

MORDECHAI 104C

MORDECHAI 12:18-27

BESB

Mar 12:18. And some Sadducees (Heb. Tz'dukim) who say there is no resurrection, came to him (Yeshua). And they questioned Him, saying,

¹⁹ Rabbenu, Moshe wrote for us that:

If brothers reside together, and one of them dies having no son, the dead man's wife shall not marry an outsider. [Rather,] her husband's brother shall be intimate with her, making her a wife for himself, thus performing the obligation of a husband's brother with her. And it will be, that the eldest brother [who performs the levirate marriage, if] she [can] bear will succeed in the name of his deceased brother, so that his [the deceased brother's] name shall not be obliterated from Israel. (Deut. 25:5-6)

²⁰ There were seven brothers. And the first took a wife, and when he died (he) left no seed.

²¹ And the second himself took her, and died, and neither did he leave seed; and the third did likewise.

²² And all seven took her and left no seed. And finally the woman died.

²³ Then in the [Day of the] resurrection, when they rise up, which of them will she be the wife? For the seven had her (as a) wife.

²⁴ And Yeshua answered them saying, have you not been led astray because of this, not knowing the Scriptures [and their oral elucidation] or the [dynamic and supernatural] power of God?

²⁵ For when they rise again from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as [androgynous] angels (ambassadors from) the Heavens.

²⁶ But concerning the dead, that they are raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, [in the Torah Seder] "Out Of The Midst Of A Bush," how God spoke to him saying, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exo 3:6).

²⁷ He is not the God of the dead, but God of the living. Therefore, you (are) greatly led astray.

GREEK TEXT

¹⁸ Καὶ ἔρχονται Σαδδουκαῖοι πρὸς αὐτόν οἵτινες λέγουσιν ἀνάστασιν μὴ εἶναι καὶ ἐπηρώτησαν αὐτὸν λέγοντες

¹⁹ Διδάσκαλε Μωσῆς ἔγραψεν ἡμῖν ὅτι ἐάν τινος ἀδελφὸς ἀποθάνῃ καὶ καταλίπῃ γυναῖκα καὶ τέκνα μὴ ἀφῆ ἵνα λάβῃ ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξαναστήσῃ σπέρμα τῷ ἀδελφῷ αὐτοῦ

²⁰ ἑπτὰ ἀδελφοὶ ἦσαν· καὶ ὁ πρῶτος ἔλαβεν γυναῖκα καὶ ἀποθνήσκων οὐκ ἀφῆκεν σπέρμα·

²¹ καὶ ὁ δεῦτερος ἔλαβεν αὐτήν καὶ ἀπέθανεν καὶ οὐδὲ αὐτὸς ἀφῆκεν σπέρμα· καὶ ὁ τρίτος ὡσαύτως·

²² καὶ ἔλαβον αὐτήν οἱ ἑπτὰ καὶ οὐκ ἀφῆκαν σπέρμα ἕσχατη πάντων ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἡ γυνὴ

²³ ἐν τῇ οὖν ἀναστάσει ὅταν ἀναστῶσιν τίνος αὐτῶν ἔσται γυνὴ οἱ γὰρ ἑπτὰ ἔσχον αὐτήν γυναῖκα

²⁴ καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς Οὐ διὰ τοῦτο πλανᾶσθε μὴ εἰδότες τὰς γραφὰς μηδὲ τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ θεοῦ

²⁵ ὅταν γὰρ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῶσιν οὔτε γαμοῦσιν οὔτε γαμίσκονται, ἀλλ εἰσὶν ὡς ἄγγελοι οἱ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς

²⁶ περὶ δὲ τῶν νεκρῶν ὅτι ἐγείρονται οὐκ ἀνέγνωτε ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ Μωσέως, ἐπὶ τῆς βάτου ὡς εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς λέγων Ἐγὼ ὁ θεὸς Ἀβραάμ καὶ ὁ θεὸς Ἰσαὰκ καὶ ὁ θεὸς Ἰακώβ

²⁷ οὐκ ἔστιν ὁ θεὸς νεκρῶν ἀλλὰ Θεὸς ζώντων· ὑμεῖς οὖν πολὺ πλανᾶσθε

DELITZSCH HEBREW TRANSLATION

¹⁸ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלָיו מִן־הַצְּדוּקִים הָאֲמָרִים אֵין תְּחִית הַמֵּתִים וַיִּשְׁאַלֵּהוּ לֵאמֹר: ¹⁹ רַבִּי מֹשֶׁה כָּתַב לָנוּ כִּי יָמוּת אֶחָיִאִשׁ וְהִנִּיחַ אִשָּׁה וּבָנִים אֵין לוֹ וְלָקַח אָחָיו אֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְהָקִים זָרַע לְאָחָיו: ²⁰ וְהִנֵּה שְׁבַעַה

אחים ויקח הראשון אשה וימת ולא השאיר אחריו זרע: ²¹ ויקח אתה השני וימת ולא הניח זרע וכן גם השלישי: ²² ויקחוהו כל השבעה ולא השאירו אחריהם זרע ואחרונה לכולם מתה גם האשה: ²³ ועתה בתחית המתים כשיקומו למי מהם תהיה לאשה כי לשבעה היתה לאשה: ²⁴ ויאמר ישוע אליהם הלא טעים אתם באשר לא ידעתם את הכתובים ולא את גבורת האלהים: ²⁵ כי בעת קומם מן המתים לא ישאו נשים ולא תנשאנה כי יהיו כמלאכי השמים: ²⁶ ועל דבר המתים שיקומו הלא קראתם בספר משה בסנה את אשר דבר אליו האלהים לאמר אנכי אלהי אברהם ואלהי יצחק ואלהי יעקב: ²⁷ האלהים איננו אלהי המתים כי אם אלהי החיים לכן טועים אתם הרבה:

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INTRODUCTION

While scholars would like to make the present story an extension of the previous, they trip over themselves because they tried to make the previous encounter an encounter between the P'rushim and the Herodians rather than the Tz'dukim and Herodians. I have discussed the probability of the meeting between the Herodians and the Tz'dukim in my discussion of Mordechai's 104b pericope.^a By use of the Tz'dukim's soferim in the previous pericope, we see the natural contiguity between the two pericope.

The contiguity between the two pericope is amazing when we focus on the themes of the past few pericope. The past themes have dealt with appropriate authority as opposed to desecrations and abuses of G-d's agency. While Stein aptly notes that the Tz'dukim is here to trap Yeshua in his words, we draw the

^a <http://torahfocus.com/2011/06/24/mesorah-of-mark-104b/>

contiguity from the previous pericope.^b His interpretation of the previous pericope fails to realize that the previous confrontation was with the Tz'dukim and Herodians rather than the P'rushim as noted above.

TZ'DUKIM

I will not elaborate here at any length on the materials that we have already covered in the past. Here I only want to build the background information for the context of the verses we are reading.

And some Sadducees (Heb. Tz'dukim) who say there is no resurrection, came to him (Yeshua). And they questioned Him, saying,

Ant 18:16-17 ¹⁶ But the doctrine of the Sadducees is this:--That souls die with the bodies; nor do they regard the observation of anything besides what the law enjoins them, for they think it an instance of virtue to dispute with those teachers of philosophy whom they frequent; ¹⁷ but this doctrine is received but by a few, yet by those still of the greatest dignity; but they are able to do almost nothing by themselves; for when they become magistrates, as they are unwillingly and by force sometimes obliged to be, they addict themselves to the notions of the Pharisees, because the multitude would not otherwise bear them.

Josephus has aptly stated that the Tz'dukim have a doctrine. I will elaborate on this statement in a latter portion of this commentary.

THE RESURRECTION AND THE TZ'DUKIM

Jwr 2:164-166 ¹⁶⁴ But the Sadducees are those who compose the second order, and take away fate entirely, and suppose that God is not concerned in our doing or not doing what is evil; and they say, that to act what is good, or what is evil, ¹⁶⁵ is at men's own choice, and that the one or the other belongs so to everyone, that they may act as they please. They also take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and the punishments and rewards in Hades. ¹⁶⁶ Moreover, the Pharisees are friendly to one another, and are for the exercise of concord, and regard for the public; but the behaviour of the Sadducees one toward another is in some degree wild; **and their conduct with those who are of their own party is as barbarous as if they were strangers to them.** And this is what I had to say concerning the philosophic sects among the Jews.

The Encyclopedia Judaica offered the following information on the Sadducees...

In the rabbinic period the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is considered one of the central doctrines of Judaism. The tenth chapter of Mishnah Sanhedrin begins, "All of Israel has a portion in the world to come, as it is said (Isa. 60:21) 'And Thy people are all righteous, at the End they shall inherit the land...' and the following have no portion in the world to come: one who says, 'There is no resurrection of the dead...'" George Foot Moore in Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era (2 (1950), 323) asserts "It must be further observed that, except on the single article of the revivification of the dead, there was no dogma and no canon of orthodoxy in this whole field [eschatology]." This dogma was one of the important points of dispute between the Sadducees and Pharisees (see Jos., Wars, 2:163; Ant., 18:16; ARN15, 14). The rabbis included belief in the resurrection in the canonical liturgy – especially in the second of the 18 benedictions of the Amidah.^c

^b Stein, R. H. (2008), Baker Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament: Mark, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, p. 552

^c Encyclopedia Judaica, Second Edition, Keter Publishing House Ltd Volume 5 pg. 654

Here I will rehearse the origins of the Tz'dukim, as it will serve to demonstrate a point I wish to make shortly.

MISSING THE POINT

Having read a good portion of the Christian comments on the present pericope, I have one note, and somebody is missing the point. Actually, I believe that this is the message of the pericope. I am not referring to the Christian commentators, albeit they cannot see the forest for the trees. I am referring to the Tz'dukim.

Origins

This point is important to the discussion on the Sadducees (Tz'dukim) because they are believed to have originated out of a misunderstanding concerning the resurrection.

According to a talmudic tradition (ARN⁵), the name derives from Zadok, a disciple of Antigonus of Sokho who, misunderstanding his teacher's maxim, denied afterlife and resurrection and formed a sect in accordance with those views (see Boethusians). The most probable explanation of the name, however, is that it is derived from Zadok, the high priest in the days of David (II Sam. 8:17 and 15:24) and Solomon (cf. I Kings 1:34ff. and I Chron. 12:29). Ezekiel (40:46, 43:19 and 44:10–15) selected this family as worthy of being entrusted with the control of the Temple. Descendants of this family constituted the Temple hierarchy down to the second century B.C.E., though not all priests were Sadducees. Hence the name "Sadducees" may best be taken to mean anyone who was a sympathizer with the Zadokites, the priestly descendants of Zadok. In the talmudic literature, the designations Boethusians and Sadducees are used interchangeably to designate the same party or sect. Some scholars believe, however, that the Boethusians were a branch of the Sadducees, deriving their name from their leader Boethus. (See L. Ginzberg, in: JE, 3 (1902), 284–5, and Schuerer, Gesch, 2 (19074), 478–9.)^d

Antigonus of Sokho received the tradition from Simon the Just who was the last of the Men of the Great Assembly.

Abot 1:3 Antigonus of Sokho received [the Torah] from Simeon the Righteous. He would say, "Do not be like servants who serve the master on condition of receiving a reward, "but [be] like servants who serve the master not on condition of receiving a reward. "And let the fear of Heaven be upon you."

As can be seen, the statement of Antigonus does not undermine the idea of the resurrection. His point was only that we are not to serve the master on condition of receiving a reward.

Why did the Tz'dukim miss the point?

The origin of the Tz'dukim developed out of misunderstanding of the scriptures. Because the Tz'dukim developed out of a misunderstanding of the Scriptures and failure to understand Biblical Hermeneutics the sect lived a life devoted to the here and now. The epicurean mentality naturally ensued. Yeshua, in Hebraic fashion, states that they have been "led astray" because of this ignorance.^e Herein the responsibility of the Talmid is inferred. The supposed elaborate fabrication of the Tz'dukim's use of the Laverite marriage only served to demonstrate their ignorance rather than their mastery of Scripture. Not only had they been led astray they themselves had wandered astray. If the previous group which tried to entrap Yeshua with

^d Encyclopedia Judaica, Second Edition, Keter Publishing House Ltd Volume 5 pg. 654

^e Cf. Mark 12:24, 27

political interrogations, this group of “some Tz’dukim” must have been the talmidim of the so-called Soferim of the Tz’dukim. They wanted to impress their masters by demonstrating that they were able to thwart Yeshua’s theology.

TZ’DUKIM LOGIC, BALAK’S AND BAALAM’S FAILED LOGIC

This pericope of Mordechai is about failed logic and ineffectual Hermeneutic. Before there can be a progressive hermeneutic there must be a progressive logic. Nathan Cardozo begins his teaching on hermeneutics with the principle of “Severah” (logical deduction).^f In his preface to “Handbook of Rabbinic Theology” Jacob Neusner tells us how valuable the Oral Torah really is.

James Joyce is reputed to have said that if Dublin were destroyed, it could be reconstructed, brick by brick, from the pages of Ulysses. Along these same lines, I allege, if the Hebrew Scriptures of ancient Israel, the Written Torah, were lost, the main lines of the narrative of Israel's life with God and the consequent social vision could be reconstructed out of the details of the Halakhah, norms of conduct, and of the Aggadah, norms of conviction, that are set forth in the Oral Torah, that is, the canon of Rabbinic writings of late antiquity.^g

I find this statement to be very insightful. If the Written Torah were lost, the Oral Torah could reconstruct it. The system proposed by Jacob Neusner is use of the Theology of Rabbinic Grammar, The Theology of the Oral Torah: Revealing the Justice of G-d and finally Halakha. The tools serve to elucidate the Written Torah, which the Tz’dukim could not master. Their lack of mastery of the Oral Torah engendered their ignorance of the Written Torah. In this pericope, Yeshua demonstrates a concise measure of exegetical interpretation applied by P’rushim as a means of reconstruction the intent of G-d in the Torah.

Lawrence Schiffman intimates that the Tz’dukim also rejected the writings of the Prophets.^h He further advocates that they also held a form of Biblical exegesis by which they derived laws which varied from the interpretation of the P’rushim.ⁱ If this were true then the Soferim of the Tz’dukim would have held diametric views to any of the P’rushim group. Yeshua demonstrates one such problematic issue in this pericope. For an example, what is hard to comprehend is how the Tz’dukim explained the angelic visitations of the Tanakh.^j This demonstrates a flawed exegetical practice.

Lawrence Schiffman also submits that not all Tz’dukim followed the practices as expounded in the Nazarean Codicil. In addition, that we should not judge all the Tz’dukim from the examples of the Nazarean Codicil. He suggests that there were those who were faithful to the Torah and the ancestral way of life. It may have been from this group that the Dead Sea Sect developed because of being unable to tolerate the

^f Cardozo, Nathan T. Lopes, The Witten and Oral Torah, Jason Aronson Inc. 1997 p. 123

^g Neusner, Jacob, Handbook of Rabbinic Theology, Brill Academic Publishers, Inc. 2002 Preface

^h Schiffman, Lawrence H. From Text to Tradition, A History of Second Temple & Rabbinic Judaism, Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1991 p.108

ⁱ Ibid p. 110

^j The presence and activity of Angelic beings is popular in the book of Beresheet. How the Tz’dukim missed this literal truth, is a further example of their flawed exegesis.

replacement of the Zadokite high priest with a Hasmonean.^k This would account for our translation “some of the “Tz’dukim.”^l

Balak was more astute than the Tz'dukim. He was aware of the supernatural powers of G-d. Because he was aware of these powers, he wished to hire Balaam to curse the Bne Yisrael. While His Eminence has aptly pointed out Balaam’s ignorance or I wish to further one more connection. Balaam accepted Balak’s biddings for two basic reasons. The first was what he believed to be his own fame as purported by Rashi^m and the second was his desire for wealth thereby emulating the epicurean mentality of the Tz’dukim. The Tz’dukim succumbed to Roman pressures in the purchase of their office. The Tz’dukim tended to be Hellenizers.ⁿ They served to typify the Gentile prophets in disparity to the Prophets of Yisrael. Here the difference is not the clouded “*specularia*” which affected the Jewish Prophets subsequent to Moshe. A. Cohen elaborates the difference between Yisrael and the Gentile prophets as he cites rabbinic sources.

A reason why so few prophets arose among the heathen peoples and why they ceased is also suggested. 'See the difference between the prophets of Israel and the prophets of the Gentiles. The Israelite prophets warned their hearers against transgressions; as it is said, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman" (Ezek. iii. 17); but the prophet who arose from the peoples (i.e. Balaam) initiated licentiousness to destroy his fellow-men from the world. Not only that, but the prophets of Israel were moved with com passion for their own people and also for Gentiles; as Jeremiah said, "My heart doth sound for Moab like pipes" (xlviii. 36), and Ezekiel was told, "Son of man, take up a lamentation for Tyre" (xxvii. 2). This cruel one, on the other hand, aimed at uprooting an entire nation (viz. Israel) without cause. For that reason the section about Balaam is included in the Scriptures, to inform us why the Holy One, blessed be He, removed the Holy Spirit from the heathen peoples, since this one arose from among them and He saw what he did' (Num. R. xx. 1).^o

A. Cohen further intimates.

What is the difference between the prophets of Israel and the prophets of the Gentiles? Parable of a king and a friend who were together in a room and a curtain hung between them. When the king wished to converse with his friend he rolled it up. (In this way He spoke with the prophets of Israel); but when He spoke with the prophets of the Gentiles, He did not roll up the curtain, but addressed them from behind it. Parable of a king who had a wife and a concubine. The former he visits openly, the latter in secret. Similarly the Holy One, blessed be He, communicated with gentile prophets only in half-speech; but with the prophets of Israel He communicated in full speech, in language of love, in language of holiness, in the language wherewith the ministering angels praise Him' (Gen. R. LII. 5).

Rav Samson Raphael Hirsch notes that Balaam could not have actually appealed to G-d in his situation. Had Balaam really appealed to G-d the decision on this matter would have been totally out of place.^p

^k Schiffman, Lawrence H. From Text to Tradition, A History of Second Temple & Rabbinic Judaism, Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1991p.110

^l Cf. Mark 12:18

^m Cf. B’Midbar 22:10, The Torah: With Rashi’s Commentary translated, annotated, and elucidated, The Artscroll Series, Mesorah Publications, Ltd, 2000 p.275

ⁿ Schiffman, Lawrence H. From Text to Tradition, A History of Second Temple & Rabbinic Judaism, Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1991p.108

^o Cohen, A. Everyman’s Talmud, Schocken Books 1949 pp. 122-123

^p Cf. B’Midbar 22:9, Hirsch, Rav Samson Raphael, The Hirsch Chumash, Sefer B’Midbar, Feldheim Publishers –Judaica Press, 2008 p. 482

NOT KNOWING I HESITATE TO SAY

I work with a man named Tom Brady. (not the quarterback) When occasionally confronted with perplexing situations or some impasse, I usually ask Tom “what now?” Tom’s typical response is, “not knowing, I hesitate to say.” Yeshua tells the Tz’dukim that they do not “know” the Scriptures.

The Greek text makes an interesting deviation from what I would have expected. The use of *μη εἰδότες* *mē eidotes* is unexpected. I would have expected the text to use the more popular *γινώσκω* *ginosko*. *Ginosko* would have paralleled the Hebrew “da’at.” Here the use of *mē eidotes* has profound implications. This type of knowing is associated with the ability to “see,” which is related to the Hebrew word *raah*.^q Rabbinic Hermeneutics mimics this perception. When a Scholar or Talmid threshes out the text, he is able to “see” what the text says. Our foundational text of B’Midbar 22:2- 23:9 bear a similar thought. Balaam was unable to “see” the Divine messenger of G-d and “know” the true plan of G-d. It took the donkey to stop his asinine stupidity. Balaam tells us that he “did not know” that the angelic presence stood in his path to detour his way.^r When we review the verbal tallies for this week, we will notice that the Hebrew word *raah*^s is linked to several verses of the Torah readings. Consequently, even the Greek is faithful to maintain context and connection with the Torah Seder and associated readings. It is also noteworthy to note that the opening verses of B’Midbar uses the idea of the “eye” (*ayin*)^t as a means of speech to indicate that the Bne Yisrael covered the surface of the land. Hakham Tsefet’s understanding of Hebrew/Greek parallels allowed him to use words that would work in both languages.^u

Knowing, the Tz’dukim and Karites

I recently listened to a lecture by Rabbi Dr. Dovid Gottlieb on the Oral Torah,^v which has always fascinated me. Rabbi Dr. Dovid Gottlieb is a Professor of Philosophy and lecturer at Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem. He has intimated that he had a personal encounter with some Karite Jews.^w I was amazed as was he that, like the Tz’dukim^x the Karites were very ill informed of the Written Torah. Concurring with Rabbi Dr. Dovid

^q Str. H7200

^r Cf. B’Midbar 22:34. Balaam’s use of the Hebrew *yada* parallels the Greek *eidotes* in LXX usage.

^s Str. H7200

^t Str. H5869

^u Here I will intimate that Hakham Tsefet was versed in Greek as well as Mishnaic Hebrew. Rabban Gamaliel was given permission to teach the students Greek due to the relationship with the Romans. Gamaliel’s son, Rabbi Simeon even wrote, “There were a 1000 pupils in my father’s house; 500 studied the Torah and 500 studied Greek wisdom.” And Simeon’s son, Rabbi Juda Hanassi went further saying, “Why speak Syriac in Palestine? Talk either Hebrew or Greek.” See Tosefta Sotah 15:8, Sotah 49b. Likewise it was permitted to have a Torah Scroll in Greek (Meg 8b) Therefore, I would conclude that Hillel must have known Greek and taught Greek to his students, as the Tosefta has stated. The students of Hillel must have had to interact with the Roman Government. Consequently, they had to know Greek. While scholars will suggest that Mordechai (Mark) knew Greek and translated for Hakham Tsefet, I will contend, that Hakham Tsefet was well versed in Greek and Mishnaic Hebrew.

^v Rabbi Dr. Dovid Gottlieb has five lectures on the vitality of the Oral in relation to the Written Torah. I do not remember exactly which lecture he reported on his encounter with the Karites.

^w Karites: Scholars have had different opinions as to the exact vocalization of the name: Whether it is qara’im (sing. qara’), or qera’im (sing. qera’i). The common sing. form qara’i, seems to be secondary. The accepted meaning of the name of the sect – Kara’im, Ba’alei ha-Mikra (“people of the Scriptures”). See Encyclopedia Judaica, Second Edition, Keter Publishing House Ltd Volume 1 p. 785

^x The Karaites themselves, however, trace their origin to the first split among the Jewish people, at the time of Jeroboam; the true law had subsequently been preserved by the descendants of Zadok, who had discovered a

Gottlieb, one would expect those ardents of Written Torah to be well versed in its nuances. While I am sure this is not the case with all Karites, it is amazing to note the similarities between the Tz'dukim and Karites. Hence, it would seem evident that ignorance of Written Torah permeates those who refuse its Oral Elucidation.

DYNAMIC SUPERNATURAL POWER AND LOGIC

Yeshua associates the ignorance of the Tz'dukim with the dynamic (living) power of G-d. I use "living" because the implication is that of following (living out) the oral law. I would seriously doubt that the Tz'dukim followed such halakha. If, they attempted to follow some sort of "Biblical Halakha" without the Oral Torah, they would have again missed the mark. I need not remind this grand body of the implications. The observance of the Tz'dukim could not be genuine obedience. Again, the resultant epicurean régime of the Tz'dukim would have taken precedence over authentic halakhic practice. A living G-d demands a living person. Torah and the Oral Torah demand a living corpus.

Rabbinic Scholars tell us that the architectural instrument that G-d used to construct the universe from is the Torah.^y Others report that the Torah equates to the DNA of the universe. His Eminence Rabbi Akiva Tatz intimates that the world is the mirror image of the Divine.

The Hebrew word for nature is "teva," the root of which means To drowns; if the world of natural cause and effect is not carefully and perceptively studied for its clues to depth, it drowns awareness of the spiritual. But the word "teva" is also the root of "matbe'a," meaning a coin which has an embossed image stamped on its surface: the world is a stamped-out image of a higher reality. If one studies the world with the knowledge that it accurately reflects its source, one can perceive the features of that source surely and consistently.

If the Torah is the architectural base of the universe, it demands dynamic interaction. Static relationship to the Torah renders us ineffectual. Hence, Yeshua demanded a fervent relationship to G-d and His Torah. The Tz'dukim lacked such a relationship. They were constantly in upheaval and trying to instigate violent reactions to their practice and theology. They were unable to fathom the philosophical aspects of the Torah.

It is not in a roundabout way, by analogy or inference, that we become aware of the ineffable; we do not think about it "in absentia". It is rather sensed as something immediately given by way of an insight that is unending and underivable, logically and psychologically prior to judgment, to the assimilation of subject matter to mental categories; a universal insight into an objective aspect of reality, of which all men are at all times capable; not the froth of ignorance but the climax of thought, indigenous to the climate that prevails at the summit of intellectual endeavor, where such works as the last quartets of Beethoven come into being. It is a cognitive insight, since the awareness it evokes is a definite addition to the mind.^z

portion of the truth. See Encyclopedia Judaica, Second Edition, Keter Publishing House Ltd Volume 1 p. 787 See also Schiffman, Lawrence H. From Text to Tradition, A History of Second Temple & Rabbinic Judaism, Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1991 p.112 where he suggest that the Sadducean sect must have remained long enough to foster the origins of the Karites. For more information on the Karites see "Karites" in the Encyclopedia Judaica, Second Edition, Keter Publishing House Ltd Volume 11 pp. 785-802

^y Cohen, A. Everyman's Talmud, Schocken Books 1949 p.29

^z Heschel, Abraham Joshua, Man is not alone , Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976 p.19

Abraham Heschel notes that all humanity has an awareness of G-d. This is a natural result of creation. This clarity will permeate those who seek a deeper awareness of life. While Yeshua quotes Scripture to the Tz'dukim with justifiable cause, G-d demands a dynamic reaction. Yeshua uses Scriptural text and Severah serve to invalidate the faulty lucidity of the Tz'dukim. In the same vein Jacob Neusner, finds the resurrection logical and dynamic.

Paradigmatic thinking in monotheism necessarily generates the conviction of resurrection. This is stated in so many words. The certainty of resurrection derives from a simple fact of restorationist theology: God has already shown that he can do it, so Genesis Rabbah LXXVII:1.1: "You find that everything that the Holy One, blessed be he, is destined to do in the age to come he has already gone ahead and done through the righteous in this world. The Holy One, blessed be he, will raise the dead, and Elijah raised the dead." The sages deem urgent the task of reading outward and forward from Scripture, and at the critical conclusion of their theological system the oral Torah focuses upon Scripture's evidence, the regularization of Scripture's facts.^{aa}

This interpretation demonstrates the dynamic vivacity of the Torah. The dynamic action of Eliyahu exhibits the practical approach to the Scriptures. Conversely, it is fascinating to note Neusner's approach to the problem of the resurrection. While Neusner quotes a Midrashic passage, I find the principal logic of Severah. As a result, logic demands vibrant application of the Torah and its halakah. Here I further that Yeshua's resurrection is demonstrative of the resurrection that each of us will face in the future.

Neusner further elaborates on the fact that the Rabbis found the end in the beginning. This principle is something that His Eminence Yoseph ben Haggai has taught us repetitively. Still, the crux of Neusner's thought is that the dynamic practice of the Torah restores humanity (those that actively and dynamically practice Torah) to Gan Eden.^{bb} I believe this logic fits well with the reasoning posited by Yeshua. Yeshua logically deduces that after the resurrection man will return to his Edenic state. Adam haRishon was an androgynous man. To recapture the words of Jacob Neusner and His Eminence Yoseph ben Haggai, "the sages find models of the end in the beginning."^{cc} Hence, Yeshua's message is enlightening; demonstrating the goal of dynamic Torah observance is to restore what was lost by Adam haRishon.

His Honor Rosh Paqid Hillel ben David has taught me that the final line of the prayer "Asher Yasar," "who heals all flesh" looks to a time when we will be healed and become like the Angelic messengers.

Sanhedrin 22a R. Simeon b. Laqish contrasts [these two verses] "It is written, 'I will gather them ... with the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travails with child together' (Jer. 31:8), and it is written, 'Then shall the lame man leap as a hart and the tongue of the dumb sing, for in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert' (Is. 35:6). How so [will the dead both retain their defects and also be healed]? "They will rise [from the grave] bearing their defects and then be healed."

The healing will undoubtedly reach farther than just healing the defects that we have experienced in life. The healing will restore humanity to the original state of humanity.

^{aa} Neusner, Jacob, Recovering Judaism, The Universal Dimension of Judaism, Fortress Press, 2001 p. 99

^{bb} Ibid p. 109

^{cc} Ibid

TORAH AS LIFE AND DEVOTION

The Rabbis have taught the Torah study is equal to prayer.^{dd} Devotional and application of Torah is different from the western way of reading and interacting with the Torah. Hakham Shaul described the Torah as a living book.^{ee} Torah is not a book read from a Western perspective. The Torah is a book this learned for the sake of living what is recorded therein. The Rabbis further stated that study of the Torah without practice was absurd.^{ff} While there were those, who were concerned with “faith vs. works” the true talmid is concerned about “Learning and doing.” When the Torah is studied and applied, it purifies the soul. Consequently, Jacob Neusner and Yeshua both derive the restoration to Eden and the androgynous man.

CONCLUSION

This week’s connections with the Torah Seder and related materials are subtle yet profound. Yeshua’s wisdom has permeated the past few weeks’ debates. When I stop to think of just how prophetic all of this is, it amazes me. It was just a week or so when I faced a similar circumstance, albeit Yeshua’s wisdom daunts mine. I was asked to defend the Jewish faith and stand as a representative for our faith. When I stop to realize that His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yoseph ben Haggai is always telling us how prophetic the Torah Seder really is I feel like I have walked the path of the Torah Seder for the last couple of weeks. Herein I believe we can strike a chord with the true resonance of this week’s readings and Hakham Tsefet. Yeshua tells us that our interaction with G-d must be dynamic. In other words, we must treat the Torah as if it were alive.

The Torah is founded on 613 mitzvot. These mitzvot are the connections between G-d and man. I might add that if we are not dynamically interactive with G-d through the mechanism of the mitzvot we are not connected at all. Or, I might say that with whatever measure we are connected by observance of those mitzvot is the measure of relationship we bear with G-d. That a mitzvah is the very process of forging that bond is contained within the very word *mitzvah* "commandment," closely related to the word *tzavta*, meaning "a connection" or "a binding." Hence, performance of mitzvot creates a connection between G-d, who commands, and man, who is commanded.

Man is the enigmatic fusion of bi-fold fragments. When G-d said “let us make man” He was speaking to the earth who He had partnered with in the creation of man.^{gg} Man has a physical body, within which thrives a neshamah of Divine origin. The physical and sublime meet in the dynamic of a mitzvah. A mitzvah is the dynamic activity and power that depicts the transcendent world of G-d in the somatic world. How does the dynamic of a mitzvah transform physicality into the metaphysical? The mitzvah relates the dynamic power of the neshamah’s ability to connect this world with the next. Enactment of the dynamics of mitzvah brings about the restoration of all that was lost in Adam ha’rishon. The Mesorah of Messiah and the Sages is an ingenious plan of restoration. This “restoration” also sub-supports our Torah Seder and readings.^{hh} Understanding the Mesorah demands dynamic interaction with a living entity. To cite Hakham Shaul once again, the Torah is a living entity.ⁱⁱ As a living entity, it demands living interaction.

^{dd} Yitzhak Bauxbaum, Jewish Spiritual Practices, Jason Aronson Inc., 1994 p. 309

^{ee} Cf. Heb. 4:12

^{ff} Montefiore, C.G, Lowe, H. A., Rabbinic Anthology, Schocken Paperbacks on Judaica 1974, p.174

^{gg} Cf. Beresheet 1:26 Ramban, The Torah; with Ramban’s Commentary Translated, Annotated, and Elucidated, Sefer Devarim, Artscroll Series, Mesorah Publications Ltd, June 2008 Beresheet, pp. 72-74

^{hh} Cf. B’Midbar 23:9; Tehillim 104:30; Micah 7:19; Nahum 2:3; Mordechai 12:25

ⁱⁱ Cf. Hebrews 4:12

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

CONNECTIONS TO TORAH READINGS

Torah Seder

This week's Hakham Tsefet's pericope is filled with verbal and thematic connections to the Torah Seder.

1. Repetitive use of the Hebrew word *raah* parallels the Greek *eidotes*
2. Balak sends messengers Heb. *malakim* which is paralleled by the Greek *aggelos*
3. The Hebrew word *shalach* also parallels *aggelos*
4. The Hebrew text speaks of Balaam's vision seeing "from the beginning." Yeshua refers to the restoration of humanity to the beginning when Adam ha'rishon was androgynous.

Tehillim

Hakham Tsefet connects with the Psalm through the idea of those who are sent one i.e. Angels and the spirit sent forth. Tehillim 104:30 / Mordechai 12:25

Rashi also points out that this bears relation to the resurrection, which is a sub theme of our pericope.

Ashlamatah

Micah – The nations will see (*raah*) and be ashamed. (Micah 7:16) This parallels the Greek word *eidotes* used by Yeshua in telling the Tz'dukim that they do not know (see). Mordechai 12:24 The connection to Micah 7:19 gives us the antithesis of Tz'dukim belief who believes that G-d had created the universe and then resigned from any interaction with it.

Nahum uses two Hebrew words equated with power Chazak and Coach. These words serve as parallels to the Greek word *dunamis*, which serves to illustrate G-d dynamic power.

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