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וזאת הברכה V'Zot HaBerachah

Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12



- 1 וְזֹאת הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר בֵּרַךְ מֹשֶׁה אֶישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ: This is the blessing with which Moses, God's agent, (agent Lit. "participant whose involvement defines the depicted situation"; trad. "man"; cf. Exod. 3.10; Num. 12.6–8; 20.16. See the Dictionary under 'ish; Agent.) bade the Israelites farewell before he died.

The text explores various comparisons made by different figures claiming superiority to Moses, highlighting Moses' humility and greatness as exemplified in Midrash and Chasidut teachings. It delves into the significance of Moses' blessings, the special relationship he had with God, and his unique role as a prophet. Commentary from different sources provides insights into Moses' leadership, humility, and the mystical nature of his blessings. The text also discusses the importance of Torah study for spiritual growth and the authority given to Moses as a judge by God.

- 2 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה מִסִּינִי בָא וְזָרַח מִשְׁעִיר לְמוֹ הוֹפִיעַ מִהָרִּן פָּאֲרָן וְאֵתָה מִרְבֶּבֶת קֹדֶשׁ מִיִּמִּינוֹ (אֲשֶׁר דָּתָן לְמוֹ): He said: הוהי came from Sinai, And shone upon them from Seir; [God] appeared from Mount Paran, And approached from Ribebboth-kodesh, (Ribebboth-kodesh Cf. Meribath-kadesh, 32.51.) Lightning flashing at them from [God's] right. (Lightning flashing ... from [God's] right Meaning of Heb. mi-ymino 'esh dath uncertain, perhaps a place name.)

The texts explore various aspects of Jewish thought, including the special status of the Jewish people as chosen by God, the significance of Torah study, the rejection of the Torah by other nations, and the importance of following the laws set forth in the Torah. They emphasize the relationship between God and the Jewish people, the need for humility, balance, and understanding in spiritual practices, and the consequences of deviating from the teachings of the Torah. These discussions also touch on topics such as the transmission of the Torah, the exclusivity of God's promises to the descendants of Isaac and Jacob, and the importance of Torah scholars in influencing nature through their knowledge.

- 3 אֶף חָבֵב עַמִּים כָּל־קִדְשָׁיו בְּיָדְךָ וְהֵם תָּכֹן לְרִגְלְךָ יֵשָׁא מִדְּבַרְתִּיךָ: (The meaning of vv. 3–5 is uncertain. An alternative rendering, with v. 3 apostrophizing Moses, is: "3 Then were, O lover of the people, / All [God's] worshipers in your care; / They followed your lead, / Accepted your precepts. / 4 Moses charged us with the Teaching / As the heritage of the congregation of Jacob. / 5 Thus was he king in Jeshurun....") Lover, indeed, of the people, Their hallowed are all in Your hand. They followed in Your steps, Accepting Your pronouncements,

Various Jewish texts and commentaries explore themes such as God's love for Israel, the role of Torah scholars, the relationship between G-d and the Jewish people, and the importance of following God's laws. These texts emphasize the special status of the righteous, the transmission of Torah teachings, and the unity of the Jewish faith. Discussions also touch upon the leadership transitions within the Jewish community, the protection of the righteous by G-d's love, and the mystical connections between G-d, Israel, and other nations.

- 4 תוֹרָה צִוְּה־לָנוּ מֹשֶׁה מוֹרְשָׁה קִהְלֹת יַעֲקֹב: When Moses charged us with the Teaching As the heritage of the congregation of Jacob.

The text emphasizes the inheritance of Torah as exclusive to the Jewish people, passed down through generations from Moses and seen as a gift from God. Teaching Torah to non-Jews is prohibited, and Torah study is essential for Jewish identity and connection to God. The Torah, symbolized as a crown, is accessible to all who desire to partake, emphasizing the unique relationship between the Jewish people and the Torah, which is considered the heritage of all of Israel.

- 5 וַיְהִי בִישׁרוֹן מֶלֶךְ בְּהַתְּאַסֵּף רָאשֵׁי עַם יִחִיד שְׁבָטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: Then [God] became King (King I.e., one who provides protection and caring help. (This poetic figure takes the ancient Near Eastern status and gender hierarchy as a given.) See further the Dictionary under “king.”) in Jeshurun, When the heads of the people assembled, The tribes of Israel together.

The text explores various aspects of Jewish thought, Midrash, Halakhah, commentary, Chasidut, liturgy, Targum, Talmud, Musar, and Kabbalah, providing insights into topics such as the importance of fair judgment by judges, the significance of elders, the consequences of lashon hara, the role of leaders in unity, and the connections between God, Moses, Torah, and the Jewish people. Reflections on concepts like unity, leadership, and divine intervention are examined through different lenses and sources, offering a deeper understanding of Jewish tradition and practice.

- 6 יַחֲיֵי רְאוּבֵן וְאַל-יָמֹת וַיְהִי מִתִּיּוֹ מִסְפָּר: May Reuben live and not die, Though few be his numbers.

The text explores the significance of Reuben as Jacob's firstborn son, focusing on his sins, loss of privileges, redemption through repentance, and resurrection concepts. Moses prays for Reuben's tribe to live and not die, replenish their numbers, and be righteous. The connection between Reuben and Judah, their actions, blessings, and interpretation are linked to reincarnation, repentance, and divine mercy, implying a contrast between the brothers. Additionally, various sources support the belief in resurrection based on Moshe's blessings and Targum interpretations. Overall, the text emphasizes the importance of unity, repentance, and divine mercy in understanding and following God's will.

- 7 וְנָאֵת לַיהוּדָה וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמַע יְהוָה קוֹל יְהוּדָה וְאַל-עֲמֹן תְּבִיאֵנּוּ יָדָיו רַב לוֹ וְעֶזֶר מִצָּרָיו תְּהִיָּה: And this he said of Judah: Hear, הוּהִי, the voice of Judah And restore him to his people. Though his own hands strive for him, (Though his own hands strive for him Better (vocalizing rab with patha) “Make his hands strong for him.” Cf. rabbeh, Judg. 9.29.) Help him against his foes.

The text discusses various aspects related to Judah, including his prayers for divine assistance, blessings for the tribe of Judah, his role in battle, and his confession regarding Tamar. It also explores connections between Judah and other tribes, highlighting the importance of prayer, repentance, and the perpetual seeking of a connection with the divine in Jewish thought, Talmudic interpretations, Kabbalistic texts, commentaries, Tanakh passages, Chasidut teachings, Targums, and Musar lessons.

- 8 וּלְלֵוִי אָמַר תִּמְיָךְ וְאוּרִיךְ לְאִישׁ חֲסִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר נִסִּיתוֹ בַּמָּסָה תִרְיָבֵהוּ עַל-מֵי מֵרִיבָה: And of Levi he said: Let Your Thummim and Urim Be with Your faithful one, Whom You tested at Massah, Challenged at the waters of Meribah;

The text discusses the tribe of Levi's attachment to God, emphasizing their loyalty, faithfulness, and righteous actions throughout history, such as during the golden calf incident and the waters of Meribah. The Levites were praised for their piousness, devotion, and fulfillment of their duties as priests and teachers of the Torah. Through their faithfulness, they remained God's devoted ones, exemplifying trust, righteousness, and faithfulness. Aaron, as High Priest, was commended for his piety and faithful service. Moses blessed the tribe of Levi, highlighting their virtues and highlighting their distinction and blessing compared to others.

- 9 הָאֵמֶר לְאָבִיו וּלְאִמּוֹ לֹא רֵאִיתִיו וְאֶת-אֶחָיו לֹא הִכִּיר וְאֶת-בָּנָיו לֹא יָדַע כִּי שְׁמָרוּ אֶמְרָתְךָ וּבְרִיתְךָ יִנְצְרוּ: Who said of his father and mother, “I consider them not.” His brothers he disregarded, Ignored his own children. Your precepts alone they observed, And kept Your covenant.

Midrashim discuss Levi's loyalty and dedication to God, while emphasizing the importance of following God's ways for eternal blessings. Various commentaries commend the Levites for their obedience, impartial judgment, and commitment to God's commandments. The tribe of Levi is praised for their spiritual superiority, loyalty during the golden calf incident, and dedication to upholding God's word. Additionally, the significance of circumcision and the Levites' virtues are highlighted in Halakhah texts, while Targum commentaries and Kabbalistic writings also focus on

the tribe of Levi's commitment to God and His covenant. The Talmud mentions a halakha regarding the tribe of Levi, with a verse indicating some Levites were involved in idol worship.

- 10 יורו משפטִיךָ לְעַלֵּב וְתוֹרַתְךָ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל יְשִׁימוּ קְטוֹרֶתָּהּ בְּאַפְךָ וְכָלִיל עַל־מִזְבִּיחֶךָ: They shall teach Your laws to Jacob And Your instructions to Israel. They shall offer You incense to savor (They shall offer You incense to savor Lit. "They shall place incense in Your nostril.") And whole-offerings on Your altar.

Midrash discusses Elkanah's righteousness and Micah's atonement, highlighting the importance of incense offerings and the role of the tribe of Levi in sacrificial practices. Jewish Thought explores the rewards of good deeds and the acceptance of Torah, while Commentary emphasizes the teaching role of the Levites. Halakhah delves into the Levites' dedication to Torah and spiritual matters. Chasidut discusses the spiritual significance of incense, Targum emphasizes the role of priests in appeasing God, and the Talmud discusses practices related to incense and wealth. Musar underscores the importance of supporting those serving God, and Kabbalah describes Aaron's spiritual qualifications for offering incense.

- 11 בֵּרַךְ יְהוָה חֵילוֹ וּפְעָל יָדָיו תִּרְצֶה מִחַץ מִתְּנִים קִמְיוֹ וּמִשְׁנָאִיו מִן־יָקוּמוֹן: Bless, הוהי, his substance, And favor his undertakings. Smite the loins of his foes; Let his enemies rise no more.

Various commentaries explore the significance of offerings in the Temple, particularly focusing on incense-burning and the blessings associated with it. Aaron's intervention to stop a plague through incense-burning is highlighted, along with the importance of compassion towards the less fortunate. Moses' close relationship with God is noted, as well as the selection of priests for incense-burning to seek favor from God. The Midrash connects biblical tribes with specific kingdoms based on symbolism and predicts the futures of biblical figures. Talmudic texts discuss the validity of disqualified Cohanim's work, while Halakhah explains the acceptance of desecrated priests in service. The Targums seek blessings and protection for the tribe of Levi, while Liturgy provides post-meal blessings. Chasidut emphasizes noble actions and influence, while Kabbalah explores Aaron's spiritual fitness for temple service and blessings.

- 12 לְבִנְיָמִן אָמַר יְדִיד יְהוָה יִשְׁכֵּן לְבֶטֶח עָלָיו חֶפֶץ עָלָיו כָּל־הַיּוֹם וּבֵין כְּתָפָיו שָׁכֵן: Of Benjamin he said: Beloved of הוהי, He rests securely beside [God], Who protects him always, As he rests between God's shoulders. (As he rests between God's shoulders Or "He dwells amid God's slopes.")

The text discusses the special status of the tribe of Benjamin in Jewish thought, particularly in relation to the Temple being located in their territory. Benjamin's unique blessings and connection to the Temple are highlighted, emphasizing the protection and presence of the divine in his land. The importance of the upah in marriage according to Jewish law and the significance of Judah's leadership role are also explored in various commentaries and texts.

- 13 וּלְיוֹסֵף אָמַר מְבֹרָכַת יְהוָה אֶרְצוֹ מִמֶּגֶד שְׁמַיִם מִטָּל וּמִתְהוֹם רִבְצָת תִּחַת: And of Joseph he said: Blessed of הוהי be his land With the bounty of dew from heaven, (With the bounty of dew from heaven Targum Onkelos and two Hebrew manuscripts: "With the bounty of heaven above," reading me'al ("above") for mial (lit., "from dew"), cf. Gen. 49.25.) And of the deep that couches below;

Moses blesses Joseph's land in Deuteronomy 33:13, emphasizing the abundant blessings it will receive from the Lord, including dew and deep waters, symbolizing fertility and abundance. This unique blessing is described as being especially fruitful, with a balance of Divine qualities and emphasis on irrigation even during droughts. The blessing of Joseph's land is considered the most blessed of all lands in the Midrash Sifrei Devarim.

- 14 וּמִמֶּגֶד תְּבוּאֹת שֶׁמֶשׁ וּמִמֶּגֶד גֶּרֶשׁ יָרֵחַ: With the bounteous yield of the sun, And the bounteous crop of the moons;

The texts explore the relationship between the sun, moon, and crop growth, emphasizing the importance of wisdom in maintaining health and highlighting the symbolism of the luminaries in providing light and influencing plant growth.

The commentaries discuss the significance of the sun and moon in creation, caution against premature redemption, and highlight the influence of stars on a person's body. The Targums and Halakhah texts describe the earth's dependence on the sun and moon for harvests and the commandment to offer sacrifices on Rosh Chodesh to acknowledge the power of the luminaries.

15 With the best from the ancient mountains,And the bounty of hills immemorial;  
ומראש הררי־קדם וממגד גבעות עולם:

Moses blesses the land of Ephrayim with abundant fruit from ancient mountains and everlasting hills, highlighting the importance of the land in Joseph's blessing. Talmudic discussions further emphasize Joseph's territory and the Divine Presence within it, while Targums connect the land's blessings to the righteousness of ancestors. Commentaries on Genesis also praise the abundance of produce in Judah and expand on Joseph's blessings reaching far and wide.

16 With the bounty of earth and its fullness,And the favor of the Presence (Presence Lit. "Dweller"; cf. Exod. 3.1ff.) in the Bush.May these rest on the head of Joseph,On the crown of the elect of his brothers.  
וממגד ארץ ומלאה ורצון שכני סנה תבואתה לראש יוסף ולקדקד נזיר אחיו:

The text discusses Joseph's forgiveness and blessings to his brothers, Moses encountering God in a burning bush, the concept of God's continuous presence in Jewish thought, and the distribution of sacred covers and sacrifices in the Talmud. Additionally, it explores the connection between various biblical figures and attributes in Chasidut, the punishment of the Egyptians for mistreating the Israelites, and the abundance and blessings bestowed upon Joseph and his family in the Targum.

17 Like a firstling bull in his majesty,He has horns like the horns of the wild-ox;With them he gores the peoples,The ends of the earth one and all.These (These I.e., one of the wild-ox's horns.) are the myriads of Ephraim,Those (Those I.e., the other horn.) are the thousands of Manasseh.  
בכור שורו הדר לו וקרני ראם קרליו בהם עמים ינגח יחדו אפסי־ארץ והם רבבות אפלים והם אלפי מנשה:

The text discusses the virtues and flaws of Jacob's sons, prophetic glimpses into their future roles, and the symbolism behind their banners. The interpretation highlights the spiritual depth of biblical narratives, such as Rabbeinu Bahya's analysis of different animals and objects, and the discussions in the Talmud regarding biblical characters compared to animals. Additionally, there is insight into the blessings of Moses for the tribes of Ephrayim and Menashe, emphasizing a hierarchy among Joseph's descendants. The mention of bowing down to God in Chasidut, the Mishnah's discussion on the shofar for Rosh Hashanah, and the Targums on Joseph's descendants portraying them as powerful and victorious are also key points.

18 And of Zebulun he said:Rejoice, O Zebulun, on your journeys,And Issachar, in your tents.  
ולזבולן אמר שמח זבולן בצאתך ויששכר באהלך:

The text discusses the importance of supporting Torah scholars, with references to the roles of different tribes in providing financial support for Torah study. It emphasizes the partnership between Zebulun and Issachar, with Zebulun's business activities being crucial in sustaining Issachar's Torah study. The significance of supporting Torah scholars discreetly is compared to nurturing a growing tree and is considered equivalent to delighting in Shabbos. The text also emphasizes the importance of dedicating oneself to Torah study, even at the expense of material comfort, and highlights the interconnectedness between Torah study and financial support in upholding and sustaining Torah wisdom.

19 They invite their kin to the mountain,Where they offer sacrifices of success.For they draw from the riches of the seaAnd the hidden hoards of the sand.  
עמים הר־יקלאו שם יזבתו זבחי־צדק כי שפע ימים ילקו ושפני טמיני חול:

The text covers various topics including the eternal love of God, the significance of Zebulun and Issachar, the hidden nature of the Hillazon, the blessings bestowed upon Zebulun and Issachar, and the concept of influence attributed to

incorporeal beings. It also touches on the ability of the tribe of Issachar to understand the signs of the times, the importance of recognizing God's sovereignty in liturgy, the wealth promised to Zebulun, and the future unity and repair work in Musar. Additionally, it explores the existence of seven seas in Kabbalah.

20 And of Gad he said: Blessed be the One who enlarges Gad! Poised is he like a lion To tear off arm and scalp.

וּלְגַד אָמַר בְּרוּךְ מְרַחֵב גֹּד כְּלָבִיָּא שֶׁכֵּן וְטָרַף זֶרַע אֶף-קֶדֶד:

In Midrash texts, Joseph chooses five non-mighty brothers to present before Pharaoh, while Moses's blessing highlights the mighty brothers not presented. Commentary on Deuteronomy 33:20 praises the tribe of Gad for their large inheritance and battle prowess. The Netziv, Rabbeinu Bahya, Ramban, Rashi, Talmud, Sforno, and Tur HaArokh all emphasize Gad's strength and courage. In Numbers 32:17, the Reubenites and Gadites propose leading as shock-troops to establish themselves in their new land. In Targum texts, Moses blesses Gad for their lion-like strength in battle.

21 (Meaning of verse uncertain; cf. vv. 3–5 (with note there), and saphun “esteemed” in post-biblical Heb.) He chose for himself the best, For there is the portion of the revered chieftain, Where the heads of the people come. He executed the judgments of Israel.

וַיִּרְא רָאשִׁית לּוֹ כִּי-שֵׁם חֶלְקָת מַחֲקָק סֶפֶן וַיִּתֵּא רָאשֵׁי לֵם צִדְקָת יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה וּמִשְׁפָּטֵי עַם-יִשְׂרָאֵל:

In Jewish thought, individuals like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses play a crucial role in bringing God's presence closer to earth through their actions. The importance of following the Torah's laws, bringing merit to the masses, and honoring the dead is emphasized in various texts like the Talmud, Midrash, Commentary, and Mishnah. These texts also discuss the significance of righteousness, voluntary acts of charity, and the interconnectedness of spiritual and earthly realms, highlighting the role of individuals in influencing the collective good for humanity's enlightened future.

22 And of Dan he said: Dan is a lion's whelp That leaps forth from Bashan.

וּלְדָן אָמַר דָּן גִּיּוֹר אֲרִיָּה יִזְנֵק מִדְּבָשָׁן:

Midrash texts in Bamidbar Rabbah and Bereshit Rabbah discuss offerings and character traits of biblical figures such as Elyasaf, Judah, and Benjamin. Commentary from various sources compares the tribe of Dan to a lion, symbolizing their protective nature near the border. Quoting commentary further explores the themes of bloodshed, sin, and the imagery of lions in relation to the Temple and Tabernacle. The Jerusalem Talmud discusses the punishment of those who sinned with the Baal Peor, resulting in a large number of deaths. Targums depict the tribe of Dan as a powerful lion cub with a well-watered land. Musar commentaries explore the numerical value of words and question the characteristics of Dan compared to a serpent and Judah as a lion.

23 And of Naphtali he said: O Naphtali, sated with favor And full of the Lord's blessing, Take possession on the west and south.

וּלְנַפְתָּלִי אָמַר נַפְתָּלִי שָׂבַע רִצּוֹן וּמָלֵא בְרָכַת יְהוָה יָם וָדָרוֹם יִרְשֶׁה:

The Midrash Bamidbar Rabbah 2:10 discusses the arrangement of the Israelite tribes around the Tabernacle, highlighting the attributes and strengths of each tribe. The Talmud discusses blessings and inheritance associated with reciting a blessing over a full cup, while the Commentary emphasizes Naphtali's blessings from God and inheritance in both worlds. Jewish Thought explores the concept of "male" in Jewish thought, while Quoting Commentary delves into the character traits and blessings of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali. The Targum outlines the blessings of the tribe of Naphtali, and Kabbalah emphasizes the Torah as a blessing leading to inheriting blessings in both worlds. Musar connects the blessings of Asher and Naphtali to the importance of the Torah in bringing abundance and eternal blessings. Lastly, in Halakhah, the traditions and interpretations of the old-timers are essential when performing the ten requirements for the cup of blessing, symbolizing thankfulness and compassion.

24 And of Asher he said: Most blessed of sons be Asher; May he be the favorite of his brothers, May he dip his foot in oil.

וּלְאַשֶׁר אָמַר בְּרוּךְ מִבְּנֵי אֶשֶׁר יְהִי רִצּוֹי אֶחָיו וְטָבַל בְּשֶׁמֶן רַגְלֵוֹ:

The text discusses the significance of the Tribe of Asher, particularly in relation to their abundance of olive oil. This blessing from Moses is highlighted in various commentaries, emphasizing the richness and prosperity associated with

the tribe. The connection between Asher's blessings and their virtuous acts, such as giving charity, is also explored, linking tithing to the abundance of blessings promised by God. Additionally, the text touches upon the relationship between Asher and other tribes, illustrating their favored position and prosperity within the Israelite camp.

25 (Meaning of verse uncertain.) **בְּרִזְלָא וּנְחָשֵׁת מְנַעֲלֶיךָ וּכְנִימֶיךָ דְּבִאֲךָ:** May your doorbolts be iron and copper, And your security last all your days.

In the Midrash, various rabbis discuss Torah study, the prosperity of Israel, and blessings on the tribe of Asher, while Jewish thought explores the term "male" in different contexts. The Talmud delves into rules regarding shoes on the Sabbath, and the Targums comment on the strength of the tribe of Asher. Quoting commentary and Chasidut further elaborate on spiritual benefits, leadership roles, and the importance of maintaining strength and wisdom into old age.

26 **אֵין כָּאֵל יִשְׁרוּן רָכַב שְׁמַיִם בְּעֶזְרֶךָ וּבְגִאֲוֹתָיו שְׁחָקִים:** O Jeshurun, there is none like God, Riding through the heavens to help you, Through the skies in His majesty.

Various texts from Jewish thought, Midrash, Talmud, commentary, Chasidut, Kabbalah, Targum, and Musar discuss the importance of connecting with God through studying Torah, observing commandments, and embodying divine attributes on Earth. Emphasis is placed on God's dominion over the heavens, the unique relationship between God and Israel, and the significance of prayer and spiritual practices in maintaining this connection. The texts also delve into the role of the Jewish people in assisting God's actions and the consequences of sinfulness on manifestations of His powers.

27 (Meaning of verse uncertain.) **מְעֵנָה אֱלֹהֵי קֶדֶם וּמִתְחַת זֶרְעֵת עוֹלָם וַיְגַרֵּשׁ מִפְּנֵיךָ אוֹיֵב וַיֹּאמֶר הַשֶּׁמֶד:** The ancient God is a refuge, A support are the arms everlasting. He drove out the enemy before you By His command: Destroy!

Various texts from Midrash, Jewish Thought, Talmud, Commentary, Kabbalah, Quoting Commentary, Halakhah, Chasidut, Targum, and Musar delve into concepts such as the relationship between God and the world, spiritual purity, self-control, prayer, humility, faith, connection to the divine, the importance of Torah study, and the significance of righteous individuals in upholding the world. The texts also touch on themes of humility, overcoming enemies, receiving healing, and the eternal nature of God's support.

28 **וַיִּשְׁכֵּן יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטַח בְּדֵר עֵין יַעֲקֹב אֶל־אֶרֶץ דָּגָן וְתִירוֹשׁ אֶף־שִׁמְיוֹ יַעֲרֹפוּ טֵל:** Thus Israel dwells in safety, Untroubled is Jacob's abode, (abode Others "fountain.") In a land of grain and wine, Under heavens dripping dew.

Various Midrash texts explore the symbolism of dew in relation to Israel's fate and God's control over them, highlighting the importance of prayer for forgiveness. Jewish thought discusses Jacob's blessing and separation, emphasizing individual spiritual personality. Commentary emphasizes the exclusivity of the Jewish people and their unique destiny, while quoting commentaries delve into symbolic interpretations of Biblical verses. In Tanakh, blessings are bestowed upon Jacob and Joseph, expressing confidence in God's protection. Chasidut links foreign thoughts to the corruption of mishpat, and Kabbalah emphasizes the unique and secure destiny of Jacob's descendants. The Talmud discusses decrees issued by Moses and the consequences of Israel's behavior, while Mishnah addresses disagreements on how to roast the Paschal lamb. Targum emphasizes Israel's security and prosperity, tied to blessings from the heavens.

29 **אֲשֶׁרֶיךָ \*יִשְׂרָאֵל מִי כָמוֹךָ עִם נוֹשֵׁעַ בְּיָהוּהָ מִגֵּן עֶזְרֶךָ וְאַשְׁרֵי־חֶרֶב נֶאֱוָתְךָ וַיִּכְחָשׁוּ אִיְבֹיֶיךָ לָךְ וְאַתָּה עַל־כְּמוֹתֵימָו תִּדְרֹךְ:** O happy Israel! Who is like you, A people delivered by הוּוּהִי, Your protecting Shield, your Sword triumphant! Your enemies shall come cringing before you, And you shall tread on their backs.

The text explores various aspects of Jewish religious practices, beliefs, and interpretations. It includes discussions about specific rituals during Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret, the importance of sacrifices, divine foreknowledge, individual and collective rewards for good deeds, and the unique relationship between Israel and God. Additionally, it delves into the themes of humility, triumph over enemies, and the concept of the Jewish people ascending to reach the Unlimited One in Kabbalah. Biblical verses and commentaries are referenced to provide support and explanations for these topics.



- 1 וַיַּעַל מֹשֶׁה מִמִּדְבַּר מוֹאָב אֶל־הָרַ נְבוֹ מִן־רֹאשׁ הַפְּסָגָה אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי יְרֵחוֹ וַיִּרְאֶהוּ יְהוָה אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֶת־הַגִּלְעָד עַד־הַיָּם: 1 Moses went up from the steppes of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the summit of Pisgah, opposite Jericho, and הוה showed him the whole land: Gilead as far as Dan;

Various texts explore themes related to Biblical passages, discussing Moses' vision of the land of Israel, the importance of prayer, the reasons why Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land, and the boundaries of Eretz Yisrael. The Talmud delves into discussions regarding Moses' physical strength before his death, while commentary explores how divine assistance and prophecy played a role in Moses' vision. The Midrash discusses Moses' death and burial, highlighting the power of prayer to change decrees, and the Tanakh mentions the idolatry of the Danite tribe. Halakhah addresses customs related to Simchat Torah, and quotes from various commentaries provide insights on Job's arguments, Moses' vision, the concept of blessings and curses, humility, and geographical locations in the Bible. Musar discusses Moses' request for a successor and his spiritual insights, while Tosefta draws parallels between divine retribution in biblical stories.

- 2 וְאֵת כָּל־נַפְתָּלִי וְאֶת־אֶרֶץ אֶפְרַיִם וּמְנַשֶּׁה וְאֵת כָּל־אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה עַד הַיָּם הָאֲחֵרֹן: 2 all Naphtali; the land of Ephraim and Manasseh; the whole land of Judah as far as the Western (Western I.e., Mediterranean; cf. 11.24.) Sea;

In Deuteronomy 34:2, God shows Moses the land of Israel, including specific tribes and regions, connecting them to historical and spiritual significance. The Midrash and Targums further elaborate on the individuals, events, and leaders associated with these tribes, while Rabbeinu Bahya emphasizes the Jewish people's exclusive claim to prophecy, Torah, the land of Israel, and resurrection after death. The significance of Hebrew terms for directions, the Sea of Reeds, and the symbolic meaning of the four directions are also discussed by Rashi and Ramban.

- 3 וְאֶת־הַנֶּגֶב וְאֶת־הַבְּקָעַת יְרֵחוֹ עַיִר הַתְּמָרִים עַד־צֹר: 3 the Negeb; and the Plain—the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees—as far as Zoar.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi discusses the future rebuilding of the Temple and the descendants of Jethro studying Torah, while various commentators describe locations shown to Moses before his passing. In different texts, Jericho is associated with palm trees and dates, and the importance of Torah being deeply embedded in one's heart is emphasized. The Midrash explains significant locations shown to Moses, and Rabbi Akiva recounts a debate about the credibility of various types of testimony in allowing a woman to remarry. The Targums mention future conflicts and deliverance during a time of tribulation.

- 4 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָיו זֹאת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וְלַיָּעֶקֶב לֵאמֹר לְוָרְעֶךָ אֶתְנַנָּה הָרְאִיתִיךָ בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְשָׂמָה לֹא תַעֲבֹר: 4 And הוה said to him, “This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, ‘I will assign it to your offspring.’ I have let you see it with your own eyes, but you shall not cross there.”

In Jewish thought, Moses was shown the land he would not enter as a consolation, with sages interpreting this spiritually rather than physically. In the Midrash, Moses saw all generations and their fates but was denied entry into the land. The Talmud discusses various teachings related to respecting the dead, the mitzvot in the Torah, and Torah education for children. Philo reflects on the need to detach from worldly things and focus on higher realities. The Targum emphasizes the fulfillment of God's promise to the forefathers but Moses being unable to enter the promised land. Finally, commentary explains that Moses was forbidden to enter the land to maintain the effectiveness of his blessing and the opportunity for the generation to participate in the resurrection, proving that the dead can communicate with the living world.

- 5 וַיָּמָת שָׁם מֹשֶׁה עֶבְד־יְהוָה בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב עַל־פִּי יְהוָה: 5 So Moses the servant of הוה died there, in the land of Moab, at the command of הוה.

The text discusses Moses' unique death in the land of Moav, emphasizing his obedience and special relationship with God. Various interpretations highlight the peaceful passing of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam as a divine "kiss," symbolizing their righteousness and close connection to the divine. Moses' role as a servant leader is emphasized, along with his desire to serve God until his last moments.

וַיִּקְבֹּר אֹתוֹ בְּגִל בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב מִן הַבְּעִיר וְלֹא יָדָע אִישׁ אֶת־קְבֻרָתוֹ עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: 6 [God] buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, near Beth-peor; and no one knows his burial place to this day.

Throughout various commentaries in Jewish texts, acts of kindness and humility are emphasized as core teachings in the Torah and exemplified through examples such as God's caring actions towards individuals like brides, grooms, and the sick. Moses' burial in a hidden location symbolizes his ascension to the will of God and the importance of avoiding worship of humans. The divine involvement in burying Moses reflects a sustained protest against human worship and emphasizes the importance of admiring role models rather than idolizing them. The concept of reward for good deeds being given measure for measure is highlighted, as well as the importance of emulating God's ways by showing kindness and compassion towards others. Ultimately, the texts explore the significance of acts of kindness, humility, and following righteous paths in the Jewish faith.

וּמֹשֶׁה בֶּן־מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה בָּמָתוֹ לֹא־כָהָתָה עֵינָיו וְלֹא־נָס לְחָה: 7 Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eyes were undimmed and his vigor unabated.

In Jewish Thought, losing a first wife is compared to the destruction of the temple, with references to Moses's unique preservation of physical health at 120 years old. Rashi disputes claims about Rivkah's age, while Moses and Abraham serve as models for aging well. The Talmud discusses unique scenarios for mitzvot, Midrash reflects on Moses's death and character, and Chasidut explores symbolism related to tefillin and Moshe as the Supernal Elder. The text also highlights Moses's strength, humility, and shifts in his role as a prophet as he ages.

וַיִּבְכּוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מֹשֶׁה בְּעֶרְבַת מוֹאָב שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם וַיִּתְּמּוּ יָמָיו בְּכִי אֶבֶל מֹשֶׁה: 8 And the Israelites bewailed Moses in the steppes of Moab for thirty days. The period of wailing and mourning for Moses came to an end.

In Jewish thought, the leadership styles of Moses and Aaron in the Wilderness are contrasted, with Moses focusing on weighty matters while Aaron was seen as a popular and beloved leader due to his pursuit of peace. The importance of mourning respected figures like Moses and Aaron for thirty days is highlighted in Talmud commentary and other texts, emphasizing the significance of peacekeeping and communal unity. Aaron is specifically mourned for his role in restoring peace, while Moses' mourning period is characterized by wisdom and counsel. Finally, it is noted that the appropriate time period for mourning and eulogizing deceased individuals varies depending on their status, with Torah scholars like Moses being mourned for up to twelve months.

וַיְהִי וְשׁוּעַ בֶּן־נוּן מִלֵּא רוּחַ חֲכָמָה כִּי־סָמַךְ מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יָדָיו עָלָיו וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֵלָיו בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה: 9 Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands upon him; and the Israelites heeded him, doing as הוֹדִי had commanded Moses.

In Jewish Thought, offerings are crucial for achieving closeness with G'd, emphasizing different types serving specific purposes related to atonement and communion. The passing down of wisdom and authority, as seen in Moses transferring to Joshua, is key in leadership and religious practice. The importance of communal offerings and connecting faith, service to G'd, and divine bounty is highlighted, along with the concept of giving credit to the conduit rather than the source. The significance of wisdom and understanding, elders, and prophets in the passing down of tradition is also emphasized in Midrash and Talmud texts, showcasing the continuity of spiritual knowledge through generations.

וְלֹא־לָקֹם נִבְיָא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּמֹשֶׁה אֲשֶׁר יָדָעוּ יְהוָה פָּנִים אֶל־פָּנִים: 10 Never again did there arise in Israel a prophet like Moses—whom הוֹדִי singled out, face to face,

Jewish thought emphasizes the uniqueness of Moses as a prophet who had a face-to-face relationship with God, setting him apart from all other prophets. This exceptional connection is seen as miraculous and transcending human understanding, with Moses' prophecy and closeness to God highlighted in various sages' interpretations. His unmatched prophetic abilities and intimate communication with God are contrasted with other prophets, affirming his unparalleled stature in Israel's history.

לְכָל־הָאֹתֹת וְהַמּוֹפְתִים אֲשֶׁר שְׁלַחַי יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם  
לְפָרְעָה וּלְכָל־עֲבָדָיו וּלְכָל־אֶרֶץ:  
11 for the various signs and portents that he sent him to display in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his courtiers and his whole country,

Maimonides explains in "Guide for the Perplexed" that not all qualified individuals become prophets due to the lack of worthiness among their contemporaries. The portrayal of prophets in the Torah emphasizes the unique qualities and relationships with God required for prophecy. Moses' miracles, performed face to face with God, established his authenticity as a prophet beyond doubt. Ramban explains that those who rebelled against Moses challenged God's authority, highlighting the significance of Moses' leadership and the miracles he performed. Torah teachings describe different dimensions of God, with Moses' miracles being understood only by the spiritually elite.

וּלְכָל־הַיָּד הַחֲזָקָה וּלְכָל־הַמּוֹרָא הַגָּדוֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה מִשָּׁה לְעֵינֵי  
כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל:  
12 and for all the great might and awesome power that Moses displayed before all Israel.

Various texts within Jewish thought, Chasidut, Talmud, Quoting Commentary, Halakhah, Commentary, Midrash, Targum, Kabbalah, and Musar, discuss different aspects of Moses' actions and significance, the Torah, and the interactions between God and the Jewish people. These texts delve into Moses' doubts and complaints, his role as a leader, the authority of the Torah, and the profound impact of events such as the splitting of the sea and the revelation at Mount Sinai. The significance of specific details in the narrative, the process of receiving and maintaining the Torah, and the symbolic meanings behind different elements are explored within the texts.

