point it is clear that the first two lines of v. 3 form one two-line verse, and the third line forms with the first line of v. 4 another two-line verse. The first to suggest this, without successfully deciphering the text, was David Yellin.[2]

מעם-גר is not an easy phrase, but it is of help in translating it to realize what the author is trying to establish in this stanza — the ubiquity of man, the inquisitive witness. The word מעם, a compound

1 R. Gordis, *The Book of Job*, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1978, p. 300 and 305. His translation is: "The lava, dark and pitch-black, Cleaves a channel from the crater Never trodden by human foot, Bereft even of wandering men."

2 D. Yellin, *"Higre Migra — Iyyob"*, 1927.

of "from" and "with" means "from with" or "from beside". The lava, the author is claiming, bursts in a stream from beside a גר. גר spelt *kametz* is the participle of גור, to sojourn, and refers, in the place where he is staying at the time, to one who wanders from place to place, or who is a stranger. It is most frequently used in a verbal sense, often in combination with the noun גר with *tzere*, but can also be employed, as here, as a substantive. The message of the verse is that, so restless a creature is he, that even a volcanic eruption is likely to take place near some displaced man.

The last two lines of v. 4 may now be assumed to form a verse on their own. The first line is deficient of a verb, and the second contains two verbs. If we, not physically, but functionally, attach the first verb to the first line we obtain a simple, relevant and satisfactorily parallel reading: *"The (or these) forgotten ones, off the beaten track they languish; they wander away from humankind.* This again attests to the ubiquity of human beings. Who the forgotten ones are is unsure. The word may refer back to the גר, taking it in a collective sense, or it may refer to lepers, or to fugitives from "redeemers of blood."

The restoration of verses 3 and 4 into three couplets and the displacement of verses 7 and 8 into the second stanza (the only example of a genuine displacement of verses in the Book of Job) now leaves us with 20 lines in ten verses in the first stanza, twenty lines in ten verses in the second stanza and 19 lines in 9 verses in the third. This is the maximum regularity which can be extracted from 59 lines. The final triplet, like rhymed couplets at the end of scenes in Shakespeare's early plays, is merely a conventional conclusion.

And now for the poem as a whole.

Job 28

I

Though there is a source for the silver
And a place for the gold they refine;

Iron is extracted from dust
And copper melted from stone.

Man puts an end to darkness
And he explores to every frontier.

The very stone of the Underworld
Erupts in a stream from near some vagrant exile.

These forgotten ones, off the beaten track
They languish; they wander away from humankind.

The earth — from her comes bread,
But her subterrain is raked over like a fire;

Her stones are the source of sapphire
And she yields him dust of gold;

Man sets his hand to the granite
And overturns mountains by the roots;

He hews out tunnels in the rocks
And his eye sees every precious thing;

He dams the rivers from flowing
And brings to light what was concealed,

II

Yet Wisdom, where shall she be found?
And where is the place of Understanding?

No hawk knows the pathway
No falcon's eye has seen it;

Proud beasts have not trodden it down;
The lion has not plundered it.

Man does not know the value of it
Nor is it to be found in the land of the living.

The Deep says, "It is not in me."
And the Sea says, "I do not have it"
It cannot be bartered for sovereigns
Nor shall silver be weighed out as its price.

It is not to be equated with gold of Ophir
With precious onyx or sapphire.

Bullion and glass cannot compare with it
Nor shall it be exchanged for gilden vessels.

Coral and crystal need not be remembered,
For the price of Wisdom is beyond rubies.

The topaz of Abyssinia cannot match it;
The purest aurum has not its value.

III

So whence comes Wisdom
And where is the place of Understanding?

That it is hidden from the sight of all the living
And concealed from the birds of the air?

Abaddon and Death declare,
"With our ears we have heard its fame."
God knows its location
And He understands its place,

For He saw to the ends of the earth
And surveyed every place 'neath the skies

When He assigned its weight to the wind
And established the water in its measure;

When He set the limits to the rain
And made the path for the thunderbolt.

Then did He see it and take its measure;
He set it up, and He explored it also;

And He said to man: "Behold!
*The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom**
And the abjuration of evil is understanding."

* wisdom with lower case w = חכמה. Wisdom with upper case W = החכמה.

SIGN – אות

BY SHIMON BAKON

The term **אות**, usually translated as "sign", appears more than fifty times in the Bible. However it assumes at least six different meanings, depending upon the context. Each of the six meanings is illustrated in one or more of the following passages.

1. AN ORDERING PRINCIPLE AND GUIDE

Already in the first chapter of Genesis we read:

> *And God said: Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for* **signs** *and for seasons, and for days and years.*[1]

We note an ordering principle, the lights of the firmament establish order for man to orient himself both in space and in time. They regulate the calendar, which enables planning for the future, for without expectation of seasonal order there could scarcely be planting and harvesting. This is the deeper meaning of God's promise to Noah after the flood:

> *While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.*[2]

The natural order suspended with the flood, is thus re-established.

Of less cosmic significance, yet containing the elements of a guiding principle, is the passage in Numbers, where Moses is told:

> *Thy children of Israel shall pitch by their fathers' houses; every man with his own standard, according to the* **ensigns – באותות**.[3]

1 Gen. 1:14.
2 Gen. 8:22.
3 Num. 2:2.

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That is, the children of Israel will camp and move in the desert not as a horde, but in a clearly defined order. Every tribe had its own ensign, and the twelve tribes were organized into four groups of three identified and organized by yet larger standards.[4]

THE SIGN OF CAIN

The episode of Cain slaying his brother Abel and its aftermath, is well known. Cain is condemned by God to become a fugitive and exile. His appeal, *And it will come to pass that whosoever findeth me will slay me* is heard by God who *set a* **sign** *for Cain, lest anyone finding him should smite him.*[5]

This sign raises a few questions. Since its purpose was to protect Cain, how did the popular, folkloristic notion of the mark of Cain, branding him a murderer, arise? As to the nature of the sign itself, the biblical statement is obviously incomplete, giving rise to speculations on the part of our sages. Rav ventured the guess that God gave him a dog to guide and protect him, while Rashi maintained that He engraved a letter of His Ineffable Name on Cain's forehead. Some of the rabbis were disturbed by the fact that Cain was only punished with exile, whereas biblical legislation calls for the blood of the murderer. R. Nehemia suggested: "The judgment of Cain cannot be that of a murderer. He killed but had no one from whom to learn,"[6] thus turning the slaying of Abel into an act of manslaughter. R. Hanina went one step further, and supposed that Cain became a repentant sinner. By a daring grammatical tours de force he turned: *He set a* **sign** *for Cain* – ויתן אות לקין, into: He made him (Cain) a **sign**– for repentants עשאו אות לבעלי תשובה.[7]

4 The "line of scarlet" on the window of Rahab's house in Jericho, served as a sign which would guide the action of the Israelites in saving her life and that of her family (Josh. 2:12-21).

5 Gen. 4:14.

6 Bereshit Rabbah 22:27.

7 Ibid.

If we accept the interpretations of Rabbi Nehemia and Hanina, the sign of Cain could be put into the category of a "guide". Cain who had no one "from whom to learn," or as a "repentant sinner," became the biblical proto-type of manslaughter.

2. SIGNS AND WONDERS

Signs, connected with "wonders", point to divine power, and to God's intercession on behalf of Israel in the course of their history. Thus Moses, charged with the seemingly insurmountable task of effecting the release of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage by "diplomatic" means: *speak thou unto Pharaoh*, responds: *I am of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?* He now gets encouragement and assurance: *I will harden Pharaoh's heart and multiply My* **signs** *and wonders*.[8] To strengthen the faltering faith of Moses, God gives him three signs (Ex. 6: 1-4).

Signs also establish God's might in the consciousness of both, Egypt and Israel. In the long drawn-out negotiations with Pharaoh, they are manifested as the plagues.

In Deuteronomy[9] signs take on an additional dimension. *When thy son asketh thee, in time to come saying: What mean the testimonies and the statutes and the ordinances which the Lord . . . hath commanded thee? then thou shalt say . . . We were Pharaoh's bondmen, and the Lord brought us out of Egypt . . . and . . . showed* **signs** *and wonders . . .* These signs, are then memorialized in statutes and ordinances, exacting a commitment on the part of Israel.

8 Ex. 6:30, 7:3,
9 Deut. 6:22.

3. THREE SIGNS OF THE COVENANT

On three occasions sign is linked to covenant – ברית: the rainbow following the flood, Abraham's circumcision, and the re-affirmation of the Sabbath as a holy day.[10]

As regards the rainbow it is stated: *This is the token of the covenant which I make between Me and you and every living creature . . . . . I have set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token (***sign***) of a covenant between Me and the earth . . . .*

A covenant, entered into by two parties, usually contains specific rights and mutual obligations. Here, however, the promise that *there shall be no more flood to destroy the earth* is one-sided, with no reciprocal obligations exacted from man or beast. It is like a fatherly gesture of goodwill on the part of God, Who had regretted making man whose heart is evil from his youth,[11] and, short of destroying him totally, there is little that could be done to rectify the situation. Thus, His covenant is one-sided. It does not seem probable that the so-called Noachide laws[12] are the pre-condition for a non-recurrence of the flood, for the "everlasting covenant" – ברית עולם is between God and every living creature, in fact *between Me and the earth.*

The second instance of a sign of the covenant – ברית אות, is Abraham's circumcision. Abraham is commanded: *And ye shall be circumcized and it shall be a token – אות of a covenant between Me and you.*[13] It is again an "everlasting covenant" ברית עולם. *And My covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.*[14]

In this covenant, entered into by God and by Abraham, the terms of God's commitment are most specific; *I will make thee exceeding fruitful, I will make nations of thee, I will give unto thee and unto thy seed the land of thy sojournings.*[15] What Abraham's obligations

10 Gen. 9:12, 17; Gen. 17:11, and Ex. 31:13, 17, respectively.
11 Gen. 6:5-7, 8:21.
12 Gen. 9:2-7.
13 Gen. 17:11.
14 Gen. 17:13.
15 Gen. 17:6,8.

to the everlasting covenant were are less clear, except to be "whole-hearted" and *to command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord . . .*[16] Perhaps one should also go to the episode of the intended destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and to the *Akedah*, to get some insights into Abraham's obligations, which were unbounded faith in God, and the pursuit of an absolute justice. The rite of circumcision is not the covenant itself, but its token, and its external sign.

Placed awkwardly between the appointment of Bezalel to construct the Tent of Meeting and the receiving of the first tablets of testimony the children of Israel are commanded to *keep My sabbaths . . . throughout their generations for a perpetual covenant* – ברית עולם. *It is a* **sign** *between Me and the children of Israel.*[17]

The conclusions reached by the rabbinic commentators regarding the significance of such placement will not concern us here. It is, however, of relevance that the purpose and the terms of the covenant are clearly stated or implied. Since it is He who created heaven and earth in six days and on the seventh He rested, it is obligatory on Israel: *Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the Lord.*[18] Hertz, in his popular commentary on the Torah, wisely observed: "The weekly hallowing of the Sabbath by the Israelites, being a proclamation of belief in God and obedience to His law, affects a perennial renewal of the covenant of God with the Patriarchs."

This seems also to be the essential feature of Isaiah, when he speaks of *the aliens that join themselves to the Lord*. Of them three things are demanded: to do justice and righteousness, to keep the Sabbath, and to hold fast to the covenant.[19]

Parenthetically, one will observe a movement of these covenants from the universal (rainbow) to the particularistic (circumcision and the Sabbath) the latter two made with a particular people, Israel.

16 Gen. 17:1; 18:19.
17 Ex. 31:17, 17.
18 Ex. 31:15.
19 Isa. 56:1, 2, 4, 6.

However, in keeping with the biblical spirit, there is no conflict between the two attitudes. Although the covenant is with one special people, the dual obligations of faith and moral conduct, devolving upon it, have universal appeal.

4. HEADS OR TAILS

Chapters 13 and 14 of I Samuel relate a revealing episode in the lives of Saul and his son Jonathan. It was on the basis of a sign that Jonathan secured a transient victory over the Philistines. This episode is told against the background of a critical situation in Israel, with the Philistines gaining ascendancy. Although Saul had a standing army of 3,000, two thousand commanded by him and one thousand by Jonathan – yet *in the day of battle . . . there was neither sword nor spear to be found in the hand of any of the people.*[20]

Taking the initiative, Jonathan smote a Philistine garrison, provoking a state of war between Israel and the Philistines. One day Jonathan decided on a daring exploit. Accompanied only by his armor-bearer, he moved between the passes in the ravine that separated the two camps, to come close to the enemy's quarters. This is what he said to his armor-bearer:

> *Behold . . . we will disclose ourselves unto them. If they say thus: Tarry until we come to you, then we will stand still in our place. But if they say thus: Come up unto us, then we shall go up; For the Lord hath delivered them into our hand. And this shall be the* **sign** *unto us.*[21]

They, indeed, disclosed themselves to the Philistines, who challenged them: *Come up to us, and we will show you a thing!* This was the sign Jonathan had been waiting for. The Philistines were caught by surprise. Many fell and those who fled created a chain-reaction of panic, which was successfully exploited by Saul.

20 I Sam. 13:22.
21 I Sam. 14:9,10.

This, essentially, is the story, but what of the sign? There are two important features in Jonathan's decisions. First, it illustrated his absolute faith, that *the Lord will work for us, for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few.*[22] Second, being firm in his belief, he was certain that the Philistines themselves would offer the sign. Thus their words: *Come up to us*, put into their mouths by God, was the clue that guided Jonathan. It was neither an "omen"[23] nor a "heads or tails" decision.

5. SIGNS AS REMINDERS

There are certain events in the history of Israel that the Bible wanted to be remembered for all generations. One was the traumatic experience of Korah's rebellion in the desert, as related in Numbers,[24] which challenged the leadership of Moses and the choice of Aaron as high priest. Moses initiated a procedure to verify the legitimacy of leadership and asked Korah, Dothan, and Abiram to take censers and put incence upon them. *And it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy.* The aftermath is well known. Moses is then told: *Let them (the censers) be made beaten plates for a covering of the altar . . . that they may be a* **sign** *unto the children of Israel.*[25] This, then, was to be a memorial – זכרון. This sign was to serve both as a *reminder* of the aborted rebellion of Korah, and as a warning for anyone not of the priesthood not to perform sacred priestly duties.

We have similar signs — reminders in the story of the twelve rods for each tribe, and the rod of Aaron that blossomed forth[26], and the twelve stones that were carried by the representatives of the twelve

22 I Sam. 14:6.

23 Acc. to Webster's *New College Dictionary*, "omen" has two definitions.
1. A thing or occurance thought to portend good or evil.
2. A sign or indication of some future event.
The sign determined by Jonathan does not fit either definition.

24 Numbers 16 and 17.

25 Ibid. 17:3.

26 Ibid. 17:16-26.

tribes when crossing the Jordan under Joshua's leadership. *That this may be a* **sign** *among you . . . and these stones shall be a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.*[27]

The phylacteries – תפילין are a classic instance of signs as reminders. We read in Exodus (13:16): *And it shall be for a* **sign** *upon thy hands and for fronlets between thine eyes; for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth from Egypt.* In this context the phylacteries are a memorial of this historic event. However, in three other passages, this sign assumes an added spiritual dimension.[28] They could also be interpreted as a superscription to the text, *I have set the Lord before me always*[29]

The four biblical passages[30] which are included in the phylacteries contain fundamental beliefs in the unity of God, the duty to love Him; the acceptance of His Kingship; reward and punishment; the obligation to study the Torah and to teach it to the children. Thus the Exodus, the central historical experience of Israel, serves as the focal point for firmly wedding the spirit and the phylacteries, the former being profound spiritual truths, the latter, their concrete external representation.

How apt then that this beautiful verse of Hosea was chosen to be recited on donning the phylacteries:

I will betroth thee unto Me forever
Yea, I will betroth thee unto Me
In righteousness and in justice,
And in lovingkindness and in compassion.
And I will betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness
And thou shalt know the Lord.[31]

27 Josh. 4:4-7.
28 Ex. 13:9; Deut. 6:9; 11:18.
29 Ps. 16:18.
30 Ex. 13:1-10, 11-16; Deut. 6:409, 11:13-21.
31 Hos. 2:21, 22.

6. THE PROPHETIC SIGN

In the Bible we encounter signs that could be best described as "prophetic". They are in the form of a pledge that an event will occur in the future which will confirm the authenticity of prophecy uttered.

We meet such a sign for the first time in Exodus 3:12. God has revealed Himself to Moses in the Burning Bush, burdening him with the gigantic undertaking to free the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. Moses has serious doubts concerning his ability to accomplish this task, pleading: *Who am I that I could go to Pharaoh*. He is now assured:

> *Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be the token –* **sign** *unto thee that I have sent thee. When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.*

This is the message: *I will be with thee*, and the proof thereof, you will bring the children of Israel to Mt. Sinai, the very spot where you had such grave doubts.

Probably the best known and most controversial and difficult "prophetic" sign is Isaiah's prophecy of "Immanuel" to King Ahaz of Judah, who has been attacked by Aram-Syria and Israel. When Isaiah instructed him to *Keep calm and be quiet – Fear not* ... (the) *two tails of smoking firebrands* (referring contemptuously to Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel), Ahaz, who had made advances to Assyria for help, rejects the sign offered by Isaiah, who then responds:

> *If you will not have faith*
> *Surely ye will not be established*

adding:

> *Therefore the Lord Himself shall give a* **sign**.
> *Behold, a young woman* עלמה *shall conceive and bear a son,*
> *And call his name Immanuel.*[32]

32 Isa. 7:11.

It is regrettable that the controversy arising from the mistranslation of עלמה "virgin," and who is meant by Immanuel, distracted from the twofold essential message, whose major thrust is clear, while its details remain obscure. Immanuel – God is with us – served as an assurance to Ahaz that, relying on God, he has nothing to fear from Pekah and Rezin. Secondly, the following verse 16, which states: *before the child shall know how to refuse the evil and choose the good,* indicates that while the child is still young, unable to discriminate between good, and evil, both Aram and Israel will be swept away.

Isaiah's bold prophecies came true in the dramatic events that followed shortly after. Damascus was laid waste in the year 732 and the kingdom of Israel came to an end in the year 721 B.C.E.

אות — sign — is an example of many terms encounteres in the Bible which assume different meanings depending upon the context in which they are used.

It is an ordering principle by which to guide our lives: (here we included the sign of Cain, inspite of an almost unbridgeable difficulty in interpreting it); a token of a covenant; a testimony of divine power in history; a "hint" interpreted by the beholder as divinely inspired; a reminder of significant events in the past; and proof of a prophetic statement, deferred into the future.

THE NAMES OF BIBLICAL VERSES

BY MARTIN SAMUEL COHEN

It has long been realized that in the first line of the Kedushah section of the daily liturgy, נקדש את שמך בעולם כשם שמקדשים אותו בשמי מרום "let us sanctify Your name on earth just as they sanctify it in the celestial heights", the initial word, *nekaddesh*, does not refer to some unspecified act of sanctification, but, as the text more or less clearly states, to the recitation of Isaiah 6:3 קדוש קדוש קדוש ה' צבאות מלא כל הארץ כבודו *Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole world is full of His glory.* The prophet makes it quite explicit that this is part of the celestial liturgy, and thus in the Kedushah, men call upon each other to join in that supernal worship service in imitation of the angels on high.[1] Recent research into the *Shi'ur Komah*, one of the most important texts of pre-kabbalistic Jewish mysticism, has allowed me to offer a further refinement of this undeniably correct evaluation of *nekaddesh*: the term does not mean "to sanctify" here, even in a technical sense. It means specifically "to recite *Kadosh*." *Kadosh* is the name of the verse, Isaiah 6:3.

As far as I know, the phenomenon of biblical verses having names is an unrecognized aspect of the rabbinic approach to the biblical text.

1 For a general overview of this notion that the earthly prayer-service mimics the celestial, see P. Bloch, "die Yorde Merkavah, die Mystiker der Gaonenzeit und ihr Einfluss auf die Liturgie," *Monatsschrift fur die Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 37 (1893), pp. 18-25, 69-74, 257-266 and, especially, 305-311; A. Altmann, "Shire Kedushah Besifrut Hehekhalot Haqqedumah," *Melilah* 2 (1946), pp. 1-25; and Lawrence Hoffman, "Censoring In and Censoring Out: A Function of Liturgical Language," in *Ancient Synagogues* (Chico, California, 1981), pp. 19-37, esp. pp. 28-29.

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The *Shi'ur Komah* is an ancient text of *merkavah* mysticism.[2] The various surviving recensions all seem to be attempts to make into a more regular *merkavah* text what was apparently itself a theurgically oriented reworking of earlier mystic data regarding the names and dimensions of the various limbs of the anthropomorphically conceived body of the Godhead. In three of the five surviving recensions, we find the following text:

> *The hand of the Holy One, blessed be He,*
> *rests on the head of the lad, His servant,*
> *whose name is Metatron. (The angels) say*
> *Izzuz and Gibbor and they say Kadosh and*
> *Barukh. And they say Hamulah (as) they come and*
> *stand before the lad . . .*[3]

The various manuscripts all seem to offer more or less the same text and it seems, therefore, clear that the author of these lines was referring to the verses used in the celestial worship service by name. I do not see any other way to explain this passage, except to suppose *Izzuz*, *Gibbor*, *Kadosh*, *Barukh* and *Hamulah* to be proper nominal forms, referring to specific and recognizable things. If *Kadosh* is the title of the verse in Isaiah 6:3, then of which verses are the other four the proper names?

2 *Merkavah* mysticism is the name generally applied to the school of pre-kabbalistic Jewish mysticism that flourished in Palestine and Babylonia during the rabbinic period. The *Shiur Komah* was one of the principal texts produced by those mystic conventicles and offers its readers the names and dimensions of the limbs and facial features of the Godhead as stuff for meditative communion with the divine.

3 This is translated from JTS ms. 1892, a fifteenth century Provencal manuscript of the long version of the *Sefer Hakkomah*, the best known of the recensions of the *Shi'ur Komah*. There is also a shorter version, in which this text is omitted. The other two recensions that present this text are the one preserved in the *Sefer Razi'el* (ed. princ. Amsterdam, 1701, p. 38a) and the long *Siddur Rabbah* text, a later reworking of early material which should not be confused with the *Seder Rabbah Devereshit*, an ancient *merkavah* text. Regarding the latter, see P. Schaefer, *Synopse zur Hekhalot Literatur* (Tubingen, 1981), p. vii and N. Sed, "Une Cosmologie Juive due Haut Moyen Age," *Revue des Etudes Juives* 123 (1964), pp. 259-305 and 124 (1965), pp. 23-123. The entire passage is translated in my *The Shi'ur Qomah: Liturgy and Theurgy in Pre-Kabbalistic Jewish Mysticism* (Washington, D.C., 1983), pp. 230-231.

BARUKH – ברוך

Barukh is Ezekiel 3:12, or at least the second half of that verse. This phrase is also part of the terrestrial Kedushah; the phrase לעומתם ברוך יאמרו can only mean "(while others) antiphonally sing *Barukh*." There seems to have been at least some question regarding this verse and its place in the celestial liturgy. In a text published by Jellinek, we read that all three groups of angels sing *Kadosh*, while they omit *Barukh*. "And why do they omit *Barukh*? Because the Shekhinah is omnipresent. In the future, when the Shekhinah returns to her place, they will sing *Barukh*."[4] Earlier in the text of the *Shi'ur Komah*, we read, "They all say *Kadosh* and they all say *Barukh*, as it is stated (in Scripture), *He tells His words to Jacob, His laws and His statutes to Israel . . .*" (Ps. 147:19)[5] The thrust of the proof text is apparently that God has already been said by the psalmists to reveal His words to Israel, the word "words" being taken here to refer specifically to the words with which he is celebrated on high.

IZZUZ, GIBBOR – עזוז, גבור

Izzuz and *Gibbor* present more of a puzzle and must be considered together. Probably, *Izzuz* and *Gibbor* are a single name and refer to Psalm 24:8 מי זה מלך הכבוד ה' עזוז וגיבור ה' גבור מלחמה *Who is the King of Glory? The Lord is valiant and mighty [izzuz vegibbor], the Lord is valiant in battle.* This verse eventually did, it is true, acquire a certain liturgical usage and, in fact, the author of the *Sefer Hakkomah* recension of the *Shi'ur Komah* actually ordered the recitation of all of Psalm 24 as part of the liturgical frame for the daily recitation of the mystic text itself.[6]

4 A. Jellinek, *Bet Hammidrash*, vol. 3, p. 163; cf. Sifre Bammidbar 103, ed. Horwitz (Leipzig, 1903, rpt. Jerusalem, 1966), p. 101; and Exodus Rabbah 23:15 to Exodus 15:1, ed. Mirkin (Tel Aviv, 1972), p. 7 and the sources listed there in note 31.

5 In my edition of the text, line 149.

6 Ibid., line 178.

HAMULAH – המלה

Hamulah is Ezekiel 1:24 ואשמע את קול כנפיהם כקול מים רבים כקול שדי בלכתם קול המלה כקול מחנה בעמדם תרפינה כנפיהן *and I heard the sound of their wings as they moved, (which was) like the sound of rushing water (or) like the sound of the Almighty – a tumult (kol hamulah) like the noise of an (army) camp; when they stood still, they relaxed their wings.* Although this verse does not seem to have acquired any liturgical usage, it was an important verse for the *merkavah* mystics themselves. Rabbi Akiba, for example, is reported to have been alone among his colleagues who entered into and survived the mystic "orchard" only because he recalled that the sound one hears on one's journey through the celestial realm only sounds like rushing water.[7] Presumably, it is from *Hamulah*, Ezekiel 1:24, that Rabbi Akiba knew this fact. Actually, this text from the *Sefer Hakkomah*, from which we learn that the angels on high sing *Hamulah* as well as the other portions of the heavenly liturgy sheds some important light on the talmudic account of Rabbi Akiba's safe journey. Rabbi Akiba notes that the secret of a safe mystic journey is in not crying out "water, water" when one sees a wall or an outcropping of some sort of pure marble. It seems reasonable to assume that one might mistake highly polished marble for water. Ezekiel adds, so to speak, that at the same time that one sees the marble, one hears the sound of the angels' wings fluttering which sounds just like the sound of rushing water. Now we learn that it is not only the sound of fluttering wings one might hear. One actually might hear the angels themselves reciting, or perhaps singing, *Hamulah*; one might thus see the marble and, overcome by hearing both the sound of water and the phrase מים רבים 'rushing water' on high, one might mistakenly cry out "water, water."

It is worth noting that the names of the verses are not always the first words in the verses in question, although that is sometimes the

7 BT Hagigah 14b.

case. The verb *amar* to say, when sued in conjunction with these verses, quite clearly means "to sing" and, in fact, *amar* is the regular term to describe the singing of hymns throughout *merkavah* literature.[8]

SHEMA – שמע

There are many other biblical verses that are given names in various rabbinic texts. Of course, there is always the possibility of confusion due to the homonymity of the name of the verse and the word itself in that verse that becomes its name, since the name is invariably chosen from the words in the verse itself. Nonetheless, we can point to some examples here; probably there are many more as well. The first Mishnah, for example, in Tractate Berakhot, begins with the question מאמתי קורין את שמע בערבין. Normally, one would expect the text to read *Ha-Shema* instead of *Shema* to yield the translation "From what time on in the evening may one recite the *Shema*?" The absence of the definite article before the word *shema*, coupled with the presence of the pleonastic *et*, used in Hebrew to point out a specified direct object, seems to suggest that the word *shema* is not here the prayer at all, but rather the name of the fourth verse of Deuteronomy 6, שמע ישראל ה' אלוהינו ה' אחד, *Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. Shema*, it seems, is the name of Deuteronomy 6:4. This is mirrored in the following Mishnah, Berakhot 1:2: מאמתי קורין את שמע בשחרית "From when on in the morning may one recite *Shema*?" There are many examples in Tractate Berakhot of expressions that refer to the full liturgical form

8 Cf. e.g. Hekhalot Rabbati 1:1, ed. Wertheimer (in *Batte Midrashot*, 2nd ed., ed. A. Wertheimer [Jerusalem, 1950]), p. 67; the *merkavah* text published by G. Scholem as an appendix to his *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1966), section 9, p. 107. On the use of *amar* to mean "to sing" in the works of the paytanim, see A. Mirsky, *Yose Ben Yose: Poems* (Jerusalem, 1977), p. 123, note to line 7, s.v. omer miyyamim vezemer millelot. There are several biblical instances, e.g. Ps. 66:3, of *amar* being presented in parallel structure to a term definitely meaning "to sing."

of the *Shema* prayer, consisting of three paragraphs, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21 and Numbers 15:37-41, but the name *Shema* itself is only used in the Mishnah in passages that could have been intended by their authors to refer either to the entire passage or to Deut. 6:4 alone.[9] Especially revealing is the remark of Rabbi Nehemiah preserved in Mishnah Sotah 5:4. R. Nehemiah, in discussing the precise manner in which the Song preserved in Exodus 15 was chanted by the Israelites at the Red Sea, observes that it was read antiphonally, כקוראין את שמע ולא כקוראין את ההלל as they recite *Shema*, and not as they recite *the Hallel*. Although it may no longer be precisely clear just what R. Nehemiah meant to be saying about the recitation of the ancient poem, it is clear that he is comparing *the Hallel* to *Shema* and not to *the Shema*. Whatever his point, the comparison is between the way the *Hallel* was read antiphonally by leader and congregation and the way Deut. 6:4, and not the entire three paragraphs of the *Shema* prayer, was read in public.[10] This point was not lost on some later authorities, for example, R. Meir, who is reported to have held the opinion that one is obliged by law to say only Deut. 6:4 with intense concentration (*kavvanah*), while one may fulfill one's duty to recite the rest of the three paragraph text even if one's mind is not absolutely concentrating on one's devotions.[11] Rabbi Judah the Patriarch, in fact, is reported to have recited only Deut. 6:4 as his "recitation of *Shema*."[12] Presumably, both these late second century rabbis recalled that, while the *Shema* prayer consists of three paragraphs, it is Deut. 6:4 alone that is named *Shema*.

9 These attestations are listed in H.Y. Kossofsky's *Otzar Leshon Ha-Mishnah* (Jerusalem, 1960), vol. 4, p. 1790, col. 3, s.v. shema 2. In some of these expressions, *Shema* is used without the article, as for example in the famous expressions *pores et (al) shema* (M. Megillah 4:3, 4:5 and 4:6) and *korkhin et shema* (M. Pesahim 4:8.) Whatever the precise meaning of these expressions, it seems likely that the reference is to the verse and not to the prayer.

10 Hallel is the collective name for Psalms 113-118 when they are recited liturgically at various occasions in the synagogue calendar.

11 BT Berakhot 13a. To this day it is customary to act Rabbi Meir's teaching out physically by covering one's eyes during the recitation of the first verse of the *Shema* only.

12 Ibid.

THE DIFFICULT VERSE IN GENESIS 4:26

BY ALLEN S. MALLER

> *And to Seth . . . was born a son; and he called his name Enosh; then began men to call upon the name of the Lord* (Gen. 4:26).

How did idolatry and superstition arise? If mankind is created in the image of God, how can people fear demons or evil spirits? The Torah seems to offer no answer to this question, unless it is contained in a short (only half a verse – Gen. 4:26b) statement that "then *huhal* to call upon the name of the Lord." The word *huhal* is difficult to interpret. In this form it appears nowhere else in the Bible. Rashi (1040-1105) says the word is from the root 'to profane' and the sentence means, "then (God) was profaned by calling (idols) by the Lord's name." According to Rashi, at this point of human development mankind attributed divinity to idols, and even to humans. Thus they were not idol worshippers originally but became so at this time.

Rashi's interpretation reverses the plain meaning of the text which is that "then (and not before) they began to call upon the name Lord." The Italian commentator Sforno (1475-1550) sees this problem, and states that it was the righteous who began to teach idolators who had arisen at that time. Sforno thus reads the text as if it followed a statement that when idolatry arose in the generation of Enosh, the righteous in opposition "then began calling on the name of Lord." Sforno follows the Spanish commentator Ibn Ezra (1092-1167) who takes the word *huhal* from the root 'to begin', which provides a smoother and more grammatical sentence. But how do we know that idolatry began in the generation of Enosh? Because his name immediately precedes this half verse. Already in the

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second century Abba Kohen Bardela said, "Until here (the generation of Enosh) men were created in the image and form (of God), from here on, the generations became corrupt."[1] By this he meant that in the first generations mankind was created in the image of God but then man began to create God in the image of Man. As proof of this, we see that three verses later (5:3) *"he (Adam) gave birth in his image"*. Thus the frequently heard quip, that man creates God in his own image, really means that man creates his own religion.

The Midrash continues: "Four things changed in the days of Enosh: the mountains became rocky, the dead felt the worms, men's faces became like apes, and they were sickened by demons." I take this to mean that: 1. when mankind became farmers, the hills which were fine for hunting, were too rocky for farming; 2. burial places became more elaborate and people tried to preserve the dead from decay; 3. human personality became less like God and more animal-like, and therefore instead of being a projection of God, God became a projection of humanity; 4. people became less fearful of magic, and superstition ruled; and thus their fears of the demons caused them to be ill. All these transformations were due to the increasing intelligence and self awareness of human beings, which in turn led to greater attempts to control the environment, leading to anxiety over the inability to do so. Farmers work in a fixed place so the wealth of land (i.e. fruitful or rocky) is important. People develop ideas of an afterlife and are concerned about the fate of the dead. There is a universal tendency to belive that in the old days things were simpler and better, and thus contemporary generations are corrupt and apelike. All these worries, economic, religous and social, produce uncertainty and anxiety which leads to magic as an attempt to acquire power/control over man's surroundings. Thus idolatry and superstition are the ills of civilized people. In this interpretation *huhal* comes from the root 'to be ill' and the meaning of the verse is "then (civilization) became sick, (so they needed) to call upon the name Lord." They knew the true God before, but now

1 Midrash Ber. Rab. 23, b.

they needed a protector, to defend them from the idols and evil spirits. Similarly today, many people are stressing the value of traditional religions because they fear the inroads of cults.

We have seen that the rabbis are divided. Some, like Rashi, following Abba Kohen Bardela, see the generations following Enosh as profaning God's name through idolatry; others, such as Ibn Ezra and Sfrono, see the rise of idolatry as stimulating an emphasis on Adonai in opposition to the idols. The second view assumes that true religion continued after the generation of Enosh.

Yet it is clear that if there was an original monotheism it had to have become corrupt, and to have totally disappeared before the generation of Abraham, or Abraham would lose his uniqueness. Indeed, all Christian commentators on this verse understand it as a positive statement about Enosh, who at least had the true name of God. However, for Christians, everyone prior to Jesus is really in the same boat, and the spiritual situation pre or post Sinai, or pre or post Abraham, is not of great significance. On the other hand, for Jews, Abraham represents a radical breakthrough. He is alone in opposition to the entire pagan world. Thus the true nature of God must have been completely forgotten prior to his generation. How did this happen?

It is no coincidence that prior to this verse (Genesis 4:26) there is no mention of how old people were when they died, or when the next generation was born. Thus we can say that while the first two generations interacted directly with God, Seth only heard about God from his father, and Enosh his son only heard about God from his grandparents. As the original generation passed, the purity and intensity of the religious experience diminished, and religious faith in God gave way to idolatry. This cycle continually repeats itself in human history. Judaism is unique in that God has revealed himself on numerous occasions to various generations over the centuries.

But there is also an interesting homiletic possibility for our text. The Torah makes no comment, positive or negative, about the statement of Genesis 4:26b. Usually the Torah condemns evil

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CITY OF DAVID

BY ABRAHAM RUDERMAN

Visitors to Jerusalem are surprised to see the extensive excavations adjacent to the southern wall of the Temple Mount. This area, known as the Ophel, was the center of royal activity in First Temple times. Benjamin Mazar, veteran archaeologist at the Hebrew University, led a team of experts and a host of volunteers at this impressive excavation for ten years from 1968-77. They uncovered Arab palaces from the 17th century, houses from the Byzantine period, and from the Herodian period, 1st century B.C.E. They discovered enormous walls of the Temple Mount approached by a huge staircase, paved streets, shops, and many ritual baths. The Ophel is mentioned several times in the Bible. (II Chron. 27:3; 33:14; Neh. 3:26, 27). During the reign of Hezekiah there was widespread activity in this area. He stopped the springs least Sennacherib derive benefit from them (II Chron. 32:3-5). South of the stepped stone structure, the residential quarters were rebuilt to accommodate an influx of refugees from the Northern Kingdom of Israel conquered by the Assyrians in 721 B.C.E. The city expanded to the west known today as Mt. Zion, and to the north west of the Temple Mount occupied today by the Jewish Quarter. Evidence of diverse religious practices in the time of Hezekiah is reflected in a find from this period consisting of 58 ceramic fertility figurines. In the period following Sennacherib's unsuccessful siege of Jerusalem two new stone terraces were built below the stepped stone structure. On the upper terrace were the structures called Ahiel's House and the Burnt Room. In one of these rooms 37 handled storage jars were uncovered. In the Burnt Room, so called because of the large quantity

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of burnt wood stemming from the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem, remains from wooden furniture and decorations were also found. On the lower terrace was the House of Bullae in which 51 bullae were found. Bullae are lumps of clay impressed with a seal and tied with a string. These lumps of clay were baked by the Babylonian conflagration, hardening and preserving them in excellent condition. At least 82 names have been deciphered on these bullae, most of them known from the Bible. Many end in "yahu" designating God, e.g. Ahiyahu, Benayahu. One name stands out because it mentions a person referred to specifically in the Bible. He is Gemaryahu, son of Shaphan, a scribe in the court of King Jehoiakim of Judah (608-597 B.C.E.). He is mentioned in Jeremiah 36:10-12, 25). Scores of iron and bronze arrowheads were also found in the Burnt Room. These reflected preparations for war on the eve of the Babylonian destruction. Many iron implements and stone weights were also found.

Below the Ophel lies the City of David, excavated by Yigal Shiloh from 1978 to 1985. Shiloh found evidence that the City of David was first settled 5,500 years ago. A 65 foot long wall was discovered by Kathleen Kenyon which she dated about 1800 B.C.E. Shiloh found an additional 200 feet of this wall at some points nearly ten feet thick. This was the Jebusite city which David conquered about 1000 B.C.E. (II Sam. 5:7 *David took the fortress of Zion, that is, the City of David*). The wall consists of a massive stepped stone structure to a height of fifty feet, one of the most impressive Iron Age monuments in Israel. The City of David which David captured from the Jebusites originally occupied 35 dunams. David expanded this village northward, where he built his palace, assisted by his friend King Hiram of Tyre (II Sam. 5:11). When Solomon succeeded his father he built a magnificent palace and Temple on the Temple Mount (I Kg. 6, 7). Benjamin Mazar made some astounding discoveries during the ten years in which he excavated the area adjacent to the southern wall of the Temple Mount. Yet he found hardly a trace of anything from the First Temple period. Then in 1976 when Prof. Mazar was beginning to give up hope of finding any First Temple

remains, he came across a building on the south eastern edge of the excavation. He excavated two rooms nearly 8 by 9 feet to a height of 11 feet. It contained many charred vessels burned in the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. In one of these rooms he found 40 storage jars and many large bowls, a small pendant with an image of the Egyptian goddess of war, and a seal impression inscribed with the name of a woman – Hannah, daughter of Azariah, indicating the woman's status in the royal administrative system. In the second room Prof. Mazar found a "rosette" storage jar, characteristic of the First Temple period. These finds were turned over to Eilat Mazar, granddaughter of Prof. Mazar to prepare a report for publication of the findings of the First Temple period. Continuing with the excavation, she discovered that these two rooms were part of a building. Here she discovered seven large *pithoi*, huge storage jars, two and a half feet wide by three and a half feet tall, used to store oil or wine. A delicate palm tree pattern was incised on the shoulder of one of these jars. Between the broken jars were carbonized cedars of Lebanon. From the dating of the many shards it seems likely that King Manasseh laid the floor as part of his construction described in II Chron. 33:14.

Then on April 17, 1986, after a plan of all the excavations uncovered up to that point had been drawn, there suddenly emerged a gatehouse similar to the well-known Solomonic gates at Megiddo, Gezer, Hazor and Lachish. The excitement mounted as this discovery was confirmed. A gatehouse of the First Temple was found in Jerusalem. Here was a four-chambered gatehouse which also had a storage function, accounting for the presence of many jars. Jeremiah 39:3 makes mention of the middle gate and Amos 5:15 regards the gate as the locus of legal proceedings, *establish justice in the gate*. Gates were centers of commercial activities as in II Kings 7:1. While nothing remains of the superstructure, the foundation walls have been preserved. There is reason to believe that this gatehouse was connected to the large tower to the south east which served as an approach to the gate. This finding was further substantiated when it was discovered that the four chambers of the Jerusalem gate

had dimensions identical to those of the palace gate at Megiddo, confirming that the two gates were built according to the same blueprint.

In the middle of the 5th century B.C.E. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem from exile hoping to renovate the city destroyed by the Babylonians. In 3:26 he refers to a water gate, and there is reason to believe that the gate discovered by Eilat Mazar may be identified as the water gate in Nehemiah.

Thus the search for the biblical past continues in Jerusalem and throughout Israel, strengthening the historic bond which unites the generations of Israel, past and present.

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(*Continued from page 259*)

A.S. MALLER

behavior. Why is the Torah silent, if in reality this marks the beginning of idolatry? Enosh means human. We are *a'nashim* – humans. Could the Torah be simply making a distinction between the religion of Enosh (humane-mensch) and the religion of Adam (earthling-Man)? People who are decent, kind, sensitive and responsible are *a'nashim-menschen*; they call upon the name of the Lord no matter what religion they profess. People who are selfish, sexist, racist, materialistic, self-righteous fanatics worship idols and evil spirits even if they call them God. The complete verse can now be read as a whole and the two parts are causally related: when the son of man "Seth also gives birth to a child and calls his name Enosh (mensch) then they begin to (truly) call upon the Lord."

עשה תורתך קבע

THE TRIENNIAL BIBLE READING CALENDAR

IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
CHAIM ABRAMOWITZ

		June-July1990
24	S	Psalms 22
25	M	Pslams 23-24
26	T	Psalms 25
27	W	Psalms 26
28	Th	Psalms 27
29	F	Numbers 19-11:11
30	שבת	Haftarah: Judges 11:1-33
JULY		
1	S	Psalms 28
2	M	Psalms 29
3	T	Psalms 30
4	W	Psalms 31
5	Th	Psalms 32
6	F	Numbers 22:12-25:9
7	שבת	Haftarah: Micah 5:1-6:8
8	S	Psalms 33
9	M	Psalms 34
10	T	Psalms 35
11	W	Psalms 36
12	Th	Psalms 37
13	F	Numbers 25:10-30:1
14	שבת	Haftarah: I Kings 18:41-19:21
15	S	Psalms 38
16	M	Psalms 39
17	T	Psalms 40
18	W	Psalms 41
19	Th	Psalms 42-43
20	F	Numbers 30:2-36
21	שבת	Haftarah: Jeremiah 2:4-28
22	S	Psalms 44
23	M	Psalms 45
24	T	Psalms 46
25	W	Psalms 47-48

		July-August 1990
26	Th	Lamentations 1
27	F	Deuteronomy 1-3:22
28	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 1:1-27
29	S	Lamentations 2
30	M	Lamentations 3
31	T	Lamentations 4-5
AUG.		
1	W	Psalms 49
2	Th	Psalms 50
3	F	Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11
4	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 40:1-26
5	S	Psalms 51
6	M	Psalms 52
7	T	Psalms 53
8	W	Psalms 54-55
9	Th	Psalms 56
10	F	Deuteonomy 7:12-11:25
11	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 49:14-51:3
12	S	Psalms 57
13	M	Psalms 58
14	T	Psalms 59
15	W	Psalms 60
16	Th	Psalms 61
17	F	Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17
18	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 54:11-55:5
19	S	Psalms 62
20	M	Psalms 63
21	T	Psalms 64
22	W	Psalms 65
23	Th	Psalms 66
24	F	Deuteronomy 16:18-21:29
25	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 51:12-52:12
26	S	Psalms 67

August-September 1990

27	M	Psalms 68
28	T	Psalms 69
29	W	Psalms 70-71
30	Th	Psalms 72
31	F	Deuteronomy 21:10-25
SEP.		
1	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 54:1-10
2	S	Psalms 73
3	M	Psalms 74
4	T	Psalms 75
5	W	Psalms 76
6	Th	Psalms 77
7	F	Deuteronomy 26-29:8
8	שבת	Haftarah: Jeremiah 2:4-28
9	S	Psalms 78
10	M	Psalms 79
11	T	Psalms 80
12	W	Psalms 81
13	Th	Psalms 82-83
14	F	Deuteronomy 29:9:31
15	שבת	Haftarah: Isaiah 61:10-63-9
16	S	Psalms 84-85
17	M	Psalms 86
18	T	Psalms 87-88
19	W	Rosh Hashanah eve
20	Th	Genesis 21:1-34
		Haftarah: I Samuel 1-2:10
21	F	Genesis 22:1-24
		Haftarah: Jeremiah 31:2-10
22	שבת	Deuteronomy 32
		Haftarah: Hoseah 14:2-10
23	S	Jonah 1
24	M	Jonah 2
25	T	Jonah 3
26	W	Jonah 4

September-October 1990

27	Th	Jonah 4
28	F	Yom Kippur eve
29	שבת	Leviticus 16
		Haftarah: Isaiah 57:14-58:16
30	S	Ecclesiastes 1-2
OCT		
1	M	Ecclesiastes 3-4
2	T	Ecclesiastes 5-6
3	W	Succot eve
4	Th	Leviticus 22:26-23:44
		Haftarah: Zechariah 14
5	F	Leviticus 22:26-23:44*
		Haftarah: I Kings 8:2-21
6	שבת	Exodus 33:12-34:26
		Haftarah: Ezekiel 38-18-39:16
7	S	Ecclesiastes 7-8
8	M	Ecclesiastes 9-10
9	T	Ecclesiastes 11-12
10	W	Hoshanah Rabba
11	Th	Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17
		Haftarah: I Kings 8:54-66
12	F	Deuteronomy 33-34**
		Haftarah: Joshua I
13	שבת	Genesis: 1-6:8
		Haftarah: Isaiah 42:5-43:10
14	S	Psalms 89
15	M	Psalms 90-91
16	T	Psalms 92-93
17	W	Psalms 94
18	Th	Psalms 95-96
19	F	Genesis 6:9-11

* In the Diaspora

** In Israel on Thursday

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