

SONG OF INHERITANCE



Kanaan Ministries

Amanda Buys' Spiritual Covering

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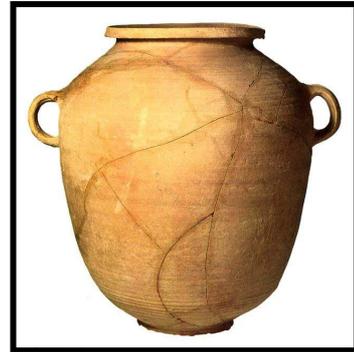
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THE SONG OF THE DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEHAD

Archaeology in 1910 produced some very interesting historical evidence:

In a storehouse north of Shechem (in the land of the tribe of Manasseh) wine and olive oil jars (dated from the period of Jeroboam) bearing the following inscriptions on them were found:



- One with the city's name "Noa"
- One with the city's name "Hogla".
- In the same region we find a city named "**Tirza**".

1 Kings 15:21 "21 When Baasha heard of it, he quit building up Ramah and dwelt in **Tirzah**."

How did these cities come to have the names of the "daughters" of Zelophehad?

Generational Background of this family:

1. Joseph (the man with the coat of many colours)

He dies in Egypt but extracts a promise from the family that they will take his bones back to Israel.



Genesis 50:25 "25 And Joseph took **an oath from the sons of Israel**, saying, God will surely visit you, and you will **carry up my bones** from here."

2. Manasseh, the son of Joseph, had a number of sons:

Joshua 17:2 "2 Allotment was also made for the other Manassites by their families—for the **sons of Abiezer, of Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hopher, and Shemida**, the male offspring of Manasseh son of Joseph by their families."

3. Machir

This grandson of Joseph:

(a) is "brought up on Joseph's knees" – this means they grew up in the presence of their grandfather.

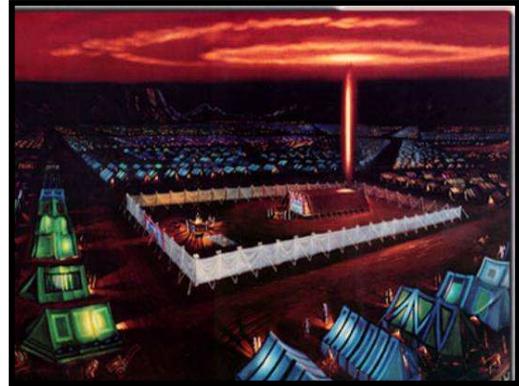
Genesis 50:23 "23 And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation; the children also of **Machir** son of Manasseh were **brought up on Joseph's knees**."

They would “know” and “feel” the passion of Joseph to go back home to Israel to the land of his birth.

(b) They go through the Passover experience, enter Canaan and chose to believe the report of the 10 spies.

(c) They walk through the wilderness for 40 years

- Seeing the cloud by day and the fire by night
- Eating the provision of manna provided by God
- Drinking from God's source of water
- Carry Joseph's bones



Exodus 13:19 “19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for [Joseph] had strictly sworn the Israelites, saying, Surely God will be with you, and you must carry my bones away from here with you.

- Experience the victory over the Amalakites, etc, and once again come to stand at the border to the Land of Promise.
One half the tribe make a choice:

- Not to go into the Promised Land.
- Not to take up the promise and the blessing
- To stop just short of the goal

4. Gilead

Numbers 32:39-42 “39 And the sons of Machir son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it and dispossessed the Amorites who were in it.
40 And Moses gave Gilead to **Machir son of Manasseh**, and he settled in it.
41 Jair son of Manasseh took their villages and called them Havvoth-jair.
42 And Nobah took Kenath and its villages and called it Nobah after his own name.

Joshua 17:1 “1 ALLOTMENT WAS made for the tribe of Manasseh, for he was the firstborn of Joseph. To Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of **Gilead**, were allotted Gilead and Bashan because he was a man of war.

5. Hephor

Not much is said in the Bible about this man but his name **says it all**:

Strong's 2660: Pit / shame – But he has **five daughters** whom we will speak about later.

THE BALANCE OF GENERATIONAL PROBABILITY

Jacob's Blessing

Jacob chooses to bless each one of the tribes. Manasseh is part of Joseph's blessing and so this is the prophetic declaration over his life.

Genesis 49:22-26 "22 Joseph is a **fruitful bough**, a fruitful bough by a well (spring or fountain), whose branches run over the wall.
23 Skilled archers have bitterly attacked and sorely worried him; they have shot at him and persecuted him.

24 But his bow remained strong and steady and rested in the Strength that does not fail him, for the arms of his hands were made strong and active by the hands of the Mighty

God of Jacob, by the name of the Shepherd, the Rock of Israel,

25 By the God of your father, Who will help you, and by the Almighty, Who will bless you with **blessings of the heavens** above, **blessings lying in the deep beneath, blessings of the breasts and of the womb.**

26 The **blessings of your father** [on you] are greater than the blessings of my forefathers [Abraham and Isaac on me] and are as lasting as the bounties of the eternal hills; they shall be on the head of Joseph, and **on the crown of the head of him** who was the consecrated one and the one separated from his brethren and [the one who] is prince among them.



This is their potential:	Curses – This is THEIR CHOICE
(a) A fruitful bough (b) Blessings of heaven <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deep beneath (water in Israel) • Breasts and the womb (provision, fruitfulness) • Legacy of your father, Abraham (c) Crown on your head	1. They lack faith to go into Canaan 2. They stop short of their inheritance. 3. They take land promised to Moab.

CONCLUSION:

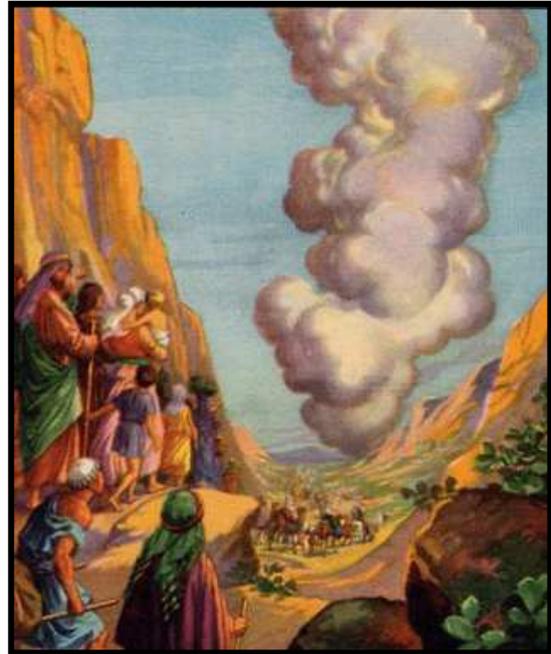
Life is a choice notwithstanding a powerful family line and a strong prophetic calling on your life you still have to choose!

STANDING ON THE PLAIN OF MOAB WAITING TO CROSS THE JORDAN

The Israelites have travelled from place to place

- Each place that they stopped at has raised their understanding of God
- Each place that they stopped at has revealed great revelations of God
- Each place that they stopped at has instilled a legacy of training

Finally they stand in front of the Land of Promise.



Numbers 33:48 “48 And they departed from the mountains of Abarim and encamped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan at Jericho.

Moses takes time out to recount their history. He tells of the promise of God, remembers the good times and reminds them of their failures. WHY? He knows that he will die on this mountain but he still fulfils his last calling.

He wants to make sure that these “young” children understand:

- The potential
- The potholes

And encourages them not to repeat the mistakes – we do not have to go around the mountain again!!

- They get final instructions
 - How to conquer the land
 - How the boundaries are to be drawn
 - How the leaders will divide the land.



THE FIVE DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEHAD STAND BEFORE MOSES

They ask of God **TWO** things:

1. **An equal inheritance for the women.** They come under the authority of their deceased father and pleaded their case that the family should still be entitled to an inheritance in the Land of Promise.

Numbers 27:4 “4 Why should the name of our father be removed from his family because he had no son? Give to us a possession among our father’s brethren.

2. **The right to take up the calling that was prophesied and placed on the family but which their ancestors had failed to take up.**

God issues a decree:

The daughters in a family, (where there are no sons) will also inherit.

We see something important:

Israel does not belong to the Israelites communally – every bit of land “belongs” to a family, a clan, a tribe.

This is why Moses rules that the daughters must marry within the tribe

Numbers 36:8 “8 And every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the Israelites shall be wife to one of the family of the tribe of her father, so that the Israelites may each one possess the inheritance of his fathers.
9 So shall no inheritance be transferred from one tribe to another, but each of the tribes of the Israelites shall cling to its own inheritance.



MAKING LIFE CHOICES – MY WAY OR GOD’S WAY

God’s vision for man is “purpose and destiny”.

In Genesis He blesses us, gives us rulership (take dominion) and releases us to multiply.

BUT

He gives mankind the freedom to exercise choice.

We make the wrong choices based on various motives.

We can **follow leadership** that make wrong choices (for those who follow the Greek/Roman

We can follow that which **seems logical** (for those who don’t have a sound Torah Based thought pattern)

We can follow the **easy way out** (for those who don’t have a value system based thought pattern.)

We can follow **self** – it appeals to my senses (for those who don’t have a moral system)

TRUTH - It is easy to go wrong!!

God’s way is:

- Go into Canaan **together** (12 unique, different tribes but in unity.)
- **Fight** and **take all** of the land
- Establish God’s Kingdom - build a Holy City / Tabernacle
- Worship according to God’s pattern of appointed times in God’s Holy City
- Each person who follows God’s plan
- Has an inheritance that God gives to them (physically (land) in the Old Testament and spiritually (gifts) in the New Testament)
- Has their true identity, calling and destiny made apparent to them
- Has a permanent role in the redeemed community of God / Bride of Messiah.

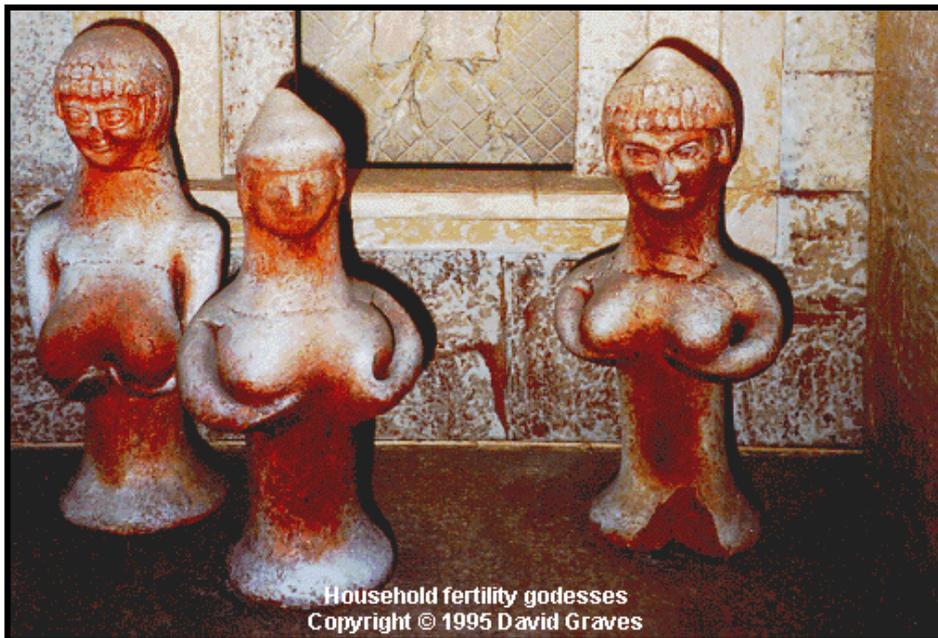


MACHIR

The son of promise, the eldest heir with a legacy that includes “hearing” about father Joseph’s passion for Israel, and who saw Joseph role model God’s everlasting Covenant of provision and protection.

He sells “God’s Way” (like Esau) and settles for the destiny and inheritance of Moab.

- They chose the next best in Covenant
- They chose the next best in inheritance
- They chose the cattle (taken from the Midianites) **and** the grasslands of Moab **and** the pagan gods of their people **instead** of intimacy with God.



THE FIVE DAUGHTERS

1. They go in

(a) They go in together to stand before **Moses** to ask for their legacy

Numbers 27:1-4 “1 *THEN CAME* the daughters of Zelophehad son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, from the families of Manasseh son of Joseph. The names of his daughters: **Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.**

2 They stood before **Moses**, Eleazar the priest, and the leaders, and all the congregation at the door of the Tent of Meeting, saying,

3 Our father died in the wilderness. He was not among those who assembled together against the Lord in the company of Korah, but died for his own sin [as did all those who rebelled at Kadesh], and he had no sons.

4 Why should the name of our father be removed from his family because he had no son? **Give to us a possession among our father’s brethren.**



And again:

(b) To stand before **Joshua** to claim their inheritance.

Joshua 17:3 “3 But Zelophehad son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons but only daughters; **their names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.**

4 They came before Eleazar the priest and **Joshua** son of Nun and the leaders and said, The Lord commanded Moses to **give us an inheritance with our brethren.** So according to the Lord’s command, Joshua gave them an inheritance among their father’s brethren.

(c) To stand with men from Manasseh that think **generationally** in terms of destiny and purpose

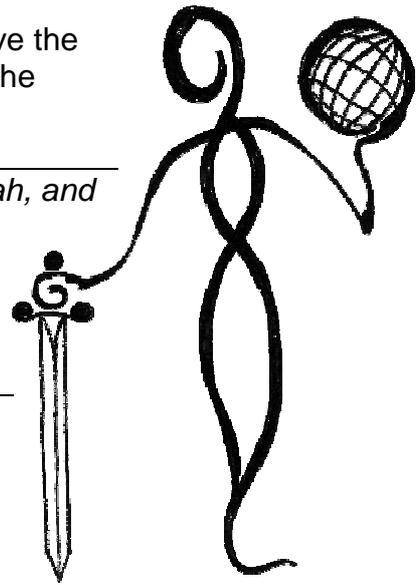
Joshua 17:6 “6 Because **the [five] daughters of Manasseh** received an **inheritance** among his [five] sons. The land of Gilead belonged to the other [half] of the Manassites.

2. Fight to take the land

- They marry men from the line of Manasseh who have the courage to step into Canaan and they chose to reject the “mighty warriors” of Manasseh who settle in Moab.

Numbers 36:11 “11 For Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married to sons of their father’s brothers.

12 They **married into the families** of the sons of Manasseh son of Joseph, and their inheritance **remained in the tribe** of the family of their father.



- The “fire” of the spirit of Joseph still burns in their hearts.

3. Establish God’s Kingdom

They retain the inherited land within the tribe and as history reveal, left such a mark on their communities that their names are found on cities in that area demarcated to the tribe of Manasseh.

Numbers 36:8 “8 And every daughter who possesses an inheritance in any tribe of the Israelites shall be wife to one of the family of the tribe of her father, so that the Israelites may each one possess the inheritance of his fathers.
9 So shall no inheritance be transferred from one tribe to another, but each of the tribes of the Israelites shall cling to its own inheritance.

- By ¹“Sh’ma” ing i.e. listening to and doing what God and Moses told them to do i.e. to live by obedience to His Commandments.

4. Worshipped God in Jerusalem

Men and women who reflect God’s characteristics worship God in the marketplace.



These daughters provide a role-model of exceptional personal behaviour fit to have a city named after them.

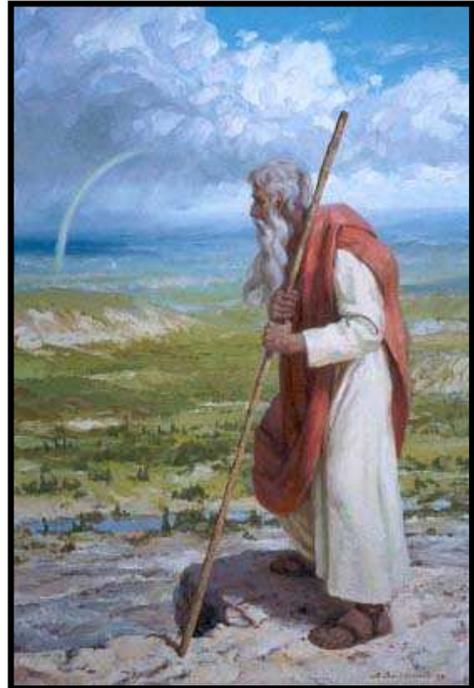
¹ See Addendum for a detailed explanation on the meaning of “Sh’ma”

WOMEN OF DESTINY

In the fields of Moab – standing in front of the river Jordan, Moses who knows that he is about to die, brings a prophetic song.

Deuteronomy 32:44 “44 And Moses came and spoke all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he and Hoshea (Joshua) son of Nun.

46 He said to them, Set your [minds and] hearts on all the words which I command you this day, that you may command them to your children, that they may be watchful to do all the words of this law.



Moses tells the people (including the five daughters of Zelophehad) that the Torah:

- Is your life
- Will prolong your life

IN

The land that I give you (**Deut 32:47**)

Deuteronomy 32:47 “47 For it is not an empty and worthless trifle for you; it is your [very] life. By it you **shall live long in the land** which you are going over the Jordan to possess.

In Jeremiah we read that the people of Israel “exchange” God’s “Glory” for “things” that have no value.

The five daughters chose life and walk on a different path to that chosen by at least half of their tribe.

The Men of Manasseh

Voluntarily give up the land that they possess **in the spirit**

- Give away God’s Glory
- Give away God’s intimacy
- Give away the legacy

The daughters

Take hold of, refuse to relinquish, proclaim their rights, and engage in warfare to move onto the land.

They value God’s presence, promises, and blessings more than anything else. As the norm we find that the meaning of their names reflects their destiny.

Mahlah

Translated into a Pictograph we see something like this:

Behold the water flowing, see the life-giving force.

- To begin, opening wedge
- To take inheritance
- To play the flute



Noah

Translated into a Pictograph we see something like this:

Look and see the seed of life, the active reflection of purpose.

- Movement
- To move from side to side
- To be promoted
- To shift

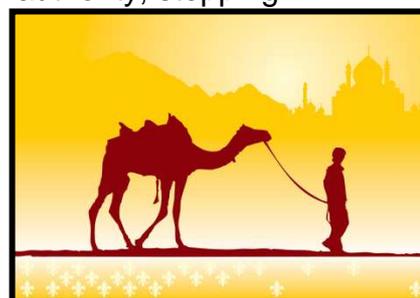


Hoglah

Translated into a Pictograph we see something like this:

Behold and see this daughter who carries the staff of authority, stepping forward to serve – as a camel – she carries a heavy load.

- Partridge
- A house or family
- A palace

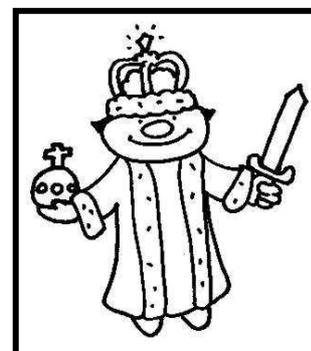


Milcah

Translated into a Pictograph we see something like this:

The daughter carries the staff of authority and everywhere she goes, the river of life flows strongly.

- Queen
- To ascend the throne
- Inducted into royalty



Tiraz

Translated into a Pictograph we see something like this:

Look and see, this daughter is the head / chief and the sign of the Covenant on the fruit of her labour (with the plough) is seen in fullness of her basket.

- Delightsomeness
- To be pleased with, have favour
- Reconcile



History records that their character attributes and commitment to God is imprinted into the physical jars found near Shechem.

In the spiritual domain they opened the portal to God in order to receive the promises made by Moses over the tribe.

Many of Israel's kings (Northern kingdom) are buried in **Tiraz**. Most famously this city and the woman / daughter after who the city is names, is referred to in the Song of Songs.

Song of Songs 6:4 "[He said] You are as beautiful as **Tiraz** [capital of the northern kingdom's first king], my love, and as comely as Jerusalem, [but you are] as terrible as a bannered host!



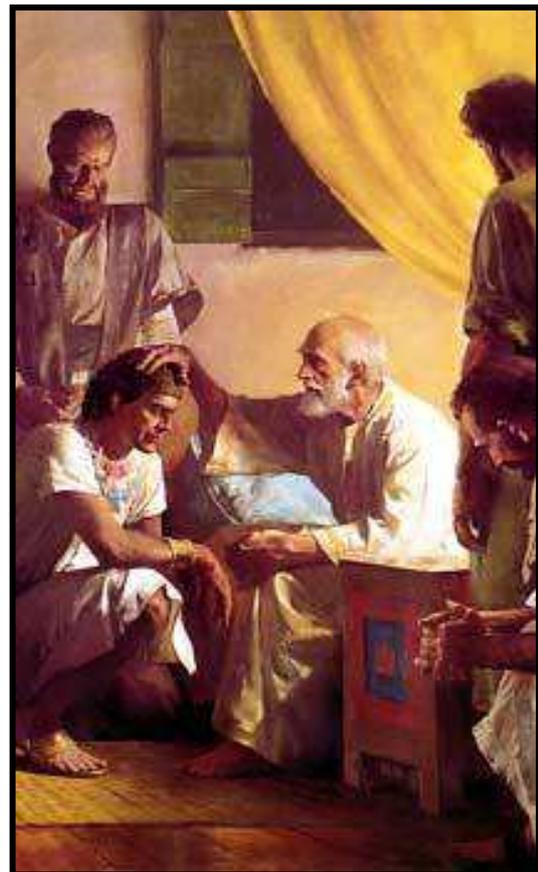
WHAT DID MOSES SING?

The Song of Moses

Deuteronomy 33:13-17 “13 And of Joseph he said: Blessed by the Lord be his land, with **the precious gifts** of heaven from **the dew** and from the **deep** that couches beneath,
14 With the **precious things of the fruits of the sun** and with the precious yield of the months,
15 With the chief products of the ancient mountains and with the precious things of the everlasting hills,
16 With the precious things of the earth and its fullness and the favor and goodwill of Him Who dwelt in the bush. Let these blessings come upon the head of Joseph, **upon the crown of the head** of him who was separate and prince among his brothers.
17 Like a firstling young bull his majesty is, and his horns like the horns of the wild ox; with them he shall push the peoples, all of them, to the ends of the earth. And they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

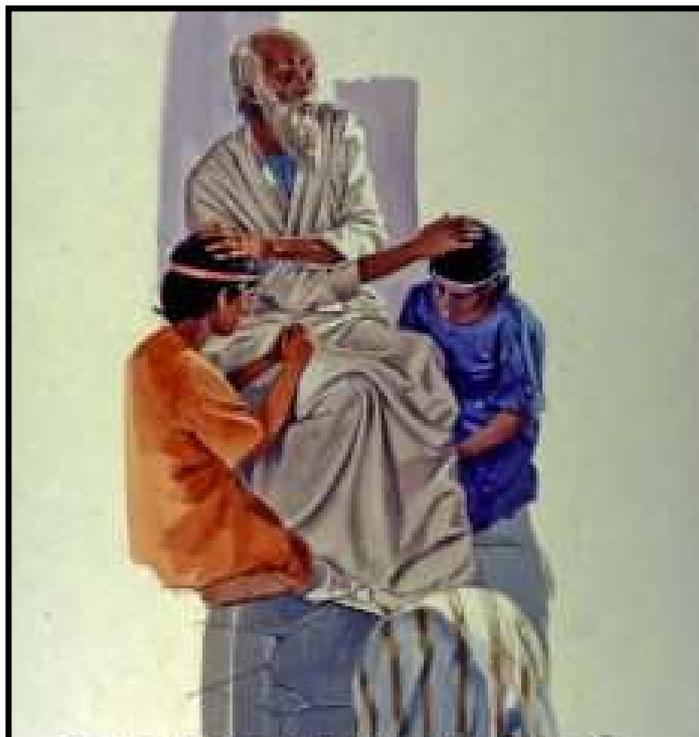
1. Manasseh's land is blessed by God

- With the precious (part, from out of eminent and distinguished) things from heaven.
- With the dew (part, from out of) covering vegetation.
- With the deep (part, prepositional from) water (an abyss or mass of water, subterranean water supply) that crouches below.
- With the precious (prepositional from above distinguished) pleasant fruit brought forth by the sun (by the brilliance of the sun)
- With the precious (prepositional from above) produce from the moon (lunation / month) i.e. the timing for the fast growth.
- With the precious things of the earth and the fullness and the favour (delight, acceptable, good pleasure of him that dwelt (to reside, stay permanently, to continue to inhabit) the bush (bramble bush).



2. Manasseh has a **crown on his head**, which differentiates him from others.

- Recognition that they are **chiefs, captains, first born and forefront**.
- They will be men whose actions will cause the heads of government to shake.
- They will be separate – consecrated as a prince or a Nazarite i.e. an unpruned vine.
- Their glory (magnificence) is an ornament that reflects comeliness, honour, excellence, goodness.
- Their horns resemble the peak of a mountain, or an elephant tooth from a wild bull – they are **wild at heart**.
- They are **warriors** who use their horn to gore, push down those who stand against them, they move in unity, alike, at once; to the ends of the earth (i.e. until there is nowhere else to go – the extremity
- They are Ephraim (double fruit) – an abundance, a myriad
- Manasseh (ox head) (to neglect / forget) the very beginning of the alphabet.



SUMMARY

Potential / Purpose

Men who are princes / leaders who fail to take their destiny will find that God chooses **women of the tribe** to take up the inheritance.

WOMEN WHO HAVE CITIES NAMED AFTER THEM



STANDING ON FERTILE GROUND



OLIVES



GRAPES

APPLICATION IN 2008

ARE THE DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEHAD HERE TODAY?

Paul teaches us a spiritual principle in:

1 Corinthians 15:46 "46 But it is not the **spiritual life** which came first, but the **physical and then the spiritual**.

49 And just as we have borne **the image [of the man] of dust**, so shall we and so let us also **bear the image [of the Man] of heaven**.

1. First the natural will precede the spiritual.
2. Secondly the man in the image of dust must be redeemed to become the Image of the Heavenly Man.

So let us look for some examples of this principle in the Torah / Word that will both describe the daughters of Zelophehad and the modern day women of God.

1. Jacob has a meeting with God at Bethel.

Later in dealing with Laban he says "my righteousness will answer for me"

Genesis 30:33 "33 So later when the matter of my wages is brought before you, **my fair dealing will be evident** and answer for me. Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats and black among the sheep, if found with me, shall be counted as stolen.

He then takes the "white" sheep, puts a peeled rod in the water trough where the sheep would drink.

Genesis 30:37-39 "37 But Jacob took fresh rods of poplar and almond and plane trees and **peeled white streaks** in them, exposing the white in the rods.

38 Then he set the rods which he had peeled in front of the flocks in the **watering troughs** where the flocks came to drink. And since they bred and conceived when they came to drink,

39 The flocks bred and conceived in sight of the rods and brought forth lambs and kids streaked, speckled, and spotted.



The sheep and goats (of nature) would conceive and bear "white" sheep, instead they **became what they saw** – spotted, marked coloured sheep. The water is an image of the Word of God and Holy Spirit.

The reflection in the water is a type of God's vision and purpose for your life.

If you look at the vision, **fill your mind with it, start walking** towards it; you will **begin to realize** God's vision and purpose for your life.

2. The Israelites stand before Mount Sinai where God speaks and prophetically declares the Ten Commandments.

God speaks: The people "witnesses"

Exodus 20:18 "18 Now all the people **perceived** the thunderings and the lightnings and the noise of the trumpet and the smoking mountain, and as [they] looked they trembled with fear and fell back and stood afar off.

◆ Hebrew Strongs 7200 -" ra-ah" means:

- literally, "saw"
- figuratively, perceive, visions.

When God "spoke" the Israelites **saw** with their minds-eye the "vision" of what God meant with the principles of the Covenant so that they would know what to do.



3. In Habbakuk, the prophet says that he will "stand and watch."

Habakkuk 2:1 "1 [OH, I know, I have been rash to talk out plainly this way to God!] I will [in my thinking] **stand upon my post** of observation and station myself on the tower or fortress, and **will watch** to see what He will say within me and what answer I will make [as His mouthpiece] to the perplexities of my complaint against Him.

BUT

God answers and says "**see the vision and run after it.**"

Habakkuk 2:2-3 "2 And the Lord answered me and said, **Write the vision** and engrave it so plainly upon tablets that everyone who passes may [be able to] read [it easily and quickly] as he hastens by.
3 **For the vision is yet for an appointed time** and it hastens to the end [fulfillment]; it will not deceive or disappoint. Though it tarry, wait [earnestly] for it, because it will surely come; it will not be behindhand on its appointed day.

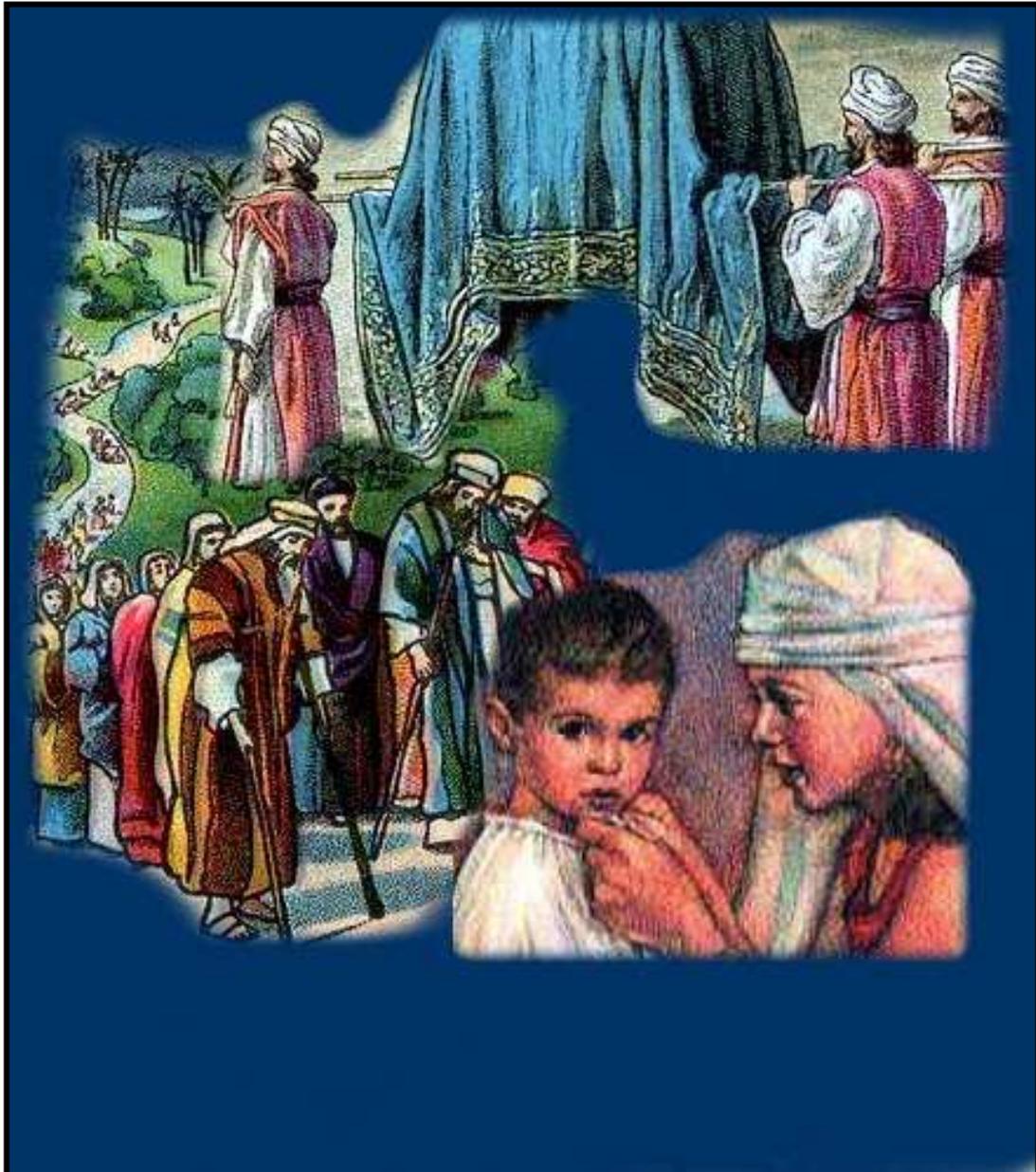
The evidence of a woman of God who has seen and accepted the vision of God is **reflected in the life choices she makes:**

Habakkuk 2:4 "4the [rigidly] just and the [uncompromisingly] righteous man (WOMAN) shall live by his (HER) faith and in his (HER) faithfulness.

THE DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEAD:

- Heard the Song of Moses
- Saw the vision
- Chose LIFE!

WILL THE REST OF THE BRIDE BE ABLE TO SING A SONG OF THE CHOICES YOU MAKE??



ADDENDUM

“SH’MA”: A HEBRAIC CONCEPT THAT EVERYONE CAN EMBRACE

(By William G. Bullock, Sr.)

Even though we live in an English-speaking country in the 21st Century, the ancient Hebrew word “*sh’ma*” is one with which most of us have some minimal familiarity.

This is true largely because adherents to one of the three great religions of the world -- Judaism -- recite each day, at least twice a day, an affirmation of faith called “the *sh’ma*”. This affirmation of faith, which predates both Christianity and Islam, is the cornerstone of monotheism (belief in one God).²

But the word *sh’ma* is not just the title of an affirmation of faith spoken by Jewish people. It is one of the most frequently recurring words found in the Bible. It is therefore a word -- or more particularly, a **CONCEPT** -- that is of critical importance to the spiritual journeys of all people who seek to know the God of the Bible.

What does an Ancient Hebrew Word/Concept Have to do With the Personal Spiritual Lives of Persons Living Today?

Virtually all the revelation of the Bible was recorded by persons whose native language was Hebrew. The recipients of Biblical revelation thus thought and spoke not in English (which did not even exist as a language at the times of the revelation of Scripture), or even in Greek, but in the framework of the Hebrew language.

Even the apostolic writings of the B’rit Chadasha, though they have been **preserved** for us only in Greek translations, were, scholars are beginning to discover, likely originally penned in Hebrew -- and represent revelation from God *to the Hebraic mind-set and in the Hebraic way of understanding God, the Creation, and the relationship between man and the Word of God.*

If, therefore, we desire to interact with the God of the Bible, while we may legitimately begin with our English translations, we will -- or should -- when searching out what our English translations really *mean*,

²This affirmation of faith is as follows: “**SH’MA YISRAEL, ADONAI ELOHEINU, ADONAI ECHAD.**” This is roughly translated as : **HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE!**

This affirmation is traditionally followed by the prayer/blessing: **BARUCH SHEM K’VOD MALCHUTO LA-OLAM VA’ED.** This is roughly translated as : **BLESSED BE HIS GLORIOUS NAME FOR EVER AND EVER!**

and determining **how they apply to us**, always wind up back in the Hebraic conceptual framework in which all Scriptural revelation had its genesis.

Since God chose to speak His revelation in Hebraic concepts, it behooves us to try to understand it in the light of those concepts.

It is in that spirit that this article is written.

The Hebraic concept of **sh'ma** constitutes a primary thread running through not only the Torah (the first five books of the Bible), but also the writings of the Prophets of Israel, the writings and histories of the kings and sages of Israel, and the apostolic writings most of us know as the "New Testament".

One of the dramatic and definitive usages that has historically been recognized and studied is the very passage in the book of Deuteronomy from which the Jewish affirmation of faith bearing the name **sh'ma** is taken. It is that passage of Holy Scripture at which I will begin.

What is the Context of Deuteronomy 6?

The Book of Deuteronomy was penned by Moshe (a Hebrew man most English-speakers know as "Moses"). Deuteronomy is a compilation of the God-inspired utterances spoken by Moshe to the generation of Israelites whose parents followed Moshe out of Egypt at the time of the "exodus" -- along with a "mixed multitude" of non-Hebrews who joined themselves with the Israelites voluntarily as they left Egypt.

These utterances constitute farewell instructions and exhortations to the generation of Jews and non-Jews which had blended together under the teaching of God as revealed through Moshe, and which, so united, would actually enter into and possess the land flowing with milk and honey.

Deuteronomy 6 opens Moshe's second, and most detailed, teaching of the generation destined to enter and possess the Land of Promise.

In this chapter, Moshe explains, in passionate language, what was to be the *abiding and over-riding principle of the lives* of the people who would enter the promised realm of God.

That principle is stated beautifully, yet succinctly, in **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**, which has been translated into modern English as follows:

**HEAR [SH'MA] O ISRAEL!
THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE!**

**You are to love the Holy One your God
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
and with all your mind.**

**Set these words, which I command you this day,
upon your heart.**

**Teach them faithfully to your children,
Speak of them as you sit in your home
and as you walk by the way,
when you lie down,
and when you rise up.
Bind them as a sign upon your hand,
let them be a symbol before your eyes.**

**Inscribe them on the doorposts of your house
and on your gates.**

What does “Sh’ma” Mean?

The word **sh’ma**³, sometimes interpreted in our English Bibles as “*listen*”, or “*hear*”, or “*hearken*”, and sometimes as “*obey*”, actually means each of the above and much more. This is because **Hebrew thought and language sees a thing from seed form all the way through full maturity and ultimate state.**

Hebraic thought, particularly ancient Hebraic thought, is thus as different from Western thought as a snapshot of you is different from a full-length movie of your life.

A Western person has a snapshot mentality; he looks at anyone or anything and takes a “snapshot” -- he looks at this moment, and whatever appears before his eyes at that specific moment, becomes, in his mind, reality.

English language expresses this Western *viewpoint*. Hence, the English word “*listen*” means only “pay attention” (snapshot mentality).

The Hebrew word **sh’ma**, on the other hand, means “**listen, and pay full attention, as if your life depended on it;**

AND once you have paid attention, and have heard what is said, begin immediately to *incorporate what has been said into your life,*

³ The word *shin, mem, ayin*, transliterated into English as the word **sh’ma**, is Strong's Hebrew word #8085. It is a primitive verb root pronounced *shaw-mah'*. The definitions given by Strong's include: to listen to, to give heed to, to hear with attention or interest, to consent or agree, to yield to, to obey or be obedient to, to regard, to respond to (as a summons) , and to cause to hear (to publish). This primitive root is, according to Strong's, found 1,159 times in the Hebrew text of the TaNaKh (commonly referred to in Christian circles as the “Old Testament”).

**AND adapt every aspect of your thought life, speech, and conduct to what you have heard,
AND begin to meditate on and memorize it,
AND teach it to your children
AND walk it out tangibly so as to demonstrate it to the world,
until you, and the world around you, is transformed into the image of the words you hear.”**

Where - and How is the Sh'ma Concept Introduced in the Bible?

The first chronological instance of the Hebrew word **sh'ma** in Biblical usage is found in **Genesis 3:17**, where Adam is said to have **sh'ma'd** what his wife said, as a result of which he ate from the tree about which the Holy One had given the instruction not to eat.

Adam did not just listen and hear and develop an intellectual understanding of what Chava [Eve] had said -- he adopted her statement as true, and let it completely change his way of thinking, his way of relating to Creation, and his behavior.

Adam **sh'ma'd** Chava (totally disregarding the instructions for life the Holy One had given him).

We are to **sh'ma** the Holy One the way Adam **sh'ma'd** Chava!

The first instance in which the Holy One is recorded as giving to a man the instruction to **sh'ma** is found in **Genesis 21:12**.

There, the Holy One told Avraham to **sh'ma** everything Sarah was to tell him concerning Ishmael (Avraham's son through Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian maid).

According to Torah, Avraham did just what the Holy One said.

He **sh'ma'd** Sarah, and forthwith took Hagar and Ishmael out into the desert and abandoned them forever, believing The Holy One's promise

[a] that it was through Yitschak, not Yish'mael, that God's promises would be fulfilled, and

[b] that the Holy One had another plan for Yish'mael, that required that he and Yitschak be separated.

Note how hearing God's instruction led not only to *believing*, but also to *acting in a manner consistent with the word spoken*.

Let us consider one more Biblical usage of the word **sh'ma** -- this time a negative one.

In Exodus 7:3-4, the Holy One says to Moshe, concerning Pharaoh:

“Even though I will increase My signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not *sh’ma* you!”

Pharaoh would not do to Moshe’s words what Adam did to Chava’s, or what Abraham did to Sarah’s. Pharaoh would not let the words of Moshe change his perspective, his way of thinking, or his actions.

Let us not be like Pharaoh!

As can be seen from these examples, the ***sh’ma*** principle makes everything about the life of the hearer turn, or hinge, on the words of the speaker.

To ***sh’ma*** is not just to listen, or hear, or *even to comply with what is said* -- it is to go beyond those things, and to ***unconditionally surrender to the speaker***.

Once the submission occurs, the words of the speaker become to the hearer more important -- and indeed more real and more powerful -- than anything else in the world.

So strong is the power of the ***sh’ma*** response that the words spoken can immediately displace in the hearer all previous notions, attitudes, priorities and beliefs, and can override even the hearer’s natural affections and appetites.

When the words spoken are those of the Holy One, they are infused with the same Creative power with which He spoke all things into existence. They literally become, to one who ***sh’ma***’s, the driving and defining force of life -- the reason for life, that which gives meaning and purpose to life.

The Holy One’s words thus become the determining factor in *who we will become* – because they become the determining factor concerning *what we will -- and will not -- think, speak, and do*.

- People who ***sh’ma*** do not live by reason or by emotion.
- They do not live by instinct or by responding to stimuli.
- They do not live by outwardly conforming to a set of *rules* or *traditions* or by adapting (consciously or unconsciously) to social expectations and customs.

People who ***sh’ma*** live, instead, by the Creative power of the Voice of God, to which they ***sh’ma***.

Did Messiah Y'shua Acknowledge the Sh'ma Concept in His Teaching?

The teaching of **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**, quoted previously, which is almost universally known simply by the title “the **Sh'ma**”, was expressly confirmed by Messiah Y'shua as the *single most important guiding and defining principle of the life of all Redeemed persons of all generations.*

In **Mark 12:28-30**, we find this dramatic and under-publicized affirmation by Y'shua:

“One of the Torah-teachers came up and heard them [Y'shua and some of the “Sadducees” who had come to question Him concerning His interpretation of the Torah] engaged in this discussion. Seeing that Y'shua answered them [the Sadducees] well, he asked him, “Which is the most important **mitzvah** (covenant provision calling for action or abstinence) of them all?”

Y'shua answered, “The most important is, ‘**Sh'ma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai echad** [Hear O Israel, the Holy One our God, the Lord is one], **and you are to love Adonai your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your understanding, and with all your strength.**”

The **sh'ma** concept, is, thus, shown by Y'shua not to be Israel's life principle only. It is, according to Y'shua, to be reflected in the lifestyle of all who follow Messiah Y'shua -- from whatever nation or people group they may come.

Want more proof? Have you ever noticed that our English renditions of the teachings of Y'shua are replete with references to **hearing, listening** and **obeying** – the exact English words by which the Hebrew word **sh'ma** is translated?

Almost certainly the concept Y'shua was expressing in such passages as:

- Luke 8:8 (“He that has ears to **hear**, let him **hear**”).
- Revelation 3:20 (“ . . . if any man **hears My Voice**, and opens the door . . .”), John 10:22 (“My sheep **listen** to my voice; I know them, and they follow Me”),

represent His usage of the concept embodied in the Hebrew word **sh'ma**.

This explains what we read in **I John 3:24**:

“Those who **obey** (i.e., **sh'ma**), **His commands** (the *mitzvot*) **remain united with Him, and He is with them.**”

Why Does Our Response to the Word of God Not Always Include all Aspects of the Meanings of Sh'ma?

The **sh'ma** lifestyle involves having a listening ear -- an "ear to hear" --that hangs on every Word spoken by the Holy One as a drowning man would hang on to a lifeline in order to be rescued.

That should start in motion a chain reaction process in our lives, culminating in our lives being conformed to the Word we have heard.

What should this process look like?

Let me illustrate with the following "flow chart", incorporating the different sequential aspects of the Hebraic concept of **sh'ma**.

To sh'ma means at least 9 things, as follows:

1. To hearken -- pay full attention to -- the Voice of the Holy One

THEN

2. To hear fully the Words He Speaks (not just what we want to hear)

THEN

3. To accept as true, and as good and beneficial, the Words we have heard

THEN

4. To Meditate on the Words we have heard from Him, and their implications to our life

THEN

5. To discontinue thought-patterns, speech-patterns, associations, and behaviors inconsistent with the Words we have heard

THEN

6. To incorporate the Words we have heard into our conversations

THEN

7. To begin, in baby steps at first, to implement the words we have heard by concrete actions .

THEN

8. To keep pursuing the implementation of the words we have heard by more and more specific and frequent behavior until they becomes a part of who we are.

THEN

9. To teach (by modeling and verbal instruction) our children, and any other persons God may place in our lives, the practical application of the words we have heard.⁴

Why does this not always occur?⁵

Because, at each stage of the foregoing “flow-chart”, our free will entitles us, if we so desire, to choose an “exit” ticket rather than proceed to the next step of **sh’ma**-ing.

And, at each “exit” passageway, voices other than the Holy One’s call out to us to jump off the “flow chart” to what they promise as “freedom”.

At each possible exit passageway, the serpent’s call can be heard, whispering: “**Did God really say . . . ?**” Joining the chorus are well-meaning acquaintances -- even people we love and respect -- scoffing and saying:

“Don’t be a ‘legalist’”, “That’s not for today.”, “We’ve been set free from “the Law”, “You are in deception.” and so on.⁶

⁴ The 9 stages of the **sh’ma** process enumerated here are roughly equivalent to the listing of actions one is told to take with regard to The Holy One’s words/instructions in **Deuteronomy 6:5-9**. The author believes that the actions described in verses 5-9 of Deuteronomy 6 are given by The Holy One to demonstrate the “life cycle” of the Word of God in one who **sh’ma**-s. The end-result of The Holy One’s Word is thus shown to be comparable to the description of the seed which falls on “good ground” in the Parable of the Sower, as told by Y’shua in Matthew 13. The seed (which is the instructions/teachings of The Holy One – His Torah) does not produce a 100-fold crop (or a 60-fold or a 30-fold crop) immediately, but does so *progressively*. The process of going from seed, to sprout, to shoot, to leaf, to blossom, to kernel, to head, etc., is the process of going from “listen” through the various listed stages listed above to “do”, and “teach”, and beyond.

⁵It is certainly not because of any deficiency or lack of power in The Holy One’s Words. **Romans 9:6**. His Word is fully capable of making us “new creations” in accordance with His Divine Plan. **Isaiah 55:10-11**.

⁶ I believe that the “flow chart” of **sh’ma**, as stated in the foregoing portion of the text, is the *dalet, resh, chet sofet* [Hebrew word transliterated as **derek**, and pronounced **deh’-rek** (Strong’s Hebrew word # 1870, meaning “Way”, or “prescribed path”) of The Holy One for His people. See Genesis 18:19, where the Lord speaks of Abraham, saying “*he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the **derek** (way/prescribed path) of the Lord, by doing what is right and just . . .*” I believe that there are two primary exit passageways from this **Derek – one** to the *left* (toward lawlessness), and one to the right (towards legalism). Voices call from both the left (to unbounded “freedom” which in reality is the ultimate form of bondage) and to the right (to approaching the Torah as a list of do’s and don’ts which are seen as finite and external only). Both kinds of voices, if heeded, have the effect of interrupting the “flow chart” referenced above and aborting the fruit of **sh’ma**-ing the Words of The Holy One. When one departs from the **derek** to the right or to the left, it is as if that one, who was planted by the rivers of living water (Psalm 1:2-3) becomes *uprooted* from that Divine state of blessing and productivity by one of the voices of Psalm 1:1. The voice that uproots may be that from the “counsel of the ungodly” (lawlessness), from the “seat of the scornful” (legalism), or from the “way of the sinner” (flagrant rebellion against the way of the **derek** of God as spelled out in His Torah). The effect in each case is the same.

And they are very persuasive. And the Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. So what is the antidote to the serpent's poison?

God's Antidote to the Poison of the Serpent

The Scriptural antidote to the poison of the serpent which threatens to interrupt the life cycle of *sh'ma* is the related Hebrew concept of *sh'mar*. In Hebrew script, to make the word *sh'mar* one merely replaces the letter *ayin* at the end of *sh'ma* with a *resh* (r).

The word *sh'mar* is usually translated by Bible translators as "keep" or "observe"⁷, but this is misleading.

To *sh'mar* is not to legalistically or ritualistically perform deeds, as our English words "keep" and "observe" have come to imply.

To *sh'mar* is to prize, treasure, cling to, stand watch over and safeguard as a sacred trust.

To ***sh'mar*** a Word spoken by The Holy One therefore means to *prize, treasure, cling to, stand watch over and safeguard as a sacred trust* The Holy One's words and instructions for life above everything else – and in defiance of all voices which call us to us at the various exit passageways of the ***sh'ma*** flow-chart.

⁷ The Hebrew word is *shin, mem, resh*, a primitive verb root transliterated into English as ***shamar***, and pronounced *shaw-mar'*. It is Strong's Hebrew word # 8104. It is used over 400 times in the Hebrew texts of Scripture. The definitions assigned to this word by Strong's include: to keep, to guard, to observe, to give heed to, to have charge of, to keep watch over (as one would a ward), to protect, save alive, to retain, to treasure up (in memory), to keep (within bounds), to celebrate, to attend, to bodyguard, to defend, to hoard, and to act as a watchman concerning something. See for example **Genesis 2:15** (first usage), **Exodus 31:13**, **Leviticus 18:4**, **Deuteronomy 11:8**, **Psalms 119:44**, and **Daniel 9:4**.

It is almost certainly the Hebrew word ***shamar*** which is translated into Greek as *tereo* [Strong's Greek word # 5083], transliterated as ***tereo***, pronounced *tay-reh'-o*, and which is assigned the following meanings by Strong's: to attend to carefully, to take care of, to guard, to keep one in the state in which he is, to observe, to continue in, to undergo, and to keep watch or guard over, so as to preserve intact, a precious thing. ***Tereo*** is the word Greek versions of the gospel of Yochanan [John] employ when quoting Y'shua to say "If you love me, 'keep' (***tereo*** -- treasure, cling to, etc.) the commandments (mitzvot) [as I taught them to you]. **John 14:15**.

What Would it Look Like if Someone We Knew Sh'ma-d and Sh'mar-d the Holy One's Words in a Hebraic Way?

Let's see how these Hebrew concepts would look in real life application today.

To **sh'mar** would mean, among other things, we would prize and treasure the Holy One's words more than we prize and treasure spending time with our friends, more than keeping in fashion or listening to (or playing) music, or watching or participating in sports, or reading business journals or going to or renting or talking about movies, or watching television, or even engaging in satisfying "ministry".

It would mean making His Words *the primary focus of one's thought-life, conversation, and goals in life.*

Now, let's put the **sh'ma** and **sh'mar** concepts together.

To **sh'ma** would mean doing whatever He has instructed us to do, and not doing whatever He has instructed against.

To do so in accordance with the **sh'mar** concept would mean that our motivation would be pure. In other words, we would do the things He says to do, and refrain from doing the things He says not to do, *not* in an effort to "win His favor" (we already have that), or in order to achieve "righteousness" in the eyes of man, but out of a mixture of awe and passionate love of Him and in full faith and trust that what He says is good.

We would **sh'ma** because we accept that whatever the Holy One has instructed us to do is the best possible thing we could do, and that whatever Torah formed the foundation of all Messiah's teaching⁸, let us look at how He viewed and approached Torah.

He has instructed us to avoid or resist is the worst possible thing for us -- because, after all, He knows more about us, and what is good (and bad) for us, than we do.

⁸ The heart of the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:17-48, constitutes an exposition by Messiah Y'shua on the Torah – as same was originally written and intended, exposing the misinterpretations of Torah popularly taught by the sages and rabbi's of Y'shua's time. In hinging His entire ministry upon the Torah, Messiah fulfilled the prophetic pronouncement of Deuteronomy 18:15-19 – that a prophet "like unto" Moshe would expound to the people of Israel the truths spoken to Moshe on Mt. Sinai, teaching everything God commands Him. If Y'shua had not taught the Torah of Moshe, or had modified it in any particular from what The Holy One spoke at Sinai, He could not have been the Messiah at all – for, by the terms of the Torah itself, He would have been a false prophet, deserving of death.

What would be the result of applying the *sh'ma/sh'mar* concepts in our lives?

It would mean we would consciously, and daily, put on ourselves, and model for all to see, His “garments of righteousness” (the *mitzvot* [i.e., the so-called *commandments* and *ordinances* of Torah])⁹.

It would also mean we would begin to participate in His Divine dramas (the *Moed'im* [Biblical festivals which each demonstrate a different aspect of His redemptive plan] in the way He has prescribed in order that the world may observe and understand Him and His goodness.

Ultimately, I believe, it would mean we would be conformed, progressively, over time, into the image of Messiah Y'shua – the embodiment of the Torah.

Did Messiah's Approach To the Torah Demonstrate the Sh'ma and Sh'mar Concepts?

Since Messiah did not consider the Torah as a finite set of rules to follow -- a legal code of conduct. He spoke against all who seek to approach Torah in such a way in biting terms. **Matthew 23:1-33**. He denounced those who tried to reduce the Torah of God, as given through Moshe, to a legal code, as sons and associates of the serpent, ha-satan. In Matthew 23:33, He called such persons “**serpents**, and “**sons of serpents**”.

Messiah did not consider the Torah to consist of 613 (or 2, any other number)¹⁰ of rules which, followed to the letter, resulted in righteousness.

⁹ The Hebrew concept of *mitzvot* (plural form of the noun *mitzvah*) is badly misunderstood by English-speakers, largely as a result of its frequent translation into our Bibles as “*commandments*”. The more accurate translation would be *instructions*, or *teachings*. The idea being demonstrated is the beneficent education and training of an apprentice by a master -- not the legal dictates of a sovereign state. While God's mitzvot are certainly more than “*suggestions*”, they are more **creative** and **beneficial** in purpose and effect than mere laws (a stop-sign, for instance, or speed limit)-- and they have **no loopholes**.

¹⁰ The popular Christian theory that Y'shua somehow replaced the Torah of Moshe with just 2 commandments ([a] love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength, and [b] love your neighbor as yourself) is just as erroneous as the theory advanced in some circles of Judaism that the Torah can be reduced to “613 commandments”. Both theories “put God in a box”, attempting to make his supernatural teaching and instruction in righteousness “manageable” by human beings. Both “the way of the 2” and “the way of the 613” exalt human understanding (the human definition of “love”, on the one hand, and 613 rules defined by humans, on the other hand), over the manifold wisdom of God. His ways are intentionally made “higher than our ways” [Isaiah 55:8-9], and incomprehensible to the natural man [I Corinthians 2:1-15], because He – and His Word – are infinite, not finite, or in any way “manageable”. He wants us to **sh'ma** His words – and let them transform us into their image; our flesh, on the other hand, wants to either ignore The Holy One's words, rebel against them, or reduce them to meaningless, standardless “mush” (the way of the 2), or to a checklist of do's and don'ts (the way of the 613) that keeps us so busy that we can ignore the God Who spoke the Word altogether.

Messiah approached the Torah instead as something infinite, a tangible “door” to an intangible world. What does that mean, you ask?

Think of Torah as a house containing many rooms, each one expressing an aspect of the heart and personality of the Holy One – as rooms of your home express not only your interests and your values, but also your personality.

Each room in the Father’s House has a “door”, or point of entry. That point of entry is the instruction itself -- the carefully chosen specific words of the instruction or commandment. The instruction itself is tangible, and capable of literal interpretation and literal performance. This literal level interpretation and performance, however, is not the goal [Greek ‘*telos*’ -- see Matthew 5:17] of the instruction -- it is only the doorway, or passageway through which we pass in order to pursue the goal.

Messiah Y’shua considered each Torah instruction such a doorway, with the voice of the Holy One on the other side calling “come in, enter this door, and discover not just a door, but a room behind the door, where you will -- if you explore carefully, and seek with all your heart -- both ***find Me*** and ***learn My heart and My personality***”.

So, when Messiah taught Torah in the Sermon on the Mount, He taught us not to just stand in the “doorway” of an instruction like “*do not murder*”, and congratulate ourselves that we have never, to date, personally blotted out the life of another human being.

Messiah taught us to look not just at our actions, but our words, and even to our thoughts¹¹, in regard to other people. Messiah taught us to go inside the room behind each Torah “door”, to the place (which varies from season to season and year to year) where the Holy One’s words shows us the difference between that which is soulish and that which is spiritual in us, and makes us aware of the difference between interacting with the Holy One as we have done and becoming one with Him as He created us to do.

This is why the writer of Hebrews stated:

“The word of the Holy One is alive! It is at work and is sharper than any double-edged sword -- it cuts right through to where soul meets spirit and joints meet marrow, and it is quick to judge the inner reflections and attitudes of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12.

¹¹ The progression of *thought* (sin in seed form) to *word* (sin in sprout form) to *action* (sin in mature form) is a well-understood Biblical concept. See **Genesis 4:7**; see also **James 1:13-15**. It is the fact that the Word of The Holy One is infinite, and can therefore deal with sin in seed, sprout, and mature form, and at all stages in between, that makes It so powerful, and proves that It is in fact the Word of God, and not mere wisdom literature conceived by men. If the operation of the Torah of God is reduced to dealing only with *actions* (the way of the 613, as described in the foregoing footnote), or to dealing only with *thoughts/motivation* (the way of the 2, as described in the foregoing footnote), it is robbed of its intended supernatural effect.

Messiah, using the specific *mitzvot* of murder, adultery, divorce and vows as *examples*, instructed us how to **sh'ma** to the Voice which calls to us from behind each "door" of Torah, "*Come, My Beloved*".

Messiah taught us not to just stand at the doorway, and read the sign on the door, assume we know the height and depth and breadth of the room, and move on.

He taught us to follow after the Voice, and search out the **goal** and purpose, and depth, and breadth, and the height, of each particular instruction, to seek an understanding of the **reason** for it and the implications of it, and thereby to discover the heart of the One who spoke it.

Of course, one can respond to the Voice behind the door in three ways:

- [a] ignore that Voice;
- [b] resist that Voice; or
- [c] surrender to His will, and allow himself to be drawn by that Voice into the secret chambers of the Holy One.

Messiah challenged us to **sh'ma** to that Voice behind the door, and follow it as the sheep follow their shepherd.

If, as Messiah taught, one approaching an instruction of Torah allows oneself to be drawn into that instruction by the Voice of the Holy One, and enters with wide-eyed, child-like wonder into the room beyond the door of the carefully selected wording, and starts looking around at the architecture and the pictures on the wall, each instruction of Torah becomes an infinite realm of Spiritual Ascent into the Presence of the Holy One.

This is because each individual instruction of Torah has something designed into it by the Master Architect which, if we will **sh'ma** to the Voice behind the "door" of that instruction, and if we will **sh'mar** it, will pierce our soul, and free us from some aspect of souliness.

"You have heard it said. . .", Messiah always began His teaching on specific instructions, **". . . but I say unto you."**

It is not just what you have heard said (the carefully chosen and eternally true words of the instruction in question), but *what He wants to "say unto you"* (the revelation of the Holy One's heart which lies behind the actual words) that will pierce soul and spirit, dividing joint and marrow, and judge the inner reflections and attitudes of the heart.

We are not just to read an instruction as it is written on the page of our Bibles. We are to open the doors of our hearts to that instruction, and surrender to its Author -- and then let Him search our hearts and change us.

The Operation of An Ancient Hebrew Concept-- Illustrated by a Computer Program?

Many of us who use computers have purchased a software program for our computers called "*Norton's Disc Doctor*". The purpose and function of this program is to search our computer's hard-drive (or any disk we may be using) for "bad blocks" -- places on the drive or disk where some damage has occurred that endangers future performance.

If I run this program on my hard drive or a disk, if a "bad block" is present (even if it is not causing any obvious problem at the moment), the program will cause a screen to appear on my monitor describing the problem and asking if I want to "fix" the problem, "continue" or "quit application".

This is not unlike what the Spirit of the Holy One does when we run a Torah instruction "program" on our hearts, by not only reading and studying a instruction as it is written, but surrendering to it, and letting it examine our attitudes, motives, priorities, prejudices, thoughts, words, and behavior patterns.

If we allow the Spirit to search our lives long enough, applying against our actions, words, thoughts, motives and attitudes the truth and the reality behind the instruction we are studying, the "bad blocks" in our souls will be discovered. The Spirit, using the instruction in question, will advise us to "fix" the problem -- but will give us the choice of continuing or quitting the application. We can, at that point, "quit application" if we wish. No one will know -- for now -- but the Holy One and ha-satan.

Torah is not Law, but the Teaching of a Caring and Benevolent Master

Messiah's teaching and example of how to approach Torah is to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life for us, His *talmidim* [followers/disciples].

The Torah is not to be "law" for us, because *every law is finite, and necessarily has loopholes and exceptions*. The Torah is infinite. Each instruction in the Torah means what it says, i.e., it is **literal** -- but it also means much, much more! The Voice calls us to come closer, to "launch out into the deep" and to enter willingly into the realm of the much, much more.

"Sh'ma, Yisrael!" can therefore appropriately be paraphrased: "Come closer! Come into the King's chambers!" It is there, in the King's chambers that the circumcision of the heart, which is the object of the Torah, occurs.

When I say that each instruction is infinite, the "house" analogy as previously described in this article falls a little short, so let me add to it. Imagine that each room in the house has, somewhere in it, a *secret passage* that leads into an ocean so deep one could never get all the way to the bottom without running out of air and having to return to the surface.

That picture describes, as well as I know how, the infinite aspect of each instruction of Torah.

Do you think Messiah exhausted all the Spiritual truth behind “*you will not kill*” in Matthew 5:21-26, or that He explored all the Spiritual reality underlying “*you will not commit adultery*” in Matthew 5:27-32?

No, Beloved. He merely scratched the surface, in order to give us a few examples of what we will find in the first few layers of Spiritual truth and reality which lay behind the literal wording of those instructions.

You see, each instruction is God-breathed, and is therefore as infinite in scope as is the Spirit of the Holy One.

This means that there is no way humanly possible to “fulfill” any of it. If it *were* possible for us to fulfill it, a finite legal code of conduct would be all He gave us.

Fortunately, *giving us a legal code was never the Holy One’s intention*. His intention was not that we utilize the Torah as a master “righteousness checklist”, on which we mark off that which we have performed satisfactorily from our (or someone else’s) human perspective.

He designed the Torah as something infinite to which we will, out of love for Him and trust in His absolute goodness, unconditionally surrender.

Once the surrender takes place, the point is to push through, each time one opens the door of the instruction, the threshold of pain (where the recognition and fixing of “bad blocks” takes place), and begin at that point to let the Spiritual truth and reality underlying the instruction do internally whatever creative work the Holy One is then desiring to do.

Can we, or should we worry about, “fulfilling” the instructions of Torah?

No, Beloved. That’s the serpent’s way -- the “checklist” mentality of legal codes and organized religion.

“Fulfilling” instructions is *Messiah’s business, not yours or mine*. We are merely to submit ourselves to each instruction across which our Torah study brings us, and move our pride and our stubborn wills out of His way so He can use each instruction as He designed, as sculptor’s tools to mould us into what He created us to be.

See **Jeremiah 18:1-4; Isaiah 64:8**. We won’t get there this Torah cycle, or in the one we’ll begin on the next ***Simchat Torah***, or in any we will ever begin or conclude.

We will not get there, Beloved, because that is not the objective.
The objective is not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

The objective is to walk in the Garden with the Holy One, responding to His Voice and fulfilling His purposes as did Adam and Chava [Eve] before the Fall.

*May you hear His Voice.
And may you **sh'ma**.*

