

Acts of the Apostles (through 7.49-50)

Acts 1.20: Let his habitation become desolate, and let there be no one to live in it; and His office let another take.

This verse is composed of two verses:

Ps 69.25: May their camp be a desolation, let no one dwell in their tents.

This verse is part of a string of curses pertaining to personal foes (cf. vs. 19) and mentions two types of dwellings, camp and tents. Both suggest impermanence, of perhaps encampments as around a city. *Tyrah* or camp is more akin to a palace which becomes a desolation, the verb *shamam*, also to waste.

Ps 109.8: May his days be few; may another seize his goods!

Reference is to a both a wicked man and accuser of vs. 6. The noun for “goods” is *pequdah*, also as office or account.

Acts 2 17-21: And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; yea, and on my menservants and my maidservants in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth beneath, blood and fire and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the day of the Lord comes, the great and manifest day. And it shall be that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Jl 2.28-32 (*These verses comprise Chapter Three in the Hebrew*): And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions. Even upon the menservants and maidservants in those days I will pour out my spirit. And I will give portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. And it shall come to pass that all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

“After this” occurs toward the end of lengthy Chapter Two with vs. 27 saying that the Lord is in the midst of Israel. The verb *shaphak* or to pour out connotes doing it profusely pertains to the divine *ruach* (cf. Mt 24.15) or spirit, also as wind. “All flesh” implies every living creature will receive this *ruach*, not just human beings. As for people, two age groups and one class are mentioned: 1) sons and daughters or those who are young will engage in prophesying, *nave'* originally as to bubble forth. 2) Old men will dream, *chalam* which bears a certain parallel to prophesying, 3) young men having visions, *chazon* with the verb *ra'ah* (cf Mt 27.39-40) and 4) finally those who are servants (i.e., slaves) will have the divine *ruach* poured upon them.

The excerpt from Joel now speaks of wonders or *mopheth*, alternately as a miracle, prodigy or sign relative to the future both in heaven and on earth, the preposition *b-* (in) being used in both cases. Note that there seems to be two types (blood and fire, columns of smoke) with perhaps the first two belonging to the former and the third to the latter. Both sun and moon will be changed (darkness and blood) not on the “day of the Lord” but before this *yom YHWH* comes. Thus both heavenly bodies will announce the immediate or almost immediate presence of this event which is more intimated than described.

As for what “shall come to pass,” that seems to refer to the *yom YHWH* when people who call on the Lord’s name will be delivered, the verb *qara’* (cf Mt 11.4-5) and the preposition *b-* prefaced to *shem* (cf. Mt 21.16) or name, “in the name.” As for being delivered, the verb is *malat* (cf. Mt 24.21), more along the lines of escaping. Note the other verb used for escape, *palat* (cf. Mt 27.43), more along the lines of slipping away undetected. It’s associated with both Zion and Jerusalem, the former being located in the latter.

There seems to be a second group, the number of which remain undetermined: survivors or *saryd* or one who has escaped a great slaughter. From among (*b-*) them the Lord will call (second use of *qara’*) others, thereby reducing this number. So one theme of this overall passage is that a small group of people will result as having been winnowed down.

Acts 2.25-28: For David says concerning him, “I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades nor let your Holy One see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.

Ps 16.8-11: I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also dwells secure. For you do not give me up to Sheol or let your godly one see the Pit. You show me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

The keeping of the Lord or *shawah* is a making equal or similar which is suggestive of a person being made in God’s image. Note that such *shawah* is constant (*tameyd*), almost in the sense of an ontological identification of the psalmist with God. Nevertheless, the distinction between the two realities is maintained: “before me” or *lenegydy* signifying place-in-front-of or not identical with. This word is prefixed by the letter *l-*, literally, “to;” the literal translation would be “to before me” which implies Moses’ words, “I pray you, show me your glory” [Ex 33.18], not your face which would be identical with God’s own self.

As for the right hand (*yamyn*), in many cultures it has been symbolic of good as opposed to the left hand. Note that God is at the psalmist’s *yamyn*, not the other

way around. Also it means the south, for when your right hand is towards this direction, your face is towards the east or sunrise. This position results in constancy, in not being moved, *mut*; use of the future tense suggests continuance of that keeping or *shawah* already discussed.

As for the psalmist's heart and soul (*lev* and *kavod*; cf. Mt 24.21 for the former), the latter fundamentally means glory and also can refer to the liver which was considered the heaviest of the internal organs. The two verbs are *samach* and *gyl* (cf. Mt 21.13 and Mt 21.4-5); the latter comes from the verbal root suggestive of a round dance. As for the psalmist's body, literally it "dwells to trust," *shakan* suggestive of constancy and here in the direction towards (*l-*) such trust, *betach*.

Give up or *hazav* (cf. Mt 27.46) connotes the finality of abandonment, an apt verb with regards to Sheol, the abode of the dead which the psalmist's soul or *nephesh* (cf. Mt 22.37) escapes. This verse is quoted in Acts 2.27 by Peter on the day of Pentecost. The psalmist identifies himself with being a godly one or *chasyd*, from the root *chasad* or one who is the object of God's tender love. The pit or *shachat* implies corruption: "But you have held back my life from the pit of destruction" [Is 38.17]. This text literally reads, "But you have in love to my soul." To see this pit is equivalent to an actual presence in it.

Because Sheol infers a downward direction, the path or '*orach* leads in the opposite or upward direction. It is a more poetic word as compared with the more prosaic *derek* (cf. Mt 11.9-10). Here its upward direction is associated with life, *chayeym*. God shows this '*orach* to the psalmist, more accurately, causes to make known, the verbal root being *yadah* (cf. Mt 13.14-15). I.e., we have here an indirect discovery on part of the psalmist of the path, not a clear manifestation. As for fulness, *savah* applies more to the intake of food. Note that joy (*samach*; cf. two paragraphs above) is in the plural, implying an indeterminate number '*eth-paneyka*, before you or in your presence or face, the source of joys. As for pleasure (*nehimoth*), the verbal root is *naham* which are derived from the right hand as in vs. 8, "because he is at my right hand." The word forever (*netsach*) derives from *natsach*, splendor, glory.

Acts 2.30-31: Being therefore a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne, he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

These two verses are comprised of the following two references:

Ps 132.11-12: The Lord swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn back: "One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne. If your sons keep my covenant and my testimonies which I shall teach them, their sons also forever shall sit upon your throne."

The Hebrew text reads literally, “The Lord swore truth (*‘emeth*, cf. Mt 12.17-21).” The contents of this swearing (*shavah*, cf. Mt 5.33): that the implied successor to David, Solomon, will reign after him. Furthermore, the Lord won’t turn back, *shuv* coupled with *mimenah* or “from it” (her, feminine). As for the contents of this oath, it continues through vs. 12. The second verse speaks of multiple sons although the first verse mentions one who will succeed David as king. This implies that their offspring will be in line for the throne after Solomon’s reign. The Lord lays down two conditions based upon *shamar* (cf. Mt 21.13) or keeping: the covenant and testimonies or *beryth* (cf. Mt 24.15) and *hed*, the latter also as witness. Both will be taught (*lamad*, cf. 15.8) by the Lord himself.

Ps 16.10: For you did not give me up to Sheol or let your godly one see the Pit.

This verse is mentioned and discussed with regard to Acts 2.30-31 above.

Acts 2.34-35: For David did not ascend into the heavens; but he himself says, “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a stool for your feet.’”

Ps 110.1: The Lord says to my lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.”

See Mt 22.43.44 for this verse and notes on it.

Acts 3.13: The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate when he had decided to release him.

Ex 3.6: And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.”

See Mt 22.32 for this verse and notes on it.

Acts 3.22: Moses said, “The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet from your brethren as he raised me up. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you.”

Dt 18.15-16: The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren—him you shall heed—just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the same of the assembly when you said, “Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God or see this great fire anymore lest I die.”

Moses gives just about the best hope for Israel’s future, that is, he will raise up (*qum*, cf. Mt 18.16) a prophet or *navy*’ from among the people, *qerev* implying the very center of the nation. Not only will this prophet come from that center but will fulfil his mission there. Compare this with 13.1 where a prophet “arises among you.” Here the preposition *b-* or in is used compared with the preposition *m-* or from, both with *qerev*. False prophets arise *in* the people, if you will, whereas a true prophet arises *from* the people. Those who are true are gifted with the ability to see things in a transcendent fashion, not bound to more immediate needs and desires. Added to

this prophet arising from the people is the distinct possibility that one will arise from a fellow Israelite, not an outsider. The latter Moses compares to himself, a point of reference with which everyone is familiar. Such a person the people will obey, *shamah* (cf. Mt 22.37) being the verb with the preposition *el-*, literally “to him” they will give this obeisance.

In vs. 16 Moses has the people recall...almost forces them to do so...the incident at Mount Horeb when they desired (*sha'al* means to ask) neither to hear his voice nor see the fire, so fearful that it would lead to death. The desire not to hear or *shamah* intimates the willful desire not to obey or *shamah* though both then and now the Israelites didn't realize it. Two things stand out in vs. 16: Israel is presented as a one person, “lest I die.” Also that occasion happened “on the day of the assembly” or *qahal*, a specific time not unlike a *kairos* event when Israel perceived itself as one person as just noted.

Acts 3.23: And it shall be that every soul that does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.

Dt 18.19: And whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.

The conjunctive beginning vs. 19 shows the close connection between the one beginning vs. 17, that is, the immediacy and importance of what's going on right now. *Shamah* (cf. Acts 3.22) or heed equals what which the prophet is speaking, *davar* (cf. Mt 3.2), failure of which results in the Lord requiring (*darash*) of him. This verb fundamentally means to tread or trample, so with this in mind, the Lord will pound on whomever does not come through. The preposition *min* is used backing up the action of *darash*, that is, “from you.”

Acts 3.25: You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God gave to your fathers, saying to Abraham, “And in your posterity shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”

Gn 26.4-5: I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and will give to your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves; because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes and my laws.

“Because” is an important word in this context which shows the pre-eminence of Abraham in God's eyes. He will extend the same blessings to Isaac “because” Abraham did the following: obeyed his voice, kept his charge, commandments, statutes and laws. This can be seen as an anticipation of the keeping of the Torah revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai as often noted in the Book of Deuteronomy.

Vs. 4 pretty much follows in line with 15.5, the covenant the Lord made with Abram shortly after his defeat of the four eastern kings and his encounter with Melchizedek. Surely Isaac had heard his father recount it many times not so much

as an old man repeating himself endlessly but of drilling into Isaac's head that he was the first of a hopefully long line of descendants destined to take over the land of Canaan. Because of this ultimate goal in mind, surely father and son consulted each other often, more so after the appearance of the Lord to Isaac. Both compared notes, as it were, as to what each had received through their respective visions (cf. 15.1 regarding Abram's).

That of Abram was much more dramatic (cf. 15.9-16), understandably so, because he was the founding father chosen by the Lord. Isaac's vision was tame by comparison but essentially the same. What stands out in both is that the divine promise lays in the future and is not realized during their respective lifetimes. Now in his old age Abraham had become very familiar with these partial fulfillments, and his son seemed destined to continue in this vein. If the Lord frequently had communicated this promise to Abraham, would he be doing the same with Isaac? At this stage it seems so. Although both responded to divine visions and the like, they have assumed the pattern of familiar repetition; certainly for Abraham but not quite yet for Isaac, still relatively young, but he had his father's experience on hand which seemed destined to repeat itself. Yes, Abraham both obeyed the Lord's voice and kept his charge, commandments, statutes and laws (cf. vs. 5); apart from that, just one reliable son (the other being rebellious Esau) with little to go on from there.

Acts 4.11: This is the stone which was rejected by you builders but which has become the head of the corner.

Ps 118.22: The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.

This verse is treated in Mt 21.44.

Acts 4.24: And when they heard it (Peter and John having been released), they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them."

Ps 146-5-7: Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. *Both vss. 5 and 7 are included because all three verses form one sentence.*

'Ashry or happy is derived brings to mind the first verse of the Psalter and is derived from the Hebrew verbal root 'ashar whose fundamental meaning is straightness which makes sense in the direction-towards-which the psalmist defines blessedness. And so to be 'ashry implies being in a state of transition, of moving forward, of not standing still. In the verse at hand, such happiness is dependent upon the *hezer* or help in the God of Jacob. This, in turn, rests upon hope or *sever* or from things not yet attained. Yet in a sense they are attained because it is the Lord who is responsible for bringing creation into existence. In addition to this, he keeps

(*shamar*, cf. Acts 2,31) faith forever and does justice or *mishpat* for persons who are oppressed, *hashaq* in the sense of being defrauded.

Acts 4.25-26: who by the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, “Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples imagine vain things? The kings of the earth set themselves in array, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and his Anointed.”

Ps 2.1-2: Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed, saying “Let us burst their bonds asunder and cast their cords from us.”

Such scheming is associated with the kings and rulers of the next verse plotting against the Lord. Note that this is the only occurrence of *ragash* (to conspire) in the Bible with the exception of the Chaldean verb in Dan 6.6[7], 11[12]. The vain things or *ryq* on which nations plot is reminiscent of that vanity described by Ecclesiastes whose first chapter recounts the restlessness and monotony inherent in nature, an image applicable to this verses’s conspiring and plotting. In Ecclesiastes, vanity is *havel*, a verb associated with breathing, whereas the Psalm’s *ryq* means something empty, for example, an empty container. The image conveyed is one of rattling, of clatter. For the verbal root to plot, *hagah*.

It is not difficult to identify the anointed or *meshyach* with Jesus Christ and apply it to his enemies. Note the two objects of their assault, Lord and anointed as indicated by the preposition *hal* (on) which suggests an elevated place from which the enemies look down upon the object of their contempt. Such is the illusory vantage point common to any conspiratorial activity which further suggests the participants gathered in a circle. The next verse contains the content of the counsel of the kings and rulers, “Let us burst their bonds asunder and cast their cords from us.” The plural they implies the Lord and his anointed, applicable to the hostile religious rulers who confronted Jesus Christ, the *Meshyach*.

The remaining verses come from Stephen’s speech before he was stoned to death. Prior to his death, Stephen gives a fairly long address where he recounts Israel’s history. Thus the verses at hand represent part of that historical account. Listings from the Old Testament come to an end at the conclusion of his speech.

Acts 7.2: Brethren and fathers, here me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia before he lived in Haran and said to him, “Depart from your land and from your kindred and go into the land which I will show you.”

Gn 12.1: Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your country and your father’s house to the land that I will show you.”

The call of Abram occurs after the extended genealogy of Shem begun in 11.10, the third genealogy after the flood as well as the dispersion after the confusion of tongues at Babel. God's address to Abram continues through vs. 3. Said-go (*lek-leka*): note the play on words, literally, "go to you," indicating a specific form of departure. The command of God to Abram involves a three-fold departure which starts from a general area to a more specific household:

- 1) from Abram's country or *'erets* (cf. Mt 15.4):
- 2) from Abram's kindred or *moledeth*: from the verbal root *yadah* (to give birth) and signifies origin as in Est 2.10: "Esther had not made known her people or kindred, for Mordecai had charged her not to make it known."
- 3) from the house of Abram's father who is Terah (cf. 11.27).

The place of migration is an *'erets* which God will *show* to Abram, *ra'ah* (cf. Acts 2.17-21) being the common verb to see. For another reference to this verse, cf. Heb 11.18: "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was to go." Thus vs. 1 may be outlined as: said->go->show. Abram can get a handle on the first two but the third...of seeing...remains to be demonstrated.

Acts 7.4-5: And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living; yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him in possession and to his posterity after him though he had no child.

The critical Greek text has three references.

Gn 12.7: Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the Lord who had appeared to him.

Compare vs. 7 beginning with "Then the Lord appeared to Abram" with vs. 1 when the "Lord said to Abram." In other words, first a speaking and then an appearing (*ra'ah*, cf. Acts 7.2) which doesn't preclude the Lord having walked with Abram from Haran to the oak of Moreh. Under what guise the Lord appeared we don't know, but the main point is for Abram to hear the words "to your descendants I will give this land." These words are to be seen against the somewhat ominous backdrop of vs. 6, "At that time the Canaanites were in the land." If it weren't for the central location of the *'elon* (oak), Abram may have had second thoughts, for despite being in the land of Canaan, he could see from that *'elon* as from a mountaintop "all the land, Gilead as far as Dan, all Naphtali, the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Western Sea, the Negeb and the Plain, that is, the valley of Jericho the city of palm trees as far as Zoar" [Ex 34.2-3]. As with Moses who uttered these words, Abram wasn't destined to occupy these places; it was up to his descendants to whom the Lord "will give this land." As for the word "descendants," *zarah* means literally seed. Thus Abram, beginning with hearing the Lord who later appeared to him, translated both into a seed, if you will,

which would be planted and reap a harvest but not in his lifetime, a fact that would frustrate Abram to his death.

Vs. 7 concludes with the words, “So he built there an altar to the Lord who had appeared to him.” This is the second mention of *mizbeach* (altar), the first being erected by Noah immediately after the flood (cf. 8.20). Both were set up in a new land and were constructed not at a direct command from God but spontaneously, more as a gesture of gratitude. No details are given as to the type of sacrifice Abram had offered compared with the animals Noah had taken from the ark and thus had survived the worldwide flood.

We have no mention about the sacrifice Abram had offered, perhaps none at the time, just construction of the altar. The most important feature is that the altar is for the “Lord who had appeared to him.” Despite the appearance, emphasis is more upon the words addressed to Abram. This emphasis is in keeping with the summoning of Abram in vs. 1. Afterward having built the altar Abram continues to move in a southerly direction all the way to Egypt, his furthest point away from Haran, after which he returned to Canaan, this account spilling over into Chapter Thirteen. Thus the altar faced in a southerly direction upon which all these lands were to be offered, more important than any animal sacrifice.

Dt 2.4-5: So take good heed; do not contend with them; for I will not give you any of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession.

The prospect of going northward was tempered by the Lord’s assurance who said the Esau-ites would be afraid of them. Nevertheless, the Israelites are to take good heed, *shamar* (cf. Acts 4.24) being the verb which also means to keep watch or observe. By doing this they’d be mirroring the same caution Jacob showed when he first encountered Esau after many years as recounted in Gen 33.1. *Shamar* is intensified by the adverb *me’od* (cf. Mt 22.37) which usually applies to excessiveness or something extreme. Apparently word had reached the Esau-ites well before their distant kinsman had approached causing them to be afraid or more likely being super-cautious of them. Word had gotten around quickly of their passage through the Red Sea many years ago as well as the Lord appearing to them at Horeb. Though of the same stock, they seem to have lacked any form of divine intervention, a sign that they lacked the Lord’s favor despite his promise to them.

At the same time the Israelites were to tread softly with respect Esau’s descendants: “do not contend with them,” this deference and fear stemming from their patriarch who was renowned for his hunting skills which had been passed down from generation to generation. *Garah* is the verb for contend which connotes being rough. The reason apart from some distant relationship? Israel is simply passing through Seir, the middle of which has that mountain around they had circled for what seems forever. The Lord shows pretty much the same contempt for the Esau-ites as he had done for their father who had despised his birthright. At the

same time he esteemed Esau's reception of Jacob much later on and didn't want to renew the friction between these two patriarchs. So when the Lord says that Seir is Esau's possession or *yerushah*, he intimates that they're stuck in that inhospitable place; they might eke out a living there but essentially would have no future. As for *yerushah*, it derives from *yarash* (to inherit). Because the Esau-ites represent a dead-end, the Lord doesn't wish to allow his people even to tread on their land which means somehow bypassing it. However, he allows the Israelites to purchase basic necessities. Most likely the meeting between the two halves was polite but guarded, taking place not in the territory of Seir but at its border so that the soles of the Israelites wouldn't have to step on it (cf. vs. 5).

Gn 13.14-15: The Lord said to Abram after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever."

Vs. 14 has the Lord speaking to Abram for the first time since 12.1 when he ordered him to leave his native land of Haran (12.7 has the Lord appearing to Abram), so the intervening time included his migration to Canaan, the Negeb, Egypt and back into Canaan. It was a fairly long interval so Abram welcomed the divine intervention. Note that on this second occasion the Lord speaks only after Lot "had separated (*parad*) from him." In other words, Abram willingly allowed Lot to take what seemed the more welcome, fertile valley of the Jordan River trusting that the Lord would speak with him shortly. As for Lot, he was delighted at apparently come off the better. At the same time Abram was curious when his nephew descended to the Jordan area and wanted to see if the Lord would provide for him...a sort of comparison between the two men and their retinues. "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are." This lifting up of Abram's eyes differs from Lot ('and Lot lifted up his eyes' to see the Jordan River area, vs. 10) in that it was divinely commanded. The place (*maqom*) at hand is where Abram "had made an altar at the first" [vs. 13] or Shechem, the oak of Moreh (12.6). It was here that Abram and Lot had their quarrel and decided to separate from each other.

At this *maqom* situated in Shechem by the oak of Moreh the Lord had Abram look to all four points of the compass. From this central point or point within a square which was determined by Abram's clear-sightedness he said in vs. 15 "for all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever."

Acts 7.6: And God spoke to this effect, that his posterity would be aliens in a land belonging to others who would enslave them and ill-treat them four hundred years.

Gn 15.13-14: Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know of a surety that your descendants will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be slaves there, and they will be oppressed for four hundred years."

“Of a surety” in Hebrew is given by a repetition of the verb *yadah*, to know (cf. 7.2)...something like “know know.” Repetition of the words is meant to for them to sink in as important. Good thing that Abram was stone-cold because what God was communicating wasn’t what he had been expecting, especially after all his complaining (and justifiable at that) about having traveled so far and still not having an heir. Despite the *tardemah* of Abram, he retained the ability to receive communication from God and to remember it upon waking. We have nothing as to his response upon awakening.

Communication within the context of *tardemah* or the deep sleep into which Abram had fallen doesn’t concerns him directly but his descendants, *zarah* (i.e., seed). They were to be *ger* or strangers in a land or *‘erets* (cf. Acts 7.2) not their own, a terrible fate for a settled people to whom identification of place is so important. However, Abram’s descendants...sprung from the current generation that came from Haran-into-Canaan-into-Egypt-into-Canaan...didn’t quite fit into this category. The reason? They grew accustomed to the continuous movement of nomadic existence, a fact heightened by living amid potentially hostile Canaanites who at any moment could wipe them out immediately.

The sticking point here was that the Lord did not reveal to Abram the country in which his descendants would be *ger*, strangers. “A land not theirs” rules out Canaan and “will be slaves” suggests some other place. Those who came from Haran with Abram hadn’t yet experienced slavery, so the place where that will take occur remains concealed from Abram. Furthermore, we haven’t any out-loud reflection by Abram as to where it might be. The most depressing part of this *tardemah*? “They will be slaves there (in the land not their own), and they will be oppressed for four hundred years.” That’s a very long time, a sentence Abram would have difficulty accepting if he were conscious. Immediately he’d cease complaining about his wife Sarai’s infertility and take it from there. Better to have Eliezar of Damascus (cf. vs. 2) be the inheritor than to be faced with such a long time.

The words which continue into vs. 14 aren’t consoling to Abram: “but I will bring judgment on the nation which they serve.” That’s a projection well into the future, so far removed from Abram’s generation that it doesn’t affect him...or does it? Such a question remains to be worked out through the rest of Abram’s life and gets some resolution in 17.2, “And I will make my covenant between me and you and will multiply you exceedingly.” Not knowing the nation about which the Lord is talking must have vexed Abram when he awoke from his *tardemah*. The only other option apart from Canaan based upon personal experience was Egypt to which he was forced to migrate due to a famine. Being there or anywhere other than a land supposedly theirs was bad enough, but reduced to be slaves? “And afterward they shall come out with great possessions.” Abram’s first thought at these supposedly consoling words must have been less than desirable, best unrecorded. *Rekush* is the word for “possessions” which was noted earlier and can involve acquired persons

and/or slaves. The Lord says simply that a generation some four hundred years hence will come out of an unknown land and enter an equally unknown land. If Abram was in the three-fold state of *tardemah* (deep sleep), *'eymah* (horror) and *chashekah* (darkness), what the Lord had just communicated was enough to wake the dead.

Acts 7:7: “But I will judge the nation which they serve,” said God, “and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place.”

Ex 3.12: He (the Lord) said, “But I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you; when you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God upon this mountain.”

At this point Moses had sent himself into exile and lived among the Midianites, two cultures which acknowledged the Lord but in a vague sort of way where emphasis lies upon tradition than genuine religious observances. As for this being-with-you, Moses is too stunned to grasp the mode by which it will be expressed. The Lord foresees the difficulty which is why immediately he adds “and this shall be the sign for you,” *'oth* (cf. Mt 1.23) is the word for “sign” and can apply to something lying in the future and here refers to serving God “upon this mountain.”

Note use of the word “serve” which is *havad* (cf. Mt 4.10). Would the *havad* requested by the Lord be the same as this, the drudgery of a slave? Use of the term doesn't sound attractive under these circumstances, so Moses has a lot of explanation to do to the Israelites. As for Mount Horeb, from Moses' point of view, so far so good...but the Lord seems to be glossing over how Israel will get there. He speaks of it as a *fait accompli* ('when you have brought for the people out of Egypt'). That's what troubled Moses, the newly appointed leader. Since the Israelites apparently were clueless about worship, the task at hand seemed close to impossible. Their only resource was turning to Egyptian deities for some clues as to its nature, even worship of some Pharaohs. In the meantime Moses was expected to focus upon that *'oth-as-worship* at Mount Horeb, not much comfort even though he was standing before the Lord. Would the Israelites end up by doing the same?

Acts 7.9-10: And the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him and rescued him out of all his afflictions and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who made him governor over Egypt and over all his household.

Gn 41.37-40: This proposal seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his servants. And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a man as this in whom is the Spirit of God?" So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discreet and wise as you are; you shall be over my house, and all my people

shall order themselves as you command; only as regards the throne will I be greater than you."

Davar (cf. Acts 3.23) is the word for thing or that which had been spoken or in this instance, a *davar* which requires *patar*, interpretation. As for Joseph being raised to such an exalted position, he seems undaunted and goes about his task in a matter-of-fact way. What strikes one reading the text is this trait coupled with his utter detachment. Such are the qualities of being discreet and wise, *byn* and *chakam*; the first from a verbal root meaning to distinguish, separate, and the latter related to the noun *chakmah* or wisdom. The same can apply to Pharaoh. Rarely do we come across an absolute ruler who is willing to delegate power, in this case to a foreigner.

Acts 7.11: Now there came a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan and great affliction, and our fathers could find no food.

Gn 41.53-54: The seven years of plenty that prevailed in the land of Egypt came to an end; and the seven years of famine began to come as Joseph had said. There was famine in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

So after all the diligence expended over seven bountiful years, at last the dreaded seven years of famine arrived. *Savah* (cf. Acts 2.30-31) is the word for plenty which is derived from the same verbal root (*savah*, to become satisfied) as the number seven (years). This new period of time is described as "began to come" [vs. 54]. At first the famine wasn't noticeable but gradually made its presence felt...for example, after the first year when no rain fell. Vs. 54 continues with "there was famine in all the lands" or all the lands about Egypt. Despite the hard-hitting impact of the famine, "the people cried to Pharaoh for bread" [vs. 55]. *Tsahaq* is the verb dramatically expressed by Esau in 37.24: "When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry." In the verse at hand, this *tsahaq* didn't come from an individual or group of individuals but from all Egypt itself. The people had gotten to know Joseph's kindness...his *chesed*...yet recognized that despite his power, he was second to Pharaoh. That's why their *tsahaq* was directed to him and to him alone. Pharaoh's response to this *tsahaq*? "God to Joseph; what he says to you, do" [vs. 55].

After this common *tsahaq* reached a crescendo—and Joseph knew this would happen; it was matter of at what intensity he'd intervene—"Joseph opened all the storehouses" [vs. 56]. The Hebrew here reads "all that was in them" after which he sold grain to the Egyptians. When we hear such words automatically there comes to mind government officials cheating as the people as much as possible. That wasn't the case with Joseph which is why we hear the simple fact that he sold grain minus any comments about the process. Throughout all this Pharaoh isn't mentioned; he has faded into the background which perhaps he always had wanted, allowing a competent person like Joseph to do the actual ruling. Never have we learned the name of this Pharaoh. The reason is that he is a figurehead and someone at the

service of Joseph...and Joseph was at the service of his wayward brothers whose ancestors would thrive in Egypt over the next four hundred years before leaving the country for a return to Canaan, that long-lost land of their ancient forebears starting with Abraham.

Acts 7.26-28: And on the following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling and would have reconciled them, saying, “Men, you are brethren, why do you wrong each other?” But the man who was wronging his neighbor thrust him aside, saying, “Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?”

Ex 2.13-14: When he (Moses) went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together; and he said to the man that did the wrong, “Why do you strike your fellow? He answered, “Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid and thought, “Surely the thing is known.” When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses.

The actual slaying of the Egyptian occurs in vs. 12: “He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand” [vs. 12]. The verb at hand is *panah* (to turn) “here and here” (*koh wkoh*) which is indicative of Moses being on guard in a furtive, nervous fashion attempting to disguise the action he was about to undertake. The mood of just indignation and desire to intervene reveals itself again shortly when Moses comes across two Hebrews struggling together, a trait he would use to great advantage before Pharaoh despite some innate bashfulness. One of the Hebrews asked “Who made you a prince and a judge over us” [14]? *Sar* is the word for “prince” which can apply to a commander of soldiers.

Despite the precaution Moses had taken—*panah* this way and that—someone had seen what happened, most likely peering over a sand dune or from behind a partially completed building. The circumstance was most likely some building project where the Egyptian (taskmaster) started beating the Israelite, so plenty of people were moving about. The verse at hand ends with “Surely the thing is known,” the noun for “thing” being *davar* (cf. Acts 7.9-10) or literally, word as expression. That is to say, *davar* being a word is endowed the swiftness of speech and quickly reached Pharaoh. He may not have been concerned if it weren’t for the partially completed building project near which this slaying occurred; otherwise, he would have let it pass. But if a Hebrew slew an Egyptian, that is, a slave killed his master, Pharaoh might soon have an all-out rebellion on his hands. At that point Moses’ cover and safety net provided by Pharaoh’s daughter was blown. Despite Pharaoh’s love for his daughter, he couldn’t allow such an incident pass by, one with the potential of undermining his throne. The importance of *davar* is again revealed with the ominous words, “When Pharaoh heard of *davar*, he sought to kill Moses.”

Acts 7.30: Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush.

Ex 3.2-3: And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and lo, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, “I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.”

Ex 3.6 is cited in both Mt 22.32 and Acts 3.13. Therefore noted relative to that verse may be found in the former reference.

Mal'ak (cf. Mt 31.32) is the word for angel which fundamentally means a messenger, the first time one appears to an Israelite since Jacob in Gen 32.1 just before he encountered his brother, Esau. This tradition which was followed by Jacob wrestling with an unknown man (though not identified per se as *mal'ak*) had been kept alive among the Israelites in Egypt as well as other encounters Jacob had with heavenly beings. This messenger is “of the Lord” which makes him all the more important and indicates that the God worshiped by the Midianites and Israelites was the same deity. Perhaps it was the same angel who later “went before the host of Israel” just before crossing the Red Sea (14.19). As for the verb “appeared,” it is the common *ra'ah* (to see, cf. Acts 7.4-5) and situated within the context of a flame of fire. What form the angel took isn't specified, for it must have been something Moses had no problem identifying as a divine *mal'ak*. This *mal'ak* appeared in a flame out of a bush which differs from the Lord himself and who does not assume a form.

Perhaps the sight made Moses think of the cherubim at the entrance to the garden of Eden as well as “a flaming sword which turned every way” [Gen 3.24]. As for bush,” *seneh* or a thornbush is typical of deserts and occurs only in this context with the exception of Dt 33.16: “with the best gifts of the earth and its fulness and the favor of him that dwelt in the bush.” Because a *seneh* is exceptionally dry, it was no small wonder that Moses now wondered why it wasn't being consumed, so in response to the angel appearing (*ra'ah*) here, Moses *ra'ah* this sight. Thus we have an angel/messenger and a burning thornbush, the former being seeing within the latter. That means Moses' attention was caught more by the flame than the fire, for it was specific to the *mal'ak* who does not utter any words. In other words, this *mal'ak* (as messenger) communicates to Moses through sight.

Without hesitation, Moses says to himself that he will turn aside and see (*ra'ah*) “this great sight” [vs. 3], the noun *mar'eh* being used which is derived from *ra'ah* and called “great by reason of appearing during the bright, harsh light of the desert as opposed to night. After all, Moses was leading his flock and couldn't do this at night. Turning aside suggests that Moses was en route somewhere with his flock or approaching Mount Horeb to get a better view of it. Thus the incident at hand prevents him from prematurely ascending the mountain, something reserved for later on.

Acts 7.32: I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.” And Moses trembled and did not dare to look.

Ex 3.4-10: When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here am I." Then he said, "Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Then the Lord said, "I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt."

“When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, ‘Moses, Moses’” [vs. 4]! Now it is the Lord’s turn to *ra’ah* (cf. Acts 7.30) which means he was paying close attention to Moses, whether or not he would approach the thornbush. *Ra’ah* on the Lord’s part implies that he had been watching him all along on his journey to Horeb. Spontaneously Moses said “Here I am,” probably thinking it was the angel. And so the thornbush contained both the angel and the Lord, the former making himself known by sight and the latter (true to the character of earlier divine revelations) by voice. The Lord forbade Moses to approach by telling him to remove his sandals, this verse echoing Jos 5.15: “Put off your shoes from your feet; for the place where you stand is holy.” Moses (the same applies to Joshua) had been standing on holy ground without knowing it. More specifically, the word *maqom* (cf. Gn 13.14-15) is used which often designates an inhabited place. It’s use suggests that Moses had been wandering around with his flock and once hitting upon Mount Horeb, had entered a piece of ground (‘*admah* or earth) that was holy or *qodesh* (an adjective fundamentally meaning to be pure, clean). So we have the generic ground placed within the confines of the restricted place (*maqom*). Somewhere was the separation between the not-holy ground and the one that was holy, a distinction of which Moses was ignorant. However, he must have sensed something different about the territory he had entered as he approached Horeb but couldn’t quite put his finger on it.

By identifying himself with the first three ancestors who lived in Canaan, the Lord puts Moses at ease basically saying that he’s on the side of his people. So while the Lord was speaking his angel or messenger (*mal’ak*, cf. Acts 7.30) was standing there alongside him within the thornbush not uttering a word. Both were in the

midst (*mitok*) of the thornbush, occupying the same space, as it were. Moses wasn't afraid to look at the spectacle before him but once he recognized the Lord within it, the same Lord who was unable to be seen but only heard, he "hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God." *Satar* is the verb for "hid" and connotes putting a veil over one's face. As for the verb "afraid," it is *yare'* (cf. Mt 22.32) and gives rise to an impulse by Moses to hide his face, *ra'ah* (to see). In the verse at hand the two read *yar'e...lire'oth*, one flowing into the other, if you will. As for looking as it applies directly to God, the verb is *navat* which connotes a regard and respect.

Especially comforting to Moses were the words "my people" which correspond to "his people" as in 2.11, so he knew that God had identified himself with the Israelites as much as he had. Note that here the Lord has seen the affliction which corresponds to 2.25 though there "affliction" isn't mentioned, that word being *hony* which derives from *hanah*, a verbal root with a great variety of adaptations. Fundamentally *hanah* means to sing, answer, signify, be afflicted. "For the Lord saw that the affliction of Israel was very bitter" [2Kg 14.26]. The Lord responded in fairly swift fashion, for the Pharaoh under whom Moses was born—presumably the same Pharaoh from whom he fled after having murdered the Egyptian—was the only recorded tyrant during the four century-plus exile of Israel, an impressive record. Actually the misbehavior of the current Pharaoh was the impetus that got the Lord's attention, having been dormant since the days of Joseph.

After having seen (i.e., the faculty of vision) this *hony*, the faculty of hearing comes into play: "and have heard." The noun *tshaqah* for cry derives from the verbal root *tsahaq* as last noted in 2.23, "and cried out for help, and their cry under bondage came up to God." The verb *nagas* has the participle form for taskmasters and alternately means to impel, urge. "They shall rule over their oppressors" [Is 14.2]. Finally we have in vs. 7 "I know their sufferings" with the verb *yadah* as at the conclusion of Chapter Two: "and God knew their condition. *Mak'ov* is the word for "sufferings as in Ps 38.17: "For I am ready to fall, and my pain is ever with me." The intimacy of *yadah* in this second use (i.e., Exodus) takes the first one not just to conclusion but to climax, begging resolution.

Note the text says "I have come down;" that is to say, already the Lord is present but the people don't know it. He does this yet again at Mount Horeb or where later he will appear to the Israelites and has to invite Moses to become acquainted with him before proceeding further. *Natsal* is the verb for "deliver" which means alternately to pull away, to snatch...in other words, a fairly sudden gesture. It's one thing to snatch up and another to drop what you've snatched: the other half of this *natsal* is *halah* (to bring up) which is more than just a deliverance from Egypt and as noted above, had been exceptionally generous to Israel except for this last Pharaoh.

In vs. 8 the Lord describes the 'erets (cf. Acts 7.6) or land to which he brings-up Israel as "a good and broad 'erets, an 'erets flowing with milk and honey" but

with the ominous note of it being inhabited by various tribes Israel will have to contend with. Description of the richness of the land sounds just great, perhaps just as great as Egypt had been for so long, but the Lord quickly modifies his words by mentioning six tribes for whom that place (*maqom*) was their native home.

The people's cry (*tshaqah* again) reaches the Lord not in heaven above but on earth ('I have come down,' vs. 8). Both terms "now" and "behold" are intended to grab the reader's attention as to the genuine involvement of the Lord in human affairs. This is necessary because the divine presence required getting some used, having been un-experienced for so many years. That's why later on the people had no idea of what Moses was speaking about when he introduced them to the Lord.

In conjunction with vs. 7, the two facilities of hearing and seeing are repeated not for repetition's sake but to have the message sink into Moses, the primary bearer of divine intervention, that the Lord with whom he is speaking means business, not just talk. In Genesis the Lord had appeared to Abraham making promises about inheriting the land of Canaan over and over with so many apparent dead ends. Tradition picked them up as warning signals, that future descendants were to be wary about putting their faith in God, a fact the Lord desperately wants to avoid. With Abraham the Lord was elsewhere, if you will...not firmly on the earth as he is now with Moses. Besides, the Israelites have become entrenched so deeply in Egypt that they considered it home. Given divine intervention, it's a wonder that Moses managed to get them out. Even if the current Pharaoh was treating them badly, that too would pass. Then again, there was a distinct possibility that popular opinion in Egypt had changed due to a successful propaganda program launched to enslave the Israelites.

Vs. 9 continues with a now familiar refrain: "I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them." Here the verb *lachats* and the verb derived from it are used meaning to press, squeeze. "I will punish all who oppress them" [Jer 20]. s for this seeing noted here and earlier, it must have taken several occasions of close observation in order to assess the situation properly. After all, the Lord would not have taken the trouble to have come down and reveal to Moses that he was about to intervene. One must wonder what the Lord had been doing for over four hundred years. Although this is not appropriate to say, the thought does arise and is dealt with by proposition various theological contortions which fail to satisfy the question.

"Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people, the sons of Israel, of out Egypt" [vs. 10]. So after a fairly extended address to Moses about what the Lord intends to do concerning the Israelites, he changes the situation dramatically. The Lord is not going to intervene directly or in the physical sense; Moses is the one who, upon hearing these words, was the person designated for this task. The introductory, almost familiar "come" is the last thing Moses wanted to do. Rightly Moses objects in the next verse with "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh

and bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt” [vs. 11]? The Lord responds—keep in mind it comes from a voice in the burning thornbush along with an angel—“But I will be with you” [vs. 12]. Up to this point Moses had sent himself into exile and lived among the Midianites, two cultures which acknowledged the Lord but in a vague sort of way where emphasis apparently lies upon tradition than genuine religious observances.

Acts 7.35: This Moses whom they refused, saying “Who made you a ruler and a judge?” God sent as both ruler and deliverer by the hand of the angel that appeared to him in the bush.”

Ex 3.2: And the angel of the Lord appeared to him (Moses) in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked and lo, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed.

Refer to Acts 7.30 for notations on this verse.

Acts 7.37: This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, “God will raise up for you a prophet from your brethren as he raised me up.”

Dt 18.15-16: The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren—him you shall heed—just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, “Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, or see this great fire any more, lest I die.”

Refer to Acts 3.22 for notations on this verse.

Acts 7.39-40: Our fathers refused to obey him but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt saying to Aaron, “Make for us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who led us out from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”

Ex 32.1: When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron and said to him, “Up, make us gods who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”

Bush is the verb for “delayed” which fundamentally means to be ashamed, be confused (piel: the doubling of the middle root consonant). The seeing (*ra’ah*, cf. Acts 7.32) of this delay by the people implies that the forty days and forty nights Moses was absent was felt as an interminable amount of time that dragged by. It was easy to view the cloud Moses had entered—and this was “in the sight of the people of Israel” [24.17]—as a gateway into another world from which it would be impossible to return. The people may have consented to wait forty days and nights, quite understandable, but soon gave up hope of seeing their leader. Even if this time span is figurative and applies to a much shorter period, the people must have been itching to get Moses out of sight so they could give into their idolatrous inclinations.

Surely if Moses disappeared forever on Mount Sinai, it was a sign that the Lord had forsaken his people as well. The first step was to get together or assemble, *qahal* being the verb, this and 35.1 being the only instances of its occurrence in Exodus. It was natural for the people to rally around Aaron to whom Moses had entrusted them prior to his ascent on Sinai (cf. 24.14). Aaron had been privy to why the Lord has summoned Moses on the mountain, and it was his failure to communicate this to Israel that led to his shame. With regard to the *qahal* (cf. Acts 22) of the people, it was “to Aaron,” *hal* being the preposition prefixed to his name meaning something like “on Aaron.” In other words, the people pressed “on” him with urgency to resolve the situation...and when you figure the Israelites numbered six hundred thousand men excluding women and children, that was a lot of people which posed a dangerous situation.

What’s revealing about this part of the Exodus narrative is that the people had become spoiled without realizing it. They beheld divine wonders in Egypt, traversed the Red Sea, saw the Egyptian army get swallowed up, were victorious against Amalek, had water in the desert plus quails and manna to eat. All this had been effected directly by the Lord despite Israel murmuring against him and Moses. Their first words to Aaron? “Up!” In other words, rouse yourself from your concern over your lost brother and get to work leading us. But before that is done, they demand of Aaron that he make (*hasah*) not just a god but gods. The simplicity and directness of this demand reveals how desperate the people had become after not having experienced any divine intervention.

The plural “gods” shows how shallow their trust had been all along, something that would haunt them ever after as in Psalms 105 and 106. “But they soon forgot his works; they did not wait for his counsel” [Ps 106.13]. Later when the Lord showed his wrath, the words that must have been especially bothersome—in addition to the *hasah* of gods—were “who shall go before us.” This going-before Israel is in imitation of the Lord leading Israel through the Red Sea (technically he did not) and through the desert to Mount Sinai. A further insult was the way the people disregarded Moses, despite acknowledgment of his leadership role: “we do not know what has become of him.”

Acts 7.42-43: But God turned and gave them over to worship the host of heaven as it is written in the book of the prophets: “Did you offer to me slain beasts and sacrifices, forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? And you took up the tent of Moloch and the star of the god Rephan, the figures which you made to worship; and I will remove you beyond Babylon.”

Amos 5.25-27: Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You shall take up Sakkuth your king, and Kaiwan your star-god, your images, which you made for yourselves; therefore I will take you into exile beyond Damascus, says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.

The rhetorical question presented by the Lord to his people is intended to put them in their place. While in the Sinai wilderness for forty years (roughly one complete generation), Israel had plenty of guidelines from Moses on Mount Horeb as to the proper way of making sacrifices. However, they opted for two other gods. Note the words “made for yourselves” which mirror the golden calf. In other words, the people took the initiative to make these idols all the while knowing it was against what the Lord had prescribed. Because the two gods mentioned here belong to Syria, the Lord will bring Israel to that land and force-feed them with false worship until they realize what they had done.

Acts 7.49-50: “Heaven is my throne and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me,” says the Lord, “or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?”

Is 66.1-2: Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool; what is the house which you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things are mine, says the Lord. But this is the man to whom I will look, he that is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

This is the next-to-last “Thus says the Lord” in the Book of Isaiah which means close attention is demanded in order to receive his concluding remarks to the prophet. The house and place of rest” *menuchah* is, of course, the temple of Jerusalem situated midway between the divine throne in heaven and the divine footstool of the earth. In other words, it stand in between both. All that the Lord claims to have made is within that closed world, if you will, of heaven and earth spoken of in the previous verse. Here a person’s spirit or *ruach* (cf. Acts 2.17-21) is both humble and contrite or *hany* and *nakah*. Not only this, he trembles or *charad* at the Lord’s *davar* or word (cf. Acts 7.26-28).

Note that the Lord puts forth two rhetorical questions in rapid succession, not giving Israel permission to respond but simply to take in what he wishes to communicate.

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Supplement to the Gospel According to St. Matthew

Is 7.14: Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a young woman shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel.

Is 8.6-8: "Because this people has refused the waters of Shiloah that flow gently and melt in fear before Rezin and the son of Remaliah; therefore, behold, the Lord is bringing up against them the waters of the River, mighty and many, the king of Assyria and all his glory; and it will rise over all its channels and go over all its banks; and it will sweep on into Judah, it will overflow and pass on, reaching even to the neck; and its outspread wings will fill the

breadth of your land, O Immanu-el." Be broken, you peoples, and be dismayed; give ear, all you far countries; gird yourselves and be dismayed; gird yourselves and be dismayed. Take counsel together, but it will come to nought; speak a word, but it will not stand, for God is with us.

Mc 5.2: But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

2Sam 5.2: "In times past when Saul was king over us, it was you that led out and brought in Israel; and the Lord said to you, "You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel."

Hos 11.1: When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. The more I called them, the more they went from me; they kept sacrificing to the Baals and burning incense to idols.

Jer 31.15: Thus says the Lord: "A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children because they are not."

Is 40.3: A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Dt 8.3: And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know; that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but that man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.

Ps 91.11-12: For he will give his angels charge of you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Dt 6.16: You shall not put the Lord your God to the test as you tested him at Massah.

Dt 6.13: You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve him and swear by his name.

Is 9.1-2 (8.23 in the Hebrew): But there will be no gloom for her that was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

Ex 20.13: You shall not kill.

Ex 20.14: You shall not commit adultery.

Dt 24.1-4: When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a bill of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, and the latter husband dislikes her and writes her a bill of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife, then her former husband who sent her away may not take her again to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord, and you shall not bring guilt upon the land which the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance.

Lev 19.12: And you shall not swear by my name falsely and so profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.

Is 66.1: Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool; what is the house which you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest?"

Ex 21.23-24: If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Lev 19.18: You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

Is 53.4: Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted.

Hos 6.6: For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

Mic 7.5-6: Put no trust in a neighbor, have no confidence in a friend; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom; for the son treats the father with contempt, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house.

Is 35.5-6: Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.

Is 61.1: The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted; he has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.

Mal 3.1: Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

Is 14.13-15: You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far north; 14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High." But you are brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the Pit.

Hos 6.6: For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

Is 42.1-4: Behold my servant whom I uphold, my chosen in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him, he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not fail or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coast lands wait for his law.

Jon 1.17: And the Lord appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah; and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Is 6.9-10: And he said, "Go, and say to this people: 'Hear and hear but do not understand; see and see but do not perceive.' Make the heart of this people fat and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and turn and be healed."

Is 6.9-10: And he said, "Go, and say to this people: 'Hear and hear but do not understand; see and see but do not perceive.' Make the heart of this people fat and their ears heavy, and

shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and turn and be healed."

Ex 20.12: Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

Is 29.13: "And the Lord has said, "This people draws nigh to me with their mouth, and they honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; but in vain do they worship me, teaching the commandments and doctrines of men."

Mt 13-14: And the Lord said: "Because this people draws near with their mouth and honors me with their lips while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men learned by rote; therefore, behold, I will again do marvelous things with this people, wonderful and marvelous; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hid."

Dt 19.15: A single witness shall not prevail against a man for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed; only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be sustained.

Gn 1.27: So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Gn 2.24: Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Dt 24.1-4: When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a bill of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, and the latter husband dislikes her and writes her a bill of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies who took her to be his wife, then her former husband who sent her away may not take her again to be his wife after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination before the Lord, and you shall not bring guilt upon the land which the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance.

Ex 20.12-16: Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you. You shall not kill. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Is 62.11: Behold, the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth; "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your salvation comes; behold, his reward is with him and his recompense before him.'"

Zech 9.9: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O Daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on an ass, on a colt the foal of an ass.

Ps 118.26: Blessed be he who enters in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord.

Is 56.6-7: And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord and to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it and holds fast to my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

Ps 8.1-2: You whose glory above the heavens is chanted by the mouth of babes and infants, you have founded a bulwark because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger.

Is 5.1-2: Let me sing for my beloved a love song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes.

Ps 118.22-23: The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

Dt 25.5: If brothers dwell together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead shall not be married outside the family to a stranger; her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her.

Ex 3.6: And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Dt 6.4.5: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

Lev 19.18: You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

Ps 110.1: The Lord says to my lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool."

1Kg 9.6-9: But if you turn aside from following me, you or your children, and do not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you but go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and the house which I have consecrated for my name I will cast out of my sight; and Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples. And this house will become a heap of ruins; everyone passing by it will be astonished, and will hiss; and they will say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?' Then they will say, 'Because they forsook the Lord their God who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt and laid hold on other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore the Lord has brought all this evil upon them.'"

Ps 118.26: Blessed be he who enters in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord.

Dan 9.27: And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week; and for half of the week he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.

Dan 11.31: Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress and shall take away the continual burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate.

Dan 12.1: At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble such as never has been since there was a nation until that time; but at that time your people shall be delivered, every one whose name shall be found written in the book.

Jl 2.12-13: "Yet even now," says the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments."

Is 13.10: For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.

Ezk 32.7: When I blot you out, I will cover the heavens and make their stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light.

Jl 2.10-11: The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. The Lord utters his voice before his army, for his host is exceedingly great; he that executes his word is powerful. For the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it?

Zech 11.12-13: Then I said to them (traffickers of sheep), "If it seems right to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them." And they weighed out as my wages thirty shekels of silver. Then the Lord said to me, "Cast it into the treasury—the lordly price at which I was paid off by them."

Zech 13.7: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who stands next to me" says the Lord of hosts. "Strike the shepherd that the sheep may be scattered; I will turn my hand against the little ones.

Ps 110.1: The Lord says to my lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool."

Dn 7.13: I saw in the night visions and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days, and was presented before him.

Zech 11.12-13: Then I said to them (traffickers of sheep), "If it seems right to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them." And they weighed out as my wages thirty shekels of silver. Then the Lord said to me, "Cast it into the treasury—the lordly price at which I was paid off by them."

Jer 32.6-9: Jeremiah said, "The word of the Lord came to me: Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle will come to you and say, 'Buy my field which is at Anathoth for the right of redemption by purchase is yours.' Then Hanamel my cousin came to me in the court of the guard in accordance with the word of the Lord and said to me, 'Buy my field which is at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, for the right of possession and redemption is yours; buy it for yourself.' Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord. "And I bought the field at Anathoth from Hanamel my cousin, and weighed out the money to him, seventeen shekels of silver.

Ps 69.21: They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

Ps 22.17-18: I can count all my bones—they stare at me and gloat over me; they divide my garments among them, and for my raiment they cast lots.

Ps 22.7: All who see me mock at me, they make mouths at me, they wag their heads.

Ps 109.25: I am an object of scorn to my accusers; when they see me, they wag their heads.

Ps 22.8: He committed his cause to the Lord; let him deliver him, let him rescue him, for he delights in him!

Ps 22.1: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?

Ps 69.21: They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

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Ps 69.25: May their camp be a desolation, let no one dwell in their tents.

Ps 109.8: May his days be few; may another seize his goods!

Jl 2.28-32: And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions. Even upon the menservants and maidservants in those days I will pour out my spirit. And I will give portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. And it shall come to pass that all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

Ps 16.8-11: I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices; my body also dwells secure. For you do not give me up to Sheol or let your godly one see the Pit. You show me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Ps 132.11-12: The Lord swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn back: "One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne. If your sons keep my covenant and my testimonies which I shall teach them, their sons also forever shall sit upon your throne."

Ps 16.10: For you did not give me up to Sheol or let your godly one see the Pit.

Ps 110.1: The Lord says to my lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool."

Ex 3.6: And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob."

Dt 18.15-16: The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren—him you shall heed—just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the same of the assembly when you said, "Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God or see this great fire anymore lest I die."

Dt 18.19: And whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.

Gn 26.4-5: I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven and will give to your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves; because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes and my laws.

Ps 118.22: The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner.

Ps 146-5-7: Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry.

Ps 2.1-2: Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed, saying "Let us burst their bonds asunder and cast their cords from us."

Gn 12.1: Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your country and your father's house to the land that I will show you."

Gn 12.7: Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the Lord who had appeared to him.

Dt 2.4-5: So take good heed; do not contend with them; for I will not give you any of their land, no, not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on, because I have given Mount Seir to Esau as a possession.

Gn 13.14-15: The Lord said to Abram after Lot had separated from him, "Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever."

Gn 15.13-14: Then the Lord said to Abram, "Know of a surety that your descendants will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be slaves there, and they will be oppressed for four hundred years."

Ex 3.12: He (the Lord) said, "But I will be with you; and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you; when you have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God upon this mountain."

Gn 41.37-40: This proposal seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his servants. And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a man as this in whom is the Spirit of God?" So Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discreet and wise as you are; you shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command; only as regards the throne will I be greater than you."

Gn 41.53-54: The seven years of plenty that prevailed in the land of Egypt came to an end; and the seven years of famine began to come as Joseph had said. There was famine in all lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

Ex 2.13-14: When he (Moses) went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together; and he said to the man that did the wrong, "Why do you strike your fellow? He answered, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid and thought, "Surely the thing is known." When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses.

Ex 3.2-3: And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and lo, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, "I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt."

Ex 3.4-10: When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here am I." Then he said, "Do not come near; put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the

God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. Then the Lord said, "I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt."

Ex 3.2: And the angel of the Lord appeared to him (Moses) in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked and lo, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed.

Dt 18.15-16: The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren—him you shall heed—just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, “Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, or see this great fire any more, lest I die.”

Ex 32.1: When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron and said to him, "Up, make us gods who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."

Amos 5.25-27: Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You shall take up Sakkuth your king, and Kaiwan your star-god, your images, which you made for yourselves; therefore I will take you into exile beyond Damascus, says the Lord, whose name is the God of hosts.

Is 66.1-2: Thus says the Lord: "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool; what is the house which you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things are mine, says the Lord. But this is the man to whom I will look, he that is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

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