

By Joseph F. Dumond

This week's Triennial Torah reading can be found at:
<https://sightedmoon.com/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf>

Gen 26	1 Sam 6-8	Ps 55-56	Mark 3 - 4:23
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Gen 26

When I was researching the Sabbatical and Jubilee years one of the things I had to prove was that the curse for not keeping the Sabbatical years were to be found throughout history. By chronology I was able to locate the curse of drought which is the second curse of Lev 26, and it occurred in Abraham's time and now again during the life cycle of Isaac. What this proved was that the law of the Sabbatical and Jubilee years was in effect even before the land was given to the children of Abraham. This then means that this law like all the other laws were in effect since the creation of Adam.

Then when I applied this understanding to Noah and plotted his chronology it too fit the curses of the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles, I learned how the life cycles of the Patriarchs were teaching us prophecy. All we have to do is read it.

We know from the Bible that the Phillistines were a seafaring people who immigrated to Israel from Crete. For example, Amos said "Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, as well as the Phillistines from Caphtor (Crete)...?" (Amos 9:7). Similarly, Yirmiyahu said, "For G-d is plundering the Phillistines, the remnants of the isle of Caphtor" (Jer. 47:4). And Yechezkel said, "Behold, I am extending My hand against the Phillistines, and I will eliminate the Cretians"

(Eze. 25:16). Historians have confirmed this from Egyptian inscriptions dating to the period of Raamses III that discuss an influx of people from islands into Israel.

Isaac was contending with Abimelech King of the Philistines during the years of 1708 BC to 1690 BC. Abimelech represents Satan and or Babylon. As you read the scriptures always remember that each time Israel interacts with certain figures of countries it is a prophetic picture of future events. Israel is still in the loins of Isaac and or Jacob.

You should also note the Philistines are at this time in history fairly righteous not wanting to incur any sin by having lain with Rebecca; Verse 10.

Where was Gerar? The following verse tells us that Gerar was near Kadesh, also called Kadesh-Barnea. "Avraham journeyed from there to the region of the south (the Negev) and settled between Kadesh and Shur, and he sojourned in Gerar" (Genesis 20:1). Clearly, Gerar is near Kadesh in the Negev, the south of Israel. While archaeologists claim that Gerar is near Beersheva based on Genesis 21:32, we can see that this is not conclusive at all. The verse reads, "Thus, they entered into a covenant at Beersheva; Avimelech then arose, with Phichol the

general of his legion, and returned to the land of the Phillistines.” Quite the opposite. We see that Gerar and the land of the Phillistines is not near Beersheva. Additionally, we see that for Yitzchak to travel from Gerar to Beersheva he first had to go past Nachal Gerar (Gen. 26:17), Esek (ibid. 20), Sitnah (ibid. 21), and Rechovot (ibid. 22). However, archaeologists need to place Gerar near Beersheva in order for it to be part of the area that later books of the Bible identify as Phillistine territory.

The Phillistines that appear in the books of Judges and Samuel lived in the five towns of Gaza, Gat, Ashdod, Ekron, and Ashkelon. Gerar, however, is never mentioned after the Torah (except for repetition in Chronicles). All of the five towns mentioned in later books as being Phillistine are near the Mediterranean Sea. If Gerar was the capital of the Phillistine territory, it must also have been near the sea and not in the Negev near Kadesh-Barnea. This land by the sea was called by earlier books Canaanite land and not Phillistine land. For example, Numbers 13:29 speaks of the expansive kingdom of the Canaanites as spanning from the Jordan river to the Mediterranean Sea. “And the Canaanite dwells by the Sea and on the bank of the Jordan.” There is no mention that the Phillistines lived by the sea.

In Genesis, we find Avimelech who is the king of Gerar and the Phillistines. In later books, each of the five towns had a governor, a seren, who are always referred to collectively (e.g. Judges 16:8). Even in the days of King David, the king of Gat was not called the king of the Phillistines. There was evidently no central leadership. Additionally, the ancient translations render seren as tyran, evidently from the Greek tyrannos. Similarly, Yirmiyahu speaks of the kings of the land of the Phillistines (Jer. 25:20) in the plural, implying that there was no single ruler like there was in the earlier days of Avimelech.

Also, Achish the king of Gat seems to have a Greek name while Avimelech the king of Gerar has a distinctly Semitic name.

More than that, we quoted above many verses later in the Bible that say that the Phillistines were immigrants from Caphtor/Crete. However, Genesis 10:14 says that the Phillistines were descended from the Casluchim and not the Caphtorim who are mentioned immediately afterwards.

What all this tells us is that there were two kingdoms of the Phillistines. In the time of the patriarchs, there was a nation that lived in the Negev called the Phillistines whose capital was Gerar. This nation ceased to exist sometime during the conquest of Israel. After that, Cretians immigrated to Israel and settled in a different part of the land – near the sea. They had a different political structure and location than the earlier group but adopted their name, perhaps to give themselves an ancient claim of authority. We see this happening today with the Palestinians who adopted an ancient name in order to lay claim to the land of Israel.

The only thing that connects these two separate people is the name Phillistines. However, their histories and civilizations were very different. The nation that historians have identified as Phillistines and corroborated as being immigrants during the twelfth century BCE were the second wave of Phillistines. They were highly influenced by the Greeks and may have been the Pelasgians mentioned in the Iliad as being allied with Troy and in other ancient Greek works. Perhaps the similarity of their name with that of the early Phillistines caused the latter’s name to be adopted instead.

The earlier Phillistines, who have eluded the sight of many historians, are the people mentioned in the Torah. They had a central government with one king who had a Semitic name. Their capital was in Gerar, in the Negev.

From http://www.aishdas.org/toratemet/en_beshalach.html

As in the days of Abraham, the land of Canaan experienced another drought and famine— and, having the example of his father before him, Isaac journeyed south with the probable intent of going into Egypt where food would be more likely available, that country being sustained by the annual inundation of the Nile. His journey took him to the southern Philistine city of Gerar, whose king bore the hereditary title Abimelech (meaning “Father King” or “My Father Is King”). That several kings bore the title of Abimelech is amply proven by archaeological discoveries.

Verse 2 records that Yahovah told Isaac, “Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land of which I shall tell you.” This implies that Yahovah generally directed Isaac’s movements, for if Yahovah had merely wanted Isaac to remain in Canaan, He would have simply said, “Live in the land,” omitting “of which I shall tell you.” The latter phrase implies continued guidance. This is interesting because we are told that Abraham, although going into Canaan, went “not knowing where he was going” (Hebrews 11:8), and that Yahovah had said, “Get out of your country to a land that I will show you” (Genesis 12:1), implying that although Abraham knew he was heading toward Canaan, he did not know whether he would remain there or if Yahovah would lead him elsewhere.

Isaac’s movement toward Egypt was stopped by God’s directly intervening to guide his movements within Canaan. For the moment, Yahovah gave no further direction than to remain in the land of Canaan (verse 3).

Notice also that in both Genesis 12 and 26 we have the repeated pattern of Yahovah commanding his servant (Abraham or Isaac, respectively) to go to a land that He would show him, followed immediately by a giving or reaffirming of what has come to be called the Abrahamic Covenant. Genesis contains several examples of this kind of couplet—as you read through the book, you should keep your eyes open for them. One of the couplets is Abraham and Isaac’s denial of their wives, in each case to a king titled Abimelech (Abraham also did so to Pharaoh, Genesis 12). These couplets have led some to suggest that the book of Genesis was stitched together from several different and contradictory traditions—in this case, one tradition having Abraham denying his wife, and another tradition having Isaac denying his wife. The truth is that there are no contradicting traditions. Abraham and Isaac both did the same things, the son imitating the father, perhaps for the same reasons.

Though the incidents with Abraham occurred before Isaac was born, Isaac probably heard about them, perhaps viewing such an approach as acceptable. In Isaac’s case, however, he did not have his father’s excuse that his wife actually was his sister. So this was blatantly a lie (although it could perhaps be argued that a close relative could be called a sister). In any case, this was clearly wrong and illustrates the fact that a bad example can go a long way.

Still, despite Isaac’s problems, he was a man who, like all of us, was growing in faith. Indeed, his is a tremendous example of perseverance. God greatly blessed him (26:12-14). But enemies tried to thwart him, filling in wells that his father’s servants had dug. Isaac’s answer: dig new wells. When the same enemies then quarrelled with him over a new well, he dug another well, and then another, and then another. Country singer Paul Overstreet actually wrote a song inspired by all of this called “Dig Another Well.” It talks about the devil thwarting our efforts—stopping up our wells—and then says, “When I go out for my morning drink, and get a dipper full of dirt, my heart does sink, but I think of old Ike and I have to grin—God blessed me once and He can do it again.” And the song’s advice to those facing such circumstances: “Just pick up your shovel, and dig another well.”

Paul Overstreet

Dig Another Well lyrics

Well Ike had a blessing from the Lord up above

He gave him a beautiful woman to love

A place to live and some land to farm Two good legs

and two good arms

Well the devil came sneaking around one night
Decided he would do a little evil to Ike
Figured he would hit old Ike where it hurts So he filled up
all of Ike's wells with dirt

And when Ike went out for his morning drink
He got a dipper full of dirt and his heart did sink
But he knew it was the devil so he said with a grin God blessed me
once and he can do it again.
He blessed me once and he can do it again.

So when the rains don't fall and the crops all fail
And the cows ain't puttin' any milk in the pail
Don't sit around waitin' for a check in the mail Just pick up the
shovel and dig another well.
Pick up the shovel and dig another well.

Now me and old Ike got a lot in common
The Lord blessed me with a beautiful woman
He gave me a job he gave me a home He gave me a
well to call my own.

Now when I go out for my morning drink
And get a dipper full of dirt my heart does sink
But I think of old Ike and I have to grin Cause God blessed me once
and he can do it again.
He blessed me once and he can do it again.

When the rains don't fall and the crops all fail...
And the cows ain't puttin' any milk in the pail
Don't sit around waitin' for a check in the mail Just pick up the
shovel and dig another well.
Pick up the shovel and dig another well.

— Instrumental —

Well, the good book says Ike finally won
(Pick up the shovel dig another well)
The devil got tired and he left him alone
(Pick up the shovel dig another well)
All I know someday I'm gonna win too
(Pick up the shovel dig another well)

'Cause the good book tells me what to do
(Pick up the shovel dig another well)
Pick up the shovel and dig another well.

Pick up the shovel and dig another well.
Pick up the shovel and dig another well...

Rabbi Reuven Mann <http://www.mesora.org/isaacswells.htm>

When Isaac entered Garar, he did as Abraham his father, and claimed his wife Rebecca was his sister, to protect his own life. After time had passed, we read that the king, Avimelech, had looked from his window, witnessing Isaac engaged in some activity with Rebecca which clearly conveyed that their relationship was in fact not siblings, but husband and wife. Avimelech rebuked Isaac for endangering his people, one of whom might have taken Rebecca, bringing sin to them. Avimelech then commanded his people that no one should harm Isaac and Rebecca.

We then read that Isaac reaped a hundredfold, and grew very successful. His successes did not cease. The Philistines envied Isaac for this. There is an interesting Rashi on this section. He writes, "Better the dung of the mules of Isaac, than the silver and gold of Avimelech." This is a strange idea: why would people prefer the former? The Torah goes on, "All the wells that his (Isaac's) father's servants had dug in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had and stopped up and filled with dirt." For what reason does the Torah inform us of this obscure fact?

Ramban states there is no honor to Isaac in this whole story. So why was it recorded? He answers that the point of this section is to allude to something hidden: these three wells allude to the three Temples. The first well was named Esek, meaning contention. The first Temple was amidst much contention. The second well Isaac dug was named Sitna, for the hatred displayed by the Philistines towards Isaac. Similarly, during the second Temple, there was much hatred. Rechovos was the name of the third well, over which the philistines did not quarrel. Rechovos means breadth, as in the breadth of mind now afforded to Isaac. And in the third Temple, there will be peace. Rabbi Israel Chait commented that although there may be some future correlations, there must also be something in each Torah account, to which we may relate to in the here and now.

Emergence of the Second Patriarch

In what sense were Abraham and his son Isaac patriarchs? Isaac differed from Abraham. Abraham made his mark through his ability to interact with the world. He debated with many, and although eventually exiled, he resumed his teachings. However, there is another element responsible for their success at spreading knowledge of God: Divine providence. Yehovah miraculously saved Abraham on many occasions, paving the way for his continued teachings, while also creating his unparalleled reputation. Isaac was different. He was an "Oleh Temima", a "wholly burnt offering" of sorts. His energies were not directed to the world of the social, but exclusively towards knowledge. Coming so close to death when he was bound to the altar had a profound effect on the personality of Isaac. Thus, Yehovah told Isaac not to descend to Egypt; he was a different personality. So how did Isaac play a role as a patriarch?

Both famines were a result of providence. But in Isaac's case, it did not have the purpose as a test, as was the case with regards to Abraham. During the famine in Isaac's era, Yehovah instructed him to remain in the land. Why was this necessary?

The Wells

The wells were essential for Isaac's emergence in his role as an independent patriarch. We are told that Isaac became very wealthy. But he does not cease in his monetary growth, as was the case with Avimelech. Avimelech was stagnant in his wealth. Therefore, the Philistines said they preferred Isaac's mule dung to Avimelech's riches. This means they respected Isaac who could take dung (famine) and make successes from it. This wealth created a great respect for Isaac. Avimelech then asked Isaac to leave Garar, as his continued dwelling in Garar made Avimelech, the king, look bad by comparison.

But the Philistines became envious. We learn that they filled up Abraham's well. This demonstrated their denouncing of Abraham's philosophy. Why didn't the Philistines fill Abraham's wells earlier? It is because when

they saw the greatness of Isaac, they now learned that Abraham's ideology was not a "flash in the pan", a one-time movement. Isaac's continuation of Abraham's philosophy now created friction in Garar, as they could no longer view Abraham's era as eclipsed by time. His philosophy was sustained through Isaac; there is a dynasty. The Philistines' realization that Abraham's philosophy was continuing was intolerable to their corrupt lifestyle. Had Abraham passed, along with his monotheistic views, they could let matters go. But this was not the case any longer. Thus, they desired to rebel against Abraham's sustained philosophy. But the Philistines could not harm Isaac. They respected his wealth. So they attacked Abraham through stopping up his wells.

Isaac left, but then returned. Why? He did so for the express purpose of reopening Abraham's wells. He made a separate journey back after having left, precisely to demonstrate why he came back: to resuscitate Abraham's fame and teachings. What was the response of the Philistines? They strove with Isaac over his new wells. The Philistines attempted to negate the greatness of Isaac. The Philistines did not say, "ours is the water" as in the first well, demonstrating that the water was not the issue. Rather, Isaac's fame was what they deplored. After a certain amount of time, they saw they could not bring down Isaac. The Philistines eventually succumbed to another emotion: their underlying respect for Isaac's success. The adage, "If you can't beat them, join them" enunciates this very change in the Philistines. Thus, the final well, which Isaac's servants dug, was named "breadth." Isaac was no longer attacked, as the emotion of adulation replaced the Philistines' prior repulsion. This point is when Avimelech desired to secure a truce. Wealth draws people. This was the method through which Isaac became renowned.

Yahovah orchestrated a famine, as the perfect backdrop to emphasize Isaac's wealth. No one else prospered during this famine. Ultimately, Isaac returns to Abraham's teaching ground, Beer Sheva. Isaac arrived physically at this location, and philosophically at his goal to be engaged in study. Thus we read, "He called out in God's name", meaning, he resumed teaching about God, his primary goal. We also learn that God's plan was successful, as we read that Avimelech traveled to Isaac, recognizing his greatness. Isaac's fame was now positive. Avimelech did not desire any truce with Isaac while he dwelled in Garar. It was only after his successes. Subsequent to his exile, Isaac became very wealthy, and this wealth was the groundwork necessary for others to recognize Isaac's philosophy.

The Philistines realized that by applying Isaac's philosophy, one could achieve success. This was exceptionally profound, while they endured a famine.

1 Sam 6-8

Not only were the men stricken with emerods, (hemorrhoids), but there was also a great numbers of mice in the land of the Philistines. The contamination by these pests had spread through every household, and the people of the Philistines wanted no more of Yahovah's punishments.

To remedy this problem they determine to load a cart with golden haemorrhoids and golden rats as a peace offering. But they also took two cows with young calves. The leaders had the calves placed in one of their cities and then sent the cows away. The leadership is hoping the cows would go to the cities where the calves were housed and then they would be able to collect all that gold as this would have proven these curses were just happen chance. And this is why the cart was followed by the leaders of Philistine. It is only natural for a cow to seek her calf and scripture even said the cows were lowing as they went; that is they were mooing calling for the calf. The fact that they did not go to the calves but went to this city is proof of Yahovah at work here.

Once the cart arrived in Beth Shemesh the men of Israel looked inside. This act caused 50,070 men to die from a plague. But this text is corrupted and some have taken it to read that 70 men died and 50 oxen.

From Josephus we read

But now it was that the wrath of Yahovah overtook them, and struck seventy persons of the village of Beth Shemesh dead, who, not being priests, and not so worthy to touch the ark, had approached to it. Those of that village wept for these that had thus suffered, and made such a lamentation as was naturally to be expected on so great a misfortune that was sent from God; and every one mourned for his own relations.

Footnote: These seventy men, being not so much as Levites, touched the ark in a rash or profane manner, and were slain by the hand of Yahovah for their rashness and profaneness.

So why did this sad event take place on what should have been such a joyful day? We find the answer in Number 4: 17 And Yahovah spoke to Mosheh, and to Aharon, saying, 18 “Do not cut off the tribe of the clans of the Qehathites from among the Levites, 19 but do this to them, and they shall live and not die when they approach the most set-apart objects: Aharon and his sons shall go in and appoint each of them to his service and his burden. 20 “They are not, however, to go in to watch while the set-apart objects are being covered, lest they die.”

It was Levites who took the ark off the cart in verse 15, but these other men who looked inside were not Levites and they died for this trespass.

The point to this chapter is that we had better listen to Yahovah and pay attention to the things and ways that He holds dear.

There was no reason that the people of Beth-shemesh should have suffered and lost one life over this matter, if they would have had just one student of the Word of Yahovah there, he would have known that what they were doing was wrong, and he could have warned them of the consequences. The mice and pork are the same affect before Yahovah for they are both unclean animals. Their purpose is to eat up the filth and keep the earth clean of dying things and the poisons are retained within their bodies. When you eat such things you take in all the poisons that they have taken in, and it causes poor health to your body. The mice are not an animal of sacrifice, and it is just as bad as some of the traditions used today to take the place of Yahovah’s Word such as the rapture doctrine, Easter (feast of Ishtar) Christmas and many other things which Christianity has held as being of God.

Though you may think you are doing Yahovah a favour, and respecting him for doing the religious things that man has created, it is an insult to substitute Yahovah’s things and ways for those created by man.

Ps 55-56 [http://www.ucq.org/brp/brp.asp?](http://www.ucq.org/brp/brp.asp?get=daily&day=31&month=July&year=2005&Layout=)

get=daily&day=31&month=July&year=2005&Layout="“Be Merciful to Me, O God, for Man Would Swallow Me Up” (Psalms 54-57)

Psalm 55 is the last maskil of David in a sequence of four. As before, the word Neginoth in the superscription, perhaps part of a postscript to Psalm 54, is probably correctly translated in the NKJV as “stringed instruments.”

David cries out to Yahovah in this song about many enemies acting against him, though his focus is on one in particular. The psalm addresses the pain of being betrayed by a friend—one David knew well who even worshiped Yahovah at the tabernacle alongside him (verses 12-14). Besides being painful on its own, a betraying friend is an enemy with vital knowledge—an adversary particularly adept at causing harm and inflicting pain. David addresses both elements here when he says, “If an enemy were insulting me, I could endure it; if a foe were raising himself against me, I could hide from him” (verse 12, NIV).

The friend having “broken his covenant” (verse 20) could mean an informal one of friendship or a formal oath of loyalty to David as king—perhaps part of an oath of office. The man’s loyalty and slick speech, David says, were a pretence—all part of a calculated plan to stab him in the back (verse 21).

David doesn't name the friend, but many believe the person meant here was his counsellor and prime minister Ahithophel, who betrayed him in joining and essentially directing Absalom's rebellion (see 2 Samuel 15-17). Further, many see a connection between Psalm 55 and Psalm 41:9: "Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me." However, Psalm 41 also concerns an illness that befell David and there is no record of him being ill when Absalom rebelled (though, as pointed out previously, it is not hard to imagine that his deep depression could have made him physically sick). It could be that Psalm 41 and Psalm 55 concern two different friends at different times-or that both concern the same friend but not Ahithophel. In any case, these two psalms are certainly linked by theme if not by occasion. That being so, we should recall that Psalm 41:9 is quoted in the New Testament as a prophecy of the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot. The betrayal in Psalm 55 would seem to prefigure this as well, as many have recognized.

The NKJV translates David's prayer in verse 15 as: "Let death seize them; let them go down alive into hell"-that is, not just the one treacherous friend but others who were set against him also. In no way does this refer to people descending into a burning hellfire and remaining conscious. Rather, the word translated "hell" here simply means, as the NIV renders it, "grave." In using the word "alive," David could conceivably be calling for what happened to Korah and the other rebels against Moses in the wilderness when the earth opened up and swallowed them-whereupon they were instantly killed. Yet it seems likely that he simply means for their deaths to come while they are in full vigour and not after they have lain on their sickbeds in old age. David later expresses his belief that this will happen when he says near the end of the psalm, "Bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days" (verse 23).

How are we to understand David's call for death on his enemies, as it may seem very unchristian in light of Jesus' instruction to love our enemies and pray for our persecutors? One book explains regarding such imprecations (calls for curse or judgment on others) in the psalms: "These invocations are not mere outbursts of a vengeful spirit; they are, instead, prayers addressed to God. These earnest pleadings to Yahovah ask that he step in and right some matters so grossly distorted that if his help does not come, all hope for justice is lost.

"These hard sayings are legitimate expressions of the longings of Old Testament saints for the vindication that only God's righteousness can bring. They are not statements of personal vendetta, but utterances of zeal for the kingdom of Yahovah and his glory. The attacks that provoked these prayers were not just from personal enemies; rather, they were rightly seen as attacks against Yahovah and especially his representatives in the promised line of the Messiah. Thus, David and his office bore the brunt of most of these attacks, and this was tantamount to an attack on Yahovah and his kingdom!

"It is frightening to realize that a righteous person may, from time to time, be in the presence of evil and have little or no reaction to it. But in these psalms we have the reverse of the situation. These prayers express a fierce abhorrence of sin and a desire to see God's name and cause triumph. Therefore, those whom the saints opposed in these prayers were the fearful embodiments of wickedness.

"Since David was the author of far more imprecatory psalms than anyone else, let it also be noted that David exhibited just the opposite of a vindictive or vengeful spirit in his own life. He was personally assaulted time and time again by people like Shimei, Doeg, Saul and his own son Absalom. Never once did he attempt to effect his own vindication or lift his hand to exercise what many may have regarded as his royal prerogative....

"Finally, these imprecations only repeat in prayer what Yahovah had already stated elsewhere would be the fate of those who were impenitent and who were persistently opposing Yahovah and his kingdom. In almost every instance, each expression used in one of these prayers of malediction may be found in plain prose statements of

what will happen to those sinners who persist in opposing God” (Walter Kaiser Jr., Peter Davids, F.F. Bruce and Manfred Brauch, *Hard Sayings of the Bible*, 1996, comments on Psalm 137:8-9).

David, we should also remember, was a prophet expressing God’s judgment. Furthermore, here in Psalm 55 he even seems to make allowance for repentance when he says that it is such people’s lack of repentance that is the basis for their punishment: “God, who is enthroned forever, will hear them [i.e., the evil they say and do] and afflict them...men who never change their ways and have no fear of God” (verse 19, NIV).

Conversely, David has confidence that Yahovah will sustain His faithful people. He tells the righteous to “cast your burden on the LORD, and He shall sustain you” (verse 22). The apostle Peter later says the same in 1 Peter 5:6-7: “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”

Psalm 56 is the first of five Davidic psalms in a row bearing the title *mikhtam* (56-60). As explained in the Bible Reading Program comments on Psalm 16 (another *mikhtam*), the meaning of this word is uncertain. It may mean a writing or inscription-and could perhaps denote something first written as a poem (though we know from the examples here that these were set to music, at least at some point, and some express a desire to play instruments or sing). As noted previously, these *mikhtams* are all written in the face of great danger.

We earlier read Psalm 56 in conjunction with the account of David fleeing from Saul into Philistine territory and being taken into custody by the Philistines at Gath-the event mentioned in the superscription (see the Bible Reading Program comments on 1 Samuel 21:1-12; Psalm 56). This was immediately before David feigned madness to escape from the Philistines, after which he composed Psalm 34 in thanks to God.

David complains that his enemies are many and that they hound him all day (56:2). Having been on the run from Saul, it is likely that David was thinking a great deal about him and his forces and not just the Philistines-though they were certainly included.

David talks through his fears in prayer: “Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You.... In Yahovah I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?” (verses 3-4; compare the same basic refrain in verses 4 and 10-11; see also 118:6). It was fear of Saul that had driven David from Israel and into Philistine territory. So he was clearly learning some lessons here.

David then once more describes the actions of his enemies (Psalm 56:5-7) before again expressing trust in Yahovah to help him. The Nelson Study Bible says that “alternating passages of pain and faith are a characteristic of the lament psalms...[and] the poet typically complains about lies, the misuse of language, and deceit” (notes on Psalm 56:3-4 and verse 5).

Thinking about his life on the run and all his suffering, David knows that Yahovah is aware and keeps track of it (verse 8). David realizes Yahovah is for him-on his side (verse 9; compare Romans 8:31). Yahovah has been faithful to him in saving and helping him (Psalm 56:13)-and David will be faithful to Yahovah (verse 12).

Some time ago I received a study from a Brother about forgiveness and how it seemed to clash with those other teachings of the scriptures. Instead of asking Yahovah to forgive, scriptures seem to tell us that David asked Yahovah to remember their transgressions to repay them for these acts just as we have just read in the Psalms.

What do Luke 23:34, Acts 7:60 and Psalm 3 have in common?

(Luke 23:34 [KJV])

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

(Acts 7:59-60 [KJV])

And they stoned Stephen, calling upon [God], and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

(Ps 3:7 [KJV])

Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies [upon] the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

You may be looking at these passages and wondering what they have to do with each other. It may be obvious what Luke 23:34 and Acts 7:60 have in common, but it is not obvious what Psalm 3 has in common with the above two passages. If we analyze the two passages of Luke and Acts, we may be able to see how Psalm 3 and several other Scriptures listed below are associated.

Let's look at the interlinear of both the Greek and the Aramaic.

We will start with Acts 7:60 in the Greek.

Acts 7:60 Greek Study Bible (Apostolic / Interlinear)

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Notice that in the Greek the negative ("NO") is before the word for "standing". When we look at the translation of the text, there is no word for "standing". Actually the opposite is true, we have the word "lay".

(Acts 7:60 [KJV])

And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

The interesting part with the translation in the English is that not only is the negative associated with the verb "stand" (the negative of stand is lay), but it is also then added into the sentence text. Let's look now at the Aramaic. Remember that the Aramaic is read from right to left.

Acts 7:60 Aramaic NT: Peshitta

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We see here in the Aramaic the same as we see in the Greek. The negative is applied to the verb "stand" and there is no other negative anywhere in the text.

It seems from the "original" texts that a better translation of the text would be one of the two translations: And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, stand not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

or

And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

My personal opinion on this translation is the latter of the two options. This makes Stephen's words completely different than what they have been rendered in the translation and the teaching in his death is now different. Before we make too many conclusions, let's look at the next Scriptural example, Luke 23:34.

The Greek text of Luke 23:34 places the negative before the conjunction in the sentence.

(Luke 23:34 [KJV])

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

The English translation renders this verse with the negative after the conjunction and the following verb. Let's look at the Aramaic to see if the same is true. Remember that Aramaic must be read from right to left.

We see here again that the same is true in the Aramaic text; the negative comes before the conjunction.

Now we should ask "What is the purpose of the conjunction in this request?" If we look at the text, we can see that if we removed the conjunction, each part of the request would stand by itself. The text would read: "Father forgive them not. They are aware of what they are doing." The conjunction brings the two statements together and makes them relevant to each other.

"Father forgive them not for they are aware of what they are doing."

Looking at these texts gives us a significantly different perspective. In both of these cases, Acts 7:60 and Luke 23:34, an innocent man is being put to death and each one is being stoned. (If you are new to thought of Messiah being stoned to death while hanging on a tree, please see the additional study at

http://www.beamesderfer.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=71:the-stoning-of-messiah&catid=40:perspectives&Itemid=84)

The below verses are additional support for calling those who knowingly sin to be remembered by our Father. What we must understand is that neither Messiah, Stephen or David raised a hand against those people who persecuted them, but they did call on our Father to remember the sins of those individuals.

(Deut 28:7 [KJV])

The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

(Ps 59:1-5 [KJV])

To the chief Musician, Altaschith, Michtam of David; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him. Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.

Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me; not [for] my transgression, nor [for] my sin, O LORD.

They run and prepare themselves without [my] fault: awake to help me, and behold.

Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.

(Ps 68:21 [KJV])

But God shall wound the head of his enemies, [and] the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.

(Rev 11:3-5 [KJV])

And I will give [power] unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

(Jer 18:18 [KJV])

Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

(Jer 18:19-25 [KJV])

Give heed to me, O LORD, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me.

Shall evil be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember that I stood before thee to speak good for them, [and] to turn away thy wrath from them.

Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and pour out their [blood] by the force of the sword; and let their wives be bereaved of their children, and [be] widows; and let their men be put to death; [let] their young men [be] slain by the sword in battle.

Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them: for they have digged a pit to take me, and hid snares for my feet.

Yet, LORD, thou knowest all their counsel against me to slay [me]: forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sin from thy sight, but let them be overthrown before thee; deal [thus] with them in the time of thine anger.

(Ps 109:1-31 [KJV])

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. Hold not thy peace, O God of my praise;

For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.

They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause.

For my love they are my adversaries: but I [give myself unto] prayer.

And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.

Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

Let his days be few; [and] let another take his office.

Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek [their bread] also out of their desolate places.

Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour.

Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children.

Let his posterity be cut off; [and] in the generation following let their name be blotted out. Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.

Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.

Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart.

As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

Let it be unto him as the garment [which] covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

[Let] this [be] the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of them that speak evil against my soul.

But do thou for me, O GOD the Lord, for thy name's sake: because thy mercy [is] good, deliver thou me.

For I [am] poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.

I am gone like the shadow when it declineth: I am tossed up and down as the locust.

My knees are weak through fasting; and my flesh faileth of fatness.

I became also a reproach unto them: [when] they looked upon me they shaked their heads.

Help me, O LORD my God: O save me according to thy mercy:

That they may know that this [is] thy hand; [that] thou, LORD, hast done it.

Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but let thy servant rejoice.

Let mine adversaries be clothed with shame, and let them cover themselves with their own confusion, as with a mantle.

I will greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, I will praise him among the multitude. For he shall stand at the right hand of the poor, to save [him] from those that condemn his soul.

These passages above all point to asking our Father to remember the sins of those who sin against us, and our reliance upon our Father's justice and judgment to be adequately applied to all those who sin against us. It is not for us to take these matters into our own hands.

(Deut 32:35 [KJV])

To me [belongeth] vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in [due] time: for the day of their calamity [is] at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

(Heb 10:28-31 [KJV])

He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

For we know him that hath said, Vengeance [belongeth] unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

[It is] a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The actions of the individuals surrounding the death of Yahushua and Stephen are acts against Torah.? It is because the acts are against Torah that they are to be remembered and that those who commit those acts would have consequences according to Torah. In this Yah is glorified and we are simply asking for a just scale in the Day of Judgment. We are not wishing undo harm on those who deserve it, but that Yah judges according to His Word.? Even in the case of David and Jeremiah, the request of remembering their sins was toward those who were seeking to murder them for no Torah justifiable reason – i.e. they were innocent. This would bring us back to what is coming in the future and the coming persecutions... those who seek to kill us in the future, we are not to fight against but rather set an example to all around that we do not fear death (see Paul's 2nd letter to Timothy), but their act is an abomination to Yah and we should want that all acts against His Torah be handled according to Torah. Yah tells us in Ezekiel that the righteous and the wicked will be remembered in their final acts, not the cumulative acts of their life.

Shalom

Mark 3 -4:23

3:4 And He said to them, "Is it right to do good on the Sabbath, or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent.

Many use this verse to justify not keeping the Sabbath, but Yahshua was not working' What they fail to realize is that He was in fact keeping the Sabbath.

I also read in the King James the name of Simon and want to point it out to you. Simon was Zealot not a Canaanite. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simon_the_Zealot

The apostle called Simon Zelotes, Simon the Zealot, in Luke 6:15 and Acts 1:13; and Simon Kananaïos or Simon Cananeus ("Simon" signifying "hearkening; listening", Standard Hebrew Šimʕon, Tiberian Hebrew Šimʕôn), was one of the most obscure among the apostles of Jesus. Little is recorded of him aside from his name. A few pseudepigraphical writings were connected to him, and Jerome does not include him in *De viris illustribus*.

The name of Simon occurs in all the passages of the synoptic gospels and Acts that give a list of apostles, without further details.

Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, and Judas ["the son" is interpolated] of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. (Luke 6:12-16, RSV)

To distinguish him from Simon Peter, he is called Kananaïos, or Kananites (Matthew 10:4; Mark 3:18), and in the list of apostles in Luke 6:15, repeated in Acts 1:13, Zelotes, the "Zealot". Both titles derive from the Hebrew word qana, meaning The Zealous, though Jerome and others mistook the word to signify the apostle was from the town of Cana (in which case his epithet would have been "Kanaïos") or even from the region of Canaan. As such, the translation of the word as "the Cananite" or "the Canaanite" is purely traditional and without contemporary extra-canonic parallel.

Unpardonable Sin

28 "Truly, I say to you, all the sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they speak, 29 but he who blasphemes against the Set-apart Spirit has no forgiveness forever, but is subject to everlasting judgment," 30 because they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

<http://www.ucg.org/bible-faq/unpardonable-sin-god-forgive.htm>

What is the unpardonable sin? What sin won't God forgive?

Some worry they have committed an unpardonable sin. Jesus Christ's perfect sacrifice can cover any sin, so what could make a sin so bad God wouldn't forgive it.

Many have asked about what is often called the unpardonable sin.

Christ mentioned this unforgivable sin in Mark 3:28-29, where it is described as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. It had to do with denying the authority and power of God. Mark explains that Christ was responding to an accusation from His detractors, who said, "He has an unclean spirit" (verse 30). They meant that His authority came from Satan, not from God. Although these accusers knew that Christ was the Son of God, they accused Him of being a fraud. Christ warned them that they were in danger of committing a sin for which there was no forgiveness.

What is the fate of one who does not repent of this sin? The unrepentant will die in a lake of fire at the end of the age (Matthew 10:28; Revelation 20:14-15). It's not that one sin is more terrible than another is, but rather that any sin we don't repent of will result in death. Hebrews

6:4-6 and Hebrews 10:26-27 both mention this sin as well, warning us not to “fall away” or to “sin willfully.” How does one know if he has crossed the point of no return?

So long as one desires to repent, to get his or her life back in order spiritually, God will always forgive. Sadly, it is possible to come to a state of not caring about and not looking for forgiveness. If there’s no repentance, there can be no forgiveness. That’s when a person is in danger of the unforgivable sin. A person can come to that place either by simply drifting away or by sharply turning away from God in angry hostility.

At any time, God can and will forgive the sin of departing from Him, if the sinner wants forgiveness and genuinely repents. God inspired John to write, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Clearly, God will extend mercy to all who sincerely repent and change—regardless of their sin. Christ’s words, coupled with the warnings in Hebrews, are sobering. Nonetheless, we should hold fast to the hope that God will grant us repentance when we turn to Him.

Let’s broaden the subject to consider a related aspect. Quite apart from the unpardonable sin, many sincere religious people do not understand that sin is the transgression of God’s law (1 John 3:4). Most churches teach and practice a theology much different from the way of life followed by the early New Testament Church of God.

Yahshua told Peter that we should forgive our brother 70 X 7, do you think Yahovah would do any less.

What is the Fathers Will?

Mark 3::35 “For whoever does the desire of Elohim is My brother and My sister and mother.”¹ Footnote: 1Mt. 12:50, Lk. 8:21.

Mathew 7: 21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Master, Master,’ shall enter into the reign of the heavens, but he who is doing the desire of My Father in the heavens. 22 “Many shall say to Me in that day, ‘Master, Master, have we not prophesied in Your Name, and cast out demons in Your Name, and done many mighty works in Your Name?’ 23 “And then I shall declare to them, ‘I never knew you, depart from Me, you who work lawlessness!’

Yahshua tells us that on the day of judgement that many will kneel before Him bragging about what they have done in His name. They will, while on bended knees, while grovelling at His feet, with hope in their voices say “Lord, Lord, remember all the things I did in Your name, I prophesied, I spoke in tongues, I healed the sick, I cast out devils, I, I, I...” Why will they be grovelling in hope instead of standing tall in confidence? They will be grovelling and squirming because of two things the Lord has warned us about in these three verses, two things they ignored.

But, Yahshua will say to them “depart from Me, you who work lawlessness.”

They healed the sick, they drove out devils, they spoke in tongues, they prophesied, they did wonderful works in the name of the Lord, why are they going to eternal damnation, what is it that they didn’t do, how is it that they missed doing the one thing they had to do, ” whoever does the desire of my Father “?

What is the will of the Father?

Mathew 18:2 And ????? called a little child to Him, set him in their midst, 3 and said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become as little children, you shall by no means enter into the reign of the heavens. 4 “Whoever then humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the reign of the heavens. 5 “And whoever receives one little child like this in My Name receives Me. 6 “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it is better for him that a millstone be hung around his neck, and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea. 7 “Woe to the world because of stumbling-blocks! For it is necessary that stumblingblocks come, but woe to

that man by whom the stumbling-block comes! 8 “And if your hand or foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or crippled, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be thrown into the everlasting fire. 9 “And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be thrown into the fire of Gehenna. 10 “See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in the heavens their messengers always see the face of My Father who is in the heavens. 11 “For the Son of Adam has come to save what was lost. 12 “What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, would he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains, going to seek the one that is straying? 13 “And if he should find it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. 14 “Thus it is not the desire of your Father who is in the heavens that one of these little ones should be lost.

Again What is the Will of the Father? Do you not yet know this?

John 14: 15 “If you love Me, you shall guard My commands.1 Footnote: 1See Ex. 20:6, vv. 21&23,. 16 “And I shall ask the Father, and He shall give you another Helper, to stay with you forever – 17 the Spirit of the Truth, whom the world is unable to receive, because it does not see Him or know Him. But you know Him, for He stays with you and shall be in you.

1 John 5: 1 Everyone who believes that ????? is the Messiah has been born of Elohim, and everyone who loves the One bringing forth also loves the one having been born of Him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of Elohim, when we love Elohim and guard His commands. 3 For this is the love for Elohim, that we guard His commands,1 and His commands are not heavy,. 4 because everyone having been born of Elohim overcomes the world. And this is the overcoming that has overcome the world: our belief. 5 Who is the one who overcomes the world but he who believes that ????? is the Son of Elohim?

2 John 1: 6 And this is the love, that we walk according to His commands.1 This is the command, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.

The Will of the Father is that you keep the commandments. Why? John 14:15 If you Love me You will keep them. Those who say they love Him and keep not the commandments are liars.

1John 2: 3 And by this we know that we know Him, if we guard His commands.1 Footnote: 1See 3:6. 4 The one who says, “I know Him,” and does not guard His commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever guards His Word, truly the love of Elohim has been perfected1 in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

1John 3: . 6 Everyone staying in Him does not sin. Everyone sinning has neither seen Him nor known Him.1 Footnote: 1See 2:4 & 3 John v. 11. 7 Little children, let no one lead you astray. The one doing righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.1 Footnote: 1See 2:29. 8 The one doing sin is of the devil, because the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of Elohim was manifested: to destroy the works of the devil.1 Footnote: 1See Titus 2:14. 9 Everyone having been born of Elohim does not sin, because His seed stays in him, and he is powerless to sin, because he has been born of Elohim.

That is the Fathers Will, that you keep the commandments. And now that you are the light of the world what must you do?

4: 20 “And those sown on good soil, are those who hear the word, and accept it, and bear fruit, some thirtyfold, and some sixty, and some a hundred.” 21 And He said to them, “Would a lamp be brought to be put under a basket or under a bed? Is it not to be put on a lampstand? 22

“For whatever is hidden shall be revealed, and whatever has been kept secret, shall come to light.¹ Footnote: 1Lk. 8:17.

You brethren are the light to the world of the truth that you are learning. Do not hide in your rooms. Do not get under a basket so no one can see your good works. Tell people about what you are learning and share it with them. Let your light shine. Let them know to return to the Torah as Yahshua truly taught. Not this christainity that does away with the law. That is not the Fathers will. The Fathers will is that we do keep His Torah and this is how we show Him that we love Him. If you are not keeping the Torah then you are liars and will be told on the fateful day I never knew you depart from me. Be a light and begin to tell what you know. Let it shine.