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# TSEFET'S PERICOPE #77

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קַח אֶת-אַהֲרֹן  
“Qach Et-Aharon”  
“Take Aaron”

Vayikra (Leviticus) 8:1 – 10:7

Commentary By Dr. Eliyahu Ben Avraham (Walter Oakley)

My Translation

Greek

## 1 Peter 3:8-17

<sup>8</sup> But the goal of all this is to be of one mind being sympathetic, having brotherly love, kindhearted and humble minded; <sup>9</sup> Not returning evil for evil or insult for insult on the but contrarily blessing because this is the thing were called in order that you might inherit praise. <sup>10</sup> For **Who is the man that desires life, and loves days, that he may see good therein? Keep your tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.** <sup>11</sup> **Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.** <sup>12</sup> **The eyes of the L-RD are toward the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry. The face of the L-RD is against them that do evil,**<sup>a</sup> <sup>13</sup> And who is this who oppresses you with evil if your are zealous to be good. <sup>14</sup> But even if your suffer because of righteousness, *you are* blessed. **Do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.** <sup>b</sup> <sup>15</sup> But sanctify Messiah as Master in your heart *being* perpetually ready for verbal defense to all those who ask *of the* hope, but let your speech with gentleness and fear, <sup>16</sup> having a good conscience so when they speak evil (seeking to defame and condemn or incriminate) and disgrace you those who insult your righteous conduct in Messiah will be ashamed. <sup>17</sup> For you are superior when you suffer [unjustly] for doing right, if that should be G-d's will, than to suffer [justly] for doing wrong.

<sup>8</sup> Τὸ δὲ τέλος πάντες ὁμόφρονες συμπαθεῖς φιλάδελφοι εὐσπλαγχοὶ ταπεινόφρονες  
<sup>9</sup> μὴ ἀποδιδόντες κακὸν ἀντὶ κακοῦ ἢ λοιδορίαν ἀντὶ λοιδορίας τοῦναντίον δὲ εὐλογοῦντες ὅτι εἰς τοῦτο ἐκλήθητε ἵνα εὐλογίαν κληρονομήσητε  
<sup>10</sup> ὁ γὰρ θέλων ζωὴν ἀγαπᾶν καὶ ἰδεῖν ἡμέρας ἀγαθὰς παυσάτω τὴν γλῶσσαν ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ χεῖλη τοῦ μὴ λαλῆσαι δόλον  
<sup>11</sup> ἐκκλινάτω δὲ ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ ποιησάτω ἀγαθὸν ζητησάτω εἰρήνην καὶ διωξάτω αὐτήν·  
<sup>12</sup> ὅτι ὀφθαλμοὶ κυρίου ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ὦτα αὐτοῦ εἰς δέησιν αὐτῶν πρόσωπον δὲ κυρίου ἐπὶ ποιῶντας κακά  
<sup>13</sup> Καὶ τίς ὁ κακώσων ὑμᾶς ἐὰν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ζηλωταὶ γένησθε  
<sup>14</sup> ἀλλ εἰ καὶ πάσχοιτε διὰ δικαιοσύνην μακάριοι τὸν δὲ φόβον αὐτῶν μὴ φοβηθῆτε μηδὲ ταραχθῆτε  
<sup>15</sup> κύριον δὲ τὸν Χριστὸν ἀγιάσατε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν ἔτοιμοι ἀεὶ πρὸς ἀπολογίαν παντὶ τῷ αἰτοῦντι ὑμᾶς λόγον περὶ τῆς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐλπίδος ἀλλὰ μετὰ πραῦτητος καὶ φόβου  
<sup>16</sup> συνείδησιν ἔχοντες ἀγαθὴν ἵνα ἐν ᾧ καταλαλεῖσθε καταισχυρθῶσιν οἱ ἐπιηραάζοντες ὑμῶν τὴν ἀγαθὴν ἐν Χριστῷ ἀναστροφῇ  
<sup>17</sup> κρείττον γὰρ ἀγαθοποιῶντας εἰ θέλοι τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ πάσχειν ἢ κακοποιῶντας

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<sup>a</sup> Psalms 34:12-16

<sup>b</sup> Isaiah 8:12

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## DELITZSCH HEBREW TRANSLATION

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וְסוּף דָּבַר הָיָה כְּוִלְכֶם לֵב אֶחָד בְּעֵלֵי חֻמְלָה אֲהַבִּי הָאֲחִים רַחֲמָנִים וְשִׁפְלֵי רוּחַ: <sup>9</sup> אֲלֵת־שְׁלֹמוֹ רָעָה תַחַת רָעָה וְלֹא חֲרָפָה תַחַת חֲרָפָה כִּי אִם־תִּבְרְכוּ מִפְּנֵי שִׂידְעִים אַתֶּם שְׁלֹזֶאת נִקְרָאתֶם שְׁתִּירְשׁוּ אֶת־הַבְּרָכָה: <sup>10</sup> כִּי הָאִישׁ הַחֲפִז חַיִּים אֲהַב יָמִים לְרֵאוֹת טוֹב יִצַר לְשׁוֹנוֹ מָרַע וְשִׁפְתָיו מִדְּבַר מִרְמָה יִסּוֹר מָרַע וְיַעֲשֶׂה־טוֹב יִבְקֹשׁ שְׁלוֹם וְיִרְדֹּפֶהוּ: <sup>11</sup> כִּי־עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֶל־צַדִּיקִים וְאֶזְנוֹ אֶל־שׁוֹעֲתָם: <sup>12</sup> וּפְנֵי יְהוָה בְּעֵשִׂי רַע: <sup>13</sup> וּמִי יֵרַע לָכֶם אִם־תִּקְנְאוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת הַטּוֹב: <sup>14</sup> וְאַשְׂרֵיכֶם גַּם אִם־תִּתְעוּנוּ לְמַעַן הַצְּדָקָה רַק־מִוֶּרְאֵם לֹא־תִירְאוּ וְלֹא תִעֲרִיצוּ: <sup>15</sup> אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֲתוֹ תִקְדִּישׁוּ בְּלִבְבְּכֶם וְהָיוּ נִכְנִים תְּמִיד לְהִשִּׁיב דְּבַר בְּעֵנְיָה וּבִירְאָה לְכָל־מִבְקֵשׁ מֵאַתְכֶם חֲשׁבוֹן הַתּוֹחֵלֶת אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּכֶם: <sup>16</sup> רוּחַ נְכוֹן יְהִי לָכֶם לְמַעַן יִבְשׁוּ הַמִּנְאָצִים דְּרַכְכֶם הַטּוֹבָה בְּמִשִּׁיחַ לְהַלְשִׁין אֶתְכֶם כַּפְעֲלֵי אֶן: <sup>17</sup> כִּי טוֹב לָכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּתְעוּנוּ בְּרָצוֹן אֱלֹהִים בְּעֲשׂוֹתְכֶם הַטּוֹב מִשְׁתְּעוּנוּ בְּעֲשׂוֹתְכֶם רַע:

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## BUT THE GOAL OF ALL OF THIS

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**But the goal of all this...** Hakham Tsefet opens with a curious word. While I say “curious”, the word τέλος (telos) is a common Classic Greek word. However, I have translated the word as a “goal” for a very specific reason. This word is very often translated as “end” or “last.” Therefore, I believe that one should use GREAT caution when translating this word. The word actually means “achievement.”<sup>c</sup> Hakham Shaul used the word τέλος (telos) in his letter to the Romans.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>4</sup> For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. (Rom 10:4 NKJ)

<sup>4</sup> For Messiah is the aim of the law, for righteousness, unto every one that believeth in him. (Rom 10:4 MRD)

I believe that James Murdock Translation of the Peshitta (MRD – above) hits the nail on the head. Messiah is NOT the END of the Torah and the halachic system that it established. The Torah will stand FOREVER! Messiah is the Model of Torah Observance! Therefore, we now have a living example of a Halachic man in the Master.

One of the things we must keep in mind when reading Hakham Tsefet is what halachic principle is he trying to convey? He in some special way can see the relationship between the Torah Seder, Season and Messiah. Through this insight, he is able to draw halachic application from all those materials.

This pericope is replete with quotation from the Tanach. Therefore, I believe Hakham Tsefet has an understanding that Messiah was the living model of the Torah. His ministry of three and a half years was the perfect illustration of a halachic man walking out the Torah as if an actor on a stage. He is the living personification of the Torah and its mitzvot. Where there was no man, the Master demonstrated real manhood. It is amazing to think that the Master must have heard the words of His Master Hillel found in Avot.

וּבְמָקוֹם שֶׁאֵין אָנָשִׁים, הַשְׁתַּדֵּל לְהִיּוֹת אִישׁ:

In a place where there is no men, endeavor to be a man (*ish*).<sup>e</sup>

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<sup>c</sup> TDNT 8:49

<sup>d</sup> I concur with His Eminence, Rabbi Dr. Yoseph Ben Haggai that the book of Romans, along with Luke –Acts may very well be the Gemara to Hakham Tsefet’s School of thought.

<sup>e</sup> Avot 2:5

This simple maxim speaks volumes. The Master was a man (Ish). Now, we are being told something similar in the words of Hakham Tsefet.

We have an old cliché in the south that says “when the going gets tough the tough get going.” Another cliché says “man up.” Both of these expressions tell us that life is not given to the faint hearted. The life of following the Master is not for the novice. It takes someone of GREAT conviction and tenacity to remain committed to the cause and projects at hand. The faint-hearted and self-motivated will soon fade as the seed planted on “shallow ground.”<sup>f</sup> Being well rooted means digging in deep when troubles come.

Hakham Tsefet is telling his audience that we must never resort to the means and methods of the enemy. We MUST follow the pattern and example of the Master.

Often times we lose sight of the goal. Here Hakham Tsefet reminds us there is a goal. From the Psalm Hakham Tsefet asks the question “**Who is the man**”?<sup>g</sup>

τέλος (telos) is also associated with “power.” Herein is the idea that we have the ability to achieve the goal. This “power” is infused in us when we follow examples. I find this very interesting since His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yoseph Ben Haggai has translated Nachamu to mean “be strengthened.” Hakham Tsefet is strengthening, comforting and exhorting his audience to accept the challenge and be real men and women who follow the Master. The Master demonstrated the “perfection” τέλος (telos) of the Torah and related mitzvot as a means of appropriate conduct. From the Torah and his teachers he was able to derive the walk of a man.

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## REVENGE AND COMFORT

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What is of further interest is that Hakham Tsefet tells his audience that there is no place for retaliation and revenge.

**hitp.:** pf. וְהִנְחַמְתִּי; < וְהִתְנַחֵם; impf. יִתְנַחֵם, וְאֶתְנַחֵם; inf. הִתְנַחֵם; pt. מִתְנַחֵם: — 1. w. 1<sup>c</sup> **scheme revenge** against Gn 27<sub>42</sub>, get revenge Ez 5<sub>13b</sub>; — 2. (**allow oneself to be sorry** Nu 23<sub>19</sub> Dt 32<sub>36</sub> Ps 135<sub>14</sub>; — 3. **be comforted, consoled** at end of time of mourning, console oneself. Ps 119<sub>52</sub>. † (pg 234)<sup>n</sup>

### Bereshit 27:42

וַיִּגַד לְרַבֵּקָה אֶת־דְּבָרֵי עֵשָׂו בְּנֵהּ הַגָּדֹל וַתִּשְׁלַח וַתִּקְרָא לְיַעֲקֹב בְּנֵהּ הַקָּטָן וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה עֵשָׂו  
אָחִיךָ מִתְנַחֵם לְךָ לְהַרְגֶּךָ:

Bereshit (Genesis) 27:42 And the words of Esau her older son were told to Rebekah. Therefore, she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, "Surely your brother Esau **comforts**

(מִתְנַחֵם) himself concerning you by intending to kill you.

Hakham Tsefet is telling his audience to “be comforted,” do not to scheme and plan revenge as Esau did. Therefore, I believe that there is a thematic connection between the words of Hakham Tsefet and the weeks of “Comfort and consolation.”

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<sup>f</sup> Matthew 13:20

<sup>g</sup> Psalms 34:12-16

<sup>h</sup> A concise Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament, based upon the lexical work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, by William Lee Holladay

Perhaps, and I do mean perhaps, Hakham Tsefet is thinking of this use of the word נָחַם (nāḥam) when he is giving this Sermon to his audience. The evidence seems to point to the thematic connection. The vocabulary is synonymous with the idea of נָחַם (nāḥam). While the above-cited verse from Bereshit may not have been in his mind, Hakham Tsefet certainly understood all the uses of נָחַם (nāḥam).

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COME, YE CHILDREN, HEARKEN UNTO ME; I WILL TEACH YOU THE FEAR OF THE L-RD.

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Our Teacher, Rabbi Dr. Yoseph Ben Haggai has taught us the sermonic system of ילמדנו "yelemmedanu." Here the Teacher, Hakham Tsefet seems to take the initiative in teaching his talmidim a valuable lesson. The passage cited (our headline to this section) is from Tehillim (Psalms) 34:11.

לְכוּ בְּנִים שְׁמְעוּ לִי יִרְאַת יְהוָה אֲלֶמְדְּכֶם :

δεῦτε τέκνα ἀκούσατέ μου φόβον κυρίου διδάξω ὑμᾶς

Come children (students –Talmidim), Listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the L-rd.

When the Psalmist is finished with his introduction he asks the question...

מִי הָאִישׁ who is a man?

The following instructions will be Hakham Tsefet's on the "Fear of HaShem. Hakham Tsefet, like the Psalmist equates spiritual life with the "fear of HaShem."

Who is the man the longs for life? The only example we are given here is one who can control his tongue. Who is the ish (man) who will be an ish? The man who desires life is a man who desires good. Therefore, he must keep (guard) his tongue from evil - נֹצֵר לְשׁוֹנֵךְ מִרַע

This tells us that the evil tongue has a profound effect on the spiritual world.

Hakham Tsefet begins a fascinating connection between his thoughts and Tehillim (Psalms) 34 with the word that connects the two texts κακός (*kakos*).

V9, 13 [Fri] κακός, ἢ, ὄν basically, denoting a lack of something *bad, not as it ought to be*, opposite καλός (*sound, good*) and ἀγαθός (*good*); (1) morally, of persons characterized by godlessness *evil, bad* (MT 24.48); substantively *evildoer* (RV 2.2); (2) as moral conduct, attitudes, plans of godless people *evil, base, wicked* (MK 7.21); (3) neuter as a substantive τὸ κακόν *evil* as being present in the world (RO 13.3); plural κακά *evil deeds* (RO 1.30); (4) of circumstances and conditions that come on a person *harmful, evil, injurious* (RV 16.2); substantively τὰ κακά *ruin, harm, misfortunes, evils* (LU 16.25); (5) as characterized by reprehensible lack of accuracy *wrong, incorrect* (JN 18.23)

κακός A--NM-S κακός

Verses 9 and 13 are Hakham Tsefet's verbal connection to the 34<sup>th</sup> Psalm.

<sup>15</sup> ἔκκλινον ἀπὸ κακοῦ καὶ ποιήσον ἀγαθόν ζήτησον εἰρήνην καὶ δίωξον αὐτήν

The Psalmist uses this word **κακός** three times. The Hebrew parallel to **κακός** is **עָוֹן**, which Delitzsch uses in his Hebrew translation above.

All of this would cause one to reflect on how Hakham Tsefet made these connections. His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Yoseph Ben Haggai has pointed out that these words are from the Shacharit. “My G-d guard my tongue from evil.” What is also fascinating is that the *Yehi Ratzon*<sup>i</sup> comes after this Psalm in the Morning Shacharit. I am certain that the *Yehi Ratzon* was a latter addition. However, what I find fascinating is that it comes in a place where Hakham Tsefet has derived his sermon idea. It is not known exactly when Judah ben Tema said these words. Certainly, the *Yehi Ratzon* was added after the destruction of the Temple. Scholars point out that the use of Psalms 34 follows the Biblical and Rabbinic pattern of liturgical human discourse.<sup>j</sup>

Was it the morning prayers that caused Hakham Tsefet to make these connections and say “Come children (students –Talmidim), Listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the L-rd?” Or, was there some other device that caused him to mouth these words in his lecture?

Again, I believe that all the above material only serves to demonstrate the true genius of Hakham Tsefet. His knowledge of Rabbinic material, the Tanach and the Master’s halacha prove to be daunting.

Recently I made a trip to Eretz Yisrael. While I was there, I visited many of the usual tourist sites. One place that is a very positive place to visit is Kefar Nachum (Capernaum). We are told that this place was the headquarters for much of the early Talmidim of the Master.<sup>k</sup> Suggestions from archeologists make the house found there the house of Hakham Tsefet’s mother-in-law. I am not able to confirm or deny these claims. However, what I did notice was the fact that this place was a thriving area where the so-called house of Hakham Tsefet’s mother-in-law looked more like an inn than a house. I have made this point because if this was the “headquarters” of Hakham Tsefet as some suggest it is very evident that he must have taught a great number of people about the Master, Torah and the Master’s halacha.

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### DEALING WITH LASHON HARA

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The present pericope teaches us how to deal with lashon hara (evil tongue or evil speech). However, the “lashon hara” seems to be deeper than just words of malice, hatred and prejudice. In the 16<sup>th</sup> verse of our present pericope, Hakham Tsefet uses the Greek word **καταλαλέω** (*katalaleō*). This word means more than just “lashon hara.” This word is associated with the idea of bringing criminating accusations. These accusations must have been something that suggested that the talmidim (Hakham Tsefet’s talmidim and audience) were not following appropriate halachic procedure. This damaging (evil speech) was the language of incriminations from a halachic perspective. We have already seen these kinds of accusations in Mordechai (Mark) chapter 7. In that passage Yeshua’ talmidim were accused of not following appropriate halachic practices. The lesson we learned from that chapter is still relevant here. Beit Shammai did not recognize the halachic procedure and practices of Beit Hillel.<sup>l</sup> We are told

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<sup>i</sup> See Avot 5:23 (some place this verse in 5:20)

<sup>j</sup> My People’s Prayer Book, Vol. 2: Traditional Prayers, Modern Commentaries--The Amidah, Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman pg 186

<sup>k</sup> See Matthew 9:1.

See also The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land, The Israel Exploration Society & Carta, Jerusalem, Simon and Shuster, Volume 1 pgs 291-296

<sup>l</sup> For a good example see Mishnah Berachot chapter 8 and related materials

See also my paper on the “Mishnah and Yeshua” and Hillel’s Mishnah.

<http://torahfocus.com/2010/02/15/mishnah-and-yeshua/>

that during the first Century that Beit Shammai may very well have dominated halachic life.<sup>m</sup> This evidence is derived from Mishnaic and Talmudic sources. This would have caused a sizable rift between the teachings of Hillel and Shammai. However, this “rift” would have been more readily noticeable between the Talmidim of the Master and Beit Shammai. The initial differences between the two schools (Hillel and Shammai) seemed to be the eighteen edicts of Shammai.<sup>n</sup> It appears evident from Hakham Tsefet’s response to the servants of Cornelius that the halachic view of Shammai dominated Jewish life.<sup>o</sup> His Eminence Rabbi Harvey Falk further elaborates on the fact that during a discussion at Hananiah’s home, members from Beit Shammai murdered students from Beit Hillel.<sup>p</sup> His Eminence Rabbi Harvey Falk further suggests that other groups were equally volatile during this period. He actually cites the possibility that the group who murdered the students of Hillel were the Zealot group of Sicarii.<sup>q</sup> Regardless of the group, Hakham Tsefet teaches his Talmidim that these methods are not acceptable. They are not consistent with the conduct and character of the Master.

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### CONSPIRACY OR NOT?

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Hakham Tsefet calls on the words of Navi (Prophet) Yeshayahu. **Do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.**<sup>r</sup>

Isa 8:11- 12 For the LORD spoke thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying: <sup>12</sup> "Do not say, 'A conspiracy,' Concerning all that this people call a conspiracy, **Nor be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.** <sup>(NKJ)</sup>

I have quoted the entire passage of Yeshayahu chapter 8 verses 11-12 for the sake of context.

These passages are wrapped in the political dilemma of Yeshayahu’s time. There may be some relation to the political dilemma of the Hakham Tsefet’s audience. However, I find an overwhelming possibility of connection between Hakham Tsefet and the relative weeks of Nachamu. The hand of HaShem comes on Yeshayahu in a strong and mighty way bringing consolation. The message given to the Prophet is complex. This is because the political situation is complex. However, the message is actually quite simple. People usually base their fears on circumstance. Yeshayahu receives a prophetic word<sup>s</sup> of consolation. This Prophetic word is a word of consolation and strengthening.

Hakham Tsefet builds upon this consolation and strengthening. **“Do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.”**

Your duty is to **“sanctify Messiah as Master in your heart.”** The vocabulary is interesting. Απολογία (ἀπολογία - apologia) is a verbal defense given before a judge. The Talmid of the Master must be ready in a moment’s notice to give an answer for the reason of his faith. However, the answer is not a key point. The attitude of response is the real virtue being called for. **“Let your speech with gentleness and fear”** not with words of bitterness and spite. And, not with words of contention or malice. Let your conversation be similar to that of the Master. Then they will understand that we are his followers and that he has had a real affect on our lives.

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<http://torahfocus.com/2010/02/12/hillels-mishnah/>

<sup>m</sup> Harvey Falk, Jesus the Pharisee, A New Look at the Jewishness of Jesus, Wipf and Stock Publishers, pg 93ff

<sup>n</sup> See Shabbat 13b-17a

<sup>o</sup> See Acts 10:28 and related reading

<sup>p</sup> Harvey Falk, Jesus the Pharisee, A New Look at the Jewishness of Jesus, Wipf and Stock Publishers, pg 57ff

<sup>q</sup> Ibid pg. 57

<sup>r</sup> Isaiah 8:12

<sup>s</sup> The language of the text of Yeshayahu demonstrates that this “prophetic word” is delivered in an unusual method.

Hakham Tsefet's words are truly strengthening and comforting words. I say this because there are times when it is easier to go with the crowd or majority. I once gave a lecture entitled "Against the Tide." My key point was and is this. Any fish can swim downstream. We are not called to a downstream school. Pun intended.

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## CONCLUSION

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I must say that I see an additional connection. Firstly, I thoroughly enjoyed the Torah Seder this week. I was fascinated by the entire story from the dedication of Aaron and his clothing to the death of Nadab and Abihu. However, I found one possible connection that seemed to be hidden in the fabric of the narrative.

In the eighth chapter, Aaron is anointed with the blood of the *Ram of ordination*. He has some of the blood applied to his right ear, right thumb and the big toe of his right side. A similar procedure was followed in the ceremonial purification of the Leper. I believe that this has numerous avenues of investigation, which present themselves. However, I will only make mention of one thought here. Hakham Tsefet seems to be battling "*lashon hara*" as mentioned above. Rabbinic sources are very clear that "leprosy" is the result of *lashon hara*. Perhaps Hakham Tsefet made a similar connection when he thought of the Anointing of the Cohanim.

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## SOME THOUGHTS ON CONNECTIONS BETWEEN HAKHAM TSEFET AND THIS WEEK'S READINGS

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### 1. Vayikra 8: 1-10:7

The opening of our Torah Seder calls for an assembly. Thematically I see the calling of Hakham Tsefet to one mindedness and brotherly love a connection with that section of the Torah Seder. These openings (In Vayikra 8: 1—5 and 1 Tsefet 3: 8) both suggest that the readings are to be read together.

My attention was also drawn to the fact that collective unity and responsibility are related in the last verses of Vayikra 10:6

Vayikra 10:6 And Moses said to Aaron, and to Eleazar and Ithamar, his sons, "Do not uncover your heads nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come upon all the people. **But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the L-RD has kindled.** From here, [we learn] that when [Torah] scholars are afflicted, all of Israel is obligated to mourn for them.

Here is the unity that Hakham Tsefet is alluding to in his opening passages

### 2. 1 Sam 2:28-36 +3:20

The wicked sons of Eli, like Nadab and Abihu are cut off, destroyed. Hakham Tsefet can be seen to understand that this section of Shemuel should be read with this week's Torah Seder. It seems that this is its own consolation to the audience of Hakham Tsefet. He reassures his audience that the oppressors and evil doers will be cut off like Nadab, Abihu, Hophni and Phinchas.

### 3. Isaiah 49:14-51:3

It seems plausible to understand that Hakham Tsefet was more that aware that it was the time of Nachamu. It was for this reason that he chose to incorporate Isaiah 8:12. This passage in the midst of Hakham Tsefet's writings is one of comfort, consolation and encouragement (strengthening). It appears that Hakham Tsefet uses an Isaiah for an Isaiah.

In other words, Hakham Tsefet picks out an obscure verse in Isaiah to drive the point of consolation home. What is more interesting is that the political scene during the time of Hakham Tsefet bore certain characteristics that must have reminded him of the political scenario from the obscure passage in Isaiah. Verse 2 of Chapter 50 is of particular interest to me. "Why when I came, was there no man?" This seems to be a play on the idea of "**Who is the man that desires life**" v10 of Hakham Tsefet's present pericope.

Isaiah 51:3 For the L-RD will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, And her desert like the garden of the L-RD; Joy and gladness will be found in it, Thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

This passage also seems to correspond to the cited passage of Hakham Tsefet. **Who is the man that desires life, and loves days, that he may see good therein?**

#### 4. Psalms 77:1-21

This Psalm progresses from mental anguish to consolation. Therefore, it is a perfect match to the Torah Seder and theme of consolation and strengthening. It seems to thematically match the Sermon of Hakham Tsefet this week. The people who Hakham Tsefet was lecturing to must have sounded like the Psalmist. Hakham Tsefet realizes their dilemma. He follows the protocol of the Psalmist for strengthening and consoling. He begins to talk of the good things of G-d.

1 Tsefet 3:14-17 But even if you suffer because of righteousness, *you are* blessed. **Do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.** <sup>t</sup> <sup>15</sup> But sanctify Messiah as Master in your heart *being* perpetually ready for verbal defense to all those who ask *of the* hope, but let your speech with gentleness and fear, <sup>16</sup> having a good conscience so when they speak evil (seeking to defame and condemn or incriminate) and disgrace you those who insult your righteous conduct in Messiah will be ashamed. <sup>17</sup> For you are superior when you suffer [unjustly] for doing right, if that should be G-d's will, than to suffer [justly] for doing wrong.

Look at the great things G-d has done in, for and through you. Be strengthened and comforted.

#### RELATIVE MITZVOT

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**N163** That a priest shall not enter the Sanctuary with unkempt hair, as it is written "let not the hair of your heads go loose" (Leviticus 10,6).

**N164** That a priest shall not enter the Sanctuary in torn clothing, as it is written "neither rend your clothes" (Leviticus 10,6).

**N165** That a priest shall not leave the Courtyard during the service, as it is written "and ye shall not go out from the door of the tent of meeting" (Leviticus 10,7).

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<sup>t</sup> Isaiah 8:12