



Parshat Ki Teitzei

No 10830:

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STARTING POINT

"In the Place that He Chooses" - by Rabbi Amnon Bazak

In this week's portion, the Torah prohibits returning a runaway slave to his master. "Do not return a slave to his master if he has run away to you from his master" [Devarim 23:16]. According to the Ramban, "the reasons for this mitzva are: (1) our nation serves G-d, and it would not be right for us to return him to his master in order to worship idols, and (2) he might study the entrance to our city, for many countries have been conquered in this way, when captured slaves have run away." Thus, the prohibition is based on practical reasons, to rescue the slave from the evil of idol worship or to avoid the danger of having the slave spy on us. In addition, a simpler reason may be suggested based on a moral approach. If the slave has run away from his master, he has evidently experienced great suffering. Therefore the Torah prohibits returning him to his master. For this reason, the Torah is also interested in the welfare of the slave. "Let him remain with you, in the place that he chooses in one of your gates, where he will be satisfied. Do not oppress him." [23:17].

This passage contains a surprising phrase, "in the place that he chooses." This phrase appears twenty-three times in the Torah, almost always in the book of Devarim. In all other cases it refers to the site of the Temple – the place that G-d will choose to reveal the Shechina. This verse is the only time that this exact phrase appears in relation to a choice by a human being. Why does the Torah use this phrase in this way?

Evidently, the use of the phrase corresponds to one of the central themes in the book of Devarim, the moral obligation to maintain a positive attitude towards a slave. In several passages, it is implied that the way a master relates to his slave should be similar to the way the Almighty relates to the nation of Yisrael. This is explicit in the case of a Hebrew slave: "Remember that you were a slave in the Land of Egypt, and G-d redeemed you. Therefore, I command you this thing today." [15:15]. This also corresponds to the reason given in Devarim for the mitzva of Shabbat: "... so that your slave and maidservant will rest like you do. And you shall remember that you were a slave in the Land of Egypt, and G-d redeemed you from there... Therefore, G-d has commanded you to observe the day of Shabbat." [5:14-15]. The mitzvot related to the obligations of charity and kindness towards the weaker people are always justified by referring to the slavery in Egypt. "Do not subvert the judgment of an orphan or a stranger and do not take the garment of a widow as collateral. Remember that you were a slave in Egypt and G-d redeemed you from there, therefore I command you to do this thing today." [24:17-18]. Another example is what is written at the end of the passage of gifts to the poor in the field,

שבת

1282

"Remember that you were a slave in the Land of Egypt, therefore I command you to do this thing" [24:22]. (See also 16:12 and the commentaries of Ibn Ezra and the Ramban.) The very fact that Bnei Yisrael experienced the difficulties of slavery obligates them to maintain a high ethical standard with respect to people who are weaker than they are.

In view of this theme, it seems that the Torah is indeed trying to establish a link between the two issues. One of the conditions that G-d will cause the Shechina to appear "in the place that He chooses" is that Bnei Yisrael will allow an unfortunate and pursued man to live "in the place that he chooses."

POINT OF VIEW

Educational Deterrence - by Rabbi Yisrael Rozen

"If a man has a rebellious son who does not listen to the voice of his father and the voice of his mother... Let his father and mother take hold of him and bring him to the elders of the city and the gate of his place. And they shall say to the elders of his city, our son is rebellious... he is a glutton and a drunkard. And they shall pelt him... with stones and he will die. And you shall uproot all the evil from your midst, and all of Yisrael will hear and be afraid." [Devarim 21:18-21].

"If his mother is not equal to his father in voice, appearance, and height, he is not declared a rebellious son... And just because this boy ate a measure of meat and drank half a measure of Italian wine, should his father and mother take him out to be stoned? Rather, this never happened and it never will. Why was it written down? It is so that you should study it and receive a reward. Rabbi Yonatan said, I saw such a son, and I sat at his grave." [Sanhedrin 71a].

"It Never Happened"

This issue of Shabbat B'Shabbato

לז'נ

מרת הנא בת ר' מרדכי מנדל אלינער

ר' עוזר בן ר' שאול אלינער

הרב שמעון בן ר' זכריה סמנער

Anybody who reads the passage of the "rebellious son" in the Torah can see that it is especially "extreme." Should a boy be "pelted with stones" just because he took a serving of "meat and half a measure of wine?" The sages seem to take the trait of justice to an extreme when they write that the son is judged

"because of his end." As Rashi writes, "A rebellious son is killed because of the end he will reach. The Torah understood where he is heading. In the end, he will use up all of his father's money, and when he wants to continue his habit and does not find anything he will stand at a crossroad and rob the passersby. The Torah said, let him die innocent and not guilty." We can only stand by in wonder: is this true justice?

Taking a deeper look at the Talmudic passage quoted above seems to provide a measure of "balance" – such a case of a rebellious son "never happened and never will," since it depends on a series of conditions that can never be fulfilled in practice (his father and mother must be the same in voice, appearance, and height – in the Mishna and in the Talmud there are other farfetched conditions to be fulfilled). And we continue to wonder: if this is so, why was the passage written in the first place? The reply quoted above, "study it and receive a reward," is balanced by Rabbi Yonatan's statement, "I sat at his grave." Everything is cloudy and mixed up in our minds. What is going on here? Did this happen? Did it never happen? Will it never happen? Is this justice? Above all, we are left with the question of a moral: What meaning does this passage have for us?

Actually, these questions were already valid two weeks ago, when we read the passage of "an incited city" which also has a frightening punishment. "Strike all of the inhabitants of that city by the sword... and gather all of its contents into the square and burn it all by fire... and let it remain as an eternal mound." [Devarim 13:16-17]. In this case too, the sages declared that "an incited city has never happened and will never occur. Why was the passage written? You should study it and receive a reward. Any city that has at least one Mezuzah will not be declared an incited city, as is written, 'gather all of its contents into the square and burn it.' But if there is a Mezuzah, this is not possible. Rabbi Yonatan said, 'I saw one, and I sat on its mound.'" Once again, if this never happened and it never will, what is the Divine message hidden in this law? In modern terms, we would ask: What lessons can we learn from these harsh and frightening passages in the Torah?

A Policy of Educational Deterrence

Actually, there is a great lesson to be learned from the above passages and from the accompanying oral Torah: an educational policy. One must strive for deterrence on one hand and forgiveness on the other.

Quite often we are faced with a profound question. Should we threaten a young boy or girl with a harsh punishment and then actually put it into effect? Or would it be better to have a forgiving attitude, and to hope that an educational lesson will suffice? The same question can be asked with respect to adults, at all levels of education and punishment. Sociologists and criminologists are often asked if harsh punishment is a deterrent against crime. And if not, is there any need for it? The question is actually of a more general nature: What is the meaning of punishment with respect to social sins? Is it deterrence? Is it vengeance by society? Does it provide a defense from future sins? Does it provide "reeducation" for the person being punished?

The Torah presents the sinner with harsh punishment, sometimes even to a very great extreme, such as punishing somebody now "because of his end." Our code of laws, the Torah of G-d, has many harsh punishments, both for sins of man against man and for sins of man against G-d. The Divine system of punishment appears to us to be very harsh and frightening. The Torah seems to be telling us that there should be no attitude of "consideration" for sinners, and in the code of laws the trait of strict judgment seems to take precedence over mercy. The goal of this harsh attitude is explicitly given in the Torah. It is to discourage others from sin: "And all of Yisrael will hear and be afraid," as quoted above at the end of the passage of the rebellious son. There is no point in trying to educate the one who receives the punishment, since after all he is stoned to death.

But now we come to the "other side of the coin," and this is the main point of in this article. In practice, in court, at home, and in educational institutions, there is a tremendous gap between the formal punishment and what is actually done. The full and explicit harsh punishment "never happened and never will." In every single case, a way will be found to be lenient after the fact and to forgive, "one more time." However, it is important that the harsh punishment exist in theory, even if it will be implemented only "once in seventy years" (as our sages taught us was the frequency of capital punishment in the Sanhedrin). For the purposes of deterrence, a single witness is sufficient if he can testify that "I saw it and sat there myself," as quoted above with respect to a rebellious son and a corrupt city.

In summary, the halacha of punishment as meted out by man is perfectly balanced: harsh deterrence which in the end is usually not carried out in practice.

SERMON BY A GUEST

"When You Go Out to War" - by Sar-Shalom Jerby, Secretary General of the Mafdal and grandson of Rabbi Meir Yehuda Getz

"When you go out to war against your enemies, your G-d will give him over into your hand, and you will take prisoners" [Devarim 21:10].

In the ancient wars of Yisrael, we never won battles with superior wisdom or military strategy, rather victory was due to G-d's salvation. Examples are Avraham in his wars and Yehoshua, who was helped by stars that left their normal paths and by stones that fell from heaven to earth. G-d is a "master of war" [Shemot 15:3], and we were given a promise that "G-d will fight for you, and you shall remain silent" [14:14]. One who has faith and feels secure will witness G-d's salvation with his own eyes. Another great example is the amazing victory of the young man David over the Philistine giant, a "war engine" that was immediately defeated, causing the entire camp to flee. David believed that if he would rise up against him, the battle would take care of itself. One who has the faith of David can expect the fulfillment of the verse, "Your G-d will give him over into your hand" - truth is eternal, truth leads to faith.

The master of all the prophets was able to foresee that when Bnei Yisrael would settle in their heritage, the promised land, every man in his vineyard and under his fig tree, the near and far enemies would try to reject this ideal Divine reality in the area surrounding the holy Temple. In modern times too, we can see the symbolic descendents of the enemies of Yisrael, and we have no alternative but to wage war against them.

There are many powerful enemies – what strength do we have? How can we be victorious? We must anticipate Divine salvation! How will this happen, and why do we deserve this privilege? Moshe reveals the key to victory in a few words: "When you go out to war" – in the singular. If we all act together, in unison, the end of the verse will be fulfilled, G-d will give them over "into your hand" – again in the singular. Peace and unity are G-d's will. This was true in the past, and it is even more relevant today.

My illustrious grandfather, Rabbi Getz, adds the following thought. "When you go out... your enemies... your G-d will give him over into your hand" – singular, plural, singular. Every war requires detailed preparations, the war against the evil inclination even more than a physical war, since the evil inclination is "an old (and experienced) king." The Rabbi adds, "Wage war through strategies" [Mishlei 20:18]. You must know that it is impossible to fight all the enemies simultaneously. This is a well known military tactic, and it is certainly true for the war against the evil inclination. One who wants to improve his ways should start by mending his actions one at a time. He should break his physical lusts stage by stage. Then he can be sure that he "will take his prisoners." This is a tactic that will lead to victory, "and your camp will be holy" [Devarim 23:15].

(Written in memory of Rabbi Meir Yehuda Getz, Rabbi of the Western Wall, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his death. A day of study will be held in his honor on Tuesday, 23 Elul, in the Yeshivat Hamekubalim in the Jewish Quarter, Jerusalem.)

TORAH, SOCIETY, AND GOVERNMENT

Damaged Sex Organs - by Rabbi Uri Dasberg

"Do not let a man with crushed testicles and or a severed organ join the community of G-d" [Devarim 23:2]. The reason for this law is given in the Sefer Hachinuch. "This will prevent the destruction of any part of the reproductive system. As is well known, there are kings who castrate men who are then appointed to guard over the women, and some inferior men are anxious to perform this role in order to become close to the king, and for financial gain."

This implies that only a man who was castrated by another person is not allowed to join the community, being permitted to marry only a convert or a freed maidservant. One who was born with imperfect organs or one who was harmed by a sickness is called a "heavenly eunuch," and according to the Rambam he is permitted to marry into the community. One who has been harmed by a human being is prohibited from entering the community only if he has a visible mark on his

body. One whose organs are whole but has lost ability to have children is still permitted to marry into the community.

On the other hand, it seems from Rashi's commentary that he does not agree with the above statement. His words have been understood to mean that somebody who has lost his abilities through sickness, even if his outward appearance remains unchanged, is not permitted to marry. Similarly, from the approach of the Rambam, it seems that somebody who was hurt in an accident is considered as having been harmed by man, since the actual damage was done by human hands, whether on purpose or not.

In recent times, rabbis have discussed the situation of people who lost their ability to reproduce as a result of radiation. Rabbi Unterman, the late Chief Rabbi, allowed infertile people who were tortured by the Nazis to marry, for several reasons: (1) The damage was not visible; (2) The operation was performed in an indirect way ("gramma"); (3) The act causing infertility did not have an immediate effect but took place over a long period of time.

Similar reasoning can be applied to people who have been treated with radiation for medical reasons. It is true that some rabbis forbid such people from joining the community, but the principle involved in damaged reproductive organs should be similar to what is accepted with respect to an illegitimate child, "One whose situation is definite has been forbidden not one who is in doubt." While with respect to illegitimate children the sages have added extra stringencies because of the sensitivity of the subject of family ties, this reasoning does not apply to one who can no longer have children. It is also true that medical science continually progresses, and perhaps somebody who was harmed by radiation will one day become fertile again.

Reference: Rabbi Yaacov Epstein, "Techumin," volume 25, pages 88-96

LAND OF MY BIRTH

The Religious "Cheder" of the Bilu Movement - by Zev Wallack

The members of the Bilu organization have the reputation of the "most secular" people of the First Aliyah, since they grew up among the Jewish intellectual circles in Russia, which moved further and further away from Jewish tradition. But I have found that even in their own settlement, Gedeira, the children were first taught by a "melamed," a traditional teacher in a "Cheder," just like in all the other settlements.

The first son to be born in the town, Amnon Horowitz, kept a hand-written diary of his memories, "The History of the Gedeira School Between 1892 and 1936." He notes that at first there were only very few children, and they did not have an established framework for study.

"We, the children of Gedeira, spent our time idly in the one and only main street... We were not constricted by a yoke of Torah or a yoke of good manners. The few men who were in the

settlement were very much occupied by the harsh and difficult labor... And the woman, also very few... were always very busy."

About seven years after the settlement was founded, the first educational institution was established. This was a Cheder, and the Odessa Committee paid the salary of the teacher. During the first two years, two ignorant and unsuccessful men served, one after the other. The situation improved after the role of the ritual slaughterer was combined with that of melamed. On the recommendation of Rabbi Yechiel Mechel Pinnes, who looked after the affairs of the town, Meir Yaacov Hakohen Kaplan was hired for the job. He was something of a "reformer" in that he agreed to accept a mixed class of boys and girls. The religious sects of Jerusalem used this fact as proof of the apostate character of the Bilu settlement. After a complaint to the Rabbi of Yaffo, Rabbi Halevi, Kaplan was suspended from his job. But Rabbi Pinnes intervened and he was allowed to return to the Cheder. At this point, even the members of the Bilu Committee agreed to accept religious education. Here is what they wrote to Rabbi Azriel Hildesheimer:

"As we return to Mount Zion we must return with our entire hearts to G-d... We will organize our lives according to the Torah and the mitzvot."

Kaplan knew how to get along with the people of Gedeira, who did not always observe the strict details of the mitzvot. He admired them for their dedication to the mitzva of settling Eretz Yisrael, and he showed them great affection. He should be recognized as one who introduced innovative techniques, for he was the first one to teach Hebrew without translations from another language. His system was similar to the modern approach of "Hebrew through Hebrew." However, he still spoke with an Ashkenazi accent. Four of the other inhabitants taught secular subjects, such as the Hebrew language, mathematics, and physics.

After the Cheder was in operation for four years, the "Chovevei Tzion" Association in Yaffo, which supported the settlement, decided that the time had come to "establish a school in Gedeira for the colonists, since there were more than twenty children who had reached school age." Rabbi Pinnes looked for a suitable candidate, and he hired Yosef Menachem Eshbal. This was "the first teacher in Gedeira" – for the first time a man was brought in whose profession was to teach and who was explicitly assigned the job of teaching. Eshbal initiated the speaking of Hebrew in the school in particular and in Gedeira in general, still with an Ashkenazi accent. He also instituted the teaching of Tanach and writing skills.

In the end, the controversy about the character of the school and about the level of studies was just as sharp in the "secular" Bilu settlement as it was in the towns that were considered more conservative. Eshbal dared to introduce textbooks that were written by Yehuda Grazovsky, leading to an accusation that he was attempting to align himself with those people of Gedeira who were not religious. One of the leaders of the struggle against Eshbal was Yaacov Shlomo Chazanov, who was one of the prominent founders of the town:

"He (Chazanov) discovered the idea when it was still in the planning stage, and he criticized Eshbal and told him that what we want is to teach our sons G-d's Torah, which was given to us by our teacher Moshe. The stories of the likes of Grazovsky will not be remembered or make any lasting impression... We thank G-d for teaching us the path of repentance."

The struggle between those who wanted religious education and those who wanted a secular Hebrew school continued for years even in Gedeira, until a new Cheder opened up, in competition with the official school. Thus, it can be seen that it is a mistake to think that the people of Bilu were all young revolutionaries infused with the concepts of secular enlightenment and socialism that they had absorbed in Russia, leading them all to abandon the Torah and the Jewish traditions. In fact, a large fraction of the people of Bilu preferred to maintain the old values and traditions.

A LESSON FOR THE CHILDREN

The Four Captives - by Rabbi Yikhat Rozen, Merkaz Neria, Kiryat Malachi

Many years ago a very tragic event occurred. A short time before it happened, Babylon was still a major center of Judaism. The Jewish community was magnificent, and it spread its light throughout the world of Judaism. The yeshivot grew, the Babylonian Talmud was written, and the Geonim, the respected rabbis of Babylon, received hundreds of questions from Jews all over the world, asking about such matters as halacha, public practices, and general requests for advice. But then a difficult time came. The rulers of the land increased their oppression of the Jews, and the community became smaller and smaller.

One day disaster struck. A gang of violent thieves fell on a small Jewish town in Babylon and took many of the Jews captive. They were put on wagons, their hands and feet in chains, and sent to unknown destinations. The captives included four very prominent rabbis – Rabbi Shemaria, Rabbi Chushiel, Rabbi Moshe, and his son Rabbi Chanoch. All four rabbis were taken to the shore, put on a boat, and taken to the slave markets across the sea.

There was great despair, and the captives felt terrible as they sat, chained and helpless, deep below the deck of the boat. Would they be sold as slaves to the home of a ruthless Spanish rich man, or perhaps to the household of an Egyptian woman, or even in the home of a forgotten French nobleman? Who could tell what would happen? They had lost their freedom, as a matter of course they were not given kosher food, and the main thing – studying Torah – was a subject that was moved far out of their minds.

When the four rabbis reached the slave market in the city Kirvan, in North Africa, one of the buyers asked, "How much do you want for this slave?" The head of the thieves, the "seller," replied, "Not less than ten thousand pieces of gold." He understood very well how valuable his "cargo" was, and he knew how much the Jews would pay to redeem a prominent rabbi. The buyer left angrily, and other people came to take his place. But they were also startled by the very high price. In the

end, a member of the Jewish community arrived. He quickly understood that Jews were being offered for sale, and he wanted to fulfill the mitzva of redeeming captives. He gathered contributions from the members of the local community in order to redeem the captives, but he had barely enough money to rescue one man. He redeemed Rabbi Chushiel, even though he did not know him and he did not yet know how much knowledge of the Torah he had.

The thieves saw that they would not be able to sell all their "cargo" in one city, and they continued with their voyage. They passed through several cities, demanding a huge ransom for each of the Jews. In the end, the four rabbis were freed in four different cities. The second rabbi was released in Italy, the third in Morocco, and the fourth in Spain.

What happened to these rabbis in the end? Very quickly, the local Jews found out how learned they were. Each community realized that a great rabbi had arrived, although this had happened in a terrible and painful way. In each case, they did not hesitate to ask the rabbi to teach them Torah. They were all aware of the great level of learning in Babylon, and they felt fortunate that they would be taught by a rabbi from that center of learning.

In a short time, a new yeshiva was established in each of the lands where the rabbis were set free. Each yeshiva was led by one of the four rabbis. Their students spread their knowledge throughout the land, and they attracted other students who joined the yeshiva and began to study Torah. Great new centers of Jewish learning and thought were opened in Italy, Kirvan, Spain, and Morocco. This was the beginning of era of the early commentators, whose influence on the world of Judaism has remained until this day.

The destruction and exile were transformed into a great light. As the community in Babylon decreased in importance, the new communities became more and more prominent, as a result of the tragic captivity of the four rabbis.

(Based on various sources, told as a traditional tale - with thanks to Dr. Meir Rapeld)

THE WAYS OF THE FATHERS (Pirkei Avot)

Chapter 2 Mishna 1 - by Rabbi Yehuda Shaviv

"Rebbi says, Who is courageous? ..."

It is interesting to compare the beginning of Rebbi's statements to the words of the Anshei Knesset Hagedolah quoted in Chapter 1. They turned to the community (to be more accurate, they were interested in the leaders of the community). "Be moderate in judgment, and teach a large number of students, and make a fence around the Torah." Rebbi, on the other hand, is interested in the individual – a man should recommend what is the best path for living.

The Anshei Knesset Hagedolah lived at the beginning of the era of the Second Temple. This was a time of reawakening of the people, including establishing the community and religious

institutions. Rebbi lived at the end of this era, after the nation and the land had been destroyed. He therefore turned not to the community but to each individual. He was preparing the people for times when they would not be able to come in contact with the dust on the feet of the sages (see Avot 1:4) or to choose a rabbi for themselves (6:16). This leaves it up to each and every individual to determine the path that is most suitable for him.

The subject discussed here is not the world as a whole and the pillars that support it, as was discussed by the sages in Chapter 1 (Shimon the Righteous in the beginning and Rabban Shimon Ben Gamliel at the end). Rather, the main theme is man as an individual.

Chapter 1 begins with the transfer of the Torah from one generation to another, starting with Moshe and ending with the Anshei Knesset Hagedolah. This seems to imply that the Torah was given to everybody on a completely equal basis, and it presents one good path that is suitable for each and every person. In the beginning of Chapter 2, Rebbi teaches that it is not true that a single path is suitable for everybody. Every person must find his own individual path, the one that is best for him.

THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

The "Bayit Vagan" High School - by the Department of Education, World Mizrahi

The Bayit Vagan religious high school in Bat Yam, led by Chana Stempler and Dalia Elezrot, was awarded the religious education prize this year for its accomplishments, advancing religious education in the city. The staff work hard to instill the values of a religious education among the girls and to teach them the importance of being active in the Israeli society. Even though the pupils come from varied socio-economic backgrounds, with different levels of basic education, the management and staff of the school have succeeded in bringing the students to a high level of achievement in general and in the national matriculation exams in particular.

Adina Friedman, the coordinator of computers in the school, notes that the teachers continue to work after the normal hours in order to help every student to reach her maximum level of achievement. They are very successful in creating a relationship of personal trust among all the girls.

The school encourages the students to engage in social activities and volunteer work in the school and in the community. Thus, they participate in a broad range of charity activities for needy sectors of the community. The twelfth grade classes participate in a program called "Le'oro neileich," named for Rabbi Moshe Tzvi Neria, where every student is involved in charity activities in many different fields. The school rabbi and the staff have developed a religious atmosphere, which leads the students to have a deep personal commitment to the basic values of the Jewish traditions. The Bayit Vagan school can serve as a model for other schools which can strive for similar success with their students.

THE CHAIN OF HALACHA

**The Text of Havdalah - by Rabbi Yosef Tzvi Rimon,
Rabbi of Southern Alon Shevut and a teacher in Yeshivat
Har Etzion**

The main part of the Havdalah is the blessing, "He who differentiates between the holy and the secular." We will discuss the other blessings on wine, a flame, and a pleasant odor at another time.

According to the Talmud, Rabbi Yehuda would say only the words "He who differentiates between the holy and the secular" without adding anything else (Pesachim 103b). In contrast, Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Levi felt that it is necessary to list all of the things described in the Tanach with the word "Vayavdel" – He separated: "What is the text of the Havdalah? One should say, He who differentiates between holy and secular, between light and darkness, between Yisrael and the other nations, between the seventh day and the six days of activity, between impure and pure... between the upper water and the water below, between Kohen and Levi... between Levi and Yisrael." [Pesachim 104a].

In practice, the Talmud writes that "the people have accepted a custom of listing three" separations and no more: between holy and secular (with the additional detail, between the seventh day and the six days of activity), between light and darkness, and between Yisrael and other nations. Avudraham explains that what we note are the three differentiations that are related to Shabbat: the sanctity, light (which was created at the end of Shabbat), and Yisrael (which are separated from the other nations by circumcision and the laws of Shabbat).

"I Am Sure of His Salvation"

Early commentators (such as Machzor Vitri and the Maharil) wrote that it is accepted practice to recite various verses before Havdalah as a sign of good fortune, and the RAMA accepts this (296:1). The chosen verses contain two words that are repeated many times: (1) "Yeshua" – salvation – appears six times, one of which is in the plural, giving a total of seven "salvations" (see Pri Tzadik, end of the Torah portion of Bereishit); and (2) the name of G-d, which appears eight times. Evidently, at the end of Shabbat, when our souls are upset and worried, we recite verses that strengthen our feelings of faith. The message seems to be: The only source of salvation is G-d, and since He is with us ("the G-d of Hosts is with us" [Tehillim 46:8]) we who put our faith in Him ("Happy is the man who trusts you" [84:13]) will be saved.

The RAMA lists other practices that are done as a sign of good fortune. This includes the verses recited before Havdalah, pouring water on the ground as a sign of abundance in the house, extinguishing the flame using wine from the Havdalah, and putting some of the wine on the eyes, as a sign of our fondness for the mitzvot. This last custom is the earliest one that is recorded, and it appears in Pirkei D'Rebbe Eliezer 20 and is quoted by the Mordechai in the name of the Geonim, who write that it prevents disasters. Evidently the intention is to symbolize our desire to transfer some measure of the sanctity of

Shabbat to our vision during the week and to continue the light of Shabbat. This will transform our vision into something that is better and purer, viewing the world from a point of view of beauty, purity, holiness, with a positive outlook.

The TAZ writes that it is not good to purposely pour wine in order that it will be spilled, and therefore it is best to fill the wine cup to the brim, so that some wine will overflow by itself. He also writes that not much wine should be spilled in this way, in order to minimize the amount lost.



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