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וזאת הברכה V'Zot HaBerachah

Expanded Commentary

Deuteronomy 33:1-34:12

Deuteronomy 33:1

- וְזָאת הַבְּרָכָה אֲשֶׁר בֵּרַךְ מֹשֶׁה אֶישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְנֵי מוֹתוֹ: 1 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.

Midrash

”? Another meaning is that Isaac’s eyes dimmed from seeing the smoke of the incense offerings when he entered the prayer house, as it is written: “All became dark [dimmah] of smoke” (Hosea 13:3). Another meaning is that Isaac’s eyes dimmed due to the words of Esau. Another meaning is that his eyes dimmed due to the gallows that Haman erected against Mordechai. What is “from seeing”? Another interpretation is that, when Isaac saw the desire of Esau to kill Jacob, his eyes dimmed as a result. Another interpretation is that his eyes dimmed because of the destroying angel who seized the knife from Abraham to slaughter Isaac. “but you have surpassed them all.”

Chasidut

- Fervent worship and Torah study with love and reverence connects a person to God, allowing them to speak God's words as if He Himself is speaking through them [Chasidut | Ba'al Shem Tov, Bechukotai 2:1]. - Moshe is described as "the man of God" and blessed the children of Israel before his death, arranging the necessary Divine service for each soul in Israel [Chasidut | Mei HaShiloach, Volume I, Deuteronomy, V'Zot HaBerachah 1]. - Moshe Rabeynu was completed in perfection on the day of his death and blessed Israel in the best way possible [Chasidut | Mei HaShiloach, Volume I, Deuteronomy, V'Zot HaBerachah 2]. - Prophets in the Bible were called seers or prophets based on the functions they performed more frequently, such as teaching repentance or telling the future, rather than their essence [Chasidut | Mevo HaShearim 1:10]. - Moses is considered "regular" because he didn't need to change physically when receiving prophecy, unlike other prophets who had to divest themselves of materiality, showing a deeper connection to their supernal source at the time of prophesying [Chasidut | Sefat Emet, Numbers, Beha'alotcha 22:3].

Quoting Commentary

- Bartenura outlines the Torah readings and haftarat for several specific days, such as the first and second days of Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Shavuot, and Sukkot. - The text emphasizes that Moses is not meant to be worshiped, but serves as a role model for humility and humanity. - The Torah refers to Moses five times as "ish," meaning man, underscoring his human qualities and role as a leader. - Moses blesses each tribe with words meant to encourage them to fulfill their destiny before his death in V'Zot HaBerachah. - The importance of humility in the context of Torah study is highlighted in different commentaries. - The inheritance of the Torah belongs to all of Israel, not just select groups, emphasizing the communal nature of Torah study and practice. - Moses is referred to as a servant of God only after his death, showcasing his full stature and theological attainments. - Various interpretations of the term "ish" in different Biblical contexts are discussed in Rabbinical commentaries.

Commentary

- The term "man of God" was used to indicate prophets were instructed by God in their blessings, including Moses [Daat Zkenim].
- The phrase "before his death" suggests Moses blessed the tribes near his death, after an encounter with the angel of death [Ibn Ezra, Daat Zkenim].
- The Torah begins with "and this is the blessing" to continue where the previous

text left off, ensuring a fatherly tradition [Or HaChaim, Ibn Ezra]. • Moses' title "man of God" distinguishes from patriarchs and suggests his blessings were divinely inspired [Or HaChaim, Ibn Ezra]. • Moses' blessings were viewed as superior to past blessings and were unreserved, despite proximity to death [Or HaChaim]. • The Torah contrasts Moses' blessing with his predecessors and explains the increase in blessings as a tribute to his spiritual strength and leadership [Or HaChaim]. • The Torah uses "before his death" to indicate a profound blessing despite circumstances, similar to fatherly or kingly traditions [Tze'enhah Ure'enhah, Sferno]. • Deviating from Moses' usual humility, he is depicted as a king when blessing the tribes [Tze'enhah Ure'enhah]. • Moses was dubbed a "man of God" for treating everyone justly and maintaining a connection to God [Tze'enhah Ure'enhah]. • To honor Moses, sages invoked a verse implying God's presence even in exile to depict how Moses uniquely blessed Israel [Or HaChaim].

Tanakh

• Exodus 3:10 - God sent Moses to free the Israelites from Egypt • Numbers 12:6-8 - God speaks to prophets in visions and dreams, but Moses is trusted and can speak with God directly, without riddles

Responsa

- The argument that verses in Scripture allude to Mohammed is feeble and fallacious - The promises made to Abraham's descendants only refer to Isaac and Jacob, not Ishmael - The prophet mentioned in Deuteronomy 18:15 is said to be a Jew like Moses, not a non-Jewish prophet like Omar or Zeid - The Laws of Moses, including the oral law from the sages, cannot be altered or added to - Heretics who attempt to corrupt the faith can be killed in accordance with Deuteronomy 17:11

Talmud

• On Sukkot, selections from Numbers 29 were read every day except the last, where the portion of "All the firstborns" was read, emphasizing helping the poor and laws regarding firstborns. • The haftara for the last day of Sukkot was "And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying" from I Kings 8:54-9:1. • On the second day of the Eighth Day of Assembly in the Diaspora, the reading was "And this is the blessing" from Deuteronomy 33-34 until the end of the Torah, with the haftara being "And Solomon stood" from I Kings 8:22-53. • According to Rabbi ama, son of Rabbi anina, even Moses didn't know where he was buried, with his burial place chosen to atone for the incident at Beth Peor in Numbers 25.

Mishnah

• Mishnah Megillah 3:5 outlines which Torah portions are read on specific holidays by the congregation. • Passover, Rosh HaShana, and Sukkot have specific portions from Leviticus that are read. • Shavuot has a portion from Deuteronomy read, Yom Kippur has a portion from Leviticus 16. • More detailed portions are read during the Sukkot holiday in addition to the portion from Leviticus.

Halakhah

On Sukkot, specific passages from the Torah and haftarot are read each day, including Shor o kesev o eyz, Hiney yom ba l'Ado-nai, Vayikahalu el hamelech Shlomo, Kol hab'chor, Vay'hi k'chalot Shlomo, Vezot haberachah, Vaya'amod Shlomo, and Vay'hi acharei mot Moshe. On Shmini Atzeret, three Torah scrolls are used with specific readings from each, along with a haftarah from Joshua. Simchat Torah follows a similar pattern with special ceremonies, festive meals, and customs such as circling the Torah scrolls and multiple readings from the Torah. In places with only two Torah scrolls, adaptations are made to accommodate the readings.

Kabbalah

- All Israel has a place among worthy souls, blessed by Moses to purify thoughts and establish wisdom with the light of the living - The blessing from Moses allows entry into the coming world, bringing goodness and blessings to the Jewish people - Moses blessed the children of Israel with a specific blessing before his death - Moses existed in the world post-death due to a specific blessing - Moses blessed Israel only with a specific blessing - Moses is referred to as "the man of Elohim," leading a specific grade over the land

Second Temple

In Second Temple commentary, Moses is referred to as having multiple names such as Moses, a Man of God, and the god of Pharaoh. Moses is seen as interpreting oracles, praying, blessing the people, and punishing Egypt for its impious deeds. In another passage, Moses is described as giving himself to God in exchange for God's protecting care.

Targum

Moshe gives blessings to the children of Israel before his death in Deuteronomy 33:1, with variations in wording across Targum Onkelos, Targum Jerusalem, and Targum Jonathan.

Musar

- Psalm 81:5 interpreted as a statute to Israel and makes sense to G-D of Jacob, alludes to Moses and Rabbi Akiva - Torah study to acquire titles or authority nullifies the value of study - Moses and Noach contrasted in terms of levels of righteousness and their relationship with G-D - Moses had a deep understanding of G-D's names and used them in various actions - Moses blessings compared to David's blessings, with David's being the most comprehensive - Moses acted as G-D's agent, with G-D performing miracles using him as a filter - Moses' progression from a human to being like G-D as shown in Exodus 12:12 - Moses started as a private in G-D's army but later reached a level of being like G-D

Deuteronomy 33:2

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה מִסִּינִי בָּא וְזָרַח מִשְׁעִיר לְמוֹ הוֹפִיעַל מִהָר פָּאֵרָן וְאַתָּה מִרְבֶּבֶת קֹדֶשׁ מִיִּמִּינוֹ (אֲשֶׁרֶת) לְמוֹ: 2 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.)

Midrash

• The tribe of Asher presented their offering after Dan, symbolizing judgment and confirmation. • Asher's offering included a silver dish and basin symbolizing the nations of the world and Israel. • The weight and number of objects in the offering represent the descendants of Noah and the queens associated with the tribes. • The gold ladle filled with incense represents Israel being chosen by God to receive the Torah.

Jewish Thought

Joseph is depicted as the archetype Jew in Jewish thought, symbolic of the Jewish people throughout the Bible. Just as Joseph was close to his brothers, the Jewish people were close to Edom when receiving the Torah, bringing "evil" reports about nations who rejected it. Israel's special status in receiving the Torah led to hatred from other nations, similar to Joseph's brothers. Daniel saw the Greeks as a leopard, reflecting their fierceness and eagerness for wisdom, attributing to them a similar character as the Jewish people who, due to the Torah, are considered fierce.

Talmud

- Nations question receiving Torah and judgement for not fulfilling mitzvot - Torah revealed money of gentile nations to Jewish people in context of giving Torah - Torah given to Jews because they are impudent, study humbles them - Right hand ties to cantillation notes, used to eat and give Torah - Torah scroll put in case beside Ark as per different opinions - Reasons for Jerusalem destruction: idolatry, causeless hatred - Torah should be rolled up, handed with right hand as delivered at Mount Sinai - Torah read with melody, Mishnah with tune to endear statutes - Written as one read as two words: fortune is come, fiery law, consumed of the fire - One who prays must take three steps back, recite Peace and bow to right and left, referencing fiery law

Quoting Commentary

- Commentary on Deuteronomy 33:2 mentions G'd offering the Torah to various nations, each rejecting it based on different laws concerning murder, adultery, and theft. - The Commentary on Exodus 14:27:1 describes the Torah being like water, acting as a shield for Israelites and a destructive force for Egyptians. - According to the Commentary on Deuteronomy 33:25:2, the Torah is viewed as a means of protection, comparable to how the phylacteries provide merit.

Commentary

• The Lord is described as coming from Sinai, shining from Seir, and manifested from the mountain of Paran, an expression of His fondness for the people of Israel • The Lord's glorious presence emanates from Sinai to bless the people • The sunrise from Seir is compared to lightning illuminating the earth • The right side symbolizes fondness, with

a fiery law coming from G-d's right hand • The reference to a "fiery law" in the verse spells out to be a single word but is meant to be read as two words, "fire" and "law" • G-d came as a prayer to Sinai to present the Torah and let the people live • The LORD's divine presence, which descended on Mount Sinai, is indicated by the Myriads Holy • The Torah appears to be constant fire given through fire and lightning • The Lord's arrival indicated that there was space for the Torah among the Israelites • G-d gave the Torah from His right hand and emanated His light to the Israelites from Mount Paran and Seir through divine revelations.

Responsa

- The argument that verses in Scripture allude to Mohammed is feeble and fallacious - The promises made to Abraham's descendants only refer to Isaac and Jacob, not Ishmael - The prophet mentioned in Deuteronomy 18:15 is said to be a Jew like Moses, not a non-Jewish prophet like Omar or Zeid - The Laws of Moses, including the oral law from the sages, cannot be altered or added to - Heretics who attempt to corrupt the faith can be killed in accordance with Deuteronomy 17:11

Chasidut

Chasidut | Kedushat Levi, Genesis, Bereshit 2: Elijah provides sustenance and teachings to Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai and his son in hiding from the Romans, teaches about G'd's essence concealing itself to make physical world creation possible, ensuring creatures can withstand radiance without blindness. Chasidut | Kedushat Levi, Genesis, Bereshit 5: The Torah indicates that G'd renews the creative process daily in spiritual and profane aspects, leading to the physical world creation. The Torah uses careful wording to indicate the closeness between G'd and the world.

Chasidut | Kedushat Levi, Genesis, Vayera 26: God offers Torah to the descendants of Esau to encourage greater devotion to Him, with material benefits for encouragement, linked to the right side exuding love. Yitzchok symbolizes awe rooted in joy, with joy manifesting in serving G'd enthusiastically. Chasidut | Likutei Moharan 101:2:3: Torah offered to nations first, each tied to a specific trait, none accepting due to conflict with Torah. Taking on Torah alleviates other burdens. Chasidut | Likutei Moharan 69:9:2: Marrying for wealth is unwise, marrying for Torah ideal. Torah is connected to the right side, symbolizing wisdom. Chasidut | Mei HaShiloach, Deuteronomy, V'Zot HaBerachah 3-5: Various locations mentioned relate to different attributes, Torah linked to assistance and love, providing clarity and illumination for souls. Chasidut | Sefat Emet, Genesis, Bereshit 5: Torah given to Bnei Yisrael on all levels, linking all creation to Hashem through Torah, even the simplest Jews connected to the trunk of Torah for spiritual growth. Chasidut | Tanya, Part II; Shaar HaYichud VehaEmunah 5:3: Tzaddikim in Gan Eden comprehend life-force from Torah's attributes of kindness and might, Torah serving as the "food" for their souls, with precepts acting as veils for comprehension. Chasidut | Tanya, Part IV; Iggeret HaKodesh 10:2: Torah's source in the "graces of the Lord" as the "right side," man's fulfillment of commandments elicits G'd's light upon himself, manifesting awe and love.

Mishnah

- A Jew's ox gored a consecrated ox or a non-sacred ox owned by a Jew: owner exempt from paying compensation - A consecrated ox gored a non-sacred ox owned by a Jew: owner exempt from liability - A Jew's ox gored a gentile's ox: owner exempt from liability - A gentile's ox gored a Jew's ox: owner pays full cost of damage

Halakhah

In Halakhah according to the Mishneh Torah, Prayer and the Priestly Blessing, it is recommended to take leave from the left first, following the example of taking leave from a king. This is because one's left is to the right side of the Divine Presence during prayer. Sefer Chasidim states that when asking for a book, it should be taken in the right hand as the Torah was given with the right hand according to Deuteronomy 33:2.

Targum

- Adonoy revealed from Sinai, radiated from Seir, appeared from Mount Paran with holy myriads, gave Torah law from flaming flame (Targum| Onkelos) - The Lord revealed from Sinai to give the law to Israel, glory upon Seir for Esau's sons but rejected, to Ishmael on Gebala but rejected, then with angels at Sinai, gave law from midst of flaming fire (Targum| Targum Jerusalem) - The Lord revealed at Sinai to give law to Israel, glory from Gebal to Esau's sons (rejected), from Mount Pharan to Ishmael (rejected), then with angels at Sinai, gave law and commandments from flaming fire (Targum| Targum Jonathan)

Kabbalah

- The concept of surrender and humility allows a person to be close to Hashem, even though He is elevated above all
- Dovid haMelech exemplifies humility as shown in Tehillim
- Elohim and El are associated with the right and left hands of Hashem, respectively
- The Torah and oral Torah come from both the right and left side of Hashem
- Neglect of Torah has caused affliction to the Shekhinah in exile, leading to the destruction of the Temples
- Purple symbolizes Shavuot, the written Torah composed of mercy and judgment, while worm scarlet symbolizes the Fifteenth of Av where Israelite daughters wore purple garments

Musar

- The Torah is called "light" and "fire" and has secrets that should not be approached too closely by those not at the appropriate station in life
- The Ten Commandments correspond to the directives issued during the creation of the universe
- The Torah relates to the mystical dimension, with connections to the presence of G-d and angels
- The Torah and Talmud are linked through debates that aim for harmony, with debate being a way to find understanding in the Torah
- The Torah commands the Jewish people to destroy the Canaanite nations, as they represent negative aspects that have lost all sanctity
- Moses represents a central point in the emanations, connecting the masculine and feminine aspects, and his defeat of certain kings symbolizes his spiritual power
- G-d initially offered the Torah to the descendants of Esau and Ishmael before offering it to Israel, who accepted it.

Tosefta

Divine punishment is measure-for-measure, while Divine beneficence is five hundred times greater. Abraham's actions were reciprocated by God. The provision of food and water was abundant for the Israelites in the desert, with manna having the ability to change flavor according to desires. God provided quail in excess for the Israelites. God protected his descendants like he did with Abraham.

Deuteronomy 33:3

אֵף חָבֵב עַמִּים כְּלִיקְדָּשָׁיו בְּיָדְךָ וְהֵם תָּכֹּן לְרִגְלְךָ יֵשָׁא
מִדְּבַרְתֶּיךָ:

3 (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,

Jewish Thought

Shemot Rabbah 25 interprets Isaiah 33,16 as relating to a table in a garden where G-d is seated at the head, righteous sit at His feet, and fruit from the garden is presented. G-d bestows the honor of reciting grace to Michael, who passes it to Gabriel, then to ancestors, and finally to David who proclaims it. David then lifts the cup of salvation and proclaims the name of the Lord (Deuteronomy 8,7; Psalms 116; Deuteronomy 33,3).

Talmud

- The text discusses how Torah scholars should be exempt from paying taxes, as they are considered holy and solely under God's authority - The verse from Deuteronomy is interpreted to refer to Torah scholars who dedicate themselves to studying and discussing God's words - Torah scholars are described as traveling extensively to learn and discuss Torah, emphasizing their commitment to studying God's teachings.

Commentary

• Chizkuni explains that G-d's love for Israel is shown through His direct supervision, comparing the Israelites to holy beings under G-d's feet at Sinai. • Chizkuni also suggests that G-d's presence is felt in the Holy Temple, where most Israelites are found, three times a year. • Chizkuni mentions that receiving part of G-d's words refers to the Israelites hearing the first two commandments at Mount Sinai directly from G-d before requiring Moses as an interpreter. • Ibn Ezra states that G-d's love for peoples refers to Israel, and that the term "peoples" can refer to different tribes. • Ibn Ezra explains that all holy ones refers to the sons of Levi being around the Ark. • Ibn Ezra interprets that "in Thy hand" means to protect them and physically place them around the Ark. • Ibn Ezra notes that the Levites will teach the Torah and transmit the oral Torah. • Or HaChaim explains that G-d's love for the other nations was displayed when He exiled the Jewish people among them, but also argues that the Jewish people were favored because they embraced the Torah wholeheartedly. • Or HaChaim also suggests that the Israelites are drawn to G-d's feet symbolized by the Holy Ark. • Or HaChaim brings up various interpretations that offer symbolic meanings of the Israelites' relationship with G-d, the Torah, and their position as being held close by G-d. • Ramban explains that G-d's love extended to the tribes, comparing them to a beloved people, and notes that G-d holds all holy possessions in His hand, including the Torah. • Siftei Chakhamim elaborates on the interpretations of the verses, including the meaning of "they sat at Your foot" as being gathered beneath G-d's shadow.

Quoting Commentary

- "Covenant and Conversation" explores themes in Deuteronomy related to love of nations and the Torah as an inheritance - "Ibn Ezra on Isaiah" discusses the use of language in stricken and revolt - Or HaChaim on Leviticus 25 delves into references to spiritual conflict and the Jewish people becoming poor in the context of Edom - Or HaChaim on Leviticus 25 also touches on Israelites being treated as hired hands rather than slaves, with a distinction between the common people and the spiritual elite - Rabbeinu Bahya discusses allusions to Moses and leadership in relation to Yehudah in Genesis - Ramban on Genesis explores the notion of Israel being referred to as nations and peoples - Rashi on Ezekiel and Psalms offers interpretations on scattered peoples and submission for pieces of silver - Tur HaArokh discusses interpretations on being made into nations and the distinction between different groups like Jewish people, Edom, and other nations

Midrash

- R. Juda the Nasi taxed the Rabbis for a fortified wall, Resh Lakish suggested the righteous don't need a guard as their deeds outnumber the sands - R. Huna b. R. Chisda asked the Rabbis about taxes, citing references to Torah study and exemption from burdens - Moses spoke to the Holy One about Torah and slavery to empires, where engagement in Torah is a deliverance from enslavement - Disciples of the sages beat their feet from city to city to learn Torah and cast off the yoke of empire - The Rabbis discussed Israel being raised from dust by God and the reward of living in the Garden of Eden - God's love for Israel is highlighted as greater than any other nation or kingdom

Chasidut

- True tzaddikim incorporate the Torah's light in various ways when interacting with others - Those who act out of love are in the hand of God and His presence is before them - The phrase "They crowded together before the infinite expansiveness of the Holy One" signifies the unity of the people in receiving God's presence and Torah as one - Israel is raised up to the level of Torah when they fulfill it together as one unit

Second Temple

In Second Temple, it is mentioned that Abraham followed all of God's law, which is represented by the Divine word instructing what should and should not be done. This indicates that those who follow God's law are essentially following His word, making their actions in alignment with God's will. It is emphasized that the wise man's actions are guided by God's words.

Targum

God loved the nations and tribes, leading them out of Egypt and keeping them under His word. Despite facing corrections, the people of Beth Israel remained committed to the law, being led by the Cloud and following His word. The nations were also shown favor because of His love for the people of Beth Israel, who were called to be saints and stand in the place of His sanctuary.

Musar

- The verse in Exodus 15,17 alludes to celestial matters, with the ten fingers symbolizing emanations and ten toes representing a lower level. - Moses conveyed the difference in love between Israel and other nations, with Israel attached to the fingers and others only at the feet of G-d. - Yitro's name hinted at benefits by attaching himself to the Jewish people, causing misunderstanding in him initially. - Yitro's refusal to go with Moses stemmed from his belief that he had his own country with legal rights, not needing to depend on Moses' favor. - Nachmanides explains the sanctity of Edom, and the Zohar connects the sanctity of Israel to the ten fingers symbolizing emanations. - G-d recognizes the distinction between the Jewish people and Gentile nations in terms of sanctity, as seen in Deut. 33,3.

Deuteronomy 33:4

תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהל יעקב: 4 When Moses charged us with the TeachingAs the heritage of the congregation of Jacob.

Halakhah

- The verse "Moshe commanded us the Torah, an inheritance for the community of Jacob" (Deut. 33:4) serves as a basis for teaching Torah to Jewish children and the prohibition against teaching Torah to non-Jews (Contemporary Halakhic Problems) - The Torah is considered an inheritance for the community of Jacob, indicating an exclusive relationship between Jews and the Torah (Communal Issues) - The Torah and mitzvot are only given as an inheritance to Israel, but anyone from other nations who desires to convert can do so (Kings and Wars) - Fathers should begin teaching their sons Torah when they begin to speak per the verse in Deut. 33:4 (Torah Study) - Torah is one of the "Three crowns" conferred upon Israel and is described as greater than the crowns of priesthood and royalty (Torah Study) - It is emphasized to start teaching Torah to a child at a young age and not to overburden them with study until they are ready (Sefer HaChinukh) - Belief in God is commanded based on the verse "I am the Lord your God" (Exodus 20:2) with a total of 613 commandments, as mentioned in Deut. 33:4 (Sefer HaMitzvot) - The number of commandments mentioned to Moses at Sinai is 613, with the commandments intended to be practiced for all generations (Shorashim) - Fathers should begin teaching their sons Torah when they begin to speak, following Deut. 33:4 (Shulchan Arukh) - The words of Torah should not be overlooked and are an inheritance for all the congregation of Jacob, even the lowest individuals (Treasures Hidden in the Sand)

Jewish Thought

- Remembrances of commandments and learning in Jewish thought are important to prevent forgetting and are linked to observing specific mitzvot that trigger memory. - Jewish festivals like Simhat Torah symbolize the joy of Jewish spirit and have emerged through customs. - The Torah commands involve 613 total commandments, with 248 "do's" and 365 "don'ts". - The first two of the Ten Commandments are considered significant because they are directly addressed by God. - The importance of intellect and understanding in interpreting religious commandments and prophecy. - An understanding and implementation of justice will prevent nations from warring; an emphasis on ethical behavior and compassion is essential. - Striving to be closer to God and fulfilling one's mission on earth to be a blessing to all. - Teaching, supporting, and embodying ethical and moral values in daily life and contributing to the preservation of Torah teachings are important to Jewish beliefs.

Talmud

- Rabbi Ami possibly wrote the verse "Moses commanded us the Torah" 400 times, not complete Torah scrolls - Interpretation of dreams: specific relations indicate anticipating understanding, Torah, wisdom, and place in the World-to-Come - There are 613 mitzvot in the Torah, relating to the number of days in a year and a person's limbs - Torah study in presence of an ignoramus causing embarrassment is compared to relations with a betrothed bride - A gentile engaging in Torah study may be liable for death penalty - Withholding halakha from a student is likened to robbing them of their inheritance from the Torah - Torah is an inheritance for the Jewish people and relates to the relationship between them and the Torah

Commentary

- Moses commanded the remaining 611 commandments after God commanded the first two (Chizkuni) - The Torah is considered a heritage of the congregation of Yaakov, passed down without personal effort (Haamek Davar) - Moses

dictated the Torah to the Jewish people who transcribed it (Ibn Ezra) - Torah was commanded to the Jewish people by Moses, who was viewed as an intermediary (Or HaChaim) - Torah exercises authority over the people of Israel, even kings, who must follow its laws (Or HaChaim) - Torah is an inheritance for the congregation of Yaakov, exclusively for Jews, supporting the land of Israel (Rabbeinu Bahya) - Torah is a lasting inheritance for all who join the congregation of Jacob, including strangers (Ramban) - Torah is described as an inheritance or handed over by Moses, as the people feared listening to God directly (Sforno) - Torah is an inheritance for the assembly of Jacob, passed on from generation to generation (Steinsaltz) - Torah, the heritage of the congregation of Jacob, is meant for Jews and for those who join them (Tur HaArokh) - The land of Israel was given to Israel because of the Torah, to be lost if the Torah is not kept (Tze'enah Ure'enah)

Quoting Commentary

- Moses is honored as simply "Moshe Rabbenu," emphasizing his role as a teacher and transmitter of Torah to the Jewish people. - Jewish tradition views the Torah as an inheritance belonging to the congregation of Jacob, stressing its deep importance and connection to Jewish life and history. - The Torah is meant to be accessible to all members of the Jewish community, not just an elite group, and extensive knowledge and understanding of the law were expected from everyone. - The Torah is likened to a crown that is available to all of Israel, emphasizing its significance above other forms of authority and leadership. - The Jewish people collectively experienced the "wilderness years," contributing to the distributed and democratized nature of Jewish spirituality. - The significance of Torah as an inheritance is distinguished from the idea of Torah as not being inherited, emphasizing the importance of active learning and engagement with Torah. - Prophecy, Torah, the land of Israel, and resurrection of the dead are seen as exclusive gifts to the Jewish people, with no other nation successfully claiming them historically. - The revelation at Mount Sinai is interpreted as the people hearing a sound from God but being unable to discern the actual words, while Moses was able to hear and interpret the commandments clearly for the people.

Midrash

- In Midrash Devarim Rabbah 11:5, Moses evokes the name of God to repel the angel of death, who visited him three times, ultimately accepting his fate with humility. - Rabbi Meir explains that Moses took the angel of death head on, seeking to praise God and eventually conceding to the judgment at hand. - The angel of death informs Moses of his impending departure, prompting Moses to try and find a way to avoid it by lauding God and invoking His name. - Moses engages in a dialogue with his soul about the approaching angel of death, reminiscing about how God has safeguarded him and expressing readiness to face his fate.

Musar

- A child's introduction to the alphabet and Torah should involve reciting the letters, reading verses, and eating honey from a chart of the alphabet.
- The parents should ensure the child is in a clean environment and pray for their success in Torah studies, as well as provide charity for the poor afterwards to instill a sense of God-fearing behavior in the child.
- The crown of Torah is emphasized as being greater than the crowns of Priesthood and Kingdom, showing the importance of Torah study and humility in seeking wisdom.
- Seeking personal gratification or advantage from Torah study is discouraged, as it can lead to haughtiness and undesirable behaviors. Torah study should be seen as transforming one's origins and storing knowledge like a waterproof cistern, with humility being key in the pursuit of wisdom.

Chasidut

Avram always had unwavering faith in God, a faith that was confirmed through his questioning about his share in the land distribution of Israel. Avram's concerns were related to his unique status as the first convert to Judaism and the first to proclaim the name of the Creator without prompting, which merited G'd to continue with the creation of the

human race. The Torah and Oral Law are compared to Jacob and Rachel, with prayer represented by Leah, showcasing their interdependence for understanding and fulfilling God's teachings. The Torah is described as the inheritance of the congregation of Yaakov, emphasizing its universal applicability and the responsibility of all souls in Israel to understand and uphold its teachings. The Torah was given by God to mankind so they could earn His goodness through fulfilling it, transitioning from solely relying on God's benevolence to participating actively in His light and knowledge. The Torah is considered the sum-total of creation, with every individual capable of arriving at the level of understanding allotted by God, showcasing its universality and applicability to each person.

Liturgy

The text discusses the morning prayers on the first day of Rosh Hashana, focusing on the repetition of the Reader's Prayer. It mentions the praises of Adonoy in various forms, with angels proclaiming His kingship in different ways. The Torah is described as a tree of life, bringing pleasantness, peace, and blessings to those who adhere to it, as desired by Adonoy for His righteousness.

Kabbalah

The 613 commandments given by Moses are connected to the secret of the Torah with a numerical value of 611, underscoring the importance of fearing the Lord and the significance of the two extreme commandments related to knowing the Name; meanwhile, the importance of the first two of the Ten Commandments, heard directly from HaShem, emphasizes the foundational nature of these commandments in Torah teachings, distinguishing them from the others which were transmitted through Moshe.

Targum

The Torah commanded by Moshe is a heritage for the congregation of Yaakov, given as an inheritance to the sons of Israel and the tribes of Jakob.

Deuteronomy 33:5

וַיְהִי בִישְׁרוּן מֶלֶךְ בְּהִתְאַסֵּף רָאשֵׁי לֵם יְחִיד שְׁבֵטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: 5 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.

Jewish Thought

• In the Akeidat Yitzchak commentary, the importance of fair judgment by human judges is emphasized, with four potential causes of faulty judgments detailed: bad character, lack of diligence in minor matters, personal bias, and errors in logic or ignorance. • Yitro recommends selecting "G-d fearing individuals" to prevent corrupt judgments, "men who hate unjust gain" to ensure fairness in all cases, and refers difficult matters to Moses to maintain professional knowledge. • Moses follows Yitro's advice in Deuteronomy 1:15-16, instructing judges to avoid favoritism, hear all cases equally, not fear anyone, and submit difficult matters to him, resulting in the appointment of many judges to minimize crime. • The Derashot HaRan commentary discusses the dual role of judges in ancient Israel, acting as both judges and kings in the absence of a king, as demonstrated by Joshua's powers resembling those of a king despite not holding the title.

Midrash

- Solomon raised the gates to bring the Ark into the Temple, with the gates wanting to break his head but honoring the King of Glory, leading to the Temple gates being hidden in place, whereas the vessels were exiled. - Those who fear God are given glory, such as Moses being called "god" to Pharaoh and Elijah reviving the dead. The Shekhinah escorted Joseph's coffin alongside the Ark, with Moses bearing Joseph's bones. - Moses, who occupied himself with the Torah, became a leader and king, as stated in Deut. 33:5. Engaging with Torah helps to obtain forgiveness, symbolized by the four horns signifying exaltation of God through various aspects.

Halakhah

- The act of the spies caused exile among the Jews because of lashon hara - Correction of this sin is necessary for redemption - Sin of the spies led to Jews being worked by Egyptians with hard labor due to lashon hara - Lashon hara leads to dispersal and factionalism among the tribes of Israel - On Rosh Hashanah, retribution should not be mentioned in prayers - Only specific verses should be recited on Rosh Hashanah for Malchuyot, Zichronot, and Shofarot - Expansion of Jerusalem and Temple Courtyard requires consent of king, prophet, Urim V'Tumim, and Sanhedrin - Moses served a role equivalent to a king in relation to the Temple configuration and establishment of limits.

Commentary

- Moses became a king in Yeshurun when the leaders of the people gathered, symbolizing the acceptance of the Torah as a blessing by all of Israel. (Chizkuni, Deuteronomy 33:5:1) - When Israel is united and free of quarrel, God is truly King over them, but when there is division among them, they reject Him as their King. (Daat Zkenim, Deuteronomy 33:5:1) - Moses, equivalent to a king, was the leader whom the heads of the tribes gathered to, showing acceptance of the Torah as law. (Ibn Ezra, Deuteronomy 33:5:1) - A king is approved by a popular assembly including the heads of the people, and can be appointed when requested by the people in addition to the Torah, as seen during the time of the prophet

Samuel. (Or HaChaim, Deuteronomy 33:5:2) - The kingdom of Israel will endure if the heads of the people are united, as seen under David and Solomon, but will suffer if there is split among the leaders. (Or HaChaim, Deuteronomy 33:5:4) - The Torah and Kingdom of Heaven are essential aspects of Israel's unity, with acceptance of their Kingship by God and embrace of the Torah. (Ramban, Deuteronomy 33:5:1) - God is constantly the King of Israel, their King is their one true leader. (Rashi, Deuteronomy 33:5:2) - The people accepted God's sovereignty and the Torah at Sinai, making Him King over all of Israel. (Sifte Chakhamim, Deuteronomy 33:5:4) - A proper leader like Moses who is accepted by the people is essential for unity and acceptance of God as King. (Tze'enah Ure'enah, V'Zot HaBerachah 5-6)

Quoting Commentary

• Moses was identified as King over the Children of Israel, taking on the role of a monarch [Chizkuni, Genesis 36:31:1] • Moses assumed the roles of both priest and king, officiating and reigning, despite God's initial plans to reserve these roles for others [Moses; A Human Life, 4 Moses in the Family; Mirrors and Foils 32] • A parallel between a king building palaces on ships and God building His chambers in heaven, connecting leadership and unity [Derekh Chayyim 4:11:13] • Boaz's actions towards Ruth were thought to be less than wholehearted in a mitzvah, as he should have offered more in satisfaction [Nachal Eshkol on Ruth 2:14:1] • In certain circumstances, leaders like Moses, Aaron, and Boaz should have acted with full intention and not out of fear of scorn or other people's opinions [Nachal Eshkol on Ruth 2:14:1, Or HaChaim on Numbers 12:11:2] • Moses was commanded to perform a demeaning task as part of his role as a king [Or HaChaim on Numbers 12:11:2] • Commentaries reflect on the significance of the sacredness of items, the Hebrew language, and the actions of leaders [Rabbeinu Bahya, Bamidbar 10:2:2; Shemot 30:13:1; Devarim 32:15:1; Shemot 40:2:2]

Chasidut

• Leaders and wise men establish the concept of Malkhut [Likutei Moharan 18:4:2] • Malkhut rises to its source through humility and inheritance [Likutei Moharan 4:7:5] • Earthly kings are needed for earthly states, but God's kingship always has an advantage [Mei HaShiloach] • The power of unity can awaken the strength of Yaakov, but unity for the wrong reasons will fail [Sefat Emet]

Liturgy

- Rashi states that Hashem was King of Yisrael only when the tribes were united, emphasizing the importance of unity and harmony among Jews - Bilaam recognized the uniqueness of Yisrael in the eyes of Hashem, leading him to realize they were invulnerable to curses - Mention of the covenant with Avraham, the binding of Yitzchak on the altar, and the significance of the names Yisrael and Yeshurun in emphasizing fulfilling God's will - Deuteronomy 33:5 is cited multiple times throughout the text, emphasizing the unity of the tribes of Yisrael and the meaningful relationship between God and the Jewish people

Targum

In Deuteronomy 33:5 from various Targums, it is mentioned that a king will arise from the house of Jacob when the tribes of Israel are gathered together, and they will be obedient to him in Yeshurun or Israel.

Talmud

The Gemara discusses the verses that should be recited during the prayers for Rosh Hashanah, specifically focusing on verses related to Kingship, concluding that there are only three suitable verses from the Torah. According to Rabbi Yosei, four verses should be recited, including the first three and a concluding one.

Musar

- Those who separate from the ways of the community are considered opponents of the agreement to serve God and are included in the group that profanes the service and does not have a share in the world to come (Musar | Sha'arei Teshuvah 3:168) - Peace is significant in the creation of the universe and is a central theme in Judaism, with numerous laws and ordinances enacted for the pursuit of peace (Musar | Shemirat HaLashon, Book I, The Gate of Remembering 11:11) - The Sanhedrin performed functions of both administering Torah law and making temporary rulings before the appointment of the first king, Moses was referred to as a "king," and after the destruction of the Temple, Jewish courts were permitted to administer corporal punishment even when Torah law did not call for it (Musar | Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Shoftim, Torah Ohr 14) - Ideally, Torah should be paired with the "crowns" of Royalty and Priesthood, with the sacrificial service being a crucial aspect of Torah performance, and Torah scholars have the responsibility to supervise and encourage people to observe Torah statutes (Musar | Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Vayeshev, Miketz, Vayigash, Torah Ohr 59)

Kabbalah

- People of Israel have merited the kingdom for guarding the covenant, as they are considered children of kings - Moses is praised for guarding the sign of the covenant - Reference to the Holy One being King and dwelling among them, with their actions affecting His presence

Deuteronomy 33:6

יְהִי רְאוּבֵן וְאֶל־יָמָת וַיְהִי מִתְּיוֹ מִסֶּפֶּר: {ס} 6 May Reuben live and not die, Though few be his numbers.

Midrash

• Rabbi Berechiah explains that Leah was beloved and Rachel was unloved, with both bearing children for Jacob, each excelling in different aspects such as giving birth to kings, prophets, and judges. • Reuben's impulsive behavior is compared to water, and Moses is seen as the one to redeem and purify him, allowing him to live without dying in the World to Come. • The Midrash in Aggadat Bereshit 83:1 discusses the blessings and abilities of the sons of Jacob, touching on aspects like authority, priesthood, kingdom, and other attributes each son had. • The Midrash in Aggadat Bereshit 49:3 conveys Reuben's blessings and transgressions, highlighting his recklessness, behaviors, and eventual redemption by Moses. • The Midrash in Bamidbar Rabbah 13:18 discusses Reuben's offering and forgiveness for his past actions, including his sin with Bilha. • The Midrash in Bereshit Rabbah 98:4 presents contrasting interpretations of Reuben's character and deeds, emphasizing his downfall and repentance. • Several other Midrashim from different texts provide insight into Reuben's sins, blessings, and eventual redemption through his actions, especially his sin with Bilha and the subsequent repentance leading to Moses' intervention for his forgiveness.

Talmud

- Rabbi Shmuel bar Namani discusses the connection between the blessings of Reuben and Judah in Moses' blessing of the tribes, questioning the repetition of Reuben's name. He is referenced in multiple texts including the Jerusalem Talmud Sanhedrin 10:1:19 and Makkot 11b:1. - Various opinions mention who prayed for those who descended alive into the pit, with references to Moses and Hannah in Jerusalem Talmud Sanhedrin 10:1:19 and 10:4:4. - In Talmud Sotah 1:4:4, Reuben and Jehudah are mentioned for their confessions of sins and the rewards they received. - Resurrection in the Torah is derived from verses mentioning Reuben, as discussed by Rava and Ravina in Sanhedrin 92a:5, and Rav Ashi in Makkot 11b:1. - Rabbi Shmuel bar Namani and Rabbi Yoanan question the relation between the blessings of Reuben and Judah in the Jerusalem Talmud Sotah 7b:9.

Commentary

- Moses prayed for the tribe of Reuben to live and not die while crossing the Jordan and battling the Canaanites [Chizkuni, Deuteronomy 33:6:1] - Moses prayed for Reuben's men not to suffer casualties and that they continued to grow in numbers after crossing Jordan [Chizkuni, Deuteronomy 33:6:2] - The tribe of Reuben, who was in the vanguard conquering Canaan, would not suffer casualties and will grow in numbers [Daat Zkenim on Deuteronomy 33:6:1] - Tribe of Reuben will have no decrease in numbers after war, they will continue to grow [Daat Zkenim on Deuteronomy 33:6:2] - Moses blessed Reuben to live as a prayer, with a spiritual meaning in the world to come [Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 33:6:1] - Moses prayed for Reuben to personally live forever without needing rebirth, praying to be spared a second death [Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 33:6:3] - Moses prayed for Reuben not to have diminished numbers [Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 33:6:4] - Reuben's tribe prayed to live in the world, not spiritually die [Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 33:6:1] - The surviving members of Reuben are prayed to be righteous despite their leaders' actions for the tribe to remain intact [Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 33:6:2] - Moses prayed for the tribe of Reuben to live and not spiritually die due to previous events [Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 33:6:3]

Quoting Commentary

- Yehudah admitted his guilt regarding Tamar - God's judgment is different from human judgment - Reuven acknowledged his guilt in defiling his father's couch - Yehudah and Reuven were wise men according to Job and were not invaded due to their territory - The Levirate marriage is linked to the sale of Joseph involving reincarnation - Nadav and Avihu's deaths imply a spiritual death - Aaron's rod was counted as one tribe - Shimon was one of the least successful tribes - Reuven was scorned by Jacob but promised life by Moses

Tanakh

Reuben is acknowledged by Jacob as his first-born son, noted for his strength, vigor, rank, and honor. (Tanakh | Genesis 49:3)

Chasidut

• Moshe Rabeynu blessed Reuven corresponding to what Yaakov had withheld from him, healing the lack of blessing Yaakov had given him before his death. • Moshe Rabeynu blessed Reuven with vivacity, joy, and strength in his heart, as well as exaltation and increase in dignity. • The blessing of Moshe Rabeynu was in response to Yaakov's blessings, with the blessing of life corresponding to strength and the numbering of men corresponding to dignity. • To mitigate harsh judgments, recite Torah sections about eleven curtains of goat-skin, the incense-offering, Moses' blessings to the Jewish people, and the Vision of the Chariot in Ezekiel.

Jewish Thought

Rava proves resurrection with Moshe's blessing to Reuben (Deuteronomy 33:6), which states "Reuben will live and will not die."

Second Temple

• Abraham prays for the grace of hearkening to holy words and learning holy truths to live • Jacob prays for the life of natural goodness, specifically asking for Reuben to live and not die • It is noted that Jacob is not praying for himself to never know death and corruption, as that would be impossible.

Targum

May Reuvein live forever without experiencing a second death, his children will receive their inheritance according to their numbers. Reuben should live in this world and not die the second death that the wicked experience in the afterlife, his young men should be counted among the men of Israel.

Musar

- When all parts of Israel gather together in peace and harmony, G-d is perceived as Israel's king - Strife prevents G-d from being perceived as Israel's king.

Deuteronomy 33:7

7 וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמַע יְהוָה קוֹל יְהוּדָה וְאֶל־עַמּוֹ תְּבַיְּאֵנוּ יְדִיו
רַב לוֹ וְעֶזְר מִצָּרָיו תִּהְיֶה: {פ}

And this he said of Judah: Hear, הוהי, 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.

Midrash

- The text discusses the tribes of Judah, Ephraim, Asher, and other descendants in various situations and contexts, highlighting their strengths, character traits, and actions. - There are references to Moses' blessing upon Judah and other tribes, showcasing how they receive wisdom, understanding, and skill. - The connection between prayer and strength is emphasized, particularly in instances where prayers save individuals or invoke divine intervention. - The concept of divine justice and punishment for the wicked is explored, with mentions of Israel's cry before God, punishment through captivities, and lessons on the consequences of actions. - The text also touches on the significance of humility, the trait of being bashful, and the importance of being merciful, especially in the case of converts like the Gibeonites.

Jewish Thought

The seventeen years in Egypt were under God's Providence; Jacob did not want to be buried in Egypt; Menashe and Ephrayim were appointed by Jacob; Jacob blessed Joseph's sons; Jacob insisted on having Ephrayim and Menashe as sons; David's encounter with Goliath was from pure motives; David's temple bore his name despite Solomon building it; David's obedience to God's commands saved him from disaster; Saul's downfall was his failure to submit to Divine guidance; The 18 benedictions in prayer parallel the Priestly blessings; The benedictions in prayer are divided into groups focusing on spiritual and physical needs; Rabbi Shimon emphasized the importance of meaningful prayer.

Talmud

- Rabbi Elazar interprets the book of Yashar as Deuteronomy, citing verses about doing what is right in the sight of the Lord and mentioning Judah's use of the bow. - Moses prays for Judah to be able to contend with the sages in study, draw conclusions in accordance with halakha, and receive help against adversaries. - Judah's bones rattled during the wilderness years until Moses prayed for God's mercy and requested him to be brought to the heavenly academy. - Reuben confessed his sin with Bilhah after Judah confessed his sin with Tamar, leading to Judah's confession influencing Reuben.

Kabbalah

- The importance of constantly seeking listening without pause to revitalize connection to the Above is emphasized, with Torah and commandments being tools for doing so. - True Torah scholars are described as those who do not rest, pause, or cease from the Torah, perpetuating Unification with their involvement in building the world. - The Divine quality of Kingship is specifically tied to Yehudah and emphasized for the Jewish people to guard and conduct themselves in purity. - Yehudah was blessed through zot, as mentioned in Deuteronomy 33:7.

Commentary

Moses linked the blessings of Reuven and Yehudah due to both tribes making public confessions of sin. Yehudah was singled out for success in warfare, similar to Reuven who had been the first to face an enemy. The confessions of Yehudah and Reuven triggered each other, leading to the blessing on Yehudah. The prayer for Judah was also a prayer for Shimon, a tribe that closely aligned with Judah in battle. Moyher also prayed for Yehudah to successfully navigate battles and be helped by God against adversaries. He requested that Yehudah's hands would be sufficient for war. The blessing on Yehudah was a plea for his success in war, even beyond what was needed for his own tribal territory. The mention of Simeon within Yehudah's blessing also hinted at the relationship between the two tribes.

Tanakh

- Judah recognizes Tamar's righteousness [Gen 38:26] - Judah's descendants will praise him and bow to him, he is compared to a lion [Gen 49:8-12] - Judah will not lose his scepter, and people will pay him tribute and homage [Gen 49:8-12] - Abimelech is disliked and someone would challenge him if they could [Jdg 9:29]

Quoting Commentary

- Contradiction regarding Judah deciding according to halachah is reconciled between Talmudic discussions in Yoma and Bava Kamma - The real reason there is no contradiction is that Yoma and Bava Kamma refer to different situations about Judah's decisions - Moshe's prayers for Yehuda's soul had a lasting effect - The Tribe of Yehuda trails of historical and symbolic significance - Reuvein repented secretly, as not being present at the time of Yoseif's sale indicates - The sun praises God as per the rising and setting concept in a Psalm 113 - Reuvein's absence during Yoseif's sale is connected to his secret repentance - not present to avoid contradiction with his public repentance over Tamar incident - The praises in the Psalms are for praises of experts before God, differs from general praise outside God's presence from the book of Psalms - The poor are lifted up; the nobles are learned upright - Holy soul (needy person) lifted from the dunghill in a symbolic explanation - Homiletic treatises show partnership between husbands and wives in begetting children is praised as a partnership between God and man - The blessing for Simeon was intertwined with a prayer for Judah, indicating their close connection - Moses prayed specially for Simeon, showing the close relationship between the tribes of Simeon and Judah along with God's blessing to Judah referencing his military leadership role.

Chasidut

- Blessing for Shimon included in Yehudah's blessing due to involvement in sale of Joseph - Shimon and Levi not initially blessed by Yaakov due to this incident - Shimon and Levi were involved in the sale of Joseph due to his dreams of kingship - Moses blesses Shimon under the general heading of Yehudah's blessing to avoid embarrassment - Tribe of Levi blessed independently for loyalty to God during golden calf incident - Moses' blessing of tribes described in Deut. 33, with commentary on תאזיז - Likutei Moharan focuses on bringing radiance of tzaddik into Israel's hearts - Sotah explains Moshe's request for God to remember Yehudah's confession - Mei HaShiloach discusses blessing for Shimon, importance of Yehudah's heart, and relationship with Ephraim - Mei HaShiloach talks about Yehudah's strength against adversaries with assistance from God - Sefat Emet discusses Yosef's holiness and Yehuda's spreading of holiness into the world, as indicated in Deut. 33:7.

Targum

In Deuteronomy 33:7, the Targum Onkelos, Targum Jerusalem, and Targum Jonathan all provide blessings for the tribe of Yehudah, asking for God's assistance in battle, protection against enemies, and peace for the tribe. Each paraphrase emphasizes the tribe's fighting prowess and God's support in times of conflict.

Musar

- Moses prayed for Judah's limbs to reunite, allowing him to be brought to the Heavenly synod - Judah was not able to engage in halachic conversation until Moses intervened - The curse of a sage is fulfilled even if the condition is met - The Holy Spirit was removed from Jacob due to the brothers placing a ban on revealing the sale of Joseph - Judah accepted self-excommunication to avoid sinning against his father - David's learning matched the halachic decisions, earning him high esteem - Yissachar dedicated full time to Torah study - Zevulun supported Torah scholars financially, shown high esteem in the Torah by being mentioned before Issachar in Deut. 33:18.

Deuteronomy 33:8

8 וַלְלֵנִי אֱמֹר תְּמִיד וְאוּרִיךְ לְאִישׁ חֲסִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר נִסִּיתוֹ בְּמַסָּה
תְּרִיבָהוּ עַל־מֵי מֶרִיבָה: 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;

Chasidut

- Levi is attached to Gd, does not need to exert himself when studying Torah - The oil of the Chanukah lights represents kindness and truth - Through kindness/halakhah, the light of truth is revealed as in Psalms 43:3

Midrash

- When Israel built the Tabernacle, Moses interceded with God, leading to His reconciliation with them. - Moses asked God to show mercy towards the Israelites after the incident with the Golden Calf. - The crafting of the Tabernacle symbolized reconciliation between God and His people, bringing peace and love. - The tribe of Levi, who did not participate in the idolatry of the Golden Calf, was chosen for a special role in service to God. - The Levites' righteousness and faithfulness were tested and proven during various trials. - Moses and Aaron faced consequences for their lack of trust in God during the incident at the rock in the wilderness. - The Levites were praised for their dedication to God and the Torah, avoiding the sin of the Golden Calf. - God showed mercy to the Israelites after the incident with the Golden Calf, eventually leading them to redemption. - The Levites saw their role in service to God as a privilege and opportunity for reconciliation with Him.

Commentary

Moses praises Levi due to their observance and piety, crediting them with not murmuring with the other tribes and being faithful to God. They were tested at Massah, with Moses defending their righteousness despite the incident at Meribah. The Urim and Thummim belonged to the High Priest, reflecting their spiritual standing. Levi was commended for their loyalty, steadfastness, and for being sinless during times of strife. Aaron, as the High Priest, remained faithful despite his role in the golden calf incident and the waters of Meribah confrontation. The Levites were instrumental in carrying out justice and judgments, respected the priests, administered circumcision, gave Torah rulings, and sacrificed on behalf of Israel, standing against evildoers. The tribe of Levi issued prophetic actions, which were seen in the days of the Hasmonians fighting against the Greeks prophetically foretold.

Quoting Commentary

- Moses' blessings on the Levites in Deuteronomy 33 became effective, even though Jacob did not bless them before his death. - Both Moses and Aaron were instructed to speak to the people at the rock before producing water, which happened at Massah and Meribah. - Ibn Ezra explains that Aaron, not an impostor, made the calf because he was tricked and acted out of fear, not to serve as an idol. - The Zohar explains that the true exile in Egypt was that of the soul, not the body, and the tribe of Levi was not enslaved because they continued to practice Brit Milah and study Torah. - Jacob's ultimate achievement was alluded to in his blessings to his children, and Rabbi Horowitz notes that anti-Semitism grew out of jealousy. - Rabbeinu Bahya discusses Aaron's sin with the golden calf, explaining that God measures great people severely, even if their intentions were pure. - Moses and Aaron met and kissed at the Mountain of God, symbolizing love, kindness, truth, justice, righteousness, and peace. - Simeon and Levi both borrowed in the matter of Shechem, but Levi repaid his debt in the wilderness and was later blessed, while Simeon did not repay his debt.

Liturgy

God's power is described through creation of heavens and earth, luminaries, sea creatures, animals, and humans, including Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Levi. The preparation of the High Priest for Yom Kippur was detailed, involving purification rituals and daily service practices. This all symbolized atonement for the people as directed by God in the Torah.

Tanakh

The text from Tanakh's Malachi 2:6 discusses a righteous priest who speaks proper rulings, avoids speaking perversely, serves God with complete loyalty, and leads people away from iniquity. References are made to other passages in the Tanakh that emphasize the importance of the priest's role and behavior.

Second Temple

. Simeon and Levi are champions against impure thinking. - They are one in will, with minds in concord and purpose set in the same direction. Moses compresses Simeon into Levi to blend their natures into one. - This unites hearing with action, symbolizing their unity and strength in repelling impurity.

Targum

Moses blessed the tribe of Levi, stating that God clothed Aharon with urim and tumim, tested him, and found him to be faithful at the waters of Merivah and Rekem. (Targum Onkelos, Targum Jerusalem, Targum Jonathan on Deuteronomy 33:8)

Musar

- Emphasizes G-d's Ineffable Name in creation and Israel's connection with it through Jacob - Prohibits making anointing oil or incense for mundane purposes to not empower forces of evil - Tabernacle mirrors creation, serves as rehabilitation for Adam's sin, parallel with Celestial Tabernacle - Aaron as High Priest symbolizes man's rehabilitation, realigning with G-d after becoming distant due to Adam's sin - Anomaly in the sequence of the High Priest consulting G-d, normally individual letters protrude before forming words.

Kabbalah

Aaron was found fit for Temple service due to his faithfulness and disregard for his own family, leading to him being granted the Urim and Thummim. Once found to be on proper levels, he was able to teach laws to Jacob, offer incense to calm divine anger, and make whole-offerings on the altar. This led to blessings and enrichment in all worlds, as indicated by the verse "Bless, Lord, his substance."

Deuteronomy 33:9

9 הָאֵמֶר לְאָבִיו וּלְאִמּוֹ לֹא רֵאִיתִיו וְאֶת־אֶחָיו לֹא הִכִּיר וְאֶת־בָּנָיו לֹא יָדַע
כִּי שָׁמְרוּ אֶמְרֹתֶיךָ וּבְרִיתֶיךָ יִנָּצְרוּ: 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.

Midrash

- The tribe of Levi did not worship idols and was honored by the Holy One [2] - The Holy One tests and examines individuals before elevating them to positions of authority [2] - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph were tested by God and blessed for withstanding their trials [2] - The tribe of Levi remained faithful during the golden calf incident and received a blessing from Moses [2] - Israel was tested in Egypt and the tribe of Levi preserved the Torah and circumcision [2] - The children of Levi were honored for their righteousness and observance of the Torah [2]

Second Temple

- Levi forsakes father and mother for the one God, making the Lord his portion - Mind renounces family for wisdom and full salvation, serving God without distraction - Company founder renounces family to minister to God, representing flight as real exile - Blessing of Levi interpreted as rejecting all earthly things for God as his portion - Levi is praised by Moses for guarding oracles, keeping covenant, and explaining judgments and laws to Israel.

Commentary

- The Levites did not commit the error of worshipping the golden calf and were willing to execute family members who did so, showing dedication to God's commandments. - The Levites kept the covenant and observed God's word, even in regards to circumcising their children in the desert. - Moses speaks of the tribe of Levi as a whole, exemplified by Samuel's early dedication to God's service and the tribe's commitment to maintaining their sanctity.

Quoting Commentary

Moses called on Israelites to join him against the golden calf; only Levites fully loyal, consecrated to serve in place of first-born who failed to rally. Levites observed covenant meticulously, transmitters of Torah. Levites demonstrated loyalty by circumcising sons and spilling blood of brothers for God. Zevulun's blessing precedes Yissachar as supporter of Torah study essential for scholars.

Chasidut

- The elders and nobles had visions equal to Ezekiel and Amos, alluding to closeness to God's essence before creation - Actions of the elders not seen as lacking respect due to lack of necessary awe - Tribe of Levi's qualitative superiority emerged due to spiritual boundaries surpassed by Yaakov - Levites were able to negate limitations of mortal man, leading to new Jewish nation - Shimon and Levi not blessed by Yaakov due to role in sale of Joseph, Moses included Shimon's blessing under Yehudah's to avoid embarrassment - Levi blessed independently for loyalty to God during golden calf episode, Moses converted mixed multitude leading to golden calf debacle

Halakhah

• Moses circumcised the people before the Paschal sacrifice to ensure no uncircumcised person could partake in it, excluding the tribe of Levi who did not neglect the covenant of circumcision in Egypt (Halakhah | Mishneh Torah, Forbidden Intercourse 13:2). • The tribe of Levi, chosen for their service in the House of God, did not have a portion of inheritance like the other tribes, but were given cities to dwell in. Their land was chosen to shelter those who kill by mistake, as they were known for their virtues and wisdom. This select tribe would not loath the killer being saved with them, even if it was a friend or relative, due to their commitment to the proper path and truth (Halakhah | Sefer HaChinukh 408:2).

Targum

The Targums on Deuteronomy 33:9 all focus on the tribe of Levi's commitment to God's commandments and covenant, even if it meant disregarding their own family members. They highlight the tribe's dedication to serving the tabernacle, separating from their families, and focusing solely on following God's word and maintaining the holy covenant.

Talmud

- Ravina related a halakha regarding the tribe of Levi - Sons of Rav Pappa bar Abba raised an objection, quoting Deuteronomy 33:9 - Verse suggests some of the tribe of Levi engaged in idol worship and were killed by their relatives.

Kabbalah

Aaron was found fit for Temple service due to his faithfulness and disregard for his own family, leading to him being granted the Urim and Thummim. Once found to be on proper levels, he was able to teach laws to Jacob, offer incense to calm divine anger, and make whole-offerings on the altar. This led to blessings and enrichment in all worlds, as indicated by the verse "Bless, Lord, his substance."

Deuteronomy 33:10

10 יִרְוּ מִשִּׁפְטֶיךָ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְתוֹרָתְךָ לְשִׁימוֹ קְטוֹרֶה 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

- Elkanah was a righteous man who fulfilled the obligation to offer sacrifices, including sin offerings for the Jewish people - Incense enriches and blessings follow due to offering it - Scholarly legal decisions are traditionally made by those of the tribe of Levi or Issachar - Incense was beloved and led to the descent of the Shekhinah - The tribe of Levi was obedient and did not partake in the sin of the Golden Calf - Only one Paschal sacrifice was offered in the desert by the Israelites, with the Levites taking the role of offering incense and burnt offerings - Levites were responsible for the teachings and judgments among the Jewish people, including rulings on difficult matters such as the red heifer, sotah, and other issues.

Jewish Thought

- The concept of "the reward of a good deed is another good deed" suggests that a positive effect leads to further positive effects, while negative momentum can be built as well. - The Torah's objective is not accomplished by a single act or gesture, but through repeated good habits and following instructions. - Refinement of one's personality is possible even if deeds are deficient in quality. - Kings require no special provisions, while judges needed provisions to focus on their tasks. - Cohanim and Levites required sustenance from the people to fulfill their roles. - Judah's tribe was assured of never ceasing from Torah study and some form of authority within their seed. - Laws in the Zera'im section of the Torah teach compassion, assisting the needy, and respecting those in need. - The priestly blessing and blessing over the Torah are connected through establishing the light of the Torah within the Jewish people.

Quoting Commentary

- Incense is linked to making a person wealthy, according to Deuteronomy. - Those new to preparing incense were allowed to take more when others were found worthy. - The incense needs to be offered up repeatedly to bring wealth and blessings according to the Torah. - The duty of the Levites is to instruct the people on halachic rulings.

Commentary

The Levites, particularly the priests, are qualified to teach and enforce God's laws to the people due to their impartiality and lack of other occupations. They spread throughout the Jewish people to learn Torah. The whole burnt offering refers to the burnt offering entirely consumed by the fire on the altar. The Levites are considered so important that their praise is given ahead of their blessing to avoid quarrel. The priests are rewarded for their righteousness by being able to teach the Torah to Israel.

Halakhah

- Levites were set aside from inheritance and spoils of war to serve God and instruct in Torah, as shown throughout biblical times and Second Temple period - Levites were designated for service in the Sanctuary, with a positive

commandment for them to be prepared for this role, even against their will - The cities of the Levites were prepared for the needs of other tribes, focused on wisdom rather than working the land, serving as centers of Torah instruction and cities of refuge - It was deemed appropriate that the cities of the Levites remain as established by God, with their importance recognized by all of Israel and seen as a source of glory.

Chasidut

- Incense binds the heart's burning with the ruach - Incense makes the heart rejoice - Corresponds to Deuteronomy 33:10 - Nullifies the curse mentioned in Genesis 3:19

Mishnah

- Before the third lottery, only new priests could participate in the lottery for offering incense. - The fourth lottery was open to both new and experienced priests to determine who would take the limbs from the ramp to the altar [Mishnah Yoma 2:4].

Targum

Targum Onkelos, Targum Jerusalem, and Targum Jonathan on Deuteronomy 33:10 emphasize the role of the priests in teaching the law and Torah, offering incense to God, and presenting sacrifices willingly and with acceptance at the altar to prevent anger or wrath.

Talmud

In Babylonia, they did not sound the shofar on Yom Kippur eve or recite havdala when Yom Kippur ended, according to Rabbi Akiva. Priests could be trusted to know when fats from Shabbat were offered on Yom Kippur without the need for the shofar (Talmud | Shabbat 114b:1). The one who burns incense becomes wealthy as stated in Deuteronomy 33:10, but a similar assertion cannot be made for those who perform the sacrifice of a burnt-offering (Talmud | Yoma 26a:4). Torah scholars who give halakhic instruction typically come from the tribe of Levi or Issachar, as indicated by verses from Deuteronomy and Chronicles. Scholars who can draw conclusions according to halakha specifically come from these tribes, although Judah also produces great scholars (Talmud | Yoma 26a:6).

Musar

- Support for those serving the Lord is comparable to supporting the Levites, who were separated for service and teaching
- Aaron was reassured that his role was greater than that of the Princes who had consecrated the world
- Gershon's rank as a firstborn was maintained due to the Torah's deep meaning
- The concept of טרפו ללכ is crucial in maintaining balance and serving the Almighty
- The Levites were dedicated to studying and teaching Torah, ensuring their financial support to fulfill their spiritual duties
- The incense offering symbolizes the attribute of Justice and maintaining connection with God through Torah
- The tribe of Levi instructs Jacob in laws and Israel in Torah, showcasing the crown of Priesthood
- The crown of Royalty is conferred through Torah, with Caleb representing Royalty and Pinchas the Priesthood in biblical contexts.

Kabbalah

Aaron was found fit for Temple service due to his faithfulness and disregard for his own family, leading to him being granted the Urim and Thummim. Once found to be on proper levels, he was able to teach laws to Jacob, offer incense to calm divine anger, and make whole-offerings on the altar. This led to blessings and enrichment in all worlds, as indicated by the verse "Bless, Lord, his substance."

Deuteronomy 33:11

11 בִּרְךְ יְהוָה חֵילוֹ וּפְעָלָיו יִדְּרוּ תְרָצָה מִחֹץ מִתְנַיִם קָמְיוֹ וּמִשְׁנָאָיו
מִן־יָקוּמוֹן: }ס{ Bless, הוהי, his substance, And favor his
undertakings. Smite the loins of his foes; Let his
enemies rise no more.

Quoting Commentary

- Mishnah mentions new priests coming up to submit to incense count - Offering the incense was considered the best task in the Temple - Only priests who hadn't offered incense before were allowed to participate - The blessing and favor went to the one who offered the incense - Quoting scripture from Deuteronomy 33:10-11 - The importance of the offering of incense in the eyes of the Lord

Midrash

- Jacob and Moses each pair two tribes with two kingdoms that will conquer Israel in the future, such as Judah with Babylon and Benjamin with Media. - Moses connects Levi with Greece, with both having three letters in Hebrew, different sacrificial practices, and different beliefs. - Moses blesses the tribes in preparation for conflicts with the kingdoms they are paired with, such as blessing Levi's strength in preparation for the Greek oppression. - Moses prays for the downfall of oppressive kingdoms like Greece to fall into the hands of the tribes, such as Levi. - The righteous actions of the tribes are guided by the Holy Spirit, as seen in Jacob's blessing of Judah and the pairing off with Babylon.

Commentary

• Chizkuni: Prays for the blessings of the work and sacrifices of the Levites. • Ibn Ezra: Refers to blessings on the Levites' substance, work, and protection from enemies. • Or HaChaim: Prays that the Levites can maintain themselves amid oppression from other nations. • Rabbeinu Bahya: References to blessings on the resources and work of the Levites, including sacrifices. • Ramban: Blessings are associated with the increase and well-being of the Levites and their possessions. • Rashi: Requests protection from enemies and blessings on the Levites' army and Temple service. • Sforno: Prays for blessings on the Levites' work and for protection against enemies. • Sifte Chakhamim: Discusses the blessings and protection received by the Levites. • Steinsaltz: Blessings sought on the work of the Levites and protection from their enemies. • Tur HaArokh: Seeks blessings for the Levites' resources, work, and protection from enemies.

Talmud

- Rabbi Yannai argues that even if a Cohen later turns out to be disqualified due to lineage, their work on the altar is still valid, based on Deuteronomy 26:3. - Rabbi anina and Rabbi Yose discuss the lottery process for incense and the pan, with Rabbi Yose emphasizing the repeated participation of newcomers. - Shmuel's father interprets Deuteronomy 33:11 to include even the work of Levites who are not part of the priesthood. - Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua disagree on whether the priesthood can be voided, with Rabbi Yehoshua stating that God accepts the offerings even if the priest is later found to be disqualified. - Rabbi Yehoshua argues that the work of a priest, even if found later to be disqualified, is accepted by God based on Deuteronomy 33:11.

Halakhah

- A priest who is discovered to be a challal may continue to serve after his genealogy is checked, but cannot serve in the future. - Levites did not receive a portion in the inheritance of Eretz Yisrael and in spoils of war because they were set

aside to serve God and teach His ways, relying on God to provide for their needs and not through material means.

Targum

The three Targum commentaries on Deuteronomy 33:11 all discuss the blessing of Levi's wealth and offerings, asking for the destruction of his enemies so they do not rise again. Targum Onkelos emphasizes shattering adversaries, Targum Jerusalem mentions breaking his enemies' loins, and Targum Jonathan focuses on overcoming enemies of the high priest Johanan by breaking their necks.

Liturgy

The Siddur Edot HaMizrach includes a post-meal blessing with the option to add a personal prayer afterwards.

Chasidut

• Blessing their substance and making their work acceptable to the Lord is desired for them to be accepted before the Lord at all times • The Lord should further encourage them among the valiant • It is noble to persist in noble things, causing others to do the same in every city and congregation • This righteousness will be accounted to him (Par. Deuteronomy 33:11, Exodus 28:38, Amos 2:16, Isaiah 32:8, Psalms 106:31)

Kabbalah

Aaron was found fit for Temple service due to his faithfulness and disregard for his own family, leading to him being granted the Urim and Thummim. Once found to be on proper levels, he was able to teach laws to Jacob, offer incense to calm divine anger, and make whole-offerings on the altar. This led to blessings and enrichment in all worlds, as indicated by the verse "Bless, Lord, his substance."

Deuteronomy 33:12

לְבִנְיָמִן אָמַר יְהוָה יִשְׁכֵּן לְבִטְחָה עָלָיו חֲפָף עָלָיו כָּל־יְהוֹם
וּבֵין כְּתֻפָּיו שָׁכֵן: {ס} 12 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.")

Jewish Thought

The temple was to be erected in the territory of Benjamin, who did not bow down to Esau; descendants of Benjamin like Saul and Mordechai defeated the descendants of Esau. Esau mistakenly believed Jacob's gift was all his wealth, showing a misunderstanding of their differences in outlook. Jacob explains the Jewish attitude towards material values, emphasizing the importance of balance to prevent negative spiritual results. Divine help is only received after exhausting natural means.

Commentary

- Moses gives a blessing specific to each tribe, which begins with 'And,' but Benjamin is unique in not having this conjunction because he was the only tribe that did not sin. - Benjamin is mentioned after Levi because the Temple was situated on his ancestral land. - Benjamin is called the beloved one of the Lord because God's protective presence was constantly manifest on his land, near the Temple. - God's manifestation covers Benjamin all day long, saving him from potential attackers. - God dwells between Benjamin's shoulders metaphorically, due to Benjamin's lineage and lack of sin. - Benjamin will dwell securely by God, with God dwelling between his shoulders. - In Bahya's interpretation, Benjamin was beloved by God and dwelt in safety with God's presence between his shoulders. - Sforino suggests Benjamin died due to the venom of the original serpent but did not commit any other offense. - Siftei Chakhamim explains the ordering of blessings to tribes like Benjamin and Levi based on their unique roles. - Rashi interprets Benjamin's blessings with references to the Temple and God's protection. - Tur HaArokh sees Benjamin dwelling safely with God's protective presence and glory over him. - Tze'enah Ure'enah notes Benjamin's unique blessing without a conjunction in his name, as he was highly favored due to the presence of the Shekhinah on his land.

Halakhah

The interpretation of "upah" is based on protection and separation, with Aggadic literature stating that seven "upot" represent coverings of honor. The presence of witnesses or ten men is not necessary during the wedding benedictions due to the immediate consummation of the marriage. Every kind of "upah" signifies acquiring a woman through marriage, with the intention of marriage and separation from others. The Rambam's opinion is that bringing the woman into his home for marriage is essential, with complete "yiud" in one room being necessary according to some Halakhic authorities.

Talmud

- Judah and Benjamin both had significant parts in housing the Temple in their territories - Benjamin is mentioned to have special significance in hosting the Divine Presence due to its righteousness and unique sanctity - Benjamin was eager to absorb the Temple altar strip of land into its portion due to its sanctity - The discussions and disputes about the exact location of the Temple within Judah and Benjamin's territories show the importance of the land for both tribes - The Divine Presence was traditionally said to rest in specific places within the territories of Benjamin - Benjamin was privileged to host the Divine Presence, as seen through the locations and attributes associated with the tribe.

Midrash

In Midrash Bamidbar Rabbah, it is explained that Judah will correspond to the east, Issachar to Torah, and Zebulun to wealth. The tribe of Reuben corresponds to the south, while Gad relates to power and Simeon to atonement. Dan is aligned with darkness in the north, with Asher fighting the darkness with light and Naphtali providing sustenance. The eastern direction corresponds to Torah, with Judah being first for offerings, war, and the arrival of news. Judah sanctified the name of the Lord by rescuing Benjamin. Benjamin was rewarded for the Shechinah resting on his shoulders by being associated with the Temple. Benjamin, Judah, and the Shechinah rested in the territory of Benjamin. Benjamin and Judah wrestled over a Temple altar built in their territories. The cities of Jerusalem were divided between Judah and Benjamin; Benjamin did not drive out all the Jebusites. Finally, in the days of Esther, Mordecai, from the tribe of Benjamin, went to Babylonia to ensure the rebuilding of the Temple.

Quoting Commentary

- In Exodus 32:11: Moses prayed and pacified God after various events, but before the people fully atoned - Benjamin would have significant reward for being unfairly accused as a thief - Jacob's statement about "this place" alludes to all three temples, with the third one said to be indestructible - The goblet found with Benjamin is connected to the establishment of the Holy Temple on his tribal land - Judah's speech to Joseph is likened to a confrontation between a lion (Judah) and an ox (Joseph) - The Israelites and the Shechinah have a reciprocal relationship with connections to the number 600,000 - The standards of each tribe positioned according to their attributes, also aligning with the directions and the celestial Throne - The Shekhinah would rest in Binyamin's land according to Zevaim 54b - Rachel's voice was heard from Ramah, located in Binyamin, despite being buried near Bethlehem

Chasidut

Yaakov's focus on Rachel is reflected in the blessings of Rachel's sons Yosef and Binyamin. The concept of Leah, as the first wife, enables one to attain the concept of Rachel. The references to "kadkod" and "his shoulders" allude to the luz bone.

Targum

Moshe blessed the tribe of Benjamin, stating that they will live securely with God, protected by His shield throughout the day, and with the Shekinah dwelling within his borders. The Targums emphasize the close relationship between Benjamin and God, highlighting the protection and presence of the Shekinah.

Deuteronomy 33:13

13 וַיֹּסֶף אָמַר מְבֹרָכַת יְהוָה אֲרֶצוֹ מִמֶּנָּה שָׁמַיִם מִטָּל וּמִתְהוֹם רֶבֶצַת תְּהִתּ: And of Joseph he said: Blessed of יהוה 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;

Commentary

- Joseph's land is especially blessed by the Lord due to Joseph's righteousness, with fertility from both the skies and the underground waters below. - The blessings on Joseph's land are specifically highlighted in contrast to other tribal territories because of Joseph's righteous actions. - Moses prays for Joseph's land to be endowed with fertile attributes from Divine assistance, such as regular dew and beneficial underground springs. - Rashi explains that Joseph's land was full of good things and provided with dainties and sweet foods, with blessings coming from above and below, corresponding to Jacob's blessings on Joseph. - The waters of the deep are referenced as beneficial for Joseph's land, rising from below, along with blessings from heaven above. - Moses blesses the land of Joseph to be abundant in both water from above and below, providing for bountiful crops.

Tanakh

- This verse from Genesis 49:25 describes the God of the father's house helping and blessing the individual with blessings from heaven, the deep, breast, and womb. (Tanakh | Genesis 49:25)

Jewish Thought

In the blessing of Yosef, his land is blessed by the Lord on the right side, balancing against the left side quality of Din. This is represented by the gematria equaling 985.

Targum

Moses blessed the tribe of Joseph, stating that his land is blessed by Adonoy with dew and rain from heaven, as well as deep waters from below. Joseph's land will have good fruit due to the blessings from above and the fountains of the deep.

Quoting Commentary

- The Torah mentions the sources of water during the deluge in a specific order to stress the immediacy of the punishment, avoiding linking God with evil actions until necessary - The blessing of the tribe of Joseph in Deuteronomy 33:13 highlights the abundant subterranean moisture supporting crops even in drought conditions - The blessing of Asher being "blessed from among the sons" in Deuteronomy 33:24 is interpreted as referring to his abundant children, with additional commentary suggesting his blessings in various areas with references to Chronicles and other sources

Midrash

- The Midrash Sifrei Devarim states that Joseph's land was considered the most blessed of all lands, based on the blessing given in Devarim 33:13.

Deuteronomy 33:14

14 וּמִמְקַדְתְּבוֹאֵת שֶׁמֶשׁ וּמִמְקַדְנֶרֶשׁ יִרְחִים: With the bounteous yield of the sun, And the bounteous crop of the moons;

Talmud

- According to Talmud Bava Kamma 81b:1, fruits should be gathered from a place not facing the sun where they grow copiously, as the sun ripens fruit. - Talmud Yoma 83b:10 provides remedies for bulmos including feeding a sheep's tail with honey, fine wheat flour with honey, or barley flour with honey. Rabbi Yoanan ate ripe figs on the east side of a tree to cure his bulmos, which ripen first where the sun rises.

Commentary

- Chizkuni explains that different fruit trees start growing at the beginning of each new moon, providing examples - Ibn Ezra notes that the fruits of the seed and vineyard depend on the sun - Ibn Ezra further explains that moon's effect on air moisture results in the yield of the moon, influencing plant growth differently than the sun - Rabeinu Bahya links the sun to fire and the moon to water, both affecting crop ripening differently, agree with Moses calling their effect "דגמ" - Rashi notes that the land exposed to the sun produced sweet fruit, while the moon brings cucumbers and melons to maturity - Sifte Chakhamim explains that the term מִיֶּחָרִי שָׁרָה refers to monthly yield in the plural form because the earth produces anew each month - Steinsaltz details the sweetness of crops of the sun that ripen in the sun and yield of the moons, with new fruit growing every month.

Quoting Commentary

- The light created on the first "day" was for the heavenly regions; the light from the sun and moon was for the earth - The premature redemption from Egypt was likened to prematurely picked fruit, causing subsequent evils and idolatry - Radak's commentary explains that the purpose of vegetation on the third "day" was to serve as food for living creatures created later - The luminaries created on the fourth "day" had a stronger influence than on the third "day" - The creation of the sun and moon served to create a separation between day and night and provide light for different crops - The luminaries also served as indicators of time, seasons, days, and years.

Chasidut

- Stars have an effect on human's service of God, impacting the body and constitution, but not the soul or free will. - One can avoid falling into transgression by using inclinations for holiness rather than suppressing them. - Utilizing and sublimating inclinations and traits is preferable to attempting to flee from them, as seen in the case of R. Nahman b. Yitzhak who was overpowered by his constitution. - The Mazal influences wisdom, even in inanimate objects, showing the presence of a Mazal for all things, down to the smallest blade of grass.

Targum

In Deuteronomy 33:14, Targum |Onkelos emphasizes the delight of the sun's harvest and the moon's ripening. Targum Jerusalem highlights bounteous produce from the sun and ripening of first fruits month by month. Targum Jonathan focuses on the age and produce perfected by the sun, with the bounty of first fruits yielded by the ground month after month.

Halakhah

- The commandment to offer sacrifices during Rosh Chodesh is rooted in the belief that the celestial bodies, particularly the sun and moon, have significant influence on earthly activities. - The power of the moon is believed to impact various aspects of life, such as cutting trees, sailing, and even drawing blood. - Because the renewal of the moon brings novelty to human activity in accordance with divine decree, it is fitting to offer additional sacrifices on Rosh Chodesh to honor God and recognize His role in all novelties in the world. - This commandment is detailed in Numbers 28:11 and is classified as a positive commandment in Jewish law.

Deuteronomy 33:15

15 וּמֵרֶאֶשׁ הַרְרֵי־קֶדֶם וּמִמְּנֶה גְבוּעוֹת עוֹלָם: With the best from the ancient mountains, And the bounty of hills immemorial;

Commentary

- The blessing on the territory of Joseph included mountainous regions [Chizkuni, Deuteronomy 33:15:1] - The land of Ephrayim was noted for being mountainous [Chizkuni, Deuteronomy 33:15:2] - The hills mentioned in the verse produce fruit constantly [Siftei Chakhamim, Deuteronomy 33:15:3] - From the commentary of Siftei Chakhamim, Rashi connects the mention of early mountains as a blessing on the land of Joseph, with a possible allusion to patriarchs and matriarchs being blessings as well [Siftei Chakhamim, Deuteronomy 33:15:1] - The creation of the everlasting hills preceded that of other mountains, symbolizing God's greater supervision over His Land [Siftei Chakhamim, Deuteronomy 33:15:2]

Talmud

The Great Rabbi iyya shares that all covers in the Tabernacle and Temple were in Benjamin's territory due to his resting between his shoulders, despite references to the Temple being in Judah. The pleasure of the Dweller in the senna is related to the consumption of sacral meat in Joseph's territory. Rabbi Eudaimon discusses the altar's location at the border of Taanat-Shilo, leading to the dwelling of the Divine Presence in the greatness of Joseph. (Jerusalem Talmud Megillah 1:12:4)

Targum

The Targum commentary on Deuteronomy 33:15 from Targum Onkelos mentions the early mountains and perennial hills. Targum Jerusalem suggests that the fruitfulness is due to the righteousness of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as well as the merit of the four mothers. Targum Jonathan emphasizes the goodness bestowed through birthright and blessings from the fathers and mothers, likening them to mountains and hills.

Quoting Commentary

- Tanchuma Miketz 7 recounts that Joseph only provided grain to the Egyptians after they were circumcised, as Pharaoh scolded them for not storing food during the previous seven years
- Radak on Genesis 49:11:1 discusses the abundance of the land given to the tribe of Yehudah, where a single vine yields enough grapes to sustain an ass, and the wine is plentiful enough to use for laundry
- Rashbam on Genesis 49:26:3 interprets "סְלוּעַ תּוֹעֲבָה תּוֹאֵת דֵּעַ" as referring to the farthest hills of the world, with a duplication used to emphasize the vastness of Joseph's blessing, similar to language used in Moses' blessing.

Deuteronomy 33:16

16 וּמִמְלֶכֶת אֶרֶץ וּמִלֵּאָה וּרְצוֹן שְׂכָנֵי סִנְיָה תְּבוֹאֶתָהּ לְרֹאשׁ יוֹסֵף וּלְקֹדֶקֶד
נָזִיר אֶחָיו: 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.

Midrash

- Joseph assures his brothers that he will sustain them and their children, comparing them to stars and stating that he cannot change the natural order - Joseph comforts his brothers with gentle words, highlighting his importance as the head and preserving his father's lineage - Benjamin names his sons in connection to his lost brother's experiences and personalities - The sons of Naphtali were expert weavers and had strong inclinations - Joseph's passion for Potifar's wife is described as his bow being taut and then loosened, his seed scattered - Jacob blesses Joseph with blessings of abundance and fertility, mentioning the importance of Rachel in his life - Joseph is referred to as the elect among his brothers, and is noted for abstaining from wine for twenty-two years.

Tanakh

- Moses tended his father-in-law Jethro's flock in Midian and came to Mount Horeb [Exodus 3:1]. - A messenger of יהוה appeared to Moses in a burning bush that was not consumed [Exodus 3:2]. - The blessings of Joseph surpass those of his ancestors and extend to the eternal hills [Genesis 49:26].

Jewish Thought

- The term "Shechinah" refers to the continuance of God's Divine Presence or Providence in a specific place or object, such as the glory of the Lord abiding or dwelling among the children of Israel - When applied to God, it can mean the Presence of His Shechinah (light created for the purpose) in a place or the continuation of His Providence protecting an object

Commentary

• The allusion is to God as dwelling in heaven, not in a bush, and the various forms of the Arabic linguistic forms in the text [Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 33:16:1]. • There's a mention of various precious resources in the land, not just produce, such as gold and silver [Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 33:16:2]. • Moses wishes for blessing to come upon the tribe of Joseph, comparing them to a bullock due to their strength in producing goods, specifically gold from the earth [Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 33:16:4]. • The writer refers to a blessing of land for the tribe of Joseph due to their ancestors' merits [Rabbeinu Bahya, Devarim 33:16:1-2]. • The blessing regards the speed of redemption for Joseph's tribe when the redemption will come [Rabbeinu Bahya, Devarim 33:16:3]. • Desire and representation of will in Aramaic language, related to feminine references to divine attributes [Ramban on Deuteronomy 33:16:3]. • Reference made to God dwelling in a bush when speaking of goodwill [Rashi on Deuteronomy 33:16:1]. • Blessing mentioned specifically for the tribe of Joseph, noting their virtues and unique path [Sforno on Deuteronomy 33:16:1 and 33:16:2]. • Reference to blessing for he who stood at the burning bush [Steinsaltz on Deuteronomy 33:16]. • Tur HaArokh discusses Moses's wish for blessings on the tribe of Joseph, also mentioning linguistic nuances [Tur HaArokh, Deuteronomy 33:16:1-4].

Talmud

- The Great Rabbi iyya explains that all covers were in Benjamin's part because he rested between his shoulders, despite the Temple being in Judah. - Rabbi Eudaimon of Sepphoris describes the altar being situated at the vertex of a trapezoid entering from Joseph's part into Benjamin's part due to the border turning eastward to Taanat-Shilo. - Rabbi Yosei interprets Moses' blessing to Joseph as allowing offerings of lesser sanctity to be consumed in any place overlooking Shiloh, even in the portions of the other tribes who are described as hating Joseph in the Torah.

Chasidut

- Yaakov's focus on Rachel enabled him to attain the concept of Leah as well, alluding to the luz bone. - Moshe's truth and Aharon's loving-kindness clashed but then reached equilibrium, leading to peace. - The burning bush taught Moshe patience, which was needed for Israel's redemption and reflected in the blessing to Yosef. - The Tabernacle at Shilo, the First Temple, and the Second Temple provided some rectification for sins, corresponding to intellect, heart, and body respectively.

Quoting Commentary

- The Egyptians pressured the Israelites to work faster, giving them multiple tasks at once and not allowing rest, even coming up with new evil decrees such as making them attend to the bathhouse, clean the marketplace, and take care of gardens and children.
- The Egyptians subjugated the Israelites to other slaves, trying to weaken them, but the Israelites continued to grow stronger.
- The intention of the Egyptians was to anger God, leading to the plagues, as the Israelites were chosen for God's favor, to receive the Torah, and compared to animals over which humans have no authority.
- Rashi analyzes various verses in Scripture to explain specific phrases, such as the usage of the term salvation and the pronunciation and meaning of certain words.
- In blessings to Joseph, it is noted that the earth was blessed for his sake since he did not follow his master's wife to do evil, unlike Adam, and thus his land would yield good fruit and resources.

Targum

In Targum Onkelos of Deuteronomy 33:16, blessings from the sweetness of the earth, favor of the One in the heavens, and the one set apart from his brothers are to be visited upon Yoseif's head. Targum Jerusalem includes the excellence of the earth, good will of the Shekinah, and blessings as a crown upon Joseph and the ruler in Mizraim. Targum Jonathan mentions the goodness of the earth, favor of Eloah, blessings as a diadem of grandeur for Joseph and the ruler of Mizraim.

Deuteronomy 33:17

17 בְּכֹר שׁוֹרֹו הָדָר לוֹ וְקַרְנֵי רָאֵם קַרְלִיו בְּהֵם עֲמִים יִנְגַּח יִחָדּוּ
אֶפְסֵי־אֶרֶץ וְהֵם רַב־בוֹת אֶפְרַיִם וְהֵם אֶלְפֵי מְנַשֶּׁה: {ס}

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.

Midrash

- Benjamin stayed with his father after Joseph was sold because he was compared to a lamb and they were compared to a wolf, but once Joseph revealed himself, Benjamin went down with them.
- Midrash connects the Messiah, son of Joseph, and the Messiah, son of David, by stating that Ephraim will not envy Judah, and Judah will not oppress Ephraim.
- The commentary discusses which historical figures have a share in the World to Come and explains the origins of difficult passages and how they relate to various characters.

Jewish Thought

In Akeidat Yitzchak 33:1:9, Reuben's sin of entering his father's bedroom caused an irreversible desecration, resulting in the loss of his birthright to Joseph. Shimon and Levi sinned due to hasty, planned actions against Shechem and Joseph. Yehudah's heroic deeds led to him receiving royal descendants, leading to continuous royalty. Jacob made efforts to secure burial rights in Canaan. After Jacob's death, the Jews felt a loss of independence, leading Joseph to invoke freedom from Egypt in his burial wishes. In Akeidat Yitzchak 72:1:7, messianic times will bring unity to the nation, eliminating the need for visible symbols for concentrating on God. Kol HaTor 2:11 discusses Mashiach ben Yosef originating from the north side, with obligations during Gog and Magog. Kol HaTor 2:131 highlights the importance of correcting conduct and establishing truth in order to counter Sitra Achra during the steps of Mashiach. Kol HaTor 2:85 explains the blessing of Yosef and emphasizes the need for balance between Din and Divine blessing.

Quoting Commentary

- Bartenura explains that the Shofar is different from a horn, referring to Deuteronomy 33:17.
- Chizkuni describes how each flag in Israel had symbols related to their ancestor's names.
- Midrash BeChiddush discusses biblical metaphors and interpretations regarding growth.
- Rabbeinu Bahya talks about how flags in Israel represented different animals and interconnected angel imagery.
- Rabbeinu Bahya offers midrashic commentary on verses mentioning oxen and lions, such as Joseph symbolizing the Jewish people.
- Rabbeinu Bahya interprets Joseph as representing the stem of Israel producing two tribes.
- Rabbeinu Bahya presents a kabbalistic perspective on offerings involving cows and connection to Adam's sin.
- Radak points out usage of language in biblical texts for similarities and multiplicity in counting.
- Rambam mentions Rabbi Yossi's view on the term "horn" and "Shofar" for a cow horn.
- Ramban examines Deuteronomy 33:6 and details the blessing of Moses to the tribes.

Talmud

- Deuteronomy 33:17 mentions Joseph as an ox and Issachar as a large-boned donkey - Moses blesses Joseph and mentions goading nations and Issachar understanding what Israel should do - Exodus 21:28 discusses goading and refers to horns of a wild ox.
- A dream about an ox warns of potential harm - The Rabbis disagree with Rabbi Yosei about the terminology of shofar and keren in relation to a cow
- The midwives liken Israelites to animals based on their tribal

symbols referenced in Genesis 49:9-27.

Commentary

- Moses refers to Joshua as the first king chosen by G-d from the descendants of Joseph, calling him "firstborn" - Soldiers of the tribe of Ephrayim would rally around Joshua in wartime - Gideon, a leader from the tribe of Menashe, was known for fighting with fewer soldiers - The tribe of Joseph is described as being large in number - Gideon and Joshua are symbolized as bulls, representing strength and beauty - Joshua is compared to the aurochs, symbolizing splendor and power - Joshua gored nations with his leadership - Joshua and Gideon defeated large armies from many nations at different times - Tribes emerged from Joseph, Ephrayim and Menashe, with Ephrayim considered the senior tribe - The blessings to Ephrayim and Menashe reflect the divisions within those tribes - Moses likens Joseph to an ox due to his association with abundant crops and the work necessary for that crop production.

Tanakh

- Zebah and Zalmunna were at Karkor with an army of 15,000, remaining from the Kedemites who had a total of 120,000 fighters. (Judges 8:10) - Moses was instructed to invest Joshua with some of his authority to ensure obedience from the Israelite community. (Numbers 27:20)

Musar

- Amaleik, descendant of Eisav, is associated with the concept of "other god" due to numerical value of 240 - Corresponding to Amaleik is the concept of "spirit of Hashem" with the same value of 240 - The two Moshiachs, son of David and son of Yosef, correspond to the ox and donkey husks on the side of holiness - The combination of ox and donkey husks creates the husk of the "viper" equal to Amaleik - Torah scrolls must be written with gallnut water to subjugate the husk of the viper - Midrash in Eichah Rabbati discusses "horns" symbolizing various figures in Israel, which were forfeited due to sin but will be restored by God - Camp flags symbolized various tribes based on respective attributes such as lion for Yehudah, ox for Ephrayim, eagle for Dan - The words "ox" and "donkey" in Jacob's blessing have deeper meanings related to priestly figures, Messiah, and the people of Israel - Joseph and Issachar are associated with the ox and donkey respectively, with Joshua defeating Amaleik and Issachar's descendants understanding God's rule

Chasidut

- Hishtachavu l'Hashem b'hadrat kodesh is the upper unification of Shabbat, the upper brit, containing primary bowing down - Yosef represents the grandeur of holiness and the inner intelligence - Focusing on inner intelligence brings one closer to God - Charity creates the holy mouth of the tzaddik - Tzaddik represents the firstborn with a double connotation in his speech

Mishnah

• Mishnah discusses primary mitzva of Rosh HaShana, sounding shofar • All shofarot fit for blowing except cow horn • Rabbi Yosei questions distinction between horn and shofar, references ram's horn as fit for Rosh HaShana

Targum

• Joseph is compared to an ox and a re'em, with strong horns that symbolize goring and victory over nations to the ends of the earth. • His descendants from Ephraim and Menasheh will be powerful in battle, slaying kings and princes in great numbers. • The birthright has been given to Joseph, leading to his glory and praise, as his descendants will not be

reduced to servitude and will dominate among the peoples in all corners of the earth. • The tribe of Joseph, specifically through Jehoshua bar Nun and Gideon bar Yoash, will be successful in battle, slaying their enemies in large numbers.

Halakhah

• The minimum size of a shofar is one that can be held in a person's hand with both ends sticking out. • All shofars are fit except for that of a cow, due to it being called a horn in Scripture. • Shofars must have a cavity inside to be considered fit for Rosh Hashanah. • Horns of oryx and other animals are not fit for blowing, only horns of rams, ewes, male goats, and female goats are suitable. • The horn of a cow is not fit despite having a cavity because it is called a horn in Scripture. • The shofar of male goats is also considered disqualified in a prophetic vision but is actually fit for use.

Liturgy

In the liturgy for Selichot Nusach Ashkenaz Lita and Nusach Polin on the Second Day of the Ten Days of Penitence, a prayer is made for guidance in bettering oneself and correcting wrongdoings, as well as blessings for the downtrodden and a restoration of glory to Jerusalem, particularly referencing Joseph as B'chor Shor. This same reference to B'chor Shor is made in the liturgy for Selichot Nusach Lita Linear on the Third Day of the Ten Days of Penitence. (Deuteronomy 33:17; Ezekiel 1:10)

Kabbalah

- The Shekhinah is called "horns of a cow" and the ox represents the messiahs Yod and Vav, as well as the First and Second Temples [Kabbalah | Tikkunei Zohar 48a:17] - The horns of the ox are associated with Netza and Hod, while the horns of re-eim represent esed and Gevurah which will help vanquish Amaleq [Kabbalah | Tikkunei Zohar 48b:14] - The fourth exile is compared to a pit where an ox has fallen, referring to a generation of evil people filled with snakes and scorpions who uproot the words of sages and give false judgments [Kabbalah | Zohar, Ki Teitzei 12:64] - The suffering endured by the people is to protect the lineage of Messiah the son of Joseph, descended from Joseph who is symbolized as the ox with grandeur [Kabbalah | Zohar, Ki Teitzei 1:21]

Deuteronomy 33:18

18 וְלִזְבוּלֹן אָמַר שְׂמַח זְבוּלֹן בְּצֵאתְךָ וְיִשְׁשַׁכָּר בְּאֹהֶלְךָ: And of Zebulun he said: Rejoice, O Zebulun, on your journeys, And Issachar, in your tents.

Midrash

On the third day, the prince of Zebulun, Eliav son of elon presented his offering, highlighting the partnership Zebulun had with Issachar in providing for Torah study, earning a livelihood together. Eliav's offering corresponded to the sea and land, Zebulun and Issachar's blessings, and the significance of their partnership in receiving the Torah's reward. Additionally, on the sixth day, the prince of Gad, Elyasaf son of Deuel's offering reflected the exodus from Egypt, corresponding to the vanguard role of the tribe of Gad. His offering symbolized the regiments that his father foresaw for Gad and other significant events related to the tribe's history. The details of their offerings and significance were intricately tied to their actions and blessings throughout their history, highlighting the continuity and partnership within the tribes.

Commentary

- Zevulun complained about receiving less fertile land compared to other tribes, but Moses prophesied that they would benefit from their territory near the ocean - Zevulun, a seafaring tribe, needed a blessing for successful maritime trade, while Yissachar needed protection for their agricultural land from thieves - Zevulun's joy in going out to sea is due to using profits to support Yissachar in Torah study, with the idea of being rewarded in the world to come - Moses emphasized that Zevulun should rejoice in their journeys for successful trade and confidence in God's help - Issachar was blessed to be successful in Torah study while guarding their tents from threats - Zevulun enabled Issachar to study Torah by providing financial support, leading to blessings for both tribes in this world and the world to come - Zebulun's location near the sea would ultimately serve a divine purpose related to the production of blue wool for the tzitzit, protecting them from moral pitfalls - Zevulun and Issachar were mentioned in their specific order due to the partnership between them, where Zevulun's success in trade supported Issachar's Torah study - The blessings bestowed upon Zevulun and Issachar reference their roles in commerce, protection of land, and support for Torah study

Tanakh

Joseph chose five of his brothers to introduce to Pharaoh (Genesis 47:2).

Musar

- Supporting Torah scholars discreetly is equivalent to delighting in Shabbos as scholars are compared to the sanctity of Shabbos.
- Torah scholars dedicate themselves solely to their studies and should be provided with financial support by the rest of the community in a dignified manner.
- Providing support for Torah scholars results in shared merit and blessings, as demonstrated in the relationship between the tribes of Yissachar and Zevulun.
- Torah study must be pursued without ulterior motives, constantly, and priority given over working hours.
- Yehudah exemplifies dedication to Torah study, while David is praised for his halachic decisions which were aligned with Torah.
- Issachar represents full-time dedication to Torah study, while Zevulun exemplifies the financial support of Torah scholars.
- Those who support Torah scholars are granted equal rewards as those who study Torah, as symbolized by the staves of the Ark not being removed.

Halakhah

• Every Jewish man, regardless of wealth or health, must dedicate time to studying the Torah, even if just a little each day and night (Kitzur Shulchan Arukh 27:2). • One must give up material pleasures and devote oneself completely to studying the Torah, even if it means straining the body and sacrificing sleep (Mishneh Torah, Torah Study 3:12). • The acquisition of Torah knowledge requires dedication and effort, with teachings suggesting that studying out loud, exerting energy, and studying in a house of study can help one retain and acquire wisdom (Mishneh Torah, Torah Study 3:12).

Chasidut

Zevulun was beloved to Yissachar, with Zevulun providing for Yissachar and being associated with business activity, which is considered lower than the service of Torah. Business activity is linked to going out and journeys, with Sodom's rejection of business activity contrasting with the necessity of it as emphasized in the rejoicing of Zevulun on their journeys.

Targum

Moses blessed the tribe of Zebulun and Issachar, telling Zebulun to rejoice in going out for commerce and Issachar in coming in to houses of learning. Zebulun was specifically told to rejoice at departure for war and Issachar when calculating festival times in Jerusalem. Rejoicing was associated with Zebulun's commerce activities and Issachar's scholarly pursuits.

Quoting Commentary

• The tribe of Issachar offered sacrifices on the second day due to their future reputation for Torah study • Zebulun provided financial support for Issachar's Torah studies • Issachar and Zebulun's order of blessing was reversed due to their roles in supporting Torah study • Zebulun engaged in trade to support Issachar's Torah study • Issachar blessed to succeed in Torah study in his tents • Tribes of Issachar and Zebulun were deeply intertwined through support and success • Jonah's effect on non-Jews is linked to Zebulun's blessing of sacrifice and worship in the Torah

Deuteronomy 33:19

19 עַמִּים הֲרִיקָאוּ שָׁם זִבְחוֹ זִבְחֵי־צֶדֶק כִּי שָׁפַע יַמִּים יִלְקוּ
וּשְׁפָנִי טְמוּנֵי חוֹל: }ס{ 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.

Halakhah

- God's love is present in past, present, and future through acts of kindness and redemption - God is King, Helper, and Shield based on various verses - Mention of God helping through loving-kindness, saving with might, and protecting as a shield through the merit of Abraham - The Hillazon from which the Techelet dye was made was hidden and challenges in recognizing and using it are discussed - Even if the correct Hillazon could be found, it may not be able to be used to dye Techelet due to previous rulings - Various signs of the Hillazon according to Chazal, including emerging from the sea to the mountains and burying itself in the earth

Midrash

- Midrash Bamidbar Rabbah 13:17 discusses the order of offerings by the princes of various tribes. - The text provides explanations for the offerings presented by the prince of Zebulun, focusing on his partnership with Issachar in Torah study and commerce. - Symbolism related to Zebulun and Issachar's offerings is detailed, highlighting their collaboration. - Midrash Bereshit Rabbah 82:5 relates that Jacob's descendants would sacrifice on private altars during the time when they are prohibited to do so. - Midrash Kohelet Rabbah 1:8:1 presents various linguistic examples and narratives to depict hidden meanings and communicative styles. - Midrash Tanchuma Buber and V'Zot HaBerachah 2:4 discuss Moses blessing Israel before the Angel of Death. - Midrash Tanchuma V'Zot HaBerachah 3:1 continues to explore Moses' interaction with the Angel of Death. - Midrash Tehillim 119:8 delves into the concept of rewards from God, particularly focusing on life as a reward for keeping the Torah and the unveiling of eyes to perceive wonders from the Torah.

Commentary

• The sand hides treasures, such as buried ships and their treasures [Chizkuni] • Zebulun's success at sea led people to offer sacrifices on Mount Zion [Daat Zkenim] • Zebulun will benefit financially from the sea, leading them to offer sacrifices [Ibn Ezra] • Zebulun will bury wealth in sand, seek protection from thieves, and offer sacrifices [Rabbeinu Bahya] • Issachar and Zebulun will benefit financially from the sea, allowing them to study Torah [Rashi] • The sea will bring wealth to Zebulun and Issachar [Sforno] • Zebulun's success in commerce will attract other nations to worship God [Steinsaltz]

Jewish Thought

• Bodies influence each other through their forms, preparing for the action of incorporeal beings. • Incorporeal beings act continuously, similar to a water-spring emitting water in all directions. • God is incorporeal and the Universe is created by His influence, as are changes in the Universe. • The term "influence" is used to describe the actions of incorporeal beings. • Some believe that God commands actions through angels, but this is the work of imagination and "evil inclination."

Quoting Commentary

- Geonim completed Babylonian Talmud, seen as expansive palace of Torah - Mastery of Talmud allows one to infer and define laws clearly - Torah study requires sound judgement and repelling attacks - Moshe's blessing to Zevulun indicates wealth from sea and hidden treasures - Rabbenu Bahya connects סיריעשכ to grass growing and סיריבר to heavy rains - G-d's love for Israelites shown through Torah and calling them "beloved" - Radak hints at Zevulun having coastal lands and riches from the sea - Various commentaries explain significance of tribal banners in camps - Sforno and Tribal Lands commentary emphasize Zebulun's association with the sea and hidden treasures in Deuteronomy 33:19

Tanakh

• The Issacharites were skilled in interpreting the signs of the times and determining Israel's actions • They had 200 chiefs leading their kinsmen [Tanakh | I Chronicles 12:33]

Liturgy

The text discusses the sounding of the Shofar during Rosh Hashanah with references to various commentaries. It emphasizes the sovereignty of God, the shofar blast symbolizing repentance and forgiveness, and the praises to God as King of all the earth. Additionally, it highlights the power of God to protect and shield those who trust in Him.

Talmud

Zebulun complained to God about receiving mountains and seas instead of fields and lands like his brothers; God reassured him that his territory had the valuable ilazon for tzitzit dye. Rav Yosef explained that Zebulun also had the tarit and sand for white glass, and God promised that those who take these resources without permission will not prosper financially.

Targum

In Deuteronomy 33:19 in Targum commentaries: • The tribes of Israel will assemble at the mountain to offer sacred offerings and consume the wealth of nations. • The people of the house of Zebulun will come together to offer true oblations from the revenue of the seas and hidden treasures in the sands. • Many peoples will pray at the mountain, bringing oblations of truth and using the resources of the sea and sands to create valuable items.

Musar

- Punishment for separating from the community includes being among those who profane the service of God and do not have a share in the world to come, and lead weak-minded individuals to sin - The repair work to restore the world to its original state will be completed, bringing both body and soul to an elevated level like at creation - Adam's spiritual descent is likened to that of an ox, but if he had not sinned, he could have cleaved to God like the righteous do after death - The repair began with the ox representing Joseph and will be completed by the lion representing Yehuda, leading to a time of unity and everlasting life as originally intended by the Creator.

Kabbalah

Rabbi El'azar discusses the seven seas and the highest sea above them, linking it to a verse in Deuteronomy 33:19 which mentions suckling from the seas.

Deuteronomy 33:20

20 וילגד אמר ברוך מרחיב גֹד כְּלִבִּיָּא שֶׁלֹךְ וְטָרַף זֶרְעֵךְ אֶף־קִדְקֵד: And of Gad he said: Blessed be the One who enlarges Gad! Poised is he like a lion To tear off arm and scalp.

Midrash

• Joseph selected five men from his brothers, including Reuben, Levi, Benjamin, Simeon, and Issachar because he knew they were not the mighty ones among them. • Moses is compared to Joseph in greatness, with Moses being the only one greater than Joseph in bringing him to burial. • Miriam waited for Moses before Israel could journey, showing that "with the measure that a man measures, so is he measured." • Miriam's sequestration outside the camp for seven days mirrors the rules for sequestration by her father in the case of a harsh rebuke. • Gad was one of the five men taken by Joseph, as his name was repeated, indicating his might among his brothers.

Commentary

- Moses blesses Gad for being given a large territory suitable for raising livestock - Gad disabled his opponents by targeting their arm and then beheading them - Gad's large territory was ideal for grazing rather than planting crops - Gad compared to a lion, with enemies fleeing from him - Gad's territory was extended towards the east, making him strong and respected - Gad's territory on the east bank of the Jordan was more vast due to his prowess in battle and request for land - Gad was praised for his strength and courage in defending his territory - Gad's territory was expanded eastward, making him powerful - Gad was compared to a lion, strong and courageous in battle, striking enemies swiftly - The territory of Gad was larger than others, particularly due to their strength in battle - Gad's territory was broadened eastward, making him powerful in defense of his land.

Quoting Commentary

• The Netziv explains that pilpul enabled Gad to inhabit the land opposite Beis pe'or, as detailed in Deuteronomy 33:20-21 • Rabbeinu Bahya points out that the tribe of Gad was brave and unafraid to inhabit the far bank of the Jordan amidst Gentile nations, having both physical strength and merit in battle. • Rabbeinu Bahya connects the tribe of Gad to physical strength and the merit of wearing phylacteries on their arms and heads, as mentioned in Deuteronomy 33:20 • Gad is praised by Yaakov for being involved in many military encounters, symbolizing military strength and success. • Rabbeinu Bahya references gemstones and their symbolism in the breastplate of the High Priest, connecting them to the tribes of Israel, such as associating Rubin with Reuven due to his admitted guilt. • Ramban interprets the blessing of Gad by Moses as referring to their military prowess and victory in battle. • Rashi explains that the tribe of Gad were mighty warriors, leading battles ahead of the other Israelites, tying back to the blessing in Deuteronomy 33:20. • The blessing of Moshe to Gad indicates courage, military prowess, and potential danger from a materialistic streak. • Sforno compares the fighting styles of Dan and Gad, highlighting Gad's group fighting tactics. • The blessing to Gad of expanding borders brings strength like a lion to defend territory. • Tribes of Gad and Reuven proposed the idea of settling on the east bank of the Jordan, with Gad being militantly fearless. • Tur HaArokh points out that Gad conceived the idea to settle on the east bank of the Jordan, showing bravery and leadership.

Tanakh

- The meaning of Heb. ushim is uncertain - The Reubenites and Gadites propose to serve as shock troops for the Israelites until they are settled in their homeland - Their children will remain in fortified towns due to the inhabitants of the land.

Targum

In Deuteronomy 33:20, three Targum commentaries mention the blessings upon the tribe of Gad. They all depict Gad as being broadened or increased by God, comparing him to a lion who is powerful in battle and able to defeat rulers and kings by severing their arms with their heads.

Deuteronomy 33:21

וַיִּרְא רֵאשִׁית לּוֹ כִּי־שָׁם חִלָּקֶת מַחֲקֵק סָפוֹן וַיִּתָּא רֵאשִׁי לָם צִדְקָה 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 יהוה’s judgments And God’s decisions for Israel.

Jewish Thought

• The concept of bringing merit to the masses will not lead to sin, as righteousness will be attributed to the one who causes others to become righteous. • Keeping the chukim of the Torah is essential to fulfilling the ultimate purpose of humanity over many generations. • The Torah serves as an antidote to the evil inclination, bringing light and sweetness to life, with only those who keep it being able to take part in the enlightened future of humanity.

Midrash

not properly separated from him, as Moses said to her: “Who are you also quarreling against me?” (Numbers 12:8); he did not mean to wrong her, but he intended to tell her that he had separated from his wife, but took her back because of her prophecy. That is why it is written: “His offering was one silver dish...” – it corresponds to Miriam. “Its weight one hundred and thirty; one silver basin of seventy shekels” – to correspond with the years of Miriam’s life. “In the sacred shekel; both of them” – to correspond with the two terrors that Miriam inspired in Egypt, one terrors in regard to the fact that a redeemer of Israel would be born, and one terrors in regard to the fact that a redeemer of Israel would arise. Rabbi Berekhya of the same statement of Rabbi Berekhya regarding the princess of Gad has been heard as explaining [thus]: The prince of Gad started his offering with the exodus from Egypt. Why start from there? Before his father gave him the blessing: “Gad will recruit a regiment and it will return intact; he will recruit a regiment and yet he will be raided” [Genesis 49:19]. This prophecy was intended for the period between the days of David and the days of Jeroboam son of Nebat. Abdullah son of Hetad explained: In the days of King David, eighty thousand of the forefathers of the tribe of Gad were numbered among the mighty men of his host, as it is stated: “Of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David [in the stronghold, in the wilderness, mighty men of valor, men trained for war, that could handle shield and buckler, and whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains]” (I Chronicles 12:8). “After their father’s house, their father’s house,” as they descended to David the rule, he prayed to the Holy One blessed be He and intended them to be loyal to him, and the Holy One blessed be He accepted his prayer. “And he set his brethren [onawehu]” (I Chronicles 12:8) – with ropes, so they would not turn from their loyalty to David. “In the mountains of Efrayim” – to discipline him. That is what is written: “Ephraim, while disciplined, bore children” (Hosea 9:11). “And they turned their loyalty to him” – they were not divided, not depommed, and not seeing a future for themselves in stand against him. That is what is written: “After him Benjamin and Judah, the Menasheites and the Kenites, they came down to David, to help contribute to his rule” (I Chronicles 12:28). “And they shall reign; he shall reign first” – in David they all shall shoot their arrows of speech, but Jeroboam shall be the one to shoot first. “The children of Israel ascended armed from the land of Egypt” – it is written favor [en] with two yods; “formed,” as though to say: “know him.” “Hosts [amushim]” – a bit of wine, that they learned about from the Holocaust, as it is written: “He performed the righteousness of the Lord, and His ordinances with Israel” – all the nations will recognize from this act of righteousness, as it is stated.

Talmud

- Moses died lying on the wings of the Shekhina, about four miles from Reuben to Gad, with angels and Israel mourning his death. (Jerusalem Talmud Sotah 1:10:6) - Moses is buried in the portion of Gad, transported by God Himself, as stated in Deuteronomy 33:21. (Talmud Sotah 13b:22) - The concept of God transporting Moses to his burial place is supported by contradictory verses, emphasizing the importance of Moses defending the Jewish people. (Talmud Sotah 13b:23) - R. 'Aiba continued teaching his disciples until he learned that his son was dead, then shifted his focus to honoring the dead. At his son's burial, he emphasized the importance of righteousness and its impact on others, referencing Moses as an example of righteousness. (Talmud Tractate Semachot 8:13)

Commentary

- Gad saw the first part of the land, previously owned by Sichon and Og, as his rightful inheritance, motivated by good grazing land, Moses' burial site, and the manned houses of the Emorites - Moses prophesied that his burial place would be in the land of Gad, concealed for all eternity - Gad, along with Reuben and half the tribe of Menasheh, vowed to assist in Israel's conquest and remained until the land was divided - The tribe of Gad led the people in the conquest of the land, fulfilling G'd's righteousness as Moses had done - Further interpretations present the idea of Moses being involved in the decision to settle on the east side of the Jordan River, with one suggesting Moses even came at the head of the people in this regard.

Quoting Commentary

- Commentary by Chizkuni on Deuteronomy 34:1-3 identifies the Nebo mountain as being at the boundary between the territories of the tribes of Reuben and Gad. - Commentary by Chizkuni on Deuteronomy 3:26:1 explains that Moses was buried in the fields of Moab to demonstrate his identification with his people's fate. - Commentary by Chizkuni on Genesis 1:1:2 discusses the rationale behind the Torah starting at Genesis 1, citing that it was to establish that God allocated the land of Israel to the Israelites and not the Canaanites. - Commentary by Daat Zkenim on Deuteronomy 31:26:1 describes how Moses wrote 13 Torah scrolls, potentially deposited one in the Holy Ark and another taken by the archangel Gavriel. - Commentary by Daat Zkenim on Numbers 21:18:2 suggests that the well was dug with a miraculous rod and indicates that God did not object to Moses striking the rock, citing Deuteronomy 33:21. - Commentary by Derekh Chayyim 5:18:1 explains the concept that bringing merit to many does not result in sin, while leading others to sin leads to sin not being recognized for repentance. - Commentary by Derekh Chayyim 5:18:6 further discusses how bringing merit or causing sin in many individuals is credited or attributed to a single person. - Commentary by English Explanation of Pirkei Avot 5:18:3 contrasts Moses' righteousness leading others to be righteous versus Jeroboam who sinned and influenced others to sin. - Commentary by Haamek Sheilah on Sheiltot d'Rav Achai Gaon discusses the possession of land near Beis-peor by the tribes of Reuben and Gad. - Commentary by Ibn Ezra on Genesis 1:1:1 delves into the interpretation and significance of the word "תישארב" in the context of creation. - Commentary by Kli Yakar on Exodus 40:2:1 highlights the association between setting up the Mishkon and God's involvement in completing human endeavors. - Commentary by Kli Yakar on Numbers 21:17:1 interprets Yisroel singing as a reference to the regained well in Moses' merit, connecting Miriam's death to the interruption of the well. - Commentary by Kli Yakar on Numbers 2:3:2 and Numbers 2:3:3 discuss the significance of the order in which tribes traveled in relation to their connections to Torah and virtues like humility and poverty. - Commentary by Or HaChaim on Deuteronomy 32:50:2 presents reasons for Moses' burial on Mount Nebo related to the sin of Baal Pe-or and leading the generation of the desert to partake in the resurrection. - Commentary by Or HaChaim on Numbers 14:32:3 and Numbers 20:8:17 highlight the aims of Moses' actions in relation to future events. - Commentary by Rabbeinu Bahya on Genesis 1:2:2 discusses the creation of the universe based on merits and agreements between writings in the Torah. - Commentary by Rabbeinu Bahya on Deuteronomy 33:1:9 and Deuteronomy 34:12:3 offers a kabbalistic perspective on the attributes of Moses and G'd. - Commentary by Rabbeinu Bahya on Deuteronomy 5:26:3 explores the concept of inspiration and wisdom in relation to G'd's control. - Commentary by Rabbeinu Bahya on Exodus 4:27:1 and Exodus 6:3:3 elucidates the symbolism behind descriptions of Moses, Aaron, and the attributes of kindness, truth, jealousy, and peace.

Tanakh

- Men should leave their families and livestock behind, but accompany their kindred in battle across the Jordan River [Joshua 1:14].
- The men are to be armed, but the exact meaning of the Hebrew term used is uncertain.

Chasidut

- Giving charity enables one to embrace the attribute of mishpat [Likutei Moharan 2:4:1] - Moshe is called M'ChoKeK (lawgiver) because he reminds about the 248 mitzvot, corresponding to the 248 limbs, and drunkenness causes one to forget them [Likutei Moharan, Part II 26:2:2] - The term SeFiNta alludes to the root of Divine Will where Moshe, the lawgiver, is buried, as his plot is hidden there [Likutei Moharan, Part II 4:11:15]

Targum

In Targum Onkelos, Deuteronomy 33:21 describes the burial plot of Moshe, who acted righteously before the Lord and His laws with Israel. In Targum Jerusalem, it is mentioned that a place prepared with precious stones and pearls for Moshe's burial, where he will continue to lead the people in the world to come due to his righteousness. Targum Jonathan also mentions the burial place of Moshe with precious stones and pearls, highlighting his righteousness before the Lord and teaching of judgments to Israel.

Mishnah

- Whoever helps multitudes to be righteous bears no sin for their actions - Whoever causes multitudes to sin cannot repent - Moses is cited as an example of a righteous leader who influenced the masses positively - Jeroboam is cited as an example of a sinful leader who led the masses into sin

Musar

The rebels displayed negative traits of jealousy, greed, and craving for honor, while Moses embodied qualities of prophecy and righteousness. The tribe of Gad volunteered beyond required duties, earning praise from Moses. Aaron questioned Moses' choice to involve his family in Israel's suffering, emphasizing the importance of justice. G-d's defeat of adversaries in celestial regions precedes earthly victories, highlighting the importance of Israel and the Torah in the universe. Israel and the Torah are considered the "first harvest" and the "beginning of His way," respectively, according to Jewish commentary.

Kabbalah

In Kabbalah, it is mentioned that the Righteous-One descends through the Shureq with one point, connected to the lawgiver's portion hidden in the truth. The depth is composed of 24 letters of the second Unity, with a reference to not letting the lowly return ashamed (Tikkunei Zohar 46b:20).

Tosefta

The Tosefta Sotah 4:3 recounts that Moses located Joseph's coffin after a woman named Serakh informed him it was in the Nile River; Moses called out to Joseph and the coffin surfaced. Some believe Joseph was buried in the crypt of the kings. In the Tosefta Sotah 4:4, it details the burial of Moses by the Shekhinah and his location within Reuben and Gad's territories. The text further explores the concept of transgressors being struck first, citing examples from the Flood, Sodom, Egypt, the spies, the Land of Israel, and the prophets of Jerusalem.

Deuteronomy 33:22

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּן גִּיּוֹר אַרְיֵה יִזְנֶק מִן־הַבָּשָׁן: 22 And of Dan he said: Dan is a lion's whelp That leaps forth from Bashan.

Midrash

- Elyasaf son of Deuel presented his offering on the sixth day with a silver dish and basin representing the Exodus from Egypt. - Yokheved's age at Moses's birth was 130 years old, corresponding to the gift she received and her role in history. - The ladle of incense represented the ten plagues inflicted on Egypt by Moses. - Judah and Benjamin played significant roles in striving for justice and redemption. - The tribes selected to appear before Pharaoh were chosen based on their strength and qualities.

Commentary

Dan is compared to a lion's whelp leaping from Bashan, as he has troops guarding the borders to prevent enemy forces from crossing into Israelite territory. The tributaries of the Jordan in the Bashan region make it tempting for enemies to try and enter Israel, similar to Lot desiring that area in Genesis. The word "leapeth" in reference to Dan's might is unique to this verse, and Bashan is a district in Transjordan. The Torah possibly refers to Samson when calling Dan a lion cub, emphasizing bravery and physical strength. Dan is equated with justice, reflected in its comparison to a lion cub. Dan finds alternative tribal land near Bashan after feeling congested in its original portion on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. The rushing flow of the Jordan River, originating in Bashan, is likened to the tactics of the tribe of Dan.

Quoting Commentary

• The blood spurts out, related to Deut. 33:22, with תַּנְכַּסְמָה as the subject. • The tribal encampments were listed in a specific order based on birth, seniority, and the flags they were grouped around. • Both Betzalel and Oholiiv were skilled craftsmen symbolized by the lion, similar to the Temples and Altar's construction. • Jacob of Genesis 47:2:1 lists the weaker brothers based on strength, with Moses repeating the names of the stronger brethren. • Dan was blessed to be a "lion cub," similar to Judah, and his territory may have encompassed portions of the Bashan region.

Talmud

The text discusses the death penalty for idolatry and the actions of Phineas in executing offenders. It specifies that there were 78,600 judges in Israel who were instructed to execute sinners. Phineas took action when no one else did, killing the offenders with a spear. Six miracles were attributed to Phineas during this event, including the angel preventing them from crying out, ensuring the killing was justified. Phineas' actions stopped a plague from affecting the people.

Targum

Three different Targums on Deuteronomy 33:22 describe the tribe of Dan as a lion or lion cub, with variations on the wording. One Targum mentions territory watered by streams from Masnon, while another mentions Batanea as the source of water for the land.

Musar

• When the Ineffable four-lettered Name is spelled as words, it equals the numerical value of "adam" and "ma'ah", which in turn also equals the Ineffable Name. • The words "they are the same" in Hebrew also equals 100, which is equivalent to "ma'ah". • Jacob referred to Yehudah as a lion and Dan as a serpent in his blessing, leading to questions about the characteristics possessed by each tribe.

Deuteronomy 33:23

23 וַלְנַפְתָּלִי אָמַר נַפְתָּלִי שָׂבַע רְצוֹן וּמִלָּא בְרָכַת יְהוָה יָם וְדָרוֹם
יִרְשֶׁהָ: {ס} And of Naphtali he said: O Naphtali, sated with
favor And full of יהוה's blessing, Take possession
on the west and south.

Midrash

- The text explores how different tribes correspond to the cardinal directions, with Judah corresponding to the east, Reuben to the south, Dan to the north, and Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin to the west. - Each tribe is seen as having specific attributes, such as Judah being associated with kingship, Issachar with Torah, and Zebulun with wealth. - The reading also discusses the selection of certain brothers by Joseph to present to Pharaoh based on their perceived might. - Naphtali is praised for his daughters and the blessings upon his land. - Mention is made of the importance of reciting thanks over a full cup of wine as it can lead to spiritual rewards and inheritance. - Various verses from the Torah are quoted to emphasize themes of strength, blessings, and providence for the different tribes.

Talmud

• The Sea of Tiberias was in the portion of Naphtali, who also received additional land for fishing [Talmud | Bava Kamma 81b:4] • Reciting a blessing over a full cup leads to a boundless inheritance and blessings, including inheriting two worlds [Talmud | Berakhot 51a:18] • Rules regarding stepping aside on the road and trespassing in fields discussed, including implications for payment [Talmud | Jerusalem Talmud Bava Batra 5:1:6] • Three attributes of the cup of Grace mentioned, connected to verses from Deuteronomy, leading to merit in this world and the World to Come [Talmud | Jerusalem Talmud Berakhot 7:5:7]

Commentary

- Naphtali's territory produces fruit that ripens early compared to other tribes, making it more satisfying for the farmer - Anyone visiting Naphtali during harvest season would bless the Lord for the produce - Possession of the Sea and South refer to Naphtali's inheritance in the southwest - The tribe of Naphtali is full of favor from God and inherits land in the west and south, blessed by the Lord - Naphtali's land was full of everything its inhabitants could desire - Naphtali took possession of the Sea of Galilee and the south - Naphtali's land is fertile and blessed by God, bordering the Sea of Galilee and the Valley of Beit She'an.

Jewish Thought

- Term male signifies one substance entering and filling another - Also denotes completion of a fixed period of time - Indicates attainment of the highest degree of excellency

Quoting Commentary

- The banner of Dan, Asher, and Naphtali was in the north. - The name Asher may be related to a generous blessing and daughters treated as if they had not sinned. - Naphtali was content and enjoyed the blessings. - The east, west, south, and north are explained in terms of directions in the Tabernacle. - Naphtali is symbolized as a hind sent forth bearing good tidings. - Naphtali is said to inherit the sea and southland according to Deuteronomy 33:23. - Naphtali was praised for his agreeable and content character, symbolized by a hind that binds society together.

Targum

- Naftoli will be satisfied and blessed by the Lord - Will occupy the sea to the west of the Sea of Ginosar and its southern coast - Will have possession to the west of the Sea of Genesareth and to the south - Will have delight in the fishes of the sea within his portion and blessings in the fruits of the vale of Genesareth - Will inherit the water of Sopheni and the sea of Tebaria

Kabbalah

- The Torah is considered a blessing, as indicated by the letter כ and associated with Wisdom and God's blessing to Solomon - The Torah, referred to symbolically as "the Filling," is a source of nourishment and advice from God, likened to flowing water that leads to delight - Following the Torah's decrees leads to inheritance in both this world (the South) and the World to Come (the Sea) - Inheriting God is emphasized in following God's ways, like a king giving his son access to all treasures, symbolized by the Sea and the South - The Torah is associated with the full cup (kos) and symbolizes both dry land and guidance from ELQYM.

Musar

- The tribe of Asher is described as blessed with many sons in the Torah, possibly as a reward for his virtue of giving charity generously. - Tithing is related to blessings promised by God in return for fulfilling the obligation of tithes, interpreted by sages to mean unlimited blessings and becoming weary of asking for "enough." - The Torah beginning with כ and ending with לארשי symbolizes blessings and the essence of all blessings being eternal. - The Torah itself is considered a blessing, as seen in Moses' blessing in Deut. 33:23.

Halakhah

In Shulchan Shel Arba 1:54, the specific requirements for the cup of blessing include: rinsing inside the cup and washing away the outside, using undiluted wine until the blessing "ha-aretz" in birkat ha-mazon, ensuring the cup is full, crowning it by disciples, wrapping oneself in a robe or tallit, holding the cup in two hands, grasping it in the right hand, raising it a hands' breadth from the ground, setting one's eyes upon it, and passing it to members of one's household. Four specific requirements mentioned are: undiluted, full, rinsing, and washing. R. Yohanan provided an acronym for these: HaMiShaH, meaning undiluted, full, rinsing, and washing, or alternatively, SiMHaH, meaning joy.

Deuteronomy 33:24

וַיֹּאשֶׁר אֶמַר בְּרוּךְ מִבְּנֵי אֲשֶׁר יְהִי רְצוּי אֶחָיו וְטָבָל בְּשֶׁמֶן רַגְלֹו׃ 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.

Midrash

- The midrash from Bamidbar Rabbah discusses the positioning of the tribes of Judah, Reuben, and Dan in relation to the four directions and corresponding attributes. - Judah is associated with light, Torah, wealth, and is placed to the east. - Reuben is associated with penitence and is placed in the south. - Dan is associated with darkness and idol worship and is placed in the north. - The midrash from Bereshit Rabbah focuses on Joseph selecting five men from his brothers based on their might, not including Judah, Naphtali, Asher, Dan, Zebulun, and Gad. - The midrash from Ein Yaakov tells a story about an oil merchant from Asher supplying a large amount of oil to a buyer. - The midrash from Tanna DeBei Eliyahu Rabbah mentions how Jezebel influenced her husband, Ahab, to become an idolater.

Chasidut

- Chasidut Bnei Yissaschar connects the month of Shevat to the Tribe of Asher in the wilderness - The Tribe of Asher is associated with abundance, particularly olive oil - The presence of olive oil signifies the presence of wisdom in the tribe

Commentary

Asher is blessed more than the other sons of Yaakov as he enjoys an abundance of oil that he shares with the other tribes, his brothers bless Asher for being fruitful and having many children, Moses lifts the curse on Asher by blessing him with strength and fortifying his shoes, his territory produces a surplus of oil benefiting all tribes, Asher did well in terms of descendants and army contributions, Moses wishes for Asher's blessings to be realized by his prosperous land that helps supply the other tribes, Asher was well-liked by his brothers for his oil and beautiful daughters, his daughters married priests and kings, they appointed an emissary to purchase oil from Asher's land, the tribe of Asher was blessed with many descendants and was a symbol of blessing for the other tribes.

Quoting Commentary

- Yaakov's blessing for Asher indicates that the land will yield royal delicacies, particularly rich oil that will be used for various purposes and praised by others - The territory of Asher was known for its olive trees, from which excellent oil was produced, known for high quality - Asher's provision of oil was crucial as it was used for Temple services and was a source of prosperity for the whole world - Interestingly, Asher's daughter Serah was the one to inform Jacob that Joseph was alive, leading to his excommunication by his brothers - The land of Asher, symbolized by olive trees, is described as lush and pleasing, matching the blessing of dipping their feet in oil, indicating prosperity and abundance.

Talmud

In the Jerusalem Talmud Bava Batra 5:1:6, R. Tanum states four conditions for collecting grass, relieving oneself, grazing in forests, and stepping aside, with various opinions on compensation for damage caused by stepping into valuable crops. In the Jerusalem Talmud Sanhedrin 10:1:22, there is a discussion on the number of nails allowed in shoes on the Sabbath based on various interpretations of Ecclesiastes 12:11. The Jerusalem Talmud Shabbat 6:2:3 also discusses the number of nails allowed in shoes on the Sabbath and rules on actions with boots and sandals. In Menachot

85b:14-16, there is a story of a messenger sent to obtain oil from the city of Tekoa in the portion of Asher, highlighting the abundance of oil in the region.

Targum

- Asher is blessed with sons and favor from his brothers - He will immerse his foot in oil - His ground will produce oil like water - His border will produce many olives yielding oil enough to bathe in - Will supply his brethren with provender in the years of release

Musar

- The tribe of Asher in the camp of Dan is blessed with many sons, according to Deut. 33:24, with no other tribe being blessed as such [Musar | Shenei Luchot HaBerit]. - The idea of tithing is connected to blessings in Maleachi 3:10, promising unlimited blessings from God for fulfilling tithing obligations [Torah Ohr]. - The tribe of Naftali in the same camp is described as being "sated with favor and full of the Lord's blessing" in Deut. 33:23 [Torah Ohr].

Deuteronomy 33:25

25 בְּרִזְלִי וּנְחֹשֶׁת מִנְעִלָיִךְ וּכְיִמְיֶךָ דְּבִאָדָךְ: (Meaning of verse uncertain.) May your doorbolts be iron and copper, And your security last all your days.

Midrash

- Rabbi Yehoshua in Pekiin taught students about Torah and novel ideas - Torah is compared to a goad that directs towards life - Torah scholars have diverse opinions but were given by one shepherd - Punishment for adding new books besides the 24 written books - Discussion on the importance of contemplating the statements of Sages - Exerting oneself in studying leads to removing evil inclinations and receiving good tidings - Torah masters being taken away lead to a deeper understanding for students - The righteousness of decrees by the righteous will be fulfilled by God - All lands will bring wealth to Israel through buying produce.

Commentary

- Moses blesses Asher to have vigor and strength in old age, being full of vigor and enjoying the golden age. - Iron and copper are referred to as the sinews and bones of the body, being like door locks. - Asher is blessed to be agile and physically strong in old age as in youth, like Rabbi Chanina who could tie shoelaces while standing on one foot at age 80. - The verse about iron and brass refers to bars used by Asher to step on mountains of iron and brass. - Another interpretation suggests that Asher's territory will be locked by iron and copper gates to protect against invaders. - As days of youth are strong and full of vigor, the blessing is for Asher to be strong and prosperous all their days. - The blessing is for Asher's borders to be sealed with iron and copper to protect them.

Jewish Thought

- Term male signifies one substance entering and filling another - Also denotes completion of a fixed period of time - Indicates attainment of the highest degree of excellency

Talmud

It is forbidden to wear nail-studded work-boots on the Sabbath, but shoes with decorative nails are permitted. There are different traditions on the number of nails for decoration, ranging from five to thirteen, corresponding to various symbolic meanings. It is permitted to put all nails on one sandal or boot. Scuffing off dirt from shoes on the Sabbath is prohibited, but oiling or dipping them in water is allowed. Anointing one's foot in a boot or sandal is not allowed, but oiling the foot before stepping into footwear is permissible. Olive oil produced in the Sabbatical year can be used for personal needs, but not for leather preparation.

Targum

In Deuteronomy 33:25, Targum Onkelos mentions locks as mighty as iron and copper, Targum Jerusalem refers to people of Beth Asher being sound as iron and strong as brass, and Targum Jonathan states that the tribe of Asher will be strong in their youth and in their old age.

Quoting Commentary

• In Devarim 8:9:2, Rabbeinu Bahya suggests that the word "bread" may refer to Torah, emphasizing the importance of studying Torah in the ideal conditions of the Land of Israel. • Scholars in Israel are seen as not lacking anything due to the climate and resources of the land, which aids in the study of Torah. • Moses praises the Land of Israel for its abundance of resources like iron, copper, silver, and gold, highlighting its superiority. • Rashi on Genesis 47:2:1 explains that Moses blessing the tribes twice indicates strength, contrasting the weak and strong brethren among Joseph's descendants. • Rashi on Nahum 3:17:1 discusses the word "princes" in Hebrew, examining the letters and possible variations in the root word.

Chasidut

The blessing of good old age comes from the strength and traits guarded in youth with an "iron lock." Remembering Hashem in youth helps avoid "bad days" in old age, leading to a fruitful old age. For Bnei Yisrael, transcending natural limitations allows strength to remain even in old age. Moshe Rabbeinu passed down wisdom through generations, demonstrating his enduring legacy as one who prepared future generations with "iron and copper locks."

Deuteronomy 33:26

אֵין כָּאֵל יִשְׁרָאֵן רֹכֵב שָׁמַיִם בְּעֶזְרָךְ וּבְנִאֲוֹתָיו שְׂחָקִים: 26 O Jeshurun, there is none like God, Riding through the heavens to help you, Through the skies in His majesty.

Jewish Thought

• Rabbi Eleazar believes that children seeing the king reading the Torah will increase reverence for God in the future, interpreting a verse about children learning to fear God as referring to young children already born but not yet of school-going age (Akeidat Yitzchak 102:1:16). • The commandment for sanctifying the moon, with all its observances, helps combat tendencies toward idol-worship, demonstrating that heavenly bodies like the moon lack the qualities of deity through their behavior (Akeidat Yitzchak 37:1:6). • The number ten in the Torah signifies the directives used in creating the universe, with two tablets designed to reflect the spiritual and physical aspects of man (Akeidat Yitzchak 45:1:6). • In Guide for the Perplexed, the concept of God riding upon the heavens is used as a metaphor for His dominion over creation, with the movement of the spheres and stars pointing to the existence of a Divine being (Part 1 70:1, Part 2 19:3, Part 2 19:18). • In Nefesh HaChayim, it's expressed that God's interactions with the world are influenced by human actions, comparing the relationship to leading God, and emphasizing the concept of serving a higher purpose (Gate I 9:8).

Midrash

- Jacob wrestles with a man until dawn, demonstrating the uniqueness of Yeshurun (Israel) - The earth stands on various pillars, waters, mountains, wind, and the support of the Holy One - The world stands upon twelve or seven pillars according to different sages - The heavens are supported by seven firmaments according to Resh Lakish - Different firmaments house luminaries, heavenly Jerusalem, angels, treasures, and the Divine throne - The Throne of Glory, seraphim, celestial beings, and ministering angels reside in Araboth - David prayed for treasures of snow, hail, dews, and rains to be brought down to the earth - Araboth in heaven contains righteousness, justice, grace, treasures of life, blessing, peace, and spirits awaiting creation - Araboth also houses celestials, seraphim, ministering angels, the Divine throne, and the living God, exalted among the clouds

Talmud

- In Talmud Chagigah 12b:14, it is discussed that God dwells in the heavens above the angels, referred to as Aravot, with a textual analogy between Psalms 68:5 and Deuteronomy 33:26. - In the Jerusalem Talmud Taanit 4:2:12, it is mentioned that three different scrolls were found in the Temple courtyard, with discrepancies in the text that were resolved by confirming two versions and annulling one in each case.

Commentary

- Moses is blessing all of Israel, saying they are to serve the Lord with all their heart and fortify their reverence for Him - God is described as mighty and riding in the heavens, with His might displayed in the skies - The direct relation between the people of Israel and God is highlighted, emphasizing their unique status among nations - The concept of God "riding" the heavens represents His control over celestial matters and highlights His assistance for His people - It is emphasized that there is none like God among all the gods of other nations, and that His Rock is unmatched - The Israelites are described as a unique people who are able to call upon God for help, as there is no other nation like them.

Chasidut

- Moses describes G'd's limitations out of love for the Jewish people, adapting His attributes based on how His people behave - Reference to Deuteronomy 33:26 connecting G'd's abilities to tefilin as chariots that shine from the supernal Imma - Pharaoh representing Imma, uncovering and revealing lights through her - Connection of tefilin as chariots to G'd riding the heavens in Deuteronomy 33:26 mentioned in Zohar

Kabbalah

• The verse "Who rides upon the heavens" is connected to Binah in Kabbalah (Kabbalah | Ohr Ne'erav, PART VII, Letter Resh 15) • Being cautious with emitting semen in vain is linked to having words of Torah and not wasting semen, as seen in Tana Devei Eliyahu (Kabbalah | Reshit Chokhmah, Gate of Holiness 17:31) • The two names E"l and Elohi"m are associated with the heavens, with HaShem in the center, and they are linked to righteousness and condemnation (Kabbalah | Sha'arei Orah, Fifth Gate, Sixth Sefirah 160) • When the children of Israel are righteous, they help HaShem and His Supernal Chariot, leading to rewards and miracles (Kabbalah | Sha'arei Orah, Third and Fourth Gates, Seventh and Eight Sefirah 38) • E"l, Elohi"m, and HaShem are associated with the heavens, with HaShem in the center, connecting to various verses in Psalms and Kings (Kabbalah | Sha'arei Orah, Third and Fourth Gates, Seventh and Eight Sefirah 42)

Targum

The Targums on Deuteronomy 33:26 emphasize that there is no God like the God of Israel, whose Shekinah resides in the heavens and whose aid and magnificence are found in the high heavens.

Quoting Commentary

- Repentance by Reuven opened the gate for other repentant sinners, associated with Shimon and the tribe of Gad - The camp of Reuven corresponds to the celestial camp headed by archangel Michael, representing Love and Mercy - In Maimonides' understanding, the Unity of G-d is preexisting, supported by Deuteronomy 33:27 - Ramban explains the creation of the heavens, correlating it with Talmudic teachings and psalms - The mishna in Pirkei Avot discusses disciplines like arithmetic and astronomy as appetizers for theology, knowledge of G-d's creation and divine attributes.

Musar

- Rabbi Nechunya ben Hakaneh states that studying Torah for its own sake is an act of kindness to God - He explains that studying Torah this way allows God to help us and enables us to "ride the heavens" - This leads to God expressing pride in the skies, according to the source verse Torah Shebikhtav, V'Zot HaBerachah, Derekh Chayim 7

Deuteronomy 33:27

מַעֲנֵה אֱלֹהֵי קֶדֶם וּמִתְחַת זְרָעוֹת עוֹלָם וַיִּגְרֶשׁ מִפְּנֵיךְ אוֹיֵב וַיֹּאמֶר
הַשֹּׁמֵד: 27 (Meaning of verse uncertain.) The ancient God is a
refuge, A support are the arms everlasting. He drove
out the enemy before you By His command: Destroy!

Midrash

• Jacob dwells in Canaan securely relying on the Lord. • Israel's dwelling place is the eternal God, and Israel relies on God. • The righteous maintain the world like everlasting arms. • King David takes care of his people and acknowledges God as the fortress. • Three daily prayers were established by the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. • There are various interpretations of what the world stands upon, including pillars or a single pillar named Tzaddik (Righteous). • The concept of dwelling place as a metaphor for God's relationship with the world and His people. • Mordechai's humility and constant prayer leads to divine favor.

Jewish Thought

- Refraining from contact with one's wife during the menstrual cycle allows one to merit the blessing of circumcision, symbolizing ascendancy over impurity. - The Torah discusses the treatment of female prisoners taken in battle, highlighting the internal struggle against physical urges and providing seven steps to overcome the yetzer hara. - The understanding of God's dominion is compared to riding on an animal and His existence is discussed in relation to the heavens and earth. - The concept of God's unity and attributes is explored, emphasizing that knowledge, creation, and justice are intrinsic to Him and highlighting the importance of praising Him for His greatness and glory.

Talmud

- Rabbi Yosei says that the earth stands on pillars supported by water, mountains, wind, storm, and the arm of God - The world endures in the merit of one who restrains himself during quarrels or renders himself as if he were non-existent - Rabbi Jehudah discusses the world being water in water, turned into snow, land, and eventually supported by wind and storm, all resting on the arm of God - Various teachings from the Jerusalem Talmud discuss God being the place of the world but the world not being His place - Scrolls found in the Temple courtyard with discrepancies in wording were corrected by confirming the two matching scrolls and annulling the one that did not match - Three scrolls found in the Temple courtyard contained different wording, with discrepancies corrected by following the text found in two matching scrolls and annulling the one that did not match.

Commentary

• Asher is seen as being supported by the universe's "everlasting arms" that carry its weight. (Chizkuni on Deuteronomy 33:27:1) • God will expel enemies such as Amalek, Sichon, and Og, and orders to "destroy" these enemies completely. (Chizkuni on Deuteronomy 33:27:2) • The eternal God serves as a refuge and preceded everything and everyone else. (Daat Zkenim on Deuteronomy 33:27:1) • God supports both the universe above and below, ruling over both upper and lower regions. (Daat Zkenim on Deuteronomy 33:27:2) • God will drive out all enemies before the Jewish people. (Daat Zkenim on Deuteronomy 33:27:3) • An era of "destroying" enemies like Amalek will come once the Jewish people are no longer under attack from gentiles. (Daat Zkenim on Deuteronomy 33:27:4) • The eternal God serves as a dwelling place, with eternal arms supporting and carrying all things. (Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 33:27:1) • The hands of God will support and protect, referencing the eternal nature of God. (Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 33:27:2) • God will always support and be a refuge, with an eternal and unchanging nature. (Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 33:27:3) • God serves as a protective covering, with eternal arms supporting all things. (Rashi on Deuteronomy 33:27:1) • God will drive out

enemies and orders to destroy them. (Rashi on Deuteronomy 33:27:2, 33:27:3) • God is the God of eternity and will banish enemies from before the Jewish people. (Sforno on Deuteronomy 33:27:1, 33:27:2, 33:27:3) • The heavens are God's dwelling place, and beneath Him reside all the strong-armed, weak in comparison. (Siftei Chakhamim on Deuteronomy 33:27:1, 33:27:2) • God carries all things with everlasting arms and will banish enemies. (Steinsaltz on Deuteronomy 33:27) • The abode of God precedes all and serves as a refuge. (Tur HaArokh on Deuteronomy 33:27:1)

Kabbalah

• Everything exists through God's desire and will, dependent on His word. • Comparisons drawn between God and things creation relies on, such as land, upper waters, and wind. • Insights on God as the primary cause and necessary existence in Kabbalistic texts, supported by the Scriptures. • The concept of the Temple built by humans being destroyed and rebuilt by God in the future. • Statements emphasizing God's primacy, creation from nothing, and lack of a beginning.

Quoting Commentary

- A person who reaches a state of being a Merkavah de-shechinah would never die, like Elijah the Prophet. - However, if everyone reached this state, the world would not be populated, as human connection to Earth is necessary for inhabiting it. - Longing to express love for God can lead one to function as a Chariot of the Divine Presence, putting spiritual aspects above physical nature. - The righteous are seen as the pillars of the Earth, preserving and supporting the world in their merit. - A kabbalistic approach emphasizes that the Jewish people's conduct influences the manifestation of God's powers. - Solomon contrasts the natures of the righteous and wicked, encouraging self-effacement and humility. - Preexistence of God is a core principle, indicated in Deuteronomy 33:27. - God is the place of the world, but cannot be contained within it.

Halakhah

After Hakafo, three Sifrei Torah are left out, with many people called up to read Vezos haberachah multiple times, followed by all young boys being called up; bar mitzvah boy should say the berachah. Hamalach hagoel verse is recited for them. Chasan Torah reads from Me'onah to end, Chasan Bereishis reads from the second Seifer Torah, followed by Maftir. Eminent person often called up as Chasan Torah. In communities with only two Sifrei Torah, Vezos haberachah is read in one and Bereishis in the other, with the first Seifer used again for Maftir.

Chasidut

- "Hashmeid! (Destroy!)" refers to driving enemy from holiness and combating the desire for money - Ascending with lights allows one to delight in Shabbat and inherit blessings of the patriarchs - The concept of counsels leads to healing, with a reference to the merit of the Patriarchs as "the arms of the world"

Targum

- In Targum Onkelos, Deuteronomy 33:27, God's dwelling is mentioned as the eternal God who banished enemies and commanded their destruction. - In Targum Targum Jerusalem, Deuteronomy 33:27, it is said that the Shekinah dwells in God's abode, under His power He controls the world, drives out enemies, and commands their destruction with His word. - Targum Jonathan on Deuteronomy 33:27, mentions God's habitation as eternal, His power upholds the world, He scatters adversaries, and commands their destruction through His Word.

Musar

- G-d loves the Jewish people because they humble themselves even when riding high economically, unlike great Gentile rulers who reacted with arrogance - G-d prefers those who "put the brakes on their ego" at times of strife, as seen in the examples of Moses, Aaron, and other righteous individuals - G-d is the "Place" of the world, not vice versa, similar to a knight and his horse, as explained in the Midrash - Divine Presence in our world is a requirement of G-d in His Heavenly Domain, and good deeds performed by the Jewish people add stature to G-d in His Celestial Regions, blessing Israel or mankind in turn

Deuteronomy 33:28

28 וַיֵּשְׁכֵן יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּטָח בְּדֶרֶךְ עֵין יַעֲקֹב אֶל־אֶרֶץ הַגֵּן וְתִירוֹשׁ
אֶרֶץ־שִׁמְיוֹ יַעֲרֹפוּ טָל: Thus Israel dwells in safety, Untroubled is Jacob's
abode, (abode Others "fountain.") In a land of
grain and wine, Under heavens dripping dew.

Midrash

- Israel compared to dew, only God controls dew - Relationship between Israel and God compared to hired singer and son of prince - Israel's dwelling place is connected to their relationship with God - Dew imagery used to show Israel's connection to rebirth, resurrection - The importance of prayer and words of Torah over sacrificial offerings - God's changing of nature for the benefit of Israel - Acknowledgement of righteousness leading to saved by the Lord

Jewish Thought

Isaac became suspicious of Jacob's identity using his senses of touch, taste, and smell, ultimately realizing he had blessed the wrong son, leading to Esau's anger and Rebecca's decision to send Jacob away. The blessing Isaac gave Jacob emphasized spiritual and material wealth, with Esau's anger directed at the means by which it was obtained. In contrast, the loneliness and separateness experienced by religious Zionism is seen as a positive aspect, highlighting the uniqueness and sanctity of an individual's spiritual personality. Loneliness is portrayed as creating security, self-esteem, significance, and confidence rather than being a negative feeling of inferiority.

Commentary

- "Eretz Yisrael" is a gift exclusive to the Jewish people - other nations never made it a prosperous land - Prophecy and the Torah are also exclusive gifts to the Jewish people - The Jewish people will be resurrected physically and experience judgment - The resurrection of bodies is specifically for the Jewish people, mentioned as "dew" and "hail to you Israel" - The land of Israel in the messianic age will be fruitful without the need for rain as before Adam's sin - Siftei Chakhamim notes on the individual and secure dwelling of the Israelites, lone dwelling relating back to Jacob's blessing - Rashi on the blessing comparisons between Jacob and Jeremiah, the dew representing the fulfillment of Yitzchak's blessing as well as Jacob's

Quoting Commentary

- Chizkuni interprets Joseph placing his hand on Jacob's eyes as a literal custom of closing them upon death, also interprets it as a blessing for Joseph to be a suitable successor to Jacob. - German Commentary on Mishnah Pesachim discusses the word "Spiess," possibly related to other words for separating or splitting, unpacks possible origins in Hebrew and related languages, and delves into its application in various contexts including tree branches and Hebrew weaving terms. - Haamek Davar explains the use of "heavens" and "earth" in the creation story as essentially inherent qualities rather than names given by God, relating them to the emanations and recipients in the natural world. - Ibn Ezra connects "waters of Judah" to the seed of Judah, drawing a parallel with "fountains of Jacob" from Deuteronomy. - Rabbeinu Bahya compares Moses' teaching to rain, with his words taking root in the listener's heart, and explains "אשר ילע סיריעשכ" to mean storm winds strengthening vegetation. - Ramban interprets Balaam's observation of the Israelites as dwelling alone and unique among nations, tied to their laws and unity, and relates this to their ancestral names. - Rashi explains the term "יָרַעַי" to mean "it drops," referencing other biblical verses where this term is used to denote fatness or dew dropping.

Tanakh

-In Genesis 27:28, the blessing given is for abundant resources from heaven and earth. -In Genesis 48:21, Israel reassures Joseph that God will be with him and bring him back to his ancestors' land. -In Psalms 4:9, the psalmist feels safe and secure while sleeping, trusting in God's protection.

Chasidut

- Main cause of foreign thoughts is corruption of mishpat - Mishpat is related to AYNin, as seen in Genesis 14:7 - Corresponds to Deuteronomy 33:28 mentioning Jacob's eyes

Liturgy

Praise for God's path through the Reed Sea, skies dripping with rain and Dew, Oneness of His Name proclaimed morning and evening in synagogues, exalted Adonoy of Hosts dwelling upon the cherubim on top of the Holy Ark.

Talmud

- Rabbi Yosei bar anina states that Moses issued four decrees, but they were revoked by four prophets, including Amos revoking the decree about safety and the fountain of Jacob - Rabbi Yoanan explains that the Jewish people rejecting God's directive led to their solitary dwelling in sorrow, rather than wealth and prominence as originally intended - Rava states that marriages between younger females and older males, and older females and younger males were common among the Jewish people

Mishnah

In Mishnah Pesachim 7:1, the process of roasting the Paschal lamb is described. Rabbi Yosei HaGelili says to thrust a spit of pomegranate wood through the mouth to the anus, putting legs and entrails inside to roast together. However, Rabbi Akiva disagrees, stating that legs and entrails should be suspended from the spit above the animal's head outside of it to avoid cooking them.

Targum

Israel will live securely as individuals, blessed by Jacob, in a land producing grain and wine. The skies above them will drip dew and rain as a sign of blessing and lovingkindness. (Targum Onkelos, Targum Jerusalem, Targum Jonathan on Deuteronomy 33:28)

Kabbalah

In Tikkunei Zohar, it is discussed how Jacob's seed in exile will dwell securely alone, as seen in Deuteronomy 33:28, emphasizing the absence of 'refuse' in Jacob. This ties into the concept of redemption from exile as mentioned in Deuteronomy 32:12, where it is highlighted that Y"Y alone will lead him without any foreign god. The repetition of 'alone' (badad) in both verses underscores the isolation and purity of Jacob's lineage. This theme is further explored in various Tikkunei Zohar passages, including Tiquin Fifteen For Day 8 and another mentioning the secure dwelling of Israel in relation to Jacob's abode.

Deuteronomy 33:29

אֲשֶׁר־יְיָ *יִשְׂרָאֵל מִי כְמוֹךָ עִם נוֹשָׁע בְּיָהוּהָ מִגֵּן עֶזְרֶךָ וְאֶשְׁר־חָרָב 29 O happy Israel! Who is like you, A people delivered
בְּיָהוּהָ, Your protecting Shield, your Sword
וְאֶתְּךָ וְיִכְחָשׁוּ אֵיבֶיךָ לְךָ וְאֶתְּהָ עַל-בְּמוֹתֵימוֹ תִּדְרֹךְ: {ס} triumphant! Your enemies shall come cringing before
you, And you shall tread on their backs.

Halakhah

- On the night of the ninth day of Sukkot, the same prayers as the night of the eighth day are recited, including kiddush and the blessing over time. - The Parashah of Zot HaBerakhah is read from three Torah scrolls, with five congregants participating in the reading. - The reason for reading Zot HaBerakhah on this day is based on King Solomon blessing Israel on the eighth day of the festival. - Weekday prayers mention God as Helper, Shield, King, and in lovingkindness, reflecting past, present, and future acts of God. - A midrash in Tractate Pesahim discusses a banquet for the righteous in the future, with the cup of blessing passed to various biblical figures. - Moses' words at the end of the Torah allude to rewards in the world to come, with Israel being delivered by the Lord and protected by God as a shield.

Midrash

- Ahab stole and killed Naboth's bull, Isaiah states this is akin to killing a human - Before the Tabernacle was set up, all high places were permitted, but after the Tabernacle was set up, they were no longer allowed

Jewish Thought

• Gersonides discusses G'd's foreknowledge as limited to events that are not subject to human decisions • Gersonides explains decisions G'd knows in advance and ones that are truly free • Maimonides teaches that G'd has full knowledge of past and future events • Israel and mankind are subjected to a program set up by G'd • Earth, sun, cherubs, and seraphim described as domains men turn to for help, instead of relying on G'd • Actions of Reuben, Shimon, and Levi analyzed in terms of hasty decisions and careful planning • Yehudah praised for maturity and clarity of judgment • Zilpah, Bilhah, and Joseph's blessings analyzed in terms of biblical implications • Ephrayim, Menashe, and Levi's roles discussed • Jacob's death, blessings, and aftermath analyzed • Commandments apply to every aspect of life • Nefesh and automatic right to life after death discussed • Israel's reward in the afterlife described generally

Talmud

• Rav Ashi quotes Deuteronomy to emphasize Israel's greatness and closeness to God • Mordecai refuses to mount a horse due to fasting, kicks Haman, citing Deuteronomy that allows for treading enemies' high places • Delighting in Shabbat can lead to rescue from oppression, supported by verses from Isaiah, Psalms, and Deuteronomy, highlighting the importance of enjoying Shabbat through specific foods like beets and fish.

Quoting Commentary

- Chizkuni on Deuteronomy 32:13:2 notes a discrepancy in the Hebrew text regarding the letter ו and the vowel kametz in the word "יתומב" - Chizkuni on Genesis 48:22:2 interprets Yaakov's use of the past tense as showing confidence in God's promises about the Israelites receiving their land, specifically mentioning the Emorite tribe for their strength. - Covenant and Conversation points out that while happiness is important in Judaism, the Torah emphasizes joy over happiness, using the word "simcha" more frequently. - Rabbeinu Bahya sees Moses' final blessing to the Israelites as a

reflection of God's love for them based on Deuteronomy 33:29. - Daat Zkenim notes a repeated metaphor of riding high places in both Deuteronomy 32:13 and 33:29. - Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 53:9:1 interprets "וַיִּתְמַכּוּ" in reference to Israelites who die in exile and their graves being on high places. - Rabbeinu Bahya highlights the relationship between Israel's conduct and the manifestation of God's powers, using Deuteronomy 33:29 as an example. - Rabbeinu Bahya also discusses Moses' praise of Israel in Deuteronomy 33:29 and contrasts the eternal survival of the Jewish nation with other nations. - Rabbeinu Bahya points out a connection between blessings in the Bible from Yaakov, Moses, and David, with a progression from one to the next. - Everett Fox's commentary on Deuteronomy 33:1-29 explores Moshe's blessing of the tribes of Israel, noting differences in tribe representation compared to Genesis.

Commentary

- Enemies may pretend to be friends to deceive - Isolation is a sign of maturity and excellence for God's people - God is compared to a shield, a sword, and provides protection and justice - Promises of rewards in both this world and the next for keeping commandments - Enemies will deny themselves and humility in front of Israel - Success in battles comes from God - Victory means enemies will try to appease Israel

Tanakh

- The Gibeonites claim to have come from a distant land because of the fame of the Israelites' God, referencing the miracles done in Egypt by this God.

Chasidut

- Israel is compared to God in terms of happiness and might - Some leaders mistakenly exalt themselves over the people with undeserved pride, wielding the "sword of pride" through arrogance - These leaders are a scourge to the world and can damage those who do not submit to their rule

Kabbalah

- Jewish people adhere to the middle line-Kav HaEmtza'ee, while seventy ministering angels of the nations adhere to the qualities of Greatness-Gedulah and Might-Gevurah - The Jewish people who adhere to the middle line ascend to the Unlimited One-Ein Sof, while nations have limits to their ascent - The letter Vav of the Name HaShem is related to the Sefirah of Splendor-Tiferet - Ministering angels of nations surround the letter Vav of the Name HaShem, but cannot ascend beyond it

Targum

- Targum Onkelos Deuteronomy 33:29 praises Israel as a fortunate people saved by God, protected by His shield, and given victory through His sword against enemies who will submit to them. - In Targum Jerusalem's version of Deuteronomy 33:29, Israel is exhorted to diligence in the law and commandments to tread on the necks of their enemies' kings as they are saved by the Lord and protected by His shield. - Targum Jonathan on Deuteronomy 33:29 describes Israel as a people saved by the Word of the Lord, with His shield of help and sword of strength leading to victory over enemies who will be found liars in terror as Israel treads on their kings' necks.

Liturgy

- The text comes from the Liturgy, specifically the Shabbat Siddur Sefard Linear, Maariv Service for the Conclusion of Shabbos, in the Veyiten Lecha 102 section. - The verse referenced is Deuteronomy 33:29 and mentions treading on the high places of others.

Musar

The Torah uses different expressions when referring to Samael and Rahav because G-d took the "light" Samael divested himself of as a legal instrument to kill with, while Rahav's blessing was used sparingly for the continuity of the Jewish people. G-d offered the Torah to other nations through their guardian angels, but they all declined, leading G-d to bestow the blessings on Israel. This highlights Israel's triumph with the sword and the significance of the Torah being given only to them.

Deuteronomy 34:1

וַיַּעַל מֹשֶׁה מִמִּעְרַבְתָּ מוֹאָב אֶל־הָר נֹבֹה רֹאשׁ הַפְּסָגָה אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי
יְרֵחוֹ וַיִּרְאֵהוּ יְהוָה אֶת־כָּל־הָאָרֶץ אֶת־הַגִּלְעָד עַד־דָּן: 1 Moses went up from the steppes of Moab to Mount
Nebo, to the summit of Pisgah, opposite Jericho,
and הוֹדִי showed him the whole land: Gilead as far
as Dan;

Jewish Thought

In Jewish thought from Akeidat Yitzchak 88:1:9, Moses' request to cross the Jordan was for the sake of the people's success in conquering the West Bank, as he believed that under his leadership, the problems that later arose would not have occurred. Although denied physically crossing the Jordan, Moses was granted a view of the land and instructed to prepare Joshua for leadership. Success and survival for the people depended on observing mitzvot, with Moses reminding them of their survival after the sin at Baal Peor. In Nineteen Letters 12:2, the emphasis is on striving to draw nearer to God, being united in love and piety, and creating a truly human habitation on earth in order to carry out the mission of blessing and raising ideal human beings. Taking a wife and caring for helpless human creatures without personal gain is highlighted as a key aspect of fulfilling this mission of love.

Talmud

- Rav Yehuda states that any area shown to Moses before his death is within the boundaries of Eretz Yisrael. (Talmud | Bava Batra 56a:8) - The Gemara questions the meaning of "go out and come in" in relation to Moses, as he appeared to be physically strong before his death. (Talmud | Sotah 13b:17) - Rabbi Yehuda affirms that Moses died in the portion of Reuben, based on explicit verses. (Talmud | Sotah 13b:20)

Commentary

• Moses ascended to Mount Nebo after blessing his people, as instructed by God, and saw the entire land of Canaan with his physical eyes before his death. • Mount Nebo is also known as Har Hapeisgah and was located at the boundary between the territories of Reuven and Gad. • Moses saw the whole land of Canaan with supernatural eyesight, from Gilead to Dan, and was exemplified the prosperity and future oppressors of the land. • The regions of Gilead, Dan, and other biblical territories were shown to Moses specifically for certain reasons, such as future events and the boundaries of the Land of Israel. • It is believed that after Moses ascended Mount Nebo, Joshua wrote the subsequent verses of Deuteronomy 34 under divine inspiration as Moses did not return.

Midrash

- R. Juda explains that Moses died in Reuben's territory and was buried in Gad's - Moses' requests were granted by God, including seeing the whole Land of Israel and the Temple - The term "ad Dan" refers to the twelve tribes coming from Abraham's loins - Moses, Hezekiah, and Jacob's prayers played a crucial role in changing decrees - God was angry and Moses' prayers weren't initially accepted as he wasn't allowed to enter the Holy Land - Moses was shown the whole Land before his death, as God granted his wish to see it - Despite the initial refusal, Moses was eventually allowed to see but not enter the Land of Israel, with his request to cross the Jordan denied.

Tanakh

- The Danites established a carved image and Jonathan, from the tribe of Manasseh, served as a priest for them - The text suggests the possibility of Jonathan being related to Moses, based on the Hebrew word for Manasseh with a suspended letter indicating an earlier reading of "Moses" - Jonathan and his descendants served as priests for the Danites until they were exiled from the land

Halakhah

On Simchat Torah, it is customary to have more than a quorum read the Torah, with everyone in the congregation reading, including those not accustomed to reading on other days. This practice is meant to increase joy, with only one individual reading from Deuteronomy 34:1 to 34:9 without dividing the verses. (Halakhah | Kol Bo 52:12)

Quoting Commentary

- Job admits he spoke without sense throughout the debate, though he always believed in Providence and immortality of the soul [Malbim on Job 38:1:8] - Moses was able to see the land of Israel through a miracle of expanded vision, using light created on the first day of creation [Or HaChaim on Numbers 27:13:1] - Lavan and Jacob's covenant not to cross into each other's territory is compared to other instances where crossing marked hostile intent, such as with Bileam [Rabbeinu Bahya, Bereshit 31:52:2] - God showed Moses all the land of Israel as requested, emphasizing that it was a divine vision [Rashi on Deuteronomy 3:27:1] - Heman, Boaz, and Moses had exceptional visions or events that were attributed to God, showing divine intervention [Rashi on I Chronicles 25:5:2] - The Sabbatical year commandment was reiterated to show that all divine commandments originated at Mount Sinai [Rashi on Leviticus 25:1:1] - Moshe's perspective as the greatest prophet was rooted in humility and comparison to God [Redeeming Relevance; Exodus] - Balak's actions with Bileam are compared to Moses' benevolent gaze at the people as a blessing [Sifte Chakhamim, Numbers 23:28:1] - Various tels in the Plains of Moab are identified, rich with biblical narrative and serving as boundaries for different tribes [Tribal Lands, Chapter 1; Reuven 87]

Targum

Moshe went up from the plains of Moav to Mount Nevo, where Adonoy showed him the entire land from Gil'od to Don. In Targum Jerusalem, Mosheh also went to the summit of the mountain of Nebo, where the Lord showed him the land of Gilead unto Dan of Kesavan. And in Targum Jonathan, Mosheh went to the mountain of Nebo where the Word of the Lord showed him all the strong ones of the land, as well as the mighty acts and victories of specific individuals.

Musar

- Moses asked God for a successor who could unify the minds of all the Jewish people, which God granted by showing him the future leaders of the Jewish people until the Resurrection
- G-d postpone fulfilling Moses' request for a perfect leader until the arrival of the Messiah
- Moses regained the fiftieth level of understanding, or הניב, before his death
- Moses prayed not to be involved in the mystical aspect of being part of every generation but was unable to avoid it
- Israel feared they would die if they continued to acquire greater insights, so they asked Moses to serve as their intermediary
- G-d told Moses that the fiftieth level of understanding, or הניב, would not be attained again during one's lifetime on earth
- Moses attained this level again when he died, as described in his death as an ascent up Mount Nebo
- Moses was able to behold visions of God at will during his lifetime

Tosefta

Moses was buried with the help of the Shekhinah, carried four miles into the lands of Reuben and Gad. Various biblical examples show that those who initiate transgression receive punishment first, such as the Flood, Sodom, Egypt, the spies, the dwellers of the Land of Israel, and the prophets of Jerusalem, with the remainder not escaping judgment.

Deuteronomy 34:2

וְאֵת כָּל־נַפְתָּלִי וְאֶת־אֶרֶץ אֶפְרַיִם וּמְנַשֶּׁה וְאֵת כָּל־אֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה עַד
הַיָּם הָאַחֲרֹן: 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;

Commentary

- God showed Moses the entire land of Israel, including territories associated with the tribes of Naphtali, Ephraim, and Manasseh, as well as Judah and the western boundary of the land (Chizkuni, JPS 1985 Footnotes, Rashi on Deuteronomy 34:2:1, Rashi on Deuteronomy 34:2:2, Rashi on Deuteronomy 34:2:3, Rashi on Deuteronomy 34:2:4, Steinsaltz on Deuteronomy 34:2) - The mention of the "last sea" could also be interpreted as referring to future events in Israel until the last day (Rashi on Deuteronomy 34:2:4) - Each region mentioned in the verse is associated with the tribe that ultimately settled there (Steinsaltz on Deuteronomy 34:2)

Midrash

God showed Moses each of the leaders from each tribe who would follow after him: Barak from Naftali, Joshua from Ephraim, Gideon from Menasheh, David from Judah, and the western sea. This is derived from specific references from the Torah in Devarim and other books in the Hebrew Bible.

Targum

- Naftoli, Ephraim, and Menasheh mentioned in Targum Onkelos and Targum Jerusalem - Yehudah mentioned as well in Targum Onkelos and Targum Jerusalem - Mention of Barak, Jehoshua bar Nun, and Gideon bar Yoash in Targum Jonathan - Reference to the kings of Israel and the kingdom of Beth Yehudah mentioned in Targum Jonathan

Quoting Commentary

- The term "בְּקַעֵי יַעֲקֹב," or "the well of Yaakov," in Devarim 33:28:1, refers to the descendants of Yaakov exclusively, allowing Jewish people an exclusive claim to gifts such as prophecy, Torah, the land of Israel, and resurrection of the bodies after an interval. - The four directions of the world have different names in Hebrew, with different meanings, such as חָרֹם (East), בְּרֶעַם (West), מִזְרָח (South), and מִצְרָח (North), each with unique significance. - The sea the Israelites crossed was the Sea of Reeds, as indicated by Moses' song of thanksgiving and mentions in Psalms and Deuteronomy, naming it יַם סוּף, the farthest boundary of the land of Israel. - The terms for directions in Hebrew, like kedem (east) and achor (west), have symbolic meanings based on the position of the sun, while the names for south and north, negev and tzaphon, have specific associations with dryness and hiddenness, respectively.

Deuteronomy 34:3

וְאֶת־הַנֶּגֶב וְאֶת־הַכְּלָר בְּקֶעֶת יְרֵחוֹ עֵיר הַתְּמָרִים עַד־צֹר׃ 3 the Negeb; and the Plain—the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees—as far as Zoar.

Talmud

Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Levi speaks about the future rebuilding of the Temple between Judah and Benjamin and the descendants of Moses' father-in-law, the Kenites, who ate the produce of the fields of Jericho. He also mentions that Jethro and his descendants were promised great rewards when the Holy Blessed One removed His Presence, and they were supported from charity at one point. The descendants of Jethro eventually went to Jabez to study Torah and became a people of God, as Jabez was a good and righteous man who taught Torah.

Commentary

- The city of date palms was exceptionally excellent - The term "the South Country" refers to the Negeb or the cave of Machpelah - "The Plain" refers to Solomon casting the vessels of the Temple in the Jordan plain - Moses' view of the land began at the most distant edge and continued to the area closest to him

Quoting Commentary

• Zoar was a city known for its abundance of dates and palm trees, referenced in various texts and described as a palm tree city by medieval writers. • Baal Tamar is identified as the plain of Jericho, with "Tamar" meaning "date," linking it to the city of Jericho known for dates. • In discussing the goodness that the Israelites bestowed upon others, it is mentioned that a portion of Jericho was left unparcelled and given to the children of Jethro, specifically Jonadab the son of Rechab, until the building of the Sanctuary occurred.

Tanakh

- King casting bronze items in earthen molds between Succoth and Zarethan in the plain of Jordan.

Chasidut

The verse "today shall be upon your heart" is interpreted by the men of Jericho as meaning that Words of Torah will be fixed in the hearts of Israel according to God's will, with scent being a hint to this understanding. The sages disagreed with their practice of reciting the Shema without pause, as it is not within man's power to hasten salvation unless it is God's will. Yericho's significance as a city of date palms symbolized looking forward to the end, connecting to ethereal levels and drawing from the end to the beginning. (Mei HaShiloach, Volume I, Deuteronomy, Vaetchanan 12)

Midrash

• God showed Moses the graves of the forefathers, the overturning of Sodom and Gomorrah, Gog and his hosts in the valley of Jericho, Devorah, and the wife of Lot in Tzoar. • The term Elohim in the commandment "I am the Lord your God" is not plural, but singular, indicating there is only one God in the world. • It is emphasized that the voice of God is with might, reflecting the strength of each individual, not multiple gods.

Mishnah

Rabbi Akiva recounts a conversation with Sage Neemya about allowing a woman to remarry based on a single witness, citing a tradition from Rabban Gamliel the Elder. Rabban Gamliel of Yavne agreed, allowing women to remarry based on hearsay testimony, slave, woman, or maidservant testimony, citing a case involving an innkeeper confirming a man's death. However, Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Yehoshua, and Rabbi Akiva disagree on the credibility of such testimony, with Rabbi Akiva requiring the woman to be as convincing as the innkeeper in the mentioned case.

Targum

- The Targum Onkelos Deuteronomy 34:3 mentions the Negev, the plain, the valley of Yereicho, and the city of date-palms until Tzo'ar. - The Targum Jerusalem Deuteronomy 34:3 includes the south, the plain of the vale of Jericho, and the city cultivating palms, which is Zeir. - The Targum Jonathan Deuteronomy 34:3 talks about the king of the south aligning with the king of the north to destroy inhabitants of the land, oppress Israel, and disperse captives from the plain of Jericho and the city of palm trees. It also mentions the punishment of Armalgos and the battle of Gog with Michael rising up to deliver in a time of great tribulation.

Deuteronomy 34:4

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלָיו זֹאת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק
וְלַיַּעֲקֹב לֵאמֹר לְוָרְעֶךָ אֶתְנַנְנָהּ הָרְאִיתִיךָ בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְשָׂמָּה לֹא תַעֲבֹר:

4 And הוהי 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.”

Jewish Thought

• G'd showed Moses the land of Gilead, but he was told he could not enter it • The intention of this consolation is questioned • Our sages interpret Moses always ascending • Moses' vision of the land is seen as a vision into the future, not physical space

Midrash

• God showed Moses everything that had been and would be, including specific individuals in each generation according to their roles and actions. • Moses requested to enter the land of Canaan through a tunnel, but God denied this request as well. • The oath made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob regarding the land was fulfilled for their descendants. • Moses saw Gehenna and was told that only the wicked and those who betray God would be sentenced there. • The land of Canaan was displayed to Moses with its inhabitants, and he was not allowed to cross into it.

Talmud

- Rabbi Yonatan reconsidered his opinion on the dead conversing with each other based on a verse in Deuteronomy [Talmud|Berakhot 18b:17] - Rebbi Zeira states that a person may not relieve himself in a cemetery, as it shows contempt for the dead [Talmud|Jerusalem Talmud Berakhot 2:3:15] - Rabbi Simlai teaches that there are 613 mitzvot in the Torah, with 365 prohibitions and 248 positive mitzvot, based on a verse in Deuteronomy [Talmud|Makkot 23b:18]

Halakhah

- A father is obligated to teach his child Torah as soon as the child begins to speak, starting with fundamental verses like Deuteronomy 33:4 and Shema Yisrael. - The child should be taught selected verses gradually until the age of six or seven, when he can begin more formal Torah study with a teacher. - Interpretations of when exactly to begin teaching a child Torah vary based on different scholars and commentaries. - Parents are encouraged to take their children to teachers for more formal Torah study around the age of six or seven, as established by Rabbi Yehoshua ben Gamla.

Second Temple

• The soul relies on good hope and faith, as seen in Abraham's belief in God and Moses being shown the Land but not entering. • Departing from lower realities to higher ones is illustrated through biblical examples like Abraham leaving Lot and Israel leaving Egypt. • The spiritual burial of lower qualities and survival of higher qualities in the mind is symbolized by Joseph's body in Egypt and bones in Canaan. • Departure is emphasized, such as in the order to make the Passover quickly and Jacob turning back to his father's land symbolizing wisdom. • The concept of seeing the perfect good in the future requires faith, as possession is more than just seeing it, as shown in Deut. 34:4.

Targum

- Adonoy tells Mosheh he will not enter the land promised to Avrohom, Yitzchok, and Yaakov - Mosheh is allowed to see the land but not cross over into it - The covenant of the land is reiterated to Mosheh but he will not be allowed to enter it

Commentary

- The Torah mentions that G'd ordered Moses to tell the patriarchs after his death that the promise to give the land to their descendants had been kept. - Moses was told by G'd that he didn't have to enter the gate to heaven through the land of Israel. - The verse hints that the Shechinah would return to Israel at a specific time in the future. - Rashi explains that Moses was shown the land so he could tell the patriarchs that G'd had fulfilled His oath. - Sforno suggests that Moses was not allowed to cross the Jordan River to prevent his blessing from invalidating a decree. - Sifte Chakhamim explains that Moses was sustained by G'd and did not cross into the land due to a decree.

Quoting Commentary

- The Torah repeated the words "עדת עדי" in Genesis 15:13 for three reasons: to warn of future enslavement, reassure of eventual redemption, and to confirm fulfillment of an oath to the patriarchs regarding the land of Israel (Or HaChaim). - The rainbow in Genesis 9:13 serves as a sign of a new relationship between God and mankind, similar to circumcision symbolizing a special relationship between God and the Jewish people (Rabbeinu Bahya). - Deuteronomy 34:1 describes how God showed Moses the entire Land of Israel, mentioning various tribal lands and emphasizing the goodness and beauty of the land (Ramban, Tribal Lands). - In Genesis 26:3, God's oath to give the land of Israel is reiterated to Isaac, ensuring the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham and including Isaac in the blessing to be a blessing for all nations (Tur HaArokh).

Deuteronomy 34:5

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

Commentary

- Moses died in a specific location to prevent enemies from benefiting, desecrating, or trampling his grave [Abarbanel]. - Moses asked God to let him live to continue proclaiming His works, but was told it was impossible as everyone must die [Daat Zkenim]. - Moses' death was a direct result of God's command [Ibn Ezra]. - Moses was referred to as a servant of the Lord only after his death, highlighting his full stature [Rabbeinu Bahya]. - Moses is said to have written the account of his own death before his passing [Rashi]. - Moses' death was also at the command of the Lord, possibly indicated as a divine kiss, transporting his soul directly to the world of disembodied spirits [Rashi, Ibn Ezra]. - Moses wrote these final verses with tears, differentiating them from the rest of the Torah [Sifte Chakhamim].

Talmud

- Moses desired to die as Aaron did, leading to God sending the Angel of Death to take Moses' soul, only for Moses to rebuke him and God to intervene, storing Moses' soul under the Throne of Glory. - There were discussions about the fate of the generation of the desert, with some arguing they will not be given eternal life while others claimed they will have a trial based on various verses. - There is a dispute over who wrote the last eight verses of the Torah, some attributing it to Joshua. - Six individuals, including Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, were said to have died with a kiss from God, exempted from the Angel of Death influencing their demise. - Moses is said to have died on the seventh of Adar and the Talmud presents differing opinions on who wrote the Torah after Moses' death. - A view is presented that Miriam also died with a divine kiss, with relatives between her death and how Moses died. - The greatness of Moses is highlighted in his ability to find compromises between God and the Jewish people. - Discussions are held on whether Moses truly died or was standing before God at the time of his "death".

Kabbalah

- Viewing the Land of Israel from a distance has merit - Moses was granted a great elevation by seeing the land before his death - Even just seeing the land without entering it has some level of elevation

Quoting Commentary

- Vezot HaBerakha is Moses' blessing delivered at the end of his life, culminating with his death and burial in Moab, with no one knowing his grave location.
- Moses was known as "the man Moses" and "the servant of the Lord" in the Torah, highlighting his humility and greatness as a human.
- Leadership in Judaism is seen as servanthood, with Moses and Joshua being praised as "servants of God" throughout Tanakh.
- Moses is hailed for his servant leadership, setting the precedent for this type of leadership in the Torah.
- In Jewish mystical traditions, the deaths of righteous figures like Moses and Aaron are described as a "death by divine kiss."
- The Torah hints at a painless death for righteous figures like Jacob and Moses, who did not die in the conventional sense.
- Ramban explains that Moses' blessing to the Israelites before his death was significant as he was a man of God.
- Yehoshua wrote part of the Torah, either completing the final verses or adding the chapter on cities of refuge.
- Moab plays a central role in Jewish history, with significant events happening in their land and Moses being buried there.
- The Torah ends in a way that echoes Deuteronomy, with references to seeing, fearing, and "Moshe his servant," emphasizing Moses' role.

Midrash

• Rabbi Yoanan identifies ten instances where it is foretold that Moses will not enter the Land of Israel, sealed when the High Court reveals itself to him. • Moses fasts and prays greatly after his sentence is sealed, attempting to reverse the decree through supplication and making a small circle. • Moses is presented with various reasons not to enter the Land of Israel, including his future actions and family lineage. • Despite Moses's pleas to enter the land and live, he eventually comes to terms with his impending death and resigns his soul to the will of God. • Metatron comes to intercede on behalf of Moses to God and comforts him in his final moments. • Moses blesses the tribes of Israel before his death, asking for forgiveness and requesting that his bones be remembered when they enter the Promised Land.

Jewish Thought

Our Sages refer to the deaths of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam as a kiss from God, symbolizing their pleasure in the knowledge of God and their great love for Him. This kind of death is seen as a deliverance from death and is only ascribed to these three individuals. While other prophets and pious men do not reach this level, their knowledge of God is strengthened as death approaches, leading to a constant state of great delight in the knowledge of God that is not like bodily pleasure (Guide for the Perplexed, Part 3 51:22).

Chasidut

The Talmud states that the people who left Egypt had achieved a level of humility that qualified them for the afterlife, as they considered themselves insignificant and had refined their speech to avoid improper words. The use of the word "desert" in reference to the people expresses that their worship of God was through speech and prayer. The Torah suggests that the Israelites who did not reach the Holy Land would receive a divine "kiss" upon their death, indicating a special blessing. Moses hoped the men exploring Canaan would approach the task in a spiritual manner, beyond material concerns, although they ultimately failed. The sages associate death with the word "there" in order to allude to a heavenly kiss from God.

Second Temple

- God has advanced some individuals to soar above species and genus and stand beside Himself, like Moses who was translated through the Word of the Supreme Cause before his death. - The same Word by which God made the universe is used to draw the perfect man from earthly things to Himself, showcasing God's appreciation for the Wise Man.

Targum

- Moses died in the land of Moav by the mouth of Adonoy - Moses was born and died on the seventh day of the month Adar - He had four crowns: the crown of the Law, Priesthood, kingdom, and a good name - Moses was gathered in the land of Moab by the kiss of the Word of the Lord

Musar

Moses didn't want to publicize his escape from Pharaoh to avoid being informed against like in Egypt. The re-incarnation of Abel as Moses showed his body and soul were well matched, proven by his body not weakening before death like a cadaver. Moses' body not being found after death was because of its vigor, and he was even able to stand next to God at the revelation.

Deuteronomy 34:6

וַיִּקְבֹּר אֱתֹו בְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ מוֹאָב בֵּית פֶּעֹר 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.

Midrash

The text overall reveals the detailed work of Midrash commenting on specific Hebrew bible verses with in-depth interpretations and connections to historical events in Jewish tradition. • The text discusses the roles of various biblical figures such as Moses, Solomon, and Joseph. • Emphasis is placed on acts of kindness throughout the Torah, involving braiding Eve's hair, consolation of mourners, visiting the ill, and more. • The details of Moses' burial, considered a kindness done by God, are closely examined to illustrate the complexity of how divine actions are interpreted in the Hebrew bible. • The discussion surrounding various biblical figures highlights the role of divine intervention and human agency in fulfilling acts of kindness and carrying out specific commands. • The midrash also delves into the meanings of various texts and practical applications of divine characteristics in Jewish tradition. These insights show the value of kindness, interpretation, and the foundational principles of divine interaction as understood in Jewish theology.

Jewish Thought

- The Sifri says that no one knew the site of Moses' grave as different viewpoints made it seem located elsewhere, reflecting disbelief that Moses was merely mortal - Moses' death is seen as a negative experience despite his superiority and burial by G-d Himself; [1] - Analysis of the city of Shechem and Dinah's rape indicates it may not have been the same city, explanation of events surrounding the incident and aftermath, including factors in making the sons of Jacob deceived; [2] - Redemption and Hashgachah for Tzaddikim discussed with examples of G-d's personal intervention due to ancestors' merits; [3] - God tells Jeremiah to call upon Moses to petition on behalf of Israel as "they know how to cry," discussing Moses' burial place; [4] - Pinhas' clarity of purpose contrasted with Israelites' confusion, Moses' burial in a valley is linked to a leadership mistake; [5] - Moses' death in location signifying unfulfilled longing due to his punishment for conflict; [6]

Commentary

Moses' burial place was kept a mystery, with some interpretations suggesting God buried him or that Moses buried himself by entering a cave. The location of the grave near Bet-Peor was seen as a way for Moses to continue protecting his people against harmful forces even after death. The Torah deliberately omits the exact location of Moses' grave, emphasizing the mystery surrounding it. Some commentaries focus on the spiritual or mystical significance of the burial place, while others debate the authorship of the final verses of Deuteronomy.

Quoting Commentary

• Moses inducted Joshua as his successor before his final moments where God showed him the promised land from Mount Nebo [Deut. 34:5-6]. • The Torah insists that "to this day no one knows his burial place" to prevent it from being turned into a place of pilgrimage or worship [Deut. 34:6]. • Moses was the greatest leader of Israel and had a humble obituary [Deut. 34:5-6]. • Moses' blessing to Israel, followed by his burial by God, highlights his role as a human role model rather than a divine figure [Deut. 34:6]. • The red heifer ritual emphasized that holiness is found in life, not in death [Deut. 34:6]. • Commentary notes that Moses' burial site was to remain hidden to prevent it from becoming an idolatrous shrine [Deut. 34:6]. • Moses' burial site and the cave where he stood with Eliyahu are discussed in contrast to

other miraculous items in Judaism [Deut. 34:6]. • The Torah concludes with God caring for the dead and providing burial for Moses [Deut. 34:6].

Talmud

Joseph had the merit to bury his father and no one was greater than him, except Moses, who then had the merit to take Joseph's bones for burial. Moses was then buried by God Himself, which is a sign within a sign according to Rabbi Berekhya. Following God's attributes, one should clothe the naked, visit the sick, console mourners, and bury the dead. Rabbi Samlai teaches that the Torah begins and ends with acts of kindness. Moses was the only one to transport Joseph's bones and to have God bury him, demonstrating God's involvement in the burial of all righteous individuals.

Chasidut

- During prayer, a person may experience a sudden burst of enthusiasm and devotion due to the light of the Infinite radiating to him, leading to intense devotion and self-nullification before God. - Moshe is associated with countering idol worship, as demonstrated by his burial place opposite Bet Pe'or, which signifies eliminating idolatry. - Moshe's burial in the valley in the land of Moav represents ascending into Ein Sof, the Will of Wills, corresponding to Malkhut and the will of Ein Sof in the letters/forms.

Mishnah

- Good deeds are rewarded measure for measure; Miriam waited for Moses, delaying travels for her later - Joseph buried his father with great honor, none greater among his brothers - Moses was only person to transport Joseph's bones to be buried in Eretz Yisrael - Moses had a unique burial, with only God involved in the process; righteousness is honored in burial of all righteous individuals.

Second Temple

Philo discusses the mysterious nature of the passing and translation of virtuous souls, emphasizing that they are not subject to death but rather a transition to a different state of being. He uses the examples of Abel and Elijah to illustrate this concept, highlighting how their graves were unknown and suggesting that they were lifted into a higher, incorporeal realm by divine intervention. This passage underscores the idea that the journey of the soul after death is beyond human understanding and perception.

Targum

• Various Targum commentaries on Deuteronomy 34:6 discuss the burial of Moses in the land of Moav. • Targum Jonathan emphasizes the teachings of the Lord in various aspects of life, such as clothing the naked and consoling mourners. • The reference to Mosheh's burial place being unknown until the present day is consistent across the Targum texts analyzed.

Kabbalah

• Surrender and humility allow a person to connect with the Creator and Hashem. • Examples from Tehillim and Midrash Tanchuma highlight the importance of humility and surrender. • Hashem demonstrates humility by performing acts like beautifying brides, visiting the sick, burying the dead, and giving comfort to mourners.

Musar

- Burying the dead and eulogizing them, especially Torah scholars, is a great mitzvah [Musal | Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Chayei Sara, Ner Mitzvah 2]. - Walking in God's paths involves emulating His actions such as providing clothing for the naked, visiting the sick, comforting the mourners, and burying the dead [Musal | Shenei Luchot HaBerit, Torah Shebikhtav, Vayera, Ner Mitzvah 3]. - The act of caring for the dead relates to the Sefirot and involves washing them from iniquities, clothing them in white, connecting them above, and carrying them on the shoulder to eventually elevate them to the Highest Eden [Musal | Tomer Devorah 5:11].

Tosefta

The Tosefta Sotah 4:3 recounts that Moses located Joseph's coffin after a woman named Serakh informed him it was in the Nile River; Moses called out to Joseph and the coffin surfaced. Some believe Joseph was buried in the crypt of the kings. In the Tosefta Sotah 4:4, it details the burial of Moses by the Shekhinah and his location within Reuben and Gad's territories. The text further explores the concept of transgressors being struck first, citing examples from the Flood, Sodom, Egypt, the spies, the Land of Israel, and the prophets of Jerusalem.

Deuteronomy 34:7

7 ומשה בן־מאה ועשרים שנה במתו לא־כהתה עינו ולא־נס לחה: Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eyes were undimmed and his vigor unabated.

Jewish Thought

Rabbi Alexander compares losing a first wife to losing eyesight, according to Talmud Sanhedrin. Losing a wife may impact one's ability to judge. Some Rabbis believe the loss refers to corrupting one's mazzal. Moses continued to argue until his death, remaining full of life and vitality.

Commentary

- Moses exuded light until the end of his days, indicating his vitality and vigor [Chizkuni].
- The heh in "his natural force" indicates moisture, which Moses retained even in old age, unlike others who become dry [Ibn Ezra on 34:7:1].
- Moses' moisture did not diminish with age, in contrast to young people whose skin retains moisture [Ibn Ezra on 34:7:2].
- Moses was 120 years old at his death, indicating completion of his life, maintaining his vigor and eyesight until that moment according to the Torah [Or HaChaim].
- Reference to Moses' moisture refers to the prevention of body dehydration, with the insertion of ה indicating ongoing divine presence even after death [Rabbeinu Bahya].
- Even after death, Moses' eye was not dim and the appearance of his face did not change [Rashi on 34:7:1, 34:7:2].
- Moses did not show signs of aging even until his death, with no change in his appearance [Siftei Chakhamim].
- Moses' health did not deteriorate with age, as he remained physically healthy and did not show signs of aging [Steinsaltz].

Quoting Commentary

- The Torah reports that Isaac waited three years after marrying Rivkah before engaging in intercourse. - Moses died at the age of 120, with his eyes still sharp and his strength unabated, symbolizing his eternal ideals. - Abraham and Moses both stayed young by never losing their passion for justice and ideals. - Moses retained his strength because his eye was undimmed, reflecting his continued passion and energy. - Moses spent a total of three sets of 40 days on Mount Sinai, resulting in his radiant appearance until his death. - Despite his old age, Moses explained that he could no longer lead based not on loss of strength but on God's decree, indicating Joshua would lead. - Esau despised his birthright for immediate gratification, causing his loss. - Moses remained passionate and strong due to never losing his ideals. - Esau's eyesight was impaired for various homiletical reasons, different interpretations suggest different causes. - Moses' energy was unabated due to his undimmed eyes, symbolizing his continued passion for justice.

Talmud

- Residents of Pappunya asked Rav Mattana about sending away the mother bird when a nest is found on someone's head, and he ruled they are obligated in the mitzva due to the head being considered like the ground according to II Samuel 15:32. - Rav Mattana also explained the allusion to Moses before his birth in Genesis 6:3, where the numerical value of "beshaggam" is the same as "Moshe", and Moses lived 120 years as stated in Deuteronomy 34:7. - In Sotah 13b, the meaning of "go out and come in" in Deuteronomy 31:2 is discussed, with the Gemara determining that it does not refer to Moses being physically restricted since he remained strong until his death at 120 as shown in Deuteronomy 34:7 and was able to ascend Mount Nebo in one step.

Midrash

• Rabbi Yoanan notes ten instances where Moses is told of his impending death in Deuteronomy • Moses was decreed to not enter the Land of Israel ten times, with his sentence being sealed in a High Court revelation • After Moses fasted and prayed, God took an oath to prevent him from entering the Land of Israel • Samael was eager to take Moses' soul but was terrified of him and ultimately failed to claim it • The day Moses died, the Mannah ceased and were eaten from until the Israelites entered the land of Canaan • Moses is compared to Adam, Abraham, Noah, and other biblical figures to show his superiority • Moses, Hillel the Elder, R. Yochanan b. Zakkai, and R. Akiva are noted to have died at the age of 120 • Six pairs of individuals are mentioned who shared the same number of years of life, including Moses and Hillel the Elder

Chasidut

- Moshe was buried by God in the valley in the land of Moav, symbolizing his ascent into Ein Sof and Malkhut, where King David descended from [LM 4:9:6] - The valley represents Ein Sof and the land of Moav symbolizes Malkhut, where the will of Ein Sof is clothed in the forms of letters [LM 4:9:6] - When finding God's greatness in Malkhut, one also finds the will of Ein Sof [LM 4:9:6]

Second Temple

• Moses departed mortal life at a specific age mentioned in the Bible (Deut. 34:7) • It seems unreasonable for the years of the guilty to match those of the sage and prophet • It is suggested that things with the same name are not always alike, and the bad and the good may be equally matched in times and numbers but their powers can be vastly different.

Targum

Moshe was 120 years old when he died; his appearance was unchanged, his face radiant, his eyes bright, and his teeth intact.

Musar

- Moses did not want to publicize his escape from Pharaoh to avoid being informed against - Viewed in light of Abel's reincarnation, Moses' soul inhabited his body well, proven by his physical vitality - Moses' body did not weaken, matching his soul - Moses' grave could not be located because his body did not become a cadaver - Moses was told by God that he would need to consult other Torah scholars as his intellectual powers declined - Moses acknowledged he could no longer master Torah studies, but retained physical vitality - Moses had to draw on Joshua's memory or resourcefulness at times - The acronym "מלא" hints at Moses' silent beginning in prophecy, followed by direct prophetic utterances and public communication with God later on.

Deuteronomy 34:8

וַיִּבְכּוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־מֹשֶׁה בְּעָרְבַת מוֹאָב שְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם וַיִּתְּמֹו 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.
יָמֵי בְכֵי אֲבֶל מֹשֶׁה:

Jewish Thought

• "Peace" is not just restoring balance, but uniting two entities into a whole, tying them together like a silver thread. • In Samuel II 11:7, "peace" refers to a common bond between people or entities, not just the absence of conflict. • A city is not at peace if there is no common purpose or goal among its people, leading to potential disintegration. • Hillel emphasized the importance of peace and community unity, recognizing the impact on individual and collective repentance. • Moses struggled with connecting with the Israelites due to his preoccupation with weighty matters and inability to engage in small talk, contrasting with the beloved leadership style of Aaron.

Talmud

- Israel wept for Aaron for 30 days because he judged fairly, never shaming anyone, and bringing peace between spouses, leading many children to be named after him, contrasting with Moses' harsh words - Mourning for fathers being 7 days originates from Joseph organizing 7 days mourning for his father Jacob, possibly predating Torah laws, linking back to the Deluge - The mourning of 7 days for Moses in the Jerusalem Talmud is interpreted in different ways, including considering it as a transition period into regular Jewish mourning practices - Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's teaching advises resuming study sessions after 30 days of mourning, aligning with the mourning period for Moses - Moses was born and died on the 7th of Adar, as suggested by verses from Deuteronomy and Joshua - Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua justify the mourning practices for Moses using textual evidence from Deuteronomy - Baraita highlights characteristics of a wise disciple, including meekness based on Moses, humility based on Aaron, and emphasis on pursuing peace - Various texts emphasize the importance of peace in Jewish practices, associating it with the foundation of the world, virtues such as humility, and the behavior of biblical figures like Aaron and prophets like Samuel - Samuel's mourning is highlighted as a significant communal event, with greater preoccupation compared to Moses' mourning - The origin of mourning for 30 days is cited from the mourning of Israel for Moses in Deuteronomy

Midrash

- Joseph wept for 40 days, but the residents of Canaan wept for Jacob for more than 70 days, showing a contrast in mourning periods - The mourning period of 7 days is established from various biblical verses, showing a connection to other periods of mourning - Mourning customs include tefillin practices, lack of mourning on Shabbat, and differences in mourning practices for different types of losses - Rabbi Yehudah the Patriarch instructed his children on how to honor their mother and maintain routines, as well as instructed on mourning and succession after his death - Aaron was a pursuer of peace like Uziel, and the whole house of Israel mourned him for 30 days because he never rebuked anyone, in contrast to Moses - Aaron's coffin was lifted above Israel, proving his death and leading to full mourning, while only the men mourned Moses - Moses' death was signaled in a vision where Aaron lay down peacefully, showing his devoted service to the Holy One - Moses explained the entire Torah in 36 days before his death on the seventh of Adar, linked to his birth on the same day, showing a completion of his life cycle through the imparting of knowledge.

Commentary

- When Moses died, the Jewish people did not all weep like they did at Aaron's death because there was no other figure of such stature left - The Jewish people wept for Moses for 30 days, but did not react as profoundly as they did for

Aaron's death, possibly because they were informed of Moses' impending death - Another reason for the different reactions is that the immediate visible effects of Aaron's death, such as the disappearance of protective clouds and an attack by the Canaanites, had a more profound impact compared to Moses' death - The Jewish people did not all weep at Moses' death because the Shechinah settled on Joshua, giving them comfort - The days of mourning for Moses were concluded after 30 days, and at that point, the children of Israel listened to Joshua's leadership.

Quoting Commentary

- Seventy days of mourning for Joseph, 40 days for embalming, 30 days for official mourning.
- Aaron and Moses were also mourned for 30 days each.
- The entire house of Israel wept for Aaron for 30 days.
- Jephthah's daughter's mourning was focused on her virginity, not on her impending death.
- One should not mourn leaders for more than 30 days.
- Priests are considered a separate nation, and mourning for them is specific to them.
- Nadav and Avihu were mourned more than Moses and Aaron.
- Egyptians also mourned Joseph.

Guides

- The passage describes how the Israelites mourned for Moses for thirty days in the plains of Moab, which marked the end of the mourning period for Moses.

Halakhah

- The general limit for mourning over the deceased is three days and eulogizing for seven days, but for Torah scholars like Moses, mourning should not exceed 30 days and eulogizing 12 months. - If a report of a wise man's death reaches after twelve months, no eulogies should be made for him.

Tanakh

The community of Israel knew Aaron had died, and they mourned him for thirty days. (Tanakh | Numbers 20:29)

Targum

The Israelites mourned Moses for thirty days on the plains of Moab. The period of mourning ended after this time according to Targum Onkelos. Additionally, in Targum Jerusalem, it is stated that the children of Israel fulfilled the days of weeping and mourning Moses for thirty days. According to Targum Jonathan, the mourning for Moses ended on the eighth of Nisan, the people of Beth Israel crossed the Jordan on the tenth of Nisan, and the manna ceased for them on the sixteenth of Nisan. They found manna to eat for thirty-seven days after Moses' death due to his righteousness.

Musar

The Torah is described as both G-d's and Moses' Torah. G-d gave Moses general rules when giving him the Torah, including principles of Torah exegesis. Moses realized the existence of an oral Torah and formed a relationship with it, giving up his physical wife. Moses is described as "husband of the Divine" and differs from other prophets given the title "man of G-d". When Moses passed away, Israel mourned, symbolizing the mourning of his "wife" Matronita.

Tosefta

Moses was born on the 7th of Adar, as indicated when he said he was 120 years old "today," signifying the completion of his years. It is also said that the Holy One Blessed be He fulfills promises to the righteous with goodwill and happiness

(Ex. 23:26). Moses died on the 7th of Adar, calculated based on the 33 days from when the Israelites crossed the Jordan on the 10th of Nissan (Josh. 4:19).

Deuteronomy 34:9

וַיְהִי וְשֵׁעַ בְּיָנוֹן מְלֵא רוּחַ חֲכָמָה כִּי־סָמַךְ מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יָדָיו עָלָיו 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.

Jewish Thought

- Freewill offering more pleasing, as indicated in Midrash - Noah's offering ensured no repeat of deluge - People of Israel commanded to offer daily offerings for closeness, not just atonement - Daily communal offerings referred to as olah, highest form of offering - Various sacrifices listed in order: olah, peace offering, sin offerings - Semichah transfers attributes of man to animal in sacrifices - Princes' offerings represent Creator, Divine Presence on earth - Nachshon's offering symbolizes man's striving on earth - Moses' appeal for successor who will be true shepherd and consult with High Priest - Communal offerings remind of ultimate purpose of residence in holy land

Midrash

• The day of appointing elders was as dear to God as the day of giving the Torah. • Moses asked for others to sustain the children of Israel, leading to the appointment of elders. • The appointment of elders was compared to a king hiring a guard for an orchard. • Moses appointed Joshua to share in his wisdom and spirit. • In the World to Come, all of Israel will become prophets. • Joshua possessed beneficial wisdom given by Moses' blessing. • Wisdom can be beneficial or harmful to the possessor.

Talmud

• Rava asked Rabba bar Mari about the idea that gratitude is given to the one who pours wine, even if the wine belongs to someone else. • Rabba bar Mari explained this concept using the example of Moses transferring his authority to Joshua, who was then credited for the spirit of wisdom he received, despite it coming from God through Moses as a conduit.

Quoting Commentary

- Moses transferred wisdom and prophecy to Joshua before his death, as referenced in Deuteronomy 34:9 (Chizkuni, Ezra ben Solomon, Ibn Ezra, Rabbeinu Bahya, Tze'edah Ure'edah) - The transfer of wisdom from Moses to Joshua did not diminish Moses' own prophecy, as illustrated by a parable of a watchman asking for assistance from the owner of an orchard (Rabbeinu Bahya, Tze'edah Ure'edah) - This passing on of wisdom was part of a tradition that continued through generations, from elders to prophets to the Men of Great Assembly to the masters of the Mishnah (Ezra ben Solomon)

Commentary

- Joshua was full of the spirit of wisdom, a reference to the spirit of the Lord that rested on him. - Moses laying his hands on Joshua was proof of his wisdom - Joshua did as the Lord commanded Moses, indicating the people were to listen to him - The need for divine confirmation through the urim vetumim indicated Joshua's inferiority to Moses as a leader - Joshua was already full of the spirit of wisdom.

Halakhah

On Simchat Torah, it is customary to have more than a quorum read the Torah, with everyone in the congregation reading, including those not accustomed to reading on other days. This practice is meant to increase joy, with only one individual reading from Deuteronomy 34:1 to 34:9 without dividing the verses. (Halakhah | Kol Bo 52:12)

Chasidut

- "A yad" symbolizes a person's ability to impart wisdom to students, as seen in the case of Yehoshua son of Nun being filled with wisdom when Moshe laid his hands on him.
- Ordination and writing are connected, with Moshe conferring authority on Yehoshua through laying on of hands, symbolizing the aspect of writing as an expression of wisdom.
- The word "Chanukah" can be derived from the verse about Yehoshua son of Nun being filled with the spirit of wisdom, with the last letters spelling out "Chanukah", hinting at the connection between wisdom and the holiday.

Targum

Yehoshua son of Nun received a spirit of wisdom from Moshe placing his hands on him. The children of Israel listened to Yehoshua and followed the Lord's commands as Moshe had instructed.

Tosefta

Rabbi Yosei believes Torah should have been given through Ezra had Moses not preceded him, as both had an "aliyah." Moses taught Torah to Israel, as did Ezra, who also had authority to implement script and language changes. Rebbi says Assyrian script was originally given to Israel, but changed due to sin, later returned during Ezra's time. Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar states the Torah was given in this script, beautiful Assyrian, as seen in various scriptures. Kings must have two Torahs, one for everyday use and one for the Temple, not to be brought to inappropriate places, with the expectation of regular engagement with it. Joshua ben Nun's continuous Torah study despite his duties serves as an example for all men to follow.

Deuteronomy 34:10

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

Jewish Thought

- G-d's ability to destroy the Earth proves it was created, as He reversed phenomena not due to their own nature - The ingathering of Israel is an act of G-d, not a natural corollary of dispersion - G-d can reverse laws of nature to demonstrate mastery over them, such as with Gideon and King Hezekiah - All natural laws are under G-d's control, as demonstrated after the flood - Noach and his sons witnessed proof that G-d created the universe ex nihilo - Only Moses had a prophecy that was miraculous and not attainable by human nature - Prophets receive effluences through a progressive cause and effect relationship from Moses - Prophets' perceptions are nullified when receiving prophecy, and understanding comes from connecting with the Most High - Prophets receive visions and understanding from the force of G-d's revelation - Moses' prophecy was distinguished from other prophets in four ways, including knowledge and clarity of prophecy - The Law of Moses is eternal because it is impossible to have another prophet like Moses with the same level of prophecy.

Chasidut

- Sparks of holy souls are intertwined with impure shells due to sin - Sparks must be sifted through Torah study, mitzvos, and divine help - Individual Jews must extract and rectify sparks of their own souls - Egypt had no sparks left due to the removal of goodness from impurity - Moses and Balaam both had da'at, one from holiness and one from impurity - The structure of prophetic knowledge of Moses is superior - Balaam used his prophetic gift destructively while Moses used it beneficially - Bilaam corresponds to daat of evil forces - Moses' generation was known as the Generation of Daat - Arizal understood and expounded upon higher spiritual levels than Moses in some aspects

Midrash

- The text discusses Moses and establishes his greatness compared to prophets and sages, with his unique qualities and relationship with God. - Moses' prophecy is compared to a lamp that spreads light without diminishing it, showing his unparalleled status as a prophet. - The text explores Moses' interaction with the angel of death, where Moses invokes the ineffable Name against him and ultimately triumphs over death with the assistance of God and angels. - Various Midrashim emphasize Moses' distinct relationship with God, his unique qualities and abilities, and his pivotal role in Israel's history and prophecy. - The discussion also delves into other biblical figures like Solomon and their relationships with God and prophecy, highlighting Moses' unparalleled status among them.

Commentary

The commentary emphasizes that no prophet in Israel matched Moses in stature, with one interpretation suggesting Moses knew God face to face, while another claiming God knew Moses thus. Some commentaries suggest the greatness of Moses was due to Israel, while alternative views highlight the different level of prophecy Moses received compared to others. The Torah concludes by highlighting Moses' unique relationship with God, receiving direct revelation instead of through symbols and forms.

Quoting Commentary

- The Torah provides a metaphysical statement on the singularity of Moses as a prophet in the concluding verses of Deuteronomy, stating that no other prophet in Israel is like Moses, whom God knew face to face. - According to rabbinic interpretations, Moses was different from other prophets in that he could communicate directly with God without the need for intermediaries and performed signs and wonders immediately rather than through prayer. - The text also emphasizes that Moses' prophetic abilities were not due to any innate superiority over others but were granted by God as a miraculous act. - Despite other prophets like Elijah and Elisha performing miracles through prayer, Moses' signs and wonders were of greater magnitude, duration, and distinction.

Responsa

- The argument that verses in Scripture allude to Mohammed is feeble and fallacious - The promises made to Abraham's descendants only refer to Isaac and Jacob, not Ishmael - The prophet mentioned in Deuteronomy 18:15 is said to be a Jew like Moses, not a non-Jewish prophet like Omar or Zeid - The Laws of Moses, including the oral law from the sages, cannot be altered or added to - Heretics who attempt to corrupt the faith can be killed in accordance with Deuteronomy 17:11

Targum

- No prophet in Israel is like Moshe, who spoke face-to-face with the Lord (Targum | Onkelos Deuteronomy 34:10) - The Word of the Lord spoke word for word with Moshe (Targum | Targum Jerusalem, Deuteronomy 34:10) - The Word of the Lord knew Moshe and spoke with him word for word, making him unique compared to other prophets in Israel (Targum | Targum Jonathan on Deuteronomy 34:10)

Talmud

- Kohelet (King Solomon) sought the fiftieth gate but failed to find it - Solomon sought to be like Moses but a Divine Voice told him to focus on the words of the Torah - The Torah states that there has not arisen a prophet like Moses in Israel

Halakhah

- Negation of the positive is different from a prohibition in Hebrew language. • Hebrews primarily use the word "lo" for negation, which is also used for prohibition. • Negation can also be done with the word "ayin" and its derivatives. • Prohibition is considered a type of command and will only come with the exact verb of a command, always in the future tense. • Negation can be a narrative sentence and can be in the past, present, or future. • Negative statements that are negations should not be considered negative commandments.

Kabbalah

- The Sixth Sefirah in Kabbalah is called The Written Torah, representing Moshe's closeness to HaShem. - Moshe is said to have known HaShem face to face, speaking with him directly and clearly. - Moshe's ability to see through the polished lens allowed him to grasp the middle line and understand in a clear vision.

Musar

- Sages compared Moses to Bileam, but did not mean they were similar in holiness. • Moses' intellectual capacity surpassed others in understanding commandments' metaphysical significance. • Accusation that Moses committed adultery was actually about denying his special relationship with God. • Korach was deceived by his descendants' virtues, which contrasted with his own quarrelsome behavior. • Moses' prophecy began in his youth when he showed sparks of godliness and attachment to God. • Moses was already a superior prophet as a youth, with sparks of godliness

evident, and displayed attachment to God. • Different categories of people entered "Pardes" to acquire Torah secrets, with Moses being at home there and Joshua being compared to the moon reflecting light compared to the sun-like Moses. • Moses purified himself physically to achieve a level unmatched by other prophets, even surpassing angels by overcoming physical limitations and radiating light.

Liturgy

- Moses is regarded as a unique prophet in Israel who beheld God's image, according to the Siddur Ashkenaz and Siddur Sefard commentaries.

Second Temple

- Moses is celebrated as a prophet in the scriptures. - The Lord appeared to Moses in actual appearance, not just in visions or riddles. - No prophet like Moses, who knew the Lord face to face, has risen since.

Deuteronomy 34:11

לְכָל־הָאֵתָת וְהַמּוֹפְתִים אֲשֶׁר שְׁלַח ה' יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם
לְפָרְעֹה וּלְכָל־עַבְדָּיו וּלְכָל־אֶרֶץ: 11 for the various signs and portents that הוהי sent him to display in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his courtiers and his whole country,

Jewish Thought

Maimonides explains that even with the necessary qualifications, not everyone will become a prophet, illustrated by Baruch ben Neriah. Our sages suggest that Hillel's students also had the qualifications but the time was not right for them to become prophets. Moses prayed for the gift of prophecy to be exclusive to the Jewish people, as they were the only ones capable of producing true prophets. Bileam is questioned as a prophet, with the suggestion that gentile prophets were more like astrologers than true prophets. Moses had a close relationship with God, while other prophets like Samuel often needed to pray before performing miracles and were unsure of the response. Other prophets, like Elijah, also had doubts about the response to their prayers, unlike Moses who was always certain of what needed to be done.

Midrash

In Bereshit Rabbah 59:5, it is explained that Abraham was fairer among both the heavenly and earthly beings, receiving blessings and praise from God. In Midrash Tanchuma, Moses' interaction with the angel of death before his passing is detailed, showcasing his faith and resolve. Shemot Rabbah 46:3 highlights Moses' reasoning behind separating from his wife and breaking the tablets, which ultimately aligned with the will of God. Both texts underscore the close relationship between the biblical figures and God.

Targum

The Targums all mention the signs, wonders, and miracles that the Lord sent Moses to perform in the land of Egypt, specifically on Pharaoh, his servants, and the people of the land.

Commentary

• Moses was able to perform miracles because God informed him face to face. • A prophet in Israel does not need to legitimise themselves with miraculous signs as Moses did, but can predict future events. • The Israelites accepted Moses as a prophet because they were willing to accept whatever he told them in God's name. • Moses' miracles distinguished him as a prophet from others, as they were performed publicly and viewed by many. • Moses' miracles, such as splitting the sea, were witnessed by the entire nation of Israel, making their belief in him unwavering. • Moses' miracles were not performed through prayer, unlike other prophets.

Quoting Commentary

Moses did not ask for specific punishment for those who criticized him, but they deserved it for disrespecting him and denying God's deeds. Korach and his followers were swallowed up by the earth as a punishment. Moses' statement about if these men die the common death of all men showed that God had not sent him, similar to previous instances of being sent by God in the Bible. The works referred to in Moses' statement were the totality of his actions for the Israelites.

Musar

- The Torah explains the laws we can and can't understand to build faith in laws beyond comprehension, such as those governing the red heifer. - Two Torahs exist: concealed and revealed, with different expressions (ה' תרות, מיקולא תרות, סדאה תרות, תמא תרות) applicable to different domains. - Moses' miracles were under the Ineffable Name of G-d, beyond normal understanding, performed for a holy nation and only perceived by the spiritual elite. - Moses' camel involvement and displeasure angered G-d, resulting in him not leading people to the Promised Land, including the spiritual elite and community, due to not keeping faith. - The return of the divine presence to Earth through refined Israel as a unique nation similar to angels is highlighted in Scripture. - Moses' physical blemish and speech impediment are questioned due to prophecy requirements, showing a potential contradiction in his character. - G-d's demonstration of His essence in actions emphasizes the greatness of His works and the wisdom behind creation.

Deuteronomy 34:12

12 and for all the great might and awesome power that
מִלְכָּה וְכָל הַחֲזָקָה וְכָל הַמִּוֶּרָא הַגָּדוֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה מֹשֶׁה לְעֵינֵי
כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Chasidut

- The holy Torah starts with the letter Beis to symbolize the existence of two Torahs, written and oral. (Chasidut | Agra DeKala, Bereshit 2) - The Torah is said to have preceded the creation of the world by two thousand years, causing questions about how events that had not yet occurred were described in the Torah. (Chasidut | Ba'al Shem Tov, V'Zot HaBerachah 4:2)

Jewish Thought

The commentary on Akeidat Yitzchak 35:1:8 raises several questions about the text of the story of Moses at Mount Chorev, including: 1) the reasons for apparent coincidences in the narrative, such as the naming of the mountain; 2) discrepancies in the description of events, like the burning bush; 3) inconsistencies in the instructions given to Moses; 4) Moses' self-demeaning behavior despite his background; 5) the timing of the sign of redemption; 6) Moses' preemptive assumptions about the reactions of the Jewish people; 7) the order of events in the narrative; 8) Moses' use of deception in asking for valuables from the Egyptians; 9) the predictability of Pharaoh's refusal; 10) Tziporah's ambiguous statement and why it was inserted in the story; 11) Pharaoh's denial of God's existence and Moses' reliance on G-d to legitimize his request; 12) the meaning of terms like shotrim and nogssim; 13) the repetition of ancestral lineage in the Torah.

Talmud

- Moses added a day of purity before receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai - Moses decided to stay apart from his wife to remain in a state of holiness - Moses stayed outside the Tent of Meeting to maintain holiness - Moses broke the tablets when he saw the Golden Calf worship - Different opinions on why Moses broke the tablets - Rulings for finishing writing a Torah scroll - Specific instructions for writing certain letters in the Torah scrolls are provided in Tractate Soferim.

Quoting Commentary

- Commentary on Mishnah Megillah states different Torah readings and Haftarahs for each day of Passover, Shavuot, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Rosh Hashanah, and Shemini Atzeret. - Bartenura on Genesis 1:1 and Deuteronomy 34:12 points out that the Torah began with an Alef and ended with a Tav respectively. - Chizkuni references Deuteronomy 34:12 to explain that Pharaoh only finally relented after the tenth plague of slaying all firstborn in Egypt. - Covenant and Conversation and Essays in Ethics both reference Deuteronomy 34:10-12 to emphasize that no prophet has risen like Moses who performed mighty wonders and signs. - Judaic commentary on Moses' breaking the tablets is referenced in connection to Rashi's commentary on Deuteronomy 34:12. - Joshua is highlighted based on Deuteronomy 34:10-12 as someone chosen to lead after Moses's mighty deeds. - Rambam and Rabbeinu Bahya make reference to Deuteronomy 34:12 regarding the Torah being inscribed and written entirely. - Siftei Chakhamim also references Deuteronomy 34:12 as an explanation from Rashi. - Everett Fox expands on Deuteronomy's unique voice and structure, explaining the book's historical overview, opening exhortation, laws, concluding exhortation, and final matters. - The same commentary by Everett Fox also details the book's final matters as it concludes in Deuteronomy 34:1-12, summed up as marking a farewell and hope for the future.

Halakhah

- Ben Ish Hai expresses a proclamation of faith and prayer for the success and redemption of Yisrael, referencing verses from Psalms and Zechariah. - Mishneh Torah allows the reading of the eight concluding verses of the Torah in a synagogue with less than ten people present, as they were related by Moses from the Almighty. - Mishneh Torah provides specific guidelines for leaving empty lines between Torah books, completing the Torah in the middle of a line at the bottom of a column, and ensuring that specific words are placed in the middle of the line at the bottom of the column.

Commentary

- Rashi interprets the breaking of the tablets by Moses positively, as reflected in Jewish teachings that May God strengthen you for breaking - Chizkuni explains that the awe inspiring manifestations made the people of Israel believe in Moses - Ibn Ezra highlights the mighty hand of God during the wonders at the sea and the great terror at Mount Sinai - Rabbeinu Bahya connects the strong hand to the splitting of the Red Sea, and the great awe to the events at Mount Sinai - Ramban relates the mighty hand to the division of the Red Sea and the great terror to the Revelation at Mount Sinai - Sforno references G'd's power over nature events like the splitting of the Red Sea and the earth swallowing Korach - Tur HaArokh states that the strong hand can refer to the splitting of the Red Sea or the killing of the Egyptian firstborn, while the great awe can relate to the giving of the Torah or the revelation at Mount Sinai - Sifte Chakhamim explains that Moses's actions and breaking of the tablets were approved by God - Steinsaltz mentions that Moses's actions were all the phenomena he performed before the eyes of all Israel

Midrash

• Moses separated from his wife based on his own reasoning and God's command • He believed he should be separated because God speaks to him directly • Moses reasoned that if he couldn't speak to God without being called on Mount Sinai, how much more should that apply at the Tent of Meeting • Moses broke the tablets because he believed idolaters shouldn't use them, despite opposition • God eventually approved of Moses breaking the tablets and blessed his hand for it according to Shemot Rabbah 46:3.

Targum

- Targum Onkelos praises Moshe for his strong hand and great displays in front of all Yisroel - Targum Jerusalem ends its commentary on Deuteronomy with a blessing for God, praising Him for His glory to fill the earth - Targum Jonathan describes Moshe's strength and miraculous deeds in front of all Israel, including splitting the sea and carrying the sapphire tablets

Kabbalah

- 42 letters are at the end of the Torah in Deuteronomy 34:12 - There are three hands in this verse - Three specific phrases are identified as the first, second, and third hand - The vocalizations in these points may be similar to the vocalizations of the letters in the Name from "In the beginning" - Rabbi Shlomo Molcho mentioned in relation to these concepts and a book "HaKamah" - Initial letters of names form the 42-letter Name as a garment for this Name

Musar

- The prophet Isaiah refers to Moses, describing his appearance and experiences in detail, including sharing a grave outside the Holy Land. - Moses was involved in the "secret of possible existence" of all generations, sharing in their merits and receiving rewards from G-d directly. - The Ten Commandments were heard by all of Israel in one phrase without punctuation, with G-d repeating the first two to be comprehended word by word. - Each Israelite heard a total of twelve commandments directly from G-d, corresponding to the twelve tribes, with the addition of the two tablets

representing the distinction between the written and oral law. - The number fourteen symbolizes the strong hand of Moses as the recipient of the Torah.