

MORDECHAI 102

יום הולדת שמח Your Eminence

MORDECHAI 11:15-19

BESB

Mar 11:15 And they came to Yerushalayim. And entering into the temple, Yeshua began to throw out those selling and buying in the temple; also he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those selling the doves.

Mar 11:16 And he would not allow any to carry a vessel through the temple [on the Sabbath].

Mar 11:17 And he taught, saying to them, Has it not been written...

Isa 56:7 Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon Mine altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

Jer 7:11 Is this house, whereupon My name is called, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, says the LORD.

Mar 11:18 And the scribes [of the Sadducees - Heb. Tz'dukim] and the chief priests (of the Sadducees Heb. Tz'dukim) heard. And they looked for a way to destroy him, for they feared him, because all the congregation was astonished by his teachings (mesorot).

Mar 11:19 And he went out of the [Holy] city when evening came.

GREEK TEXT

¹⁵ Καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα καὶ εἰσελθόντων ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὸ ἱερόν ἤρξατο ἐκβάλλειν τοὺς πωλοῦντας καὶ ἀγοράζοντας ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ τὰς τραπέζας τῶν κολλυβιστῶν καὶ τὰς καθέδρας τῶν πωλούντων τὰς περιστερὰς κατέστρεψεν

¹⁶ καὶ οὐκ ἤφιεν ἵνα τις διενέγκῃ σκεῦος διὰ τοῦ ἱεροῦ

¹⁷ καὶ ἐδίδασκεν λέγων αὐτοῖς Οὐ γέγραπται ὅτι Ὁ οἶκός μου οἶκος προσευχῆς κληθήσεται πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐποιήσατε αὐτὸν σπήλαιον ληστῶν

¹⁸ καὶ ἤκουσαν οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ ἐζήτουν πῶς αὐτὸν ἀπολέσουσιν· ἐφοβούντο γὰρ αὐτὸν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ὄχλος ἐξεπλήσσετο ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ

¹⁹ Καὶ ὅτε ὄψε ἐγένετο ἐξεπορεύετο ἔξω τῆς πόλεως

DELITZSCH HEBREW TRANSLATION

¹⁵ וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם וְאַתֶּם מֵה־תֵּאמְרוּ לִי מִי אָנִי: ¹⁶ וַיַּעַן שְׁמֵעוֹן פְּטָרוֹס וַיֹּאמֶר אֶתָּה הוּא הַמְּשִׁיחַ בֶּן־אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים: ¹⁷ וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲשֶׁר־יְדַע שְׁמֵעוֹן בֶּר־יִזְנֶה בִּי־בִשְׂרָוֹ וְדָם לֹא גָלָה־לְךָ אֶת־זֹאת כִּי אִם־אָבִי שֶׁבִשְׂמַיִם: ¹⁸ וְגַם־אָנִי אָמַר לְךָ כִּי אֶתָּה פְּטָרוֹס וְעַל־הַצּוּר הַזֶּה אֲבִנָּה אֶת־קַהֲלֹתִי וְשַׁעְרֵי שְׂאוֹל לֹא יִגְבְּרוּ עָלָיָהּ: ¹⁹ וְאַתָּן לְךָ אֶת־מִפְתָּחוֹת מַלְכוּת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר תִּאָּסֵר עַל־הָאָרֶץ אֲסוּר יִהְיֶה בַּשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר תִּתִּיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ מוּתָר יִהְיֶה בַּשָּׁמַיִם:

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INTRODUCTION

Middot 1:1 In three places do the priests keep watch in the sanctuary:

- (1) in Bet Abtinah,
- (2) in Bet Hanitzot (house of the spark - flame), and
- (3) in Bet Hamoked (house of the hearth).

And the Levites [keep watch] in twenty-one places [I Chron. 26:17–18]: five at the five gates of the Temple mount; four at the four corners on the inside [of the Temple wall]; five at the five gates of the courtyard; four at the four corners on the outside [the wall of] the courtyard; and one at the office of the offering [M. 1:6], and one at the office of the veil, and one behind the Mercy Seat [outside of the western wall of the holy of holies, M. 5: 1].

These expanded areas had a higher level of sanctity than the rest of Yerushalayim but did not have the sanctity of the 500 by 500 area. This 500 *amot*^a square included not only the Temple and its courtyards but also the area of the palace of the king. The king's palace was destroyed at the end of the First Temple Period and was not rebuilt in the Second Temple Era. The area of the palace was outside the *Soreg*^b, with a lower sanctity than within the *Soreg*.

Middot 2.3 Within it (Har haBayit) was a latticework (*Soreg*), ten *tefachim* (handbreadths) high, and thirteen breaches were there that the kings of Greece breached, and they repaired them again, and decreed

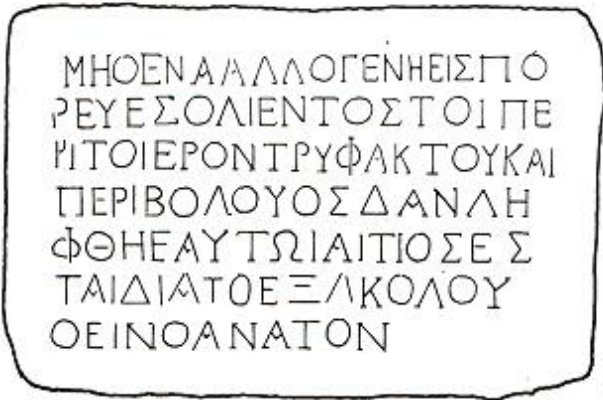
^a Hebrew for "cubit." The Royal Cubit measured 20.67 inches. This "amah" (Heb. Cubit, singular) This amah was the measurement used on the 500 by 500 *amot* Har haBayit. The five *tefachim* (handbreadth) *amah* measured 19.2 inches. The Six *Tefachim Amah* measured 23.06 inches

^b A barrier fence that surrounded the Inner Courtyards, which delineated the court of the gentiles from the court of the Israelites.

thirteen prostrations opposite them. Within it was the Heil ten *amot*, and twelve steps were there, the height of each step was half an amah, and its depth half an *amah*. All the steps that were there, the height of each step was half an amah, and its depth half an amah, except those to the ulam. . .

Wars 5:193-194 Approaching the second court before the Temple was a fence made of stone three cubits high, entirely surrounding the temple with graceful proficiency.

¹⁹⁴ Standing at equal intervals were monuments of stone announcing the laws of purity written in Greek and Latin forbidding foreigners to be present or entrance into the sacred precincts.^c



CAPTION ON THE SOREG

The above caption reads...

**NO FOREIGNER
IS TO GO BEYOND THE BALUSTRADE
AND THE PLAZA OF THE TEMPLE ZONE
WHOEVER IS CAUGHT DOING SO
WILL HAVE HIMSELF TO BLAME
FOR HIS DEATH
WHICH WILL FOLLOW**

UNDERSTANDING THE TEMPLE LAYOUT

And they came to Yerushalayim. And entering into the temple...

To this very day understanding of the Second Temple complex and its layout is a matter of much scholarly research and debate. Having been involved in some of that research I can attest to the complexities of understanding the layout of the Second Temple complex. Therefore, I would conjecture that the events of our present pericope occurred within the court of the gentiles. ALL other courts had higher levels of sanctity and would not allow gentiles to pass beyond the *soreg* as detailed above. However, our pericope shows a clear disdain for holiness and the things of G-d. While we see

^c Translation is mine from 2007

that the disdain for the true palace of G-d was being exhibited we also believe that the courts of sanctity were not opened for practices such as buying and selling regardless of the need.

Middot 1:1 At three sites, the kohanim stand guard in the Temple: In Bet Avtinah, in Bet Hanitzotz, and in Bet Hamoked. Bet Avtinah and Bet Hanitzotz were balconies, and the youngsters would stand guard there. Bet Hamoked was a dome, and it was a large building, surrounded by stone slabs, and the elders of the bet av would sleep there, and the keys of the azarah were in their hands. And the young kohanim, each one with his cushion on the ground — they would not sleep in the holy garments, but rather would take off, fold up, and place them under their heads, and cover themselves with their own covering. If one of them had a seminal emission, he would go out and walk through the passage that goes under the Birah, and the candles would be burning from this side and from that side, until he would reach the place of immersion. And there was a fire there, and a place with a chair of dignity, and this was its dignity: If he found it locked, he would know that there was a person there; open, he would know that there was no person there. He went down and immersed, came up and dried off, and he warmed himself near the fire. He came and sat near his brothers, the kohanim, until the gates were opened. He would go out and walk away.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GUARDS

While tractate *Tamid* is not overly concerned with the guards, it does include that foundational data. Therefore, we are left to explain the purpose of the guards who guarded the Temple. We are told by the rabbinic sources that the Temple was not guarded because of possible thievery or for any similar purpose. Rather it was guarded as a matter of honor. The Temple was viewed as a Royal Palace. It was the Palace of G-d the great King. Just as King Sholomo^d had guards to guard, the royal palace, guards were stationed at various locations around the Temple as a means of honorary display.^e Therefore, commentaries on this Mishnah tell us that the Temple was guarded as a matter of honor. However, the Biblical text cited below indicates that the guarding is in the advent of a stranger coming into the tabernacle (Temple compound) i.e. into areas that they are not qualified to have access.

B'Midbar 18:2-5 And thy brethren also, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring thou near with thee, that they may be joined unto thee, and minister unto thee, thou and thy sons with thee being before the tent of the testimony. ⁽³⁾ And they shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the Tent; only they shall not come nigh unto the holy furniture and unto the altar, that they die not, neither they, nor ye. ⁽⁴⁾ And they shall be joined unto thee, and keep the charge of the tent of meeting, whatsoever the service of the Tent may be; but a common man shall not draw nigh unto you. ⁽⁵⁾ And ye shall keep the charge of the holy things, and the charge of the altar, that there be wrath no more upon the children of Israel.

B'Midbar 1:51-53 "And when the tabernacle is to go forward, the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be set up, the Levites shall set it up. The outsider who comes near shall be put to death. ⁽⁵²⁾ "The children of Israel shall pitch their tents, everyone by his own camp, everyone by his own standard, according to their armies; ⁽⁵³⁾ "but the Levites shall camp around the tabernacle of the Testimony, that there may be no wrath on the congregation of the children of Israel; and the Levites shall keep charge of the tabernacle of the Testimony."

B'Midbar 7-8 And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, to do the service of the tabernacle. ⁽⁸⁾ And they shall keep all the furniture of the tent of meeting, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle.

When the Tabernacle was standing Moshe, Aaron and his sons were to be stationed directly in front of the Tabernacle. It was their apparent duty to guard the Tabernacle. They were to prevent the

“stranger” from entering or going beyond inappropriate boundaries. Because of these passages, we can determine that the same level of security was appropriated to the Temple. In view of the fact that the Tabernacle faced east, the camp of Moses, Aaron and his sons was also on the east guarding the Tabernacle’s entrance. As noted above, Rambam notes that the King’s palace was guarded and therefore, the Temple as G-d’s House must be guarded.^f The above-mentioned verses give further insight into the guardianship of the Tabernacle and Temple as well. The stranger (גֵר) *zar* was not allowed to enter the Tabernacle and certain Temple courtyards on pain of death. The גֵר need not be a stranger from the nations as might be assumed from the English reading of the text. The Hebrew word גֵר means some who was not permitted or authorized. No one without a permitted cause was allowed in the Tabernacle complex.

Mishnah’s tractate Middot further elucidates the guarding of the Temple by both the *Kohanim* and the *Levi’im*. These two divisions of the *Levi’im* are represented by Moshe and Aaron. As we have noted above it has been suggested that the *Levi’im* guarded three sides the *Mishkan* and that the *Kohanim* guarded its eastern side. The remaining camps and families were said to have camped 1,000 cubits from the *Mishkan*.^g According to commentary notes of the Artscroll Mishnah in Middot 5:1, the camp of Israel, during its wilderness journey, was divided into three sections. The first section was the “Camp of the *Shekinah*.” No person that was considered *tamei* could enter this section of the camp. The first section included the Courtyard of the *Mishkan*. The second section was the “camp of the *Levi’im*.” In this section the *Levi’im* were camped. The final section was the “camp of Israel.” Here the remainder of the Israelites lived and camped.^h Similar distinctions have been made for Yerushalayim.

Zevachim 116b Just as there were camps in the wilderness, so there was a camp in Jerusalem. From [the walls of] Jerusalem to the Temple Mount was the camp of the Israelites; from the Temple Mount to the Gate of Nicanorⁱ was the Levitical camp; beyond that was the camp of the *Shekinah*, and that corresponded to [the place within] the curtains in the wilderness.

Breakhot 9:5 Another matter: With all your might—with each and every measure that he measures out for you, thank him much. One should not act silly while facing the Eastern Gate [of the Temple in Jerusalem] for it faces toward the Chamber of the Holy of Holies. **One should not enter the Temple mount with his walking stick, his overshoes, his money bag, or with dust on his feet.** And one should not use [the Temple mount] for a shortcut. And spitting [there likewise is forbidden, as is proven by an argument] a *minori ad majus* [if you may not use it for a shortcut, you obviously may not spit there]. [At one time] all blessings in the Temple concluded with “forever.” When the heretics corrupted [the practice] and said, “There is but one world [but no world to come],” they ordained that they should say, “forever and ever” [thus suggesting the existence of a world to come]. And they ordained that an individual should greet his fellow with [G-d’s] name, in accordance with what is said, And behold Boaz came from Bethlehem; and he said to the reapers, “The L-rd be with you!” And they answered, “The L-rd bless you” (Ruth 2:4). And it says, The L-rd is with you you mighty man of valor (Judges 6:12). And it says, Do not despise your mother when she is old (Prov. 23:22). And it says, It is the time for the L-rd to act, for thy law has been broken (Ps. 119:126).

Middot 2:3 Inside it [the Temple mount, surrounding the inner area which contained the women’s court and the Temple court] is a latticed railing, ten handbreadths high. There were thirteen breaches in it, which the kings of Greece opened up. They went and closed them up again and decreed on their account

^f Beit HaBechirah 8:1; 2 Ki 11:6

^g Malbim, Artscroll Chumash, pg 741 (B’midbar 3:38)

^h Mishnah, Seder Kodashim Vol. IV Artscroll Mishnah Series Middot 5:1 pg 154

ⁱ The east gate of the Temple court.

thirteen prostrations. Inside it is the rampart, ten cubits [wide]. And there were twelve steps there [leading up from the rampart to the women's courtyard]. The height of each step is a half-cubit, and its tread, a half-cubit. All the steps which were there [within the Temple mount] were a half a cubit in height and a half-cubit in tread, except for those of the porch [which had a tread of a cubit]. All of the entrances and gates which were there were twenty cubits high and ten cubits wide, except for that of the porch. All the entrances which were there had doors, except for that of the porch [M. 3:7]. All the gates which were there had lintels, except for the Tadi gate, which had two stones leaning against one another [as a pointed arch]. All the gates which were there were changed [and covered] with gold, except for Niqanor's gate, because a miracle was done with them [M. Yom. 3:10]. And there are those who say, "Because their bronze shone like gold."

Why did the Grecian Kings despise the "*soreg*" so greatly that they made thirteen breeches in it? The "*soreg*" marked the boundary beyond which now non-Jew may pass.

The non-Jews have frequently been offended at their inability to pass beyond the *soreg*. This is witnessed by a passage in Josephus.

Wars of the Jews 6:124 ¹²⁴ Now Titus was deeply affected with this state of things, and reproached John and his party, and said to them, "Have not you, vile wretches that you are, by our permission, put up this **partition wall** before your sanctuary?"

Titus was offended that the *soreg* prohibited him from passing into the holier locations of the sanctuary. This same offence exists within contemporary non-Jews. Most non-Jews have it in their mind that the wall or *soreg* was destroyed by Yeshua. This is based upon an inaccurate interpretation of Hakham Shaul's letter to the Ephesians.¹ Hakham Shaul's "middle wall of partition" has nothing to do with *soreg*.

WHAT DOES THE SOREG TEACH US AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO OUR PERICOPE?

The information cited above teaches us about the sanctity of the Temple. In concurring with His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yoseph ben Haggai I would suggest that the issue at hand has to do with the violation of Shabbat. I noted this immediately in preparing for the translation of Mordechai. I will not try to reproduce his notes here. I will only sound a hearty AMEN.

Another aspect of the present Torah Seder is the wearing of *tzitzit*. Here the question of how Hakham Tsefet was able to interlace all of the Torah Seder material into one short pericope is amazing.

The *soreg* bespeaks sanctity as does Shabbat and the Tzitzit. It is clear from our pericope that there was a loss of reverence for the Temple, Shabbat and the things of G-d in general. However, Yeshua's consternation is the result of violating the Sabbath. Yeshua was not trying to say that the money-changers or other services were in some way unacceptable. The Temple required these services.

The actions of Yeshua teach us clearly that Shabbat bears sanctity above all the other days of the week. This should go without saying.

One should not enter the Temple mount with his walking stick, his overshoes, his money bag, or with dust on his feet...

If we apply the hermeneutic rule of **Ḳal va-ḥomer**: "Argumentum a minori ad majus" or "a majori ad minus"; corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori we will understand that if one was not able to

¹ Ephesians 2:14

enter the Temple precincts (the courts of sanctity) with a walking stick, overshoes, his money bag or dust on his feet, we will draw the conclusion that this was **much the more** prohibited on Shabbat.

I believe that the text of the Torah Seder along with the pericope of Mordechai teaches us clearly, when there is a disregard for the Sabbath there is erosion that causes degradation of all the mitzvot of G-d.

However, the "soreg" addresses other issues in relation to our pericope.

Mar 11:17 *And he taught, saying to them, Has it not been written...*

Isa 56:7 *Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon Mine altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.*

Yeshua declares that the Temple would become a house of prayer for all nations (peoples). This directly relates to our Torah Seder.

B'Midbar11:14 If a proselyte resides with you, or those among you in future generations, and he offers up a fire offering of pleasing fragrance to the Lord, as you make it, so shall he make it.

B'Midbar11:15 One rule applies to the assembly, for yourselves and for the proselyte who resides [with you]; one rule applies throughout your generations just as [it is] for you, so [it is] for the proselyte, before the Lord.

B'Midbar11:16 There shall be one law and one ordinance for you and the proselyte who resides [with you].

The rules of the Temple and Shabbat were not open for debate. In short the Torah Seder requires the hermeneutic cited above. If the Native born Jew is required to follow all the Laws of the Torah in relation to Shabbat, fringes and offerings, how much the more should the Proselyte **guard** these things?

The lesson of the *soreg* discussed above is rather simple. First we must realize that there are levels of sanctity. Secondly we should realize that there are boundaries and boarders in life that we are not permitted to cross.

HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL PEOPLES

Mar 11:17 *And he taught, saying to them, Has it not been written...*

Isa 56:7 *Even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon Mine altar; for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.*

The mesorot of Yeshua includes Gentiles. In other places this teaching caused the leaders of the city to try to throw Yeshua off the edge of a cliff.^k I see here the masterful art of Hakham Tsefet in weaving

^k Cf. Luke 4:16ff

a pericope into the Torah Seder. Likewise, I believe that Yeshua's masterful teachings as a Hakham taught the Torah Sederim so that they could be explained in the Triennial Torah reading cycle. Or, I might say that Yeshua taught his Talmidim the Messianic aspects of the Torah from a triennial Torah reading cycle. This seems to be most logical because dominate scholarly consensus is that Yeshua's ministerial life is believed to have lasted for three and one-half years.

Yeshua's citing of the passage from Yeshayahu¹ is not a claim at deity. It is clear from Yeshua's teachings that he believed that Judaism should be the universal religion for ALL humanity. This is elaborated at length by Professor Jacob Neusner in his work titled "Recovering Judaism."^m The so called "Great Commission" was to "talmudize" all nations or peoples.ⁿ This "talmudizing" required teaching foreign nations how to walk and conduct life after the manner of Yeshua's mesorah. Note here that the teachings of Yeshua are in perfect agreement with the Torah Seder. I will here further the idea that the halakah follows universal rules and truths along specific rules of logical analogy.^o Consequently, the logical thinking man should be able to deduce the rationality of the halakah as taught by the Rabbis. The teachings of Yeshua are at unity with the teachings of the Rabbis, specifically the House of Hillel. These "teachings" naturally deduce the monotheistic conduct that the first century Talmidim followed.

I find it very interesting that the point of connection would cause the hermeneutic rule of "Dabar halamed me-'inyano: Interpretation deduced from the context" to deduce that the gentile proselytes would have to follow the mitzvot in exactly the same way that the native born Jew does. Again Professor Jacob Neusner's thoughts on logic ring true.^p

It is also noteworthy to mention Abarbanel's view of the resurrection in relation to the gentiles.^q It is also noteworthy to mention that the House of Shammai did not have the same universal view of Judaism that the House of Hillel possessed. The House of Hillel saw the universal aspects of Judaism as taught by the Prophets. This should be obvious here since Yeshua, from the House of Hillel is quoting a prophetic passage to demonstrate the universalistic message of Judaism.^r

SCRIBES AND CHIEF PRIESTS

Scholars generally suggest that the rise of the P'rushim^s most likely developed out of the συναγωγή γραμματέων (*sunagoge grammateon*) (company of scholars).^t George Foot Moore suggests that the P'rushim later may have been known as a "guild of Scholars" which we now label the "Scribes." Here he cites Josephus telling us the first mention of the P'rushim was in 139 B.C.E. He furthers the point that about this time the three sects of P'rushim Tz'dukim^u and Essenes appeared.^v The meaning of the name or title P'rushim is vague. It appears to have been associated with the idea of being separate and holy - *kodesh*. They were distinguished from the *Am haEretz* who were the "common people of the land." The P'rushim practiced strict kosher and made sure that all they benefited from, had been

¹ Isaiah

^m Cf. Jacob Neusner, *Recovering Judaism, The Universal Dimension of Judaism*, Fortress Press, 2001

ⁿ Cf. Mark 16:15ff, Matthew 28:18ff

^o Jacob Neusner, *Recovering Judaism, The Universal Dimension of Judaism*, Fortress Press, 2001 p.16

^p Ibid

^q See commentary by His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yoseph ben Haggai, Iyar 17, 5771

^r Jacob Neusner, *Recovering Judaism, The Universal Dimension of Judaism*, Fortress Press, 2001 p.16

^s Pharisees

^t 1 Macc 7. 12ff.

^u Sadducees

^v George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*, Hendrickson Publishers, Inc, 1997 Vol 1 pg 57
see also Josephus "Jewish Wars."

titled upon. The practice of the Oral Torah (Mesorah) was vital to this group from the very beginning. Exactly how they had encountered this is unknown. If, the P'rushim developed from a "guild of scholars" it would not be hard to imagine that they had somehow developed from a school that embraced Ezra's teachings and philosophy.

The association of the Sofer (Scribe) with the P'rushim is quickly referenced in the Nazarean Codicil. The Soferim were most likely closely associated with the P'rushim. However, it seems plausible that the Tz'dukim may also have had their own "Guild of Soferim."^w We note that the *Soferim* of the Tz'dukim enjoyed a particular power and authority within the Nazarean Codicil. They seem to have been the lawyers and teachers of the Law (Torah).^x This "Guild of Scholars" would have been in direct opposition to the teachings of the Yeshua, his Talmidim and the P'rushim.

Therefore, I have noted in the translation that the particular *soferim* (scribes) are from the sect of the Tz'dukim. These *soferim* worked in conjunction with the Tz'dukim. The "Chief Priests" were of Tz'dukim persuasion and like the *Soferim* of the Tz'dukim, they would have vehemently opposed the teachings Yeshua purported of a universal Judaism. Furthermore, this would have upset the status quo which brought the Tz'dukim a great deal of affluence. I would also note that the Tz'dukim wielded power in the Temple complex during the latter portion of the Second Temple period. However, the "Priesthood" was defunct as we have mentioned before. The on the whole, the "Am haEretz"^y followed the mesorah and halakhic rulings of the P'rushim.

The Nazarean Codicil clearly tells us which party sought the death of Yeshua and why. Nothing motivates people like fear.

CONCLUSION

Why have I included so much material on the "*soreg*"? The balustrade demonstrates a barrier between the Jew and Gentile. His Eminence has pointed out on more than one occasion that the inscription over Yeshua's crucifixion stake read that he was the "King of the Jews." This inscription was more prophetic than many people might imagine. Jacob Neusner points out that G-d's restoration of humanity is through the agency of the Jews.^z When the gentile embraces the Torah and teachings of the Rabbis the balustrade is no longer an issue. The *soreg* is an issue as long as the gentile remains pagan in practice and religion. When the gentile becomes one with the Jewish people (converts to Judaism) the identity of gentile is lost and the balustrade again is no longer an issue. The balustrade sounds a resounding alarm to all who see it. While the inscription read in the negative I will rephrase it in the positive. The Torah is Life to all who find it. The *soreg* says guard the ways of G-d in much the way that we would speak of *shomer* Shabbat.

BS"D (B'Siyata D'Shamaya)
Aramaic: With the help of Heaven
Pakid Dr. Adon Eliyahu ben Abraham

^w Matthew 2:4, I will discuss this further below.

^x Luke 5:17

^y General populace or common people.

^z Jacob Neusner, *Recovering Judaism, The Universal Dimension of Judaism*, Fortress Press, 2001 pp. 5-9

CONNECTIONS TO TORAH READINGS

Torah Seder

The Pericope of Mordechai is directly tied to the Torah Seder through the idea that the gentile must embrace the same laws as the native Jew (B'Midbar 15:15). Thematically we have a connection through the idea of being Shomer Shabbat.

Tehillim

Thematically the lengthening of shadow is connected with the idea of exile. The lack of piety among the people demonstrated a lack of genuine spirituality. The generation which was brought to light in last week's pericope is more readily illustrated in the present pericope of Mordechai. Hakham Tsefet's remarks "And he went out of the [Holy] city when evening came" tell us that the exile is fast approaching. Soon the Governance of G-d would be through the mesorah.

Ashlamatah

The Ashlamatah deals with both the Shomer Shabbat and the Foreigner who is joined to the L-rd thereby connecting perfectly with our present pericope.

MITZVOT

Torah Add	M#	Mitzvah	Oral Torah
B'Midbar 15:20:9	385	Precept of Hallah	M. Hallal. M. Orlah
B'Midbar 15:38ff	386	Precept of Tzitzit	Minahot 43b
B'Midbar 15:39	387	Prohibition against straying after the eyes and heart (follow heresy)	Abot 6:2

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Why were guards posted at varied sights in the Temple complex?
2. What is the *Soreg*?
3. How does the *soreg* teach us to be shomer Shabbat?
4. What is the message of the *Soreg*?
5. Which set of "scribes" opposed the teachings of Yeshua?
6. Which "scribes" would have agreed with the teachings of Yeshua?
7. What halakhic statement is Hakham Tsefet trying to make in this pericope?
8. In your opinion, how are the halakahot (Mitzvot 385-387) of our Torah Seder one interrelated taxon?