

true nature of the First Century Jew. The nature of almost all the Jewish sects of that era dealt with halacha. This indicates that the nature of dominate Jewish sects of that period were primarily halachic.”¹

Avot 1:1

א מִשָּׁה קִבֵּל תּוֹרָה מִסִּינַי, וּמִסֵּרָה לַיהוֹשֻׁעַ,

The chain of transmission from Chakam to talmid demonstrates the ability to pass a flawless oral tradition from one generation to the next. Tsefet transmitted orally the halachic teachings of the Torah as they were interpreted by Yeshua.

“The teachers - Rabbis, therefore, interpreted the written Law so as to include in it or derive

from it all those customs and practices. Thus, the teachings of the Halakah (for all such rules, customs, practices, and traditional laws constituted the Halakah) had to be represented as an interpretation or an

exposition of the written Law.”²

In the beginning, etc. Bereshit bara]. This verse should be interpreted according to the Midrash, and it is in this way that our rabbis apply it to the Torah as having existed “before His works of old,” or to Israel, called “the first-fruits of His increase.” But if one wishes to explain these words in their natural meaning, it is necessary to observe the following method. In the beginning of the creation of the heaven and the earth, when the earth was confusion and chaos, God said: “Let there be light.” This verse does not set forth the order of the creation. If it did, the word בראשונה would have been necessary, whereas the word ראשית is always in the construct, as in Jer. xxvii. 1, Gen. x. 10, Deut. xviii. 4; likewise ברא must here be taken as an infinitive: the same construction occurs in Hosea i. 2.

Because we see that the nature of the first century Jew was primarily halachic, we must surmise that the Yeshua and his Talmid were also halachic in their lifestyle.

Many phrases are common to both the Mishnah and the Nazarene Codicil. Likewise, much of the material is similar in its presentation and message.

Therefore, we can look at both sources and determine lifestyle and practice. Furthermore, we must scrutinize both sources to see what those have in common.

WHAT’S STILL TROUBLING RASHI?

Why was Rashi was troubled with the opening of the Chumash, “Bereshit Bar Elohim”?

Rashi was troubled with this text because he knew that the Chumash was a halachic book. As a result Rashi had to resolve the problem of why HaShem began the text with “Bereshit bara.”

The point being made is that Rashi, as do almost all the Sages see the Torah as a Halachic document.

TRANSMISSION

Because the Nazarene Codicil is the halachic decisions of Yeshua haMashiach, we have the halachic decisions passed to us from Tsefet (Peter) through his talmid Mordechai.

Tsefet had received the complete tradition of halachic observance from his Master Yeshua.

According to Jewish Mysticism the Torah and mitzvot restore G-d’s presence to the natural material world. Every mitzvah speeds the process of tikkun.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the key to understanding the Torah ?
2. What is the key attribute of the Sofer?
3. What does Mark 12:28ff tell us about the nature of the Scribe?
4. What is the true nature of the Torah?
5. What troubled Rashi?
6. What does Rashi say about the phrase “Bereshit bara Elohim?
7. Given the true nature of the Torah, how are we to determine the nature of the Nazarene Codicil?

¹ Midrash and Mishnah, A study in the Early History of the Halakah, Jacob Z. Lauterbach, Ph.D pg2
² The Commandments, Maimonides, translated by Charles B. Chavel, Soncino Press , Forward vii

Torah Focus

יום חמישי, יא' בחשוון, תש"ע

Mesorah of Mark

STUDY GUIDE #3

THE PURPOSE OF TORAH

Why do we have the Torah? Why was the Torah given to us?

Torah *Shebichtav* (the written Torah—the Pentateuch), the most important portion of Tanach (the Bible), is nothing less than the voice of G-d communicating His Will to mankind through the written word. Through its narratives and precepts the Torah challenges mankind to

pose questions. What is one to do with his life? How can one sanctify his life? The Torah provides the answers to those who ask. To those who have no questions, the Torah remains an enigma, for as the well-known dictum states, nothing is more irrelevant than an answer to a question nobody asks. The person who genuinely seeks meaning in his life will find the Torah replete with intellectual incisiveness, penetrating psycho-logical insights, and an overwhelming reverence for life.¹

The Torah being of Divine origin, and the primary object of man being to lead a life that will be fully consonant with His will as expressed in the Torah, the great concern of Jewish religion thought to ascertain what precisely constitutes the will of God, and what are the details and conditions pertinent to its exact fulfillment.²

SOFERIM AND P'SHAT

סֹפֵר In trying to picture to ourselves New Testament scenes, the figure most prominent, next to those of the chief actors, is that of the

Scribe. He seems ubiquitous; we meet him in Jerusalem, in Judaea, and even in Galilee. Indeed, he is indispensable, not only in Babylon, which may have been the birthplace of his order, but among the ‘dispersion’ also. Everywhere he appears as

the mouthpiece and representative of the people; he pushes to the front, the crowd respectfully giving way, and eagerly hanging on his utterances, as those of a recognized authority. He has been solemnly ordained by the laying on of hands; and is the Rabbi, ‘my great one, Master, amplitudo. He puts questions; he urges objections; he expects full explanations and respectful demeanor. Indeed, his **hyper-ingenuity in questioning** has become a proverb.³

Ezra 7:6 Mark 12:28ff

MISHNA AND THE FIRST CENTURY

When searching for a model of first century Jewish lifestyle we must look to literature that illuminates the routine of that era. On excellent source for modeling, first century life is the Mishnah.

“The Mishna by in large demonstrates the

ראשית בשורת ישוע
המשיח בן־האלהים : כאשר
ברוב פנייה ישעיה הנני
שולח מלאכי לפניך ופנה
דרך לפניך : קול קורא
במדבר

¹ The Written and Oral Torah, A Comprehensive Introduction, Nathan Cardozo Aaronson Press
² The 613 Maimonides. Volume #1, The Positive Commandments, Soncino Press
³ The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Alfred Edersheim, Chapter 1 book 8 p64
⁴ My paraphrase of “Berakot and Tosefta” A. Lukyn, Introduction Xii