



By Joseph F. Dumond

This week's Triennial Torah reading can be found at:

[https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon\\_2015/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf](https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf)

We are now in our 52nd week, since we began this first year of this 3rd Sabbatical cycle of the 119th Jubilee cycles since Adam and we began at Aviv 1 which was March 20, 2010 on the Gregorian calendar. Because we have an Adar Bet this year we will get to do four more studies before we get into the new year.

Ex 4	1 Kings 8	Ps 108	Luke 19
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## Exodus 4

I find amazing that as we approach the Passover season with an Adar Bet month, a 13th month, that we will be reading during this 3 ½ year study of torah the events of Exodus at the same time as Passover.

The three miracles that Yehovah had Moses perform would be a great witness to the Egyptians—and to the Israelites, who were by now quite influenced by Egyptian religion. The snake was one of the gods of Egypt. Leprosy was an incurable disease that would have any physician of the time believing in a “god” had there been a cure. Last, but not least, the Nile was also worshiped, and defiling its waters with blood would draw the attention of everyone!

When we come to Exodus 4:24, it is shocking to read that Yehovah sought to kill Moses! Why?

Notice the account in chapter 4 of the confrontation between Moses and his wife. Part of Yehovah's covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was the acknowledgment of that covenant through the act of circumcision. Whoever was not circumcised among the males of Yehovah's people would be “cut off,” or destroyed, from among them. When we review to whom the covenant promises were made, we can see that they did not extend through the lineage born to Abraham and Keturah. The Midianites were the descendants of Abraham and Keturah through Midian. And while Midian himself may have been circumcised, as Ishmael was, it is apparent that after the children of Keturah were sent away (Genesis 25:5), they did not continue the practice of circumcising their children. Rather, “the Midianites practiced circumcision on a groom right before his marriage instead of circumcising male infants.... Many of Israel's neighboring

peoples practiced circumcision, but none except Israel circumcised infants” (Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 24).

Now let’s put together verses 24 through 26. It is apparent that Yehovah was holding Moses responsible for circumcising his son, but Moses had delegated that to his wife, Zipporah, who was objecting to doing it. She finally did it, but with reluctance and resentment, calling Moses a “bloody man.” We might wonder why only one son was at issue when Moses had two sons (verse 20; 18:4). One suggestion is that, “most likely, Moses had kept one of his sons uncircumcised, despite what Yehovah had commanded” (same note). Perhaps Zipporah was so upset by the circumcision of one son that she demanded her next son not be circumcised. In any event, Moses was not following Yehovah’s instructions. And this involved the very sign of the covenant people—being violated by the one who was to be the national leader. Moses’ disobedience in light of these factors made it a capital offense. So we find this brief insert—the recording of an incident that, no doubt, had a great impact on Moses.

These two verse troubles me so I then found the following explanation of what is going on here.

**[http://jbq.jewishbible.org/assets/Uploads/332/332 Chatan1.pdf](http://jbq.jewishbible.org/assets/Uploads/332/332_Chatan1.pdf)**

HATAN DAMIM – THE BRIDEGROOM OF BLOOD

JEFFREY M. COHEN

Exodus 4:24-26 has been justifiably described as “arguably the single most bizarre and baffling passage in all of the Hebrew Bible.”

1 Moses has just been given the charge to journey to Egypt, there to commence the most audacious, awesome and dangerous mission of demanding that the great Pharaoh release his vast cadre of Israelite slaves.

According to the text, these were not the usual motley group of slaves, dragged back in bonds as the booty of a victorious battle. They had been resident in Egypt for generations, albeit ethnically alien, and consciously singled out and enslaved because they were deemed to constitute a direct threat to the security of the realm (Ex. 1:9-10). Without God’s assured promise of protection, providence and ultimate victory, such a mission was a recipe for disaster, spelling suicide for its instigator and bitter consequences for those it had intended to benefit.

The relationship between God and the leader chosen to undertake such a mission must have been exceptionally close, and the spiritual credentials of the latter so impeccable as to justify the trust placed in him by God. And yet, no sooner has he set out on the journey, disaster strikes:

And it came to pass on the way at the lodging-place, that the Lord met him and sought to kill him. The Zipporah took a flint and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet; and she said: ‘Surely a bridegroom of blood art thou to me.’ So He let him alone. Then she said: ‘A bridegroom of blood in regard of the circumcision’ (Ex. 4:24-26).

What it was that caused God to launch that fearsome attack on His chosen leader is mystifying in the extreme. Moses had hardly had time – or opportunity, given that he was escorting his wife and young children – to do anything to offend his God so heinously during the few days that had elapsed from the time he left Midian to the time he arrived at the inn in the desert.

## HATAN DAMIM – THE BRIDEGROOM OF BLOOD

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If, as the text seems to suggest, Moses' sin was neglect of the circumcision of his son, then we also need to understand why, at that critical moment, with Moses' momentous mission about to be launched, it was just circumcision that loomed so large in the scheme of Divine priorities. Was God prepared to abort His great plan for Israel's deliverance through the taking of the life of the leader He had chosen to carry it out? If circumcision was, indeed, the issue, then one might also question why Moses deserved the death penalty and why it was being administered without any prior warning (even Pharaoh was forewarned, time and again, before the punishment of the plagues was administered!) and why mitigating circumstances were not taken into consideration.

After all, Moses was reared and lived until this time in total isolation from the traditions of his Hebrew brethren, and may well have been completely ignorant of that precept, its significance and the precise time in the life of the infant that it had to be performed.

The precise meaning of Zipporah's outburst, 'A bridegroom of blood art thou to me,' also needs to be clarified. Why "bridegroom" and not "husband?"

Also, what additional point, if any, did she mean to convey by unnecessarily repeating that pejorative description, 'a bridegroom of blood in relation to the circumcision'?

The whole episode is complicated even further by the absence of subjects for the verbs employed. We are told that God met him and sought to kill him, but we are not told to whom this refers. Yes, we have assumed above that it was Moses who was the object of the attack, but it might also have been one of the two sons that accompanied him, presumably the one who was peremptorily circumcised by Zipporah in order to save his life. But which son was that? Again, that fact is suppressed. The reference is merely to "her son," so it could have been either Gershom, the firstborn, or the second son named in 18:4 as Eliezer.

We are also told that Zipporah cast the foreskin "at his feet," though we know not whether this means the feet of the circumcised son or of Moses.

Indeed, there is also the possibility that her outburst was addressed to the former, and that he is the one being referred to by the phrase bridegroom of blood. And, as if we were not short of problems, there is that of the strange formulation that God "sought to kill him" – as if this were some difficult and protracted challenge in which God was engaged.

For an elucidation of this most enigmatic episode we would instinctively turn to the wisdom, insights and tradition of our classical commentators.

Quite surprisingly, most of the above issues are ignored. Nachmanides allows the episode to pass without a single observation, almost like an angel fearing to tread where others might readily rush in.

Rashi, quoting the Talmud, 2 views Moses as the victim of the Divine attack because of his failure to circumcise his younger son, Eliezer. (Rashi clearly follows the Midrash in its identification of the son, 3 whereas Targum Yonatan identifies him as Gershom, the firstborn 4 ). The Talmud excuses Moses' delay in performing that mitzvah on the grounds that he considered his first priority to be responding to the Divine summons mandating him to set out immediately into the desert, rather than to circumcise his son first. Although the act of circumcision only took a few minutes, Moses was cognizant that he could be jeopardizing the life of a weak, circumcised child by subjecting him to a journey through the desert.

Rashi explains that the foreskin was cast at the feet of Moses, but that Zipporah was addressing her son Eliezer when she made her subsequent outburst.

Rashi therefore renders Hatan damim attah li as, "You [attah] were (almost) the cause [gorem] of Moses, my beloved's [hatan li] blood [damim] being shed." The repetition of that outburst, according to Rashi, took the form of an act of realization, when the heavenly attacker withdrew [Vayiref mimmenu], that the attack had indeed been occasioned by the failure to circumcise [la-mulot].

A bracketed gloss on Rashi's last point reveals that Zipporah was confused as to the precise offense that her husband had perpetrated against his God to evoke this terrible retribution. It was only when, subsequent to her circumcision of Eliezer, the heavenly attacker withdraws, that she realizes [az amrah] that it was the failure to circumcise, and not any other sin, that had been the cause of the attack.

The text implies that Zipporah did not know that the cause of the heavenly attack was the lack of circumcision until after she had performed that emergency operation. This begs the question of what it was that alerted her to just that course of action as a means of saving her son.

A commentator 5 offers the suggestion that Zipporah was always troubled by Moses' marriage with her, the daughter of an idolatrous priest, and feared HATAN DAMIM – THE BRIDEGROOM OF BLOOD Vol. 33, No. 2, 2005 some retribution. At this moment she instinctively assumed that this might well have been the real reason for the attack on Moses, and that he could not presume to become Israel's liberator if he retained her as his wife. When she saw the attack subside immediately after her act of circumcision, she breathed a sigh of relief and cried out, A bridegroom of blood on account of the circumcision – and not for the other reason!

This purely speculative explanation does have the benefit of offering a reason for Zipporah's use of the otherwise abstruse nomenclature "bridegroom" to describe Moses. Psychologically, she is returning to, and articulating, her long-standing apprehension; namely, that Moses, her bridegroom, had chosen a bride from a family of idolators, rather than from his own monotheistic people.

The usually incisive and original Ibn Ezra is of little help in unraveling the mystery of this episode, and in offering a solution to all the difficulties which we have enumerated. He is unusually expansive, and merely reiterates the Talmudic presentation of Moses' dilemma over taking a circumcised child on a journey. He quotes R. Samuel ben Hofni, who could not bear the thought [chalilah!] that God would attack Moses, the agent of His mission on behalf of Israel. According to him, the attack could only have been leveled, therefore, at Eliezer.

6 It is most perplexing, however, that neither R. Samuel nor Ibn Ezra was troubled by the terrible injustice that would have been perpetrated, if they were right, on an innocent babe.

I believe that the key to resolving all the problems we have raised above lies in the relation of this episode to the verses that precede and, I believe, introduce it. It is important in this context to note that our "bloody bridegroom" episode runs on from the previous verses, with none of the usual textual indicators that would demarcate it as a separate episode.

In those introductory verses, Moses is commanded to tell Pharaoh: 'Israel is my firstborn son, and I tell you to let my son go and serve Me [v'ya'avdeni]; and if you refuse to do so, I shall kill your firstborn son. Service of God is emphasized here as being so vital that its prevention is a capital offense.

It is against that background that the very next episode is set. Moses cannot deliver that religious message to Pharaoh because he himself is guilty of that identical act of prevention of religious practice through his failure to circumcise his own firstborn son, Gershom.

7 The latter is being prevented from serving his God in the prescribed manner through the failure of his father to initiate him into the sacred covenant of circumcision.

It stands to reason, therefore, that Moses is on course to suffer the prescribed consequences of that sin. That is, his own firstborn, Gershom, should have his life forfeited. It is him that God encounters and seeks to slay.

Zipporah rescues her son's life, literally in the nick of time. Her thrusting of the foreskin at the feet [vatagga' leraglav] of her husband is indicative of the fearful haste she felt impelled to employ and her profound anger at Moses for having endangered their son's life. She verbalizes this anger in the problematic cry, 'ki hatan damim attah li [literally: For a bridegroom of blood you are/were for me].'

I offer here two possible explanations of this most puzzling condemnation.

The first takes account of the fact that, in the cognate early Semitic languages, one of the nuances of the basic meaning of the verbal root underlying the word “hatan [son-in-law]” is “to circumcise.” This is retained in classical Arabic where “hatana” has the meaning “to circumcise” and “hitun” means “circumcision” or “circumcision feast.” The lexicons elucidate the relatedness of these two meanings by explaining that “circumcision [is] performed on young men just prior to marriage.”

8 Hence, the particular nuance of Zipporah’s condemnatory cry *hatan damim attah li*: You should have been the circumciser for me! You should have done it, not me!

A second possible interpretation takes account of the usage of the word “damim” in the sense of “guilt,” or “responsibility.” Hence, in the legislation providing for the establishment of cities of refuge, where the manslayer can escape the revenge of the near relative, the Torah states that [it is] so that no innocent blood be shed in the midst of thy land [*v’hayah alekha damim*] – nor shall any blood be upon you (Deut. 19:10). *Damim* here is clearly a synonym for “guilt,” “responsibility” for the taking of innocent life.

And this may well be the condemnation that Zipporah was levelling against her husband, *hatan damim attah li*: A guilty groom you’ve proved to me! You have let me down by jeopardizing the life of our child! She may well have employed the term *hatan* here pejoratively and idiomatically, underlying the fact that, through his neglect of the circumcision, Moses had behaved more like an inexperienced groom than a mature and responsible husband.

The Targum Yonatan on Exodus 4:24 says that “Gershom was not circumcised, on account of Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, who would not permit Moses to do so, though Eliezer was circumcised, according to the agreement made between them.” This is an allusion to the tradition contained in the Mekhilta, that Jethro’s condition for giving his daughter in marriage to Moses was that the first son should be brought up in the idol-worshipping tradition of Midian, whereas the second son could be reared according to Israelite tradition.

9 Now, circumcision was already practiced among the ancient Egyptians as early as 4000 BCE, as well as in many other Middle-Eastern societies. “Wherever the operation is performed as a traditional rite it is done either before or at puberty, and sometimes, as among some Arabian peoples, immediately before marriage.”

10 We may assume, therefore, that the delay in circumcising his firstborn son was, as the Midrash suggests, prompted by Jethro’s insistence that Midianite practice be observed, and that Gershom would eventually have been circumcised at puberty or as a prelude to marriage. Thus, Zipporah’s oblique reference to Moses as a *hatan* [son-in-law] who had concocted an unseemly – and clearly dangerous – pact with his father-in-law.

Hence, once the immediate threat had passed, she breathed an audible sigh of relief [*az amrah*], reflecting, a little more calmly, though also more specifically, on the precise issue wherein her

husband had let her down: *hatan damim la-mulot* [a bridegroom guilty (of dereliction) in relation to circumcision.]

Ironically, it is Zipporah who stands out here as the one brimming with righteous indignation, and Moses, the future law-giver, is cast as the religious compromiser!

As to the difficulty of God's attack on an innocent child, I believe that the inclusion of the word "vayyevakesh [And He attempted (to slay him)], is highly significant. It clearly betokens a roleplay, a symbolic and harmless acting-out of the slaying of a firstborn. It was a charade with a double purpose: to reassure Moses that every threat he was to aim at Pharaoh would be carried out, even to the extent of the slaying of Pharaoh's firstborn, as referred to in God's most recent communication to Moses. This was calculated to embolden Moses so that he would undertake his most hazardous mission without any reservations or fears for his own safety. At the same time, it was a not-so-subtle reminder to Moses that he had to put his own house in order and circumcise his firstborn without a moment's delay.

## NOTES

1. J. Kirsch, *Moses: A Life* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1998) p.130.
2. Talmud Nedarim 31b.
3. See Midrash Shemot Rabbah 5 (8).
4. See Targum Yonatan on Exodus 4:25.
5. See the eclectic commentary contained in *Mikra'ot Gedolot Rav Peninim* (Jerusalem, Brothers Levin-Epstein, 1955) vol. II, *Sefer Shemot*. Essay entitled, "Inyan pegishat ha-mal'akh," on Exodus 4:24.
6. See Ibn Ezra, *Commentary on Exodus 4:24*.
7. Brown, Driver Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907) p.368.
8. See Targum Yonatan on Exodus 4:24
9. *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael, Masekhta d'Amalek*, ed. Jacob Z. Lauterbach, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1976) p.168, ll. 96-101.
10. "Circumcision" in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1970 ed., Vol. 5, p. 799.

## 1 Kings 8

### The Dedication of the Temple and the Prayer of Solomon

[1-Kings 8:1] THEN SOLOMON ASSEMBLED THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL, AND ALL THE

HEADS OF THE TRIBES, THE CHIEF OF THE FATHERS OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, UNTO KING SOLOMON IN JERUSALEM, THAT THEY MIGHT BRING UP THE ARK OF THE COVENANT OF THE LORD OUT OF THE CITY OF DAVID, WHICH IS ZION.

THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL. In Hebrew “Ziknei Yisrael”. “Elder” is “zaken” or in plural “zakenim”. This can also apply to anyone who is learned and from whom advice is taken no matter what their age. The expression THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL usually applies to the Sanhedrin or its equivalent.

THE HEADS OF THE TRIBES. Each Tribes had its own “Prince” and Princely House. THE CHIEF OF THE FATHERS. Hebrew “Nasii Ha-Avot”. This should perhaps be rendered “Those who were the most exalted out of the Patrilineal Family Groupings”.

[1-Kings 8:2] AND ALL THE MEN OF ISRAEL ASSEMBLED THEMSELVES UNTO KING SOLOMON AT THE FEAST IN THE MONTH ETHANIM, WHICH IS THE SEVENTH MONTH.

ETHANIM (Modern Hebrew “Aitanim”) means “Strong Ones” or “Might Men”. According to tradition all the Patriarchs (i.e. the Mighty Men) were born in this month.

This is the month of Tishrei which overlaps September-October. In this month fall the Festivals of Rosh HaShanah (New Year), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), and Tabernacles (Succot).

[1-Kings 8:3] AND ALL THE ELDERS OF ISRAEL CAME, AND THE PRIESTS TOOK UP THE ARK.

[1-Kings 8:4] AND THEY BROUGHT UP THE ARK OF THE LORD, AND THE TABERNACLE OF THE CONGREGATION, AND ALL THE HOLY VESSELS THAT WERE IN THE TABERNACLE, EVEN THOSE DID THE PRIESTS AND THE LEVITES BRING UP.

The Tabernacle had previously been in Gibeon just outside of Jerusalem. Daat Mikra understands these verses to say that they brought up the ark from the City of David and different appurtenances that still remained from the Tabernacle in Gibeon.

[1-Kings 8:5] AND KING SOLOMON, AND ALL THE CONGREGATION OF ISRAEL, THAT WERE ASSEMBLED UNTO HIM, WERE WITH HIM BEFORE THE ARK, SACRIFICING SHEEP AND OXEN, THAT COULD NOT BE TOLD NOR NUMBERED FOR MULTITUDE.

[1-Kings 8:6] AND THE PRIESTS BROUGHT IN THE ARK OF THE COVENANT OF THE LORD UNTO HIS PLACE, INTO THE ORACLE OF THE HOUSE, TO THE MOST HOLY PLACE, EVEN UNDER THE WINGS OF THE CHERUBIMS.

See 1-Kings 6:27



<http://www.britam.org/Kings/1Kings6.html> And  
the illustration just below it.

[1-Kings 8:7] FOR THE CHERUBIMS SPREAD FORTH THEIR TWO WINGS OVER THE PLACE OF THE ARK, AND THE CHERUBIMS COVERED THE ARK AND THE STAVES THEREOF ABOVE.

[1-Kings 8:8] AND THEY DREW OUT THE STAVES, THAT THE ENDS OF THE STAVES WERE SEEN OUT IN THE HOLY PLACE BEFORE THE ORACLE, AND THEY WERE NOT SEEN WITHOUT: AND THERE THEY ARE UNTO THIS DAY.

[1-Kings 8:9] THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE ARK SAVE THE TWO TABLES OF STONE, WHICH MOSES PUT THERE AT HOREB, WHEN THE LORD MADE A COVENANT WITH THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, WHEN THEY CAME OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT.

HOREB is another name for Mount Sinai (Exodus 3:1) where the Israelites received the Law.

[1-Kings 8:10] AND IT CAME TO PASS, WHEN THE PRIESTS WERE COME OUT OF THE HOLY PLACE, THAT THE CLOUD FILLED THE HOUSE OF THE LORD,

[1-Kings 8:11] SO THAT THE PRIESTS COULD NOT STAND TO MINISTER BECAUSE OF THE CLOUD: FOR THE GLORY OF THE LORD HAD FILLED THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

[1-Kings 8:12] THEN SPAKE SOLOMON, THE LORD SAID THAT HE WOULD DWELL IN THE THICK DARKNESS.

God was with them and had made HIS presence felt amongst them. Nethertheless HE chose to dwell in a place that could not be seen, IN THE THICK DARKNESS.

[1-Kings 8:13] I HAVE SURELY BUILT THEE AN HOUSE TO DWELL IN, A SETTLED PLACE FOR THEE TO ABIDE IN FOR EVER.

[1-Kings 8:14] AND THE KING TURNED HIS FACE ABOUT, AND BLESSED ALL THE CONGREGATION OF ISRAEL: (AND ALL THE CONGREGATION OF ISRAEL STOOD;)

King Solomon blessed all the People of Israel. Solomon was the King and a King is like a father to his subjects and can bless them as a father blesses his children.

[1-Kings 8:15] AND HE SAID, BLESSED BE THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL, WHICH SPAKE WITH HIS MOUTH UNTO DAVID MY FATHER, AND HATH WITH HIS HAND FULFILLED IT, SAYING,

The Almighty had promised David that his son would build the Temple (2-Samuel 7:13).

[1-Kings 8:16] SINCE THE DAY THAT I BROUGHT FORTH MY PEOPLE ISRAEL OUT OF EGYPT, I CHOSE NO CITY OUT OF ALL THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL TO BUILD AN HOUSE, THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE THEREIN; BUT I CHOSE DAVID TO BE OVER MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.

God chose David to be the King of Israel. David is the chosen monarch. This is the will of the Almighty. The rightful ruler of all Israel should be from the family of David. If it so happens that someone from another family has to be in charge then their rulership should be considered as temporary. If however the non-Davidic rulers merit it their reign could last for several generations. In principle it could last indefinitely with the non-Davidic rulers eventually becoming deputies of the descendants of David. This was the eventuality that Yehonatan (son of Saul) hoped would fall to the last of his descendants under those of David.

[1-Kings 8:17] AND IT WAS IN THE HEART OF DAVID MY FATHER TO BUILD AN HOUSE FOR THE NAME OF THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL.

[1-Kings 8:18] AND THE LORD SAID UNTO DAVID MY FATHER, WHEREAS IT WAS IN THINE HEART TO BUILD AN HOUSE UNTO MY NAME, THOU DIDST WELL THAT IT WAS IN THINE HEART.

[1-Kings 8:19] NEVERTHELESS THOU SHALT NOT BUILD THE HOUSE; BUT THY SON THAT SHALL COME FORTH OUT OF THY LOINS, HE SHALL BUILD THE HOUSE UNTO MY NAME.

We are told (2-Samuel ch.7) how David wished to build the Temple but was told by the Almighty through the Prophet Nathan that his son would do it.

[1-Kings 8:20] AND THE LORD HATH PERFORMED HIS WORD THAT HE SPAKE, AND I AM RISEN UP IN THE ROOM OF DAVID MY FATHER, AND SIT ON THE THRONE OF ISRAEL, AS THE LORD PROMISED, AND HAVE BUILT AN HOUSE FOR THE NAME OF THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL.

The Temple was a glorification of the Name of the God of Israel throughout the world.

[1-Kings 8:21] AND I HAVE SET THERE A PLACE FOR THE ARK, WHEREIN IS THE COVENANT OF THE LORD, WHICH HE MADE WITH OUR FATHERS, WHEN HE BROUGHT THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT.

The Covenant of God with Israel involves the Commandments that were placed in the Ark.

[1-Kings 8:22] AND SOLOMON STOOD BEFORE THE ALTAR OF THE LORD IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL THE CONGREGATION OF ISRAEL, AND SPREAD FORTH HIS HANDS TOWARD HEAVEN:

[1-Kings 8:23] AND HE SAID, LORD GOD OF ISRAEL, THERE IS NO GOD LIKE THEE, IN HEAVEN ABOVE, OR ON EARTH BENEATH, WHO KEEPEST COVENANT AND MERCY WITH THY SERVANTS THAT WALK BEFORE THEE WITH ALL THEIR HEART:

[1-Kings 8:24] WHO HAST KEPT WITH THY SERVANT DAVID MY FATHER THAT THOU PROMISEDst HIM: THOU SPAKEST ALSO WITH THY MOUTH, AND HAST FULFILLED IT WITH THINE HAND, AS IT IS THIS DAY.

[1-Kings 8:25] THEREFORE NOW, LORD GOD OF ISRAEL, KEEP WITH THY SERVANT DAVID MY FATHER THAT THOU PROMISEDst HIM, SAYING, THERE SHALL NOT FAIL THEE A MAN IN MY SIGHT TO SIT ON THE THRONE OF ISRAEL; SO THAT THY CHILDREN TAKE HEED TO THEIR WAY, THAT THEY WALK BEFORE ME AS THOU HAST WALKED BEFORE ME.

We have discussed this several times.

See:

Sons of David as Rulers

<http://www.britam.org/Proof/Attributes/roleDavid.html>

The Divine Promises to David:

Were they Unconditional? <http://www.britam.org/Kings/1Kings2.html#Divine>

In short there would always be rulers from the seed of David over a significant section of the descendants of Israel though the REAL fulfillment of the Promise will only be actualized in the Messianic Age.

[1-Kings 8:26] AND NOW, O GOD OF ISRAEL, LET THY WORD, I PRAY THEE, BE VERIFIED, WHICH THOU SPAKEST UNTO THY SERVANT DAVID MY FATHER.

[1-Kings 8:27] BUT WILL GOD INDEED DWELL ON THE EARTH? BEHOLD, THE HEAVEN AND HEAVEN OF HEAVENS CANNOT CONTAIN THEE; HOW MUCH LESS THIS HOUSE THAT I HAVE BUILDED?

[1-Kings 8:28] YET HAVE THOU RESPECT UNTO THE PRAYER OF THY SERVANT, AND TO HIS SUPPLICATION, O LORD MY GOD, TO HEARKEN UNTO THE CRY AND TO THE PRAYER, WHICH THY SERVANT PRAYETH BEFORE THEE TO DAY:

[1-Kings 8:29] THAT THINE EYES MAY BE OPEN TOWARD THIS HOUSE NIGHT AND DAY, EVEN TOWARD THE PLACE OF WHICH THOU HAST SAID, MY NAME SHALL BE THERE:

THAT THOU MAYEST HEARKEN UNTO THE PRAYER WHICH THY SERVANT SHALL MAKE TOWARD THIS PLACE.

[1-Kings 8:30] AND HEARKEN THOU TO THE SUPPLICATION OF THY SERVANT, AND OF THY PEOPLE ISRAEL, WHEN THEY SHALL PRAY TOWARD THIS PLACE: AND HEAR THOU IN HEAVEN THY DWELLING PLACE: AND WHEN THOU HEAREST, FORGIVE.

The site of the Temple Mount is always sacred even when there is Temple there.

When praying one should preferably face in the direction of the Temple.

WHEN THOU HEAREST, FORGIVE. We can always be forgiven. We just have to repent and atone. This is easier said than done but it can be done. The first and most important step is simply to make the request for forgivingness.

[1-Kings 8:31] IF ANY MAN TRESPASS AGAINST HIS NEIGHBOUR, AND AN OATH BE LAID UPON HIM TO CAUSE HIM TO SWEAR, AND THE OATH COME BEFORE THINE ALTAR IN THIS HOUSE:

[1-Kings 8:32] THEN HEAR THOU IN HEAVEN, AND DO, AND JUDGE THY SERVANTS, CONDEMNING THE WICKED, TO BRING HIS WAY UPON HIS HEAD; AND JUSTIFYING THE RIGHTEOUS, TO GIVE HIM ACCORDING TO HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

[1-Kings 8:33] WHEN THY PEOPLE ISRAEL BE SMITTEN DOWN BEFORE THE ENEMY, BECAUSE THEY HAVE SINNED AGAINST THEE, AND SHALL TURN AGAIN TO THEE, AND CONFESS THY NAME, AND PRAY, AND MAKE SUPPLICATION UNTO THEE IN THIS HOUSE:

If our enemies defeat us it is because we have sinned. We must repent and God will forgive us.

One should however avoid going into battle or any form of confrontation and thinking that because of your superior virtues the Almighty will grant you victory.

Simply ask God to help you and trust in HIM.

Do not rely on yourself.

[1-Kings 8:34] THEN HEAR THOU IN HEAVEN, AND FORGIVE THE SIN OF THY PEOPLE ISRAEL, AND BRING THEM AGAIN UNTO THE LAND WHICH THOU GAVEST UNTO THEIR FATHERS.

This is a promise that the ALMIGHTY will bring the Exiles of Israel back to their Land.

[1-Kings 8:35] WHEN HEAVEN IS SHUT UP, AND THERE IS NO RAIN, BECAUSE THEY HAVE SINNED AGAINST THEE; IF THEY PRAY TOWARD THIS PLACE, AND CONFESS THY NAME, AND TURN FROM THEIR SIN, WHEN THOU AFFLICTEST THEM:

[1-Kings 8:36] THEN HEAR THOU IN HEAVEN, AND FORGIVE THE SIN OF THY SERVANTS, AND OF THY PEOPLE ISRAEL, THAT THOU TEACH THEM THE GOOD WAY WHEREIN THEY SHOULD WALK, AND GIVE RAIN UPON THY LAND, WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN TO THY PEOPLE FOR AN INHERITANCE.

[1-Kings 8:37] IF THERE BE IN THE LAND FAMINE, IF THERE BE PESTILENCE, BLASTING, MILDEW, LOCUST, OR IF THERE BE CATERPILLER; IF THEIR ENEMY BESIEGE THEM IN THE LAND OF THEIR CITIES; WHATSOEVER PLAGUE, WHATSOEVER SICKNESS THERE BE;

[1-Kings 8:38] WHAT PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION SOEVER BE MADE BY ANY MAN, OR BY ALL THY PEOPLE ISRAEL, WHICH SHALL KNOW EVERY MAN THE PLAGUE OF HIS OWN HEART, AND SPREAD FORTH HIS HANDS TOWARD THIS HOUSE:

Whatever happens outside of you may reflect something inside your own being. Rectify yourselves

And your surroundings may well be corrected as it says EVERY MAN THE PLAGUE OF HIS OWN HEART. The plagues that will come upon them will be because of the sickness in their own souls.

[1-Kings 8:39] THEN HEAR THOU IN HEAVEN THY DWELLING PLACE, AND FORGIVE, AND DO, AND GIVE TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS WAYS, WHOSE HEART THOU KNOWEST; (FOR THOU, EVEN THOU ONLY, KNOWEST THE HEARTS OF ALL THE CHILDREN OF MEN;)

[1-Kings 8:40] THAT THEY MAY FEAR THEE ALL THE DAYS THAT THEY LIVE IN THE LAND WHICH THOU GAVEST UNTO OUR FATHERS.

[1-Kings 8:41] MOREOVER CONCERNING A STRANGER, THAT IS NOT OF THY PEOPLE ISRAEL, BUT COMETH OUT OF A FAR COUNTRY FOR THY NAME'S SAKE;

[1-Kings 8:42] (FOR THEY SHALL HEAR OF THY GREAT NAME, AND OF THY STRONG HAND, AND OF THY STRETCHED OUT ARM;) WHEN HE SHALL COME AND PRAY

TOWARD THIS HOUSE;

[1-Kings 8:43] HEAR THOU IN HEAVEN THY DWELLING PLACE, AND DO ACCORDING TO ALL THAT THE STRANGER CALLETH TO THEE FOR: THAT ALL PEOPLE OF THE EARTH MAY KNOW THY NAME, TO FEAR THEE, AS DO THY PEOPLE ISRAEL; AND THAT THEY MAY KNOW THAT THIS HOUSE, WHICH I HAVE BUILDED, IS CALLED BY THY NAME.

The non-Israelite foreigner who acknowledges the God of Israel will be saved if he sincerely asks for help.

[1-Kings 8:44] IF THY PEOPLE GO OUT TO BATTLE AGAINST THEIR ENEMY, WHITHERSOEVER THOU SHALT SEND THEM, AND SHALL PRAY UNTO THE LORD TOWARD THE CITY WHICH THOU HAST CHOSEN, AND TOWARD THE HOUSE THAT I HAVE BUILT FOR THY NAME:

[1-Kings 8:45] THEN HEAR THOU IN HEAVEN THEIR PRAYER AND THEIR SUPPLICATION, AND MAINTAIN THEIR CAUSE.

If we pray God will help us.

[1-Kings 8:46] IF THEY SIN AGAINST THEE, (FOR THERE IS NO MAN THAT SINNETH NOT,) AND THOU BE ANGRY WITH THEM, AND DELIVER THEM TO THE ENEMY, SO THAT THEY CARRY THEM AWAY CAPTIVES UNTO THE LAND OF THE ENEMY, FAR OR NEAR;

[1-Kings 8:47] YET IF THEY SHALL BETHINK THEMSELVES IN THE LAND WHITHER THEY WERE CARRIED CAPTIVES, AND REPENT, AND MAKE SUPPLICATION UNTO THEE IN THE LAND OF THEM THAT CARRIED THEM CAPTIVES, SAYING, WE HAVE SINNED, AND HAVE DONE PERVERSELY, WE HAVE COMMITTED WICKEDNESS;

[1-Kings 8:48] AND SO RETURN UNTO THEE WITH ALL THEIR HEART, AND WITH ALL THEIR SOUL, IN THE LAND OF THEIR ENEMIES, WHICH LED THEM AWAY CAPTIVE, AND PRAY UNTO THEE TOWARD THEIR LAND, WHICH THOU GAVEST UNTO THEIR FATHERS, THE CITY WHICH THOU HAST CHOSEN, AND THE HOUSE WHICH I HAVE BUILT FOR THY NAME:

[1-Kings 8:49] THEN HEAR THOU THEIR PRAYER AND THEIR SUPPLICATION IN HEAVEN THY DWELLING PLACE, AND MAINTAIN THEIR CAUSE,

[1-Kings 8:50] AND FORGIVE THY PEOPLE THAT HAVE SINNED AGAINST THEE, AND ALL THEIR TRANSGRESSIONS WHEREIN THEY HAVE TRANSGRESSED AGAINST THEE, AND GIVE THEM COMPASSION BEFORE THEM WHO CARRIED THEM CAPTIVE, THAT THEY MAY HAVE COMPASSION ON THEM:

When the Northern Ten Tribes were taken into Exile by the Assyrians some of them were treated as slaves and subjected to hard labor. Others were treated relatively well and soon reached important positions in the Assyrian administration. A portion of them due to external events were enabled to assert their independence at an early date. For the rest it took a little longer but eventually they were released.

So too, on innumerable occasions the Jews who descended from inhabitants of the southern Kingdom of Judah were persecuted and driven from one place to another. Despite the persecutions of the Jews by their Gentile neighbors it often happened that rulers and princes would have mercy on them. There were times and areas where the Jews were relatively well off by contemporary standards. In fact from an historical perspective the Jews may well have had it better than most other peoples. They usually had a good family life, relative health, and prosperity. They learned the Law which gave them an intellectual enlightenment that other peoples did not have.

[1-Kings 8:51] FOR THEY BE THY PEOPLE, AND THINE INHERITANCE, WHICH THOU BROUGHTEST FORTH OUT OF EGYPT, FROM THE MIDST OF THE FURNACE OF IRON:

[1-Kings 8:52] THAT THINE EYES MAY BE OPEN UNTO THE SUPPLICATION OF THY SERVANT, AND UNTO THE SUPPLICATION OF THY PEOPLE ISRAEL, TO HEARKEN UNTO THEM IN ALL THAT THEY CALL FOR UNTO THEE.

[1-Kings 8:53] FOR THOU DIDST SEPARATE THEM FROM AMONG ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH, TO BE THINE INHERITANCE, AS THOU SPAKEST BY THE HAND OF MOSES THY SERVANT, WHEN THOU BROUGHTEST OUR FATHERS OUT OF EGYPT, O LORD GOD.

This is recalled in the Book of Exodus.

The People of Israel had just sinned by committing idolatry and worshipping the golden bull calf. The Almighty had almost destroyed them but Moses interceded and God had mercy. Moses then asked God to forgive them and also to distinguish them from all other peoples, that only they would be the special people of God through whom the Almighty could be known.

And God agreed.

[Exodus 33:16] FOR WHEREIN SHALL IT BE KNOWN HERE THAT I AND THY PEOPLE HAVE FOUND GRACE IN THY SIGHT? IS IT NOT IN THAT THOU GOEST WITH US? SO

SHALL WE BE SEPARATED, I AND THY PEOPLE, FROM ALL THE PEOPLE THAT ARE UPON THE FACE OF THE EARTH.

[Exodus 33:17] AND THE LORD SAID UNTO MOSES, I WILL DO THIS THING ALSO THAT THOU HAST SPOKEN: FOR THOU HAST FOUND GRACE IN MY SIGHT, AND I KNOW THEE BY NAME.

We spoke of this matter in our talk on Parshat "KiTisa".

See: Ki  
Tisa

<http://www.britam.org/Broadcasts/NewBambi.html#GC>

The Golden Calf and the God of Israel and the Choseness of Israel

Exodus 30:11-34:35 (44 minutes)

[1-Kings 8:54] AND IT WAS SO, THAT WHEN SOLOMON HAD MADE AN END OF PRAYING ALL THIS PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION UNTO THE LORD, HE AROSE FROM BEFORE THE ALTAR OF THE LORD, FROM KNEELING ON HIS KNEES WITH HIS HANDS SPREAD UP TO HEAVEN.

[1-Kings 8:55] AND HE STOOD, AND BLESSED ALL THE CONGREGATION OF ISRAEL WITH A LOUD VOICE, SAYING,

[1-Kings 8:56] BLESSED BE THE LORD, THAT HATH GIVEN REST UNTO HIS PEOPLE ISRAEL, ACCORDING TO ALL THAT HE PROMISED: THERE HATH NOT FAILED ONE WORD OF ALL HIS GOOD PROMISE, WHICH HE PROMISED BY THE HAND OF MOSES HIS SERVANT.

When we pray we should end or begin our prayers with a request that God bless the People of Israel and Judah.

[1-Kings 8:57] THE LORD OUR GOD BE WITH US, AS HE WAS WITH OUR FATHERS: LET HIM NOT LEAVE US, NOR FORSAKE US:

One should bless others in order to bring a blessing on oneself and those whom one holds dear.

[1-Kings 8:58] THAT HE MAY INCLINE OUR HEARTS UNTO HIM, TO WALK IN ALL HIS WAYS, AND TO KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, AND HIS STATUTES, AND HIS JUDGMENTS, WHICH HE COMMANDED OUR FATHERS.

We should all want to do the will of the Almighty and keep HIS commandments.



This is not easy.

It may be especially hard for “Ephraimites” who technically speaking are not obliged to keep the Law. Nevertheless many Ephraimite descendants of the Lost Ten Tribes are being aroused by Divine Providence to Keep the Law.

Some of them want to but lack the strength to do so.

Others want to, probably are strong enough to do so but they do not know how.

Pray to God, remind HIM of HIS promises and of this prayer of Solomon and the Almighty will help.

This Prayer of Solomon is not only a request. It is a promise of Prophetic significance.

[1-Kings 8:59] AND LET THESE MY WORDS, WHEREWITH I HAVE MADE SUPPLICATION BEFORE THE LORD, BE NIGH UNTO THE LORD OUR GOD DAY AND NIGHT, THAT HE MAINTAIN THE CAUSE OF HIS SERVANT, AND THE CAUSE OF HIS PEOPLE ISRAEL AT ALL TIMES, AS THE MATTER SHALL REQUIRE:

[1-Kings 8:60] THAT ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE EARTH MAY KNOW THAT THE LORD IS GOD, AND THAT THERE IS NONE ELSE.

We need to succeed not only for our own sakes but also for the sake of the Almighty.

The God of Israel in some way is judged by what we are.

[1-Kings 8:61] LET YOUR HEART THEREFORE BE PERFECT WITH THE LORD OUR GOD, TO WALK IN HIS STATUTES, AND TO KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS, AS AT THIS DAY.

[1-Kings 8:62] AND THE KING, AND ALL ISRAEL WITH HIM, OFFERED SACRIFICE BEFORE THE LORD.

[1-Kings 8:63] AND SOLOMON OFFERED A SACRIFICE OF PEACE OFFERINGS, WHICH HE OFFERED UNTO THE LORD, TWO AND TWENTY THOUSAND OXEN, AND AN HUNDRED AND TWENTY THOUSAND SHEEP. SO THE KING AND ALL THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL DEDICATED THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

Solomon offered up on behalf of Israel 22,000 head of cattle and 120, 000 sheep.

[1-Kings 8:64] THE SAME DAY DID THE KING HALLOW THE MIDDLE OF THE COURT THAT WAS BEFORE THE HOUSE OF THE LORD: FOR THERE HE OFFERED BURNT OFFERINGS, AND MEAT OFFERINGS, AND THE FAT OF THE PEACE OFFERINGS: BECAUSE THE BRASEN ALTAR THAT WAS BEFORE THE LORD WAS TOO LITTLE TO

RECEIVE THE BURNT OFFERINGS, AND MEAT OFFERINGS, AND THE FAT OF THE PEACE OFFERINGS.

[1-Kings 8:65] AND AT THAT TIME SOLOMON HELD A FEAST, AND ALL ISRAEL WITH HIM, A GREAT CONGREGATION, FROM THE ENTERING IN OF HAMATH UNTO THE RIVER OF EGYPT, BEFORE THE LORD OUR GOD, SEVEN DAYS AND SEVEN DAYS, EVEN FOURTEEN DAYS.

Solomon ruled over the Greater Land of Israel stretching from the area of south-east Turkey up unto the western branches of the Nile River.

See:

What Are the Boundaries of the Promised Land According to the Bible?

<http://www.britam.org/Questions/QuesLand.html#Boundaries>

[1-Kings 8:66] ON THE EIGHTH DAY HE SENT THE PEOPLE AWAY: AND THEY BLESSED THE KING, AND WENT UNTO THEIR TENTS JOYFUL AND GLAD OF HEART FOR ALL THE GOODNESS THAT THE LORD HAD DONE FOR DAVID HIS SERVANT, AND FOR ISRAEL HIS PEOPLE.

## **Psalm 108**

### **“Save With Your Right Hand”**

Psalm 108 is titled a psalm of David, being a combination, with slight modifications, of parts of two other psalms of David, Psalms 57 and 60 (compare 57:7-11 with 108:1-5 and 60:5-12 with 108:6-13). As their superscriptions attest, Psalm 57 was written when David and his men hid from Saul in the cave near the desert oasis of En Gedi, and Psalm 60 was written when David fought against the forces of Mesopotamia and Syria. We earlier read Psalm 108 in the Bible Reading Program in conjunction with the account of the latter episode (see the Bible Reading Program comments on 2 Samuel 10; 1 Chronicles 19; Psalm 60; Psalm 108; Psalm 83). It would be helpful here to review the Bible Reading Program’s Psalms section comments on Psalm 57 and Psalm 60.

The first part of Psalm 108 (verses 1-5), the part also found in Psalm 57:7-11, praises the extensiveness of God’s hesed-His steadfast covenant love and mercy. In fact, where Psalm 57:10 said it reaches to the heavens, Psalm 108:4, slightly reworded, says it is great above the heavens. Based on this pervasiveness of God’s covenant faithfulness, the latter part of Psalm 108 (verses 6-13), the part taken from Psalm 60:5-12, is a prayer for deliverance from and help against Israel’s national enemies. While the later song could have been composed shortly after the former, so that the circumstances described still existed, it may be that the later composition

was much later-so that circumstances were completely different yet the same general need for God's intervention was present (evidently after a period of things not going so well). As in Psalm 60, the song is adamant in proclaiming that only through God can we attain ultimate victory.

## **Luke 19**

This again is amazing to me as we do the 3 ½ year Torah Study how it lines up with the season we are now entering into; the Passover Season.

Yeshua is on His way to Jerusalem and again He meets with those who are known as sinners and this time Zacchaeus repents and restores what may have been stolen.

Immediately after this incident Yeshua tells the parable of the king who left in charge three servants with various amounts of money. But did you catch what was said in verse 14.

Luk 19:14 "But his subjects were hating him, and sent a delegation after him, to say, 'We do not wish this one to reign over us.'

As you all know this is speaking of Yeshua who presently has gone away and is about to return. Currently many in the Christian faith believe Jesus to be a god of love. And all you have to do is love and it will be OK. The trouble with this stinken thinken is that it just ain't so.

Read what Yeshua says in Luk 19:27 'But those enemies of mine who did not wish me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before me.' "

Not much Christian love going on here, is there?

Yeshua said if you love me you will keep the commandments. Yet many Christians will not keep the commandments and as such refuse to be ruled over by Yeshua. We are told right here they will be brought forward and slain in front of Him. He will tell them He never knew them.

We have covered the 4th commandment the past few weeks and shown you where it says you shall keep the Sabbath and the Holy Day all shown to you in Lev 23 and it also includes the Sabbatical years as shown to you in Lev 25-26.

**[http://www.shema.com/commentaries/Luke/Luke 19 28-46.php](http://www.shema.com/commentaries/Luke/Luke_19_28-46.php)**

Verse 28

After He had said these things, He was going on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

He's just told a very pointed and troubling parable to an audience of Jewish people who had a serious flaw in their view about when and how the Kingdom of God was coming. Messiah Yeshua never sought to widen His audience by soft-pedaling the truth. Unlike those who seek to gain a huge following, the Master often taught very difficult truths, knowing full well it would turn some people off. But He was okay with that. Yeshua knew that some people are unwilling to repent and are unfit for His Kingdom. So as He leaves Jericho for Jerusalem, we can imagine

there might have been fewer people following Him than when He arrived there. Of course, those who are truly His loyal subjects will endure to the end.

#### Verses 29-31

When He approached Bethphage and Bethany, near the mount that is called Olivet, He sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you; there, as you enter, you will find a colt tied, on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say, 'The Lord has need of it.'"

Messiah Yeshua approached the villages whose names mean "House of unripe figs" and "House of Affliction" or "House of Poverty". There is some question about the proper translation of Bethany, as its root is probably either Syriac or Aramaic. In any case, the village of Bethany still exists today, but by the Arabic name Al-Eizariya (from the name Lazarus, Yeshua's very good friend whose family lived there).

More significant than the names of the two villages is the fact that Yeshua is approaching Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. The Mount of Olives is very important real estate. It was the very last place His feet touched before ascending to Heaven, and likewise the very first place His feet will touch again upon His glorious and powerful return to Earth.

Let's talk about the colt – the young male donkey Yeshua sent for. What did He want with a young donkey? It's really quite straightforward: The Son of David was about to ride into the City of David, and offer Himself as the rightful King, the One who will sit on the throne of David. About that very day the prophet Zechariah (9:9) had announced over 500 years earlier:

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem!

Behold, your King is coming to you;

He is just and endowed with salvation,

Humble, and mounted on a donkey,

Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

We have come to refer to this incident as "The Triumphal Entry" but many regard it as a misnomer, and I'm inclined to agree. First of all, the acclaim that surrounded Him that day was short-lived. Messiah Yeshua knew He would soon be rejected by His own nation, handed over to the Gentiles and put to death in a most horrible fashion. How is that triumphal? Neither did the righteous young rabbi presume to ride in on a white stallion.

What this does represent is the selecting of the lamb for Passover which was to be done on the 10th day of the month of Aviv. Yeshua is now going to be examined for the next 4 days before He is sacrificed.

Riding in on a donkey sent a certain message. Donkeys are humble animals. To most people they are, to put it mildly, unimpressive. But humility and outward simplicity was the hallmark of Yeshua's entire ministry on Earth. Read through the Gospels and you will see He made no particular effort to engage the scholarly elite, nor the aristocracy, nor the politically powerful and well-connected. For that matter, He didn't even hobnob with the pious rabbis. In fact, most of His time was spent outside of Jerusalem, including in some places nobody else would set foot – such as in Samaria and throughout Galilee, and in the company of those that society either considered complete losers (such as Bartimaeus the blind beggar); traitors (such as Zaccheus the tax-collector), or just plain people of ill-repute.

His riding in on a young donkey was unexpected to those who were looking for a warrior-messiah. You see, in the ancient world, when a new king rode into a capitol city on a horse, it was a signal that he intended to rule with an iron fist. Horses were animals of war. But to ride in on a donkey signaled the intention to rule peaceably.

Why did Yeshua specify a young donkey upon which no one had ever sat? I believe it is because He is not to be compared with any other human being. In fact, the Talmud (Sanhedrin 2:5) stipulates that no one else may ride an animal on which the king has ridden. This sheds a little light on the ultimate irony of Mordecai the Jew being led in procession around the city on the king's horse, wearing one of the king's robes, and heralded by the king's highest official. It is my opinion that that young colt, tied there next to its mother (as Matthew tells us), had been created for that very day and hour. Imagine the honor of that little colt – an otherwise humble, despised animal!

#### Verses 32-35

So those who were sent went away and found it just as He had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They said, "The Lord has need of it." They brought it to Yeshua, and they threw their coats on the colt and put Yeshua on it.

In his own account, Mark fills in the details a little, indicating that the owners, upon hearing the simple words, "the Lord has need of it" gave their permission. Perhaps Yeshua had worked this out in advance with the family, who wouldn't have recognized the two disciples, but who knew Yeshua. Or perhaps they were just godly folks who sensed the sincerity of the request. Matthew indicates that they untied the colt and its mother donkey, which makes sense – the young one would have been reluctant to go anywhere without its mother, much less with men who were completely unfamiliar.

#### Verses 36-38

As He was going, they were spreading their coats on the road. As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, shouting: "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in Heaven and glory in the highest!"

Matthew, Mark and John tell us in their accounts that not only were people spreading their coats on the ground, but others were cutting branches from leafy trees and palms and spreading them in the road. Why did they do this? What was the meaning of this grand procession? Those of you who have been at Shema for awhile might already have guessed. What biblical festival includes the taking of branches of leafy trees and palms? Sukkot – the Feast of Tabernacles! If only for a fleeting moment, the enormous crowd around Him got it; He was declaring Himself the King Messiah – Immanu-El, God among us, making His tabernacle in our midst.

Throngs of worshippers followed Him from Bethany, and the noise of it all must have caught the attention of people inside the city, because they came out in droves to join the procession. They were praising God with reckless abandon! And why not – it was the right time, and they were overjoyed, many of them having witnessed His miracles, not least of which was the raising of His friend Eliezer (Lazarus) from the dead in nearby Bethany!

Again, don't miss the fact that this is taking place at the descent of the Mt. of Olives, toward Jerusalem. The Mt. of Olives, where our Lord and King and Messiah will return to Earth! And it is through that Eastern Gate facing the Mt. of Olives that Israel's King is to come to Jerusalem. During the reign of the Muslim leader Suleiman, the Ottoman Turks cemented that gate closed in the 1600's, thinking to prevent any such Jewish expectation from being realized. Right... as if cement is going to stop God from accomplishing what He has already declared will take place!!

[Actually that eastern or Golden gate being spoken of is part of the Temple mount complex and is nowhere near to where the Temple of Yehovah once stood. Jehovah's Temple was 600 Meters South over the Gihon Spring.]

And the people shouted "Baruch Melech HaBa b'shem Adonai – Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord." Words similar to those shouted out at Jewish weddings when the Groom makes his appearance, but even grander, since our Bridegroom-to-come is also our Sovereign King. And the crowd there got it! He really was and is the King of the Jews. They also shouted, "Shalom baShamayim u'kavod b'elyon – Peace in Heaven and glory in the highest!" Can you just imagine the joy and exhilaration in those moments? Wouldn't you love to have seen that?

But meanwhile, not everyone there was joyful and exuberant.

Verses 39-40

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." But Yeshua answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"

I still get a kick out of people who reject Yeshua's claim to be the King Messiah, but insist He was a good man. Here the religious leaders are urging Him to restrain His followers, because as far as they are concerned, the crowd is very nearly blaspheming – hailing Yeshua as King and Messiah. Instead of rebuking His disciples, Yeshua rebukes the Pharisees, saying that the very

creation itself was on the verge of crying out in praise of Him! Those are not the words of merely a “good man”. They are either the words of the God of the Universe or they are the words of a madman.

Years back some of us on the Jews For Jesus staff in New York used to go into the subways with our guitars and sing. One of the songs we loved most started this way: “Ain’t no rock gonna cry in my place as long as I’m alive I’ll glorify His holy name.” You see, we were created to give God praise. And if we won’t do it, the rocks and the trees will be more than happy to stand in for us; but not if I can help it. And make no mistake about it, one day the creation itself will be set free and offer praise to the Father and the Son. For now the creation groans from the effects of the Fall, waiting and yearning for that coming Day (Romans 8:22).

But as Yeshua came near the city; the City of David; Jerusalem; the Holy City; the Spiritual Center of Planet Earth; the joy gave way to bewildered quiet, as Messiah began to weep. They were not tears of joy.

Verses 41-44

When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.”

This was no triumphal entry. It stopped short. The multitudes shouting and praising God as they approached Jerusalem, the palm branches and the songs of worship – it would only be a faint glimmer – a brief glimpse at what might have been. That generation would not see it, in the same way that the generation that came out of Egypt, having witnessed God’s miracles through Moses, both in Egypt and in the wilderness, were doomed to die in the wilderness because of their unbelief. They rejected Moses and they rejected God who had delivered them. Now, 1,400 years, many prophets and many warnings later, the people of Jerusalem, especially the leaders of our people, rejected the very One of whom all the prophets foretold, and in so doing, invited God’s judgment.

That judgment would come 40 years later in the form of Rome’s legions under the General Vespasian and later his son Titus. Yeshua foretold that the city of Jerusalem would be besieged and destroyed, along with the Temple and all its ornate gold inlay. His words were literally fulfilled; the soldiers who sacked the Temple broke it apart stone by stone, plundering all the gold they could retrieve – even from between the stones.

And why? In Yeshua’s words, “...because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.”

Please take notice that Yeshua did not say that all the suffering our Jewish people have endured across the world in all the generations since then was because we rejected Him. Yeshua said specifically that Jerusalem would be destroyed. We need to be careful not to say what the Scriptures don't say.

But we do need to be clear about this: it was on account of rejecting the true and righteous Messiah when He presented Himself to Israel that Jerusalem was destroyed.

In the aftermath of the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD, the rabbis asked themselves why this catastrophe happened. Here is what they wrote: "Why was the first Holy Temple destroyed? Because of three wicked things: idol worship, adultery, and murder. But in the second Temple in which time the Jewish people were occupied studying the Torah and doing good deeds and acts of charity why was it then destroyed? The answer is: It was because of hatred without a cause to teach you, that hate without a cause is equal to these sins and that it is as serious a crime as the three great transgressions of idol worship, adultery, and murder" [Yoma 9].

They never specified who it was they hated without a cause, but Yeshua cited Psalm 35 (and Psalm 69) in demonstrating that He was the One they hated without a cause.

Considering that Yeshua wept deeply over Jerusalem, we should examine whether Jerusalem has priority in our own thoughts and occupies a place of prominence in our prayer life. Psalm 137:5-6 reads, If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget her skill. May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth If I do not remember you, If I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy. Psalm 122:6 enjoins us: pray for the peace of Jerusalem, may they prosper who love you.

Unfortunately most people, to this day, fail to understand that this planet has been "visited" – most human beings, including most Jewish people, continue to reject Messiah Yeshua. But that will change – soon.

Verses 45-46

Yeshua entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling, saying to them, "It is written, 'And My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a robber's den."

In Malachi 3:1-3 the prophet warned Israel that the Lord Himself would come to His Temple, but that His coming would be difficult to endure; that He would chasten and purify the sons of Levi. Messiah Yeshua entered the Temple and drove out all the profiteers – for the second time. This was a clear claim to be the Messiah. It also was long overdue.

The Temple had been for many years monopolized by the priests and Saducees, who controlled what animals were deemed "acceptable" for sacrifice. If you wanted to be sure no defect was found, you could always purchase one of their "pre-approved" animals – but at an enormously inflated price. Or you could take your chances with one of your own animals.



Despite people bringing their best, these wicked priests managed to find defects on animals that were not purchased by their hand-picked merchants. And the priests and Sadducees all got a kick-back on the profit from the sales. Most Israelis were poor to begin with, and this made festivals like Passover a time of grief, as families realized they couldn't afford the going prices at the Temple. It was wickedness, and Messiah would not have it. They really had made it "a robber's den".

It is a reminder that those who serve in the House of God will incur a stricter judgment. But we should also bear in mind that Yeshua was quoting from Isaiah 56:6-7, and the context is that God's House will be a house of prayer for all the peoples. There is absolutely no room for ethnic exclusivity in God's program. Messiah is for all people.