

Abraham Ibn Ezra to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi:
A Critical Edition, Translation, and Supercommentary with an Analytic Introduction
by
Ezra Frazer

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies
Yeshiva University
May 2018

Copyright © 2018

by

Ezra Frazer

The committee for this doctoral dissertation consists of
Mordechai Z. Cohen, PhD., Yeshiva University, Chair
Sid Z. Leiman, PhD., CUNY-Brooklyn
Richard C. Steiner, PhD, Yeshiva University

Acknowledgements

In the mid-2000's, my interest in academic approaches to Jewish Studies was piqued by courses that I took as an M.A. student in Yeshiva University's Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies (BRGS). Each semester, I eagerly anticipated having my eyes opened to new perspectives on texts that I had previously studied in traditional yeshiva settings. While I was taking his course in Biblical Hebrew, Prof. Richard C. Steiner first planted the idea in my head that I should continue my studies at the doctoral level. I am profoundly grateful that he not only prodded me to pursue this course of study but also agreed to continue as a member of my doctoral committee even after his own retirement. Thanks to his courses, I developed the skills and knowledge to fully appreciate Ibn Ezra and other philologically-oriented exegetes.

My doctoral committee chair, Prof. Mordechai Z. Cohen, and the third member of my dissertation committee, Prof. Sid Z. Leiman, both introduced me to many aspects of biblical scholarship throughout my studies at Yeshiva U., starting with Prof. Cohen's undergraduate courses, and continuing through both professors' graduate courses at BRGS.

I was fortunate to have already developed relationships with all three committee members before beginning my dissertation, and I benefitted from the scholarship and insight of all three of them throughout the process of writing and revising my dissertation. As it became clear that my dissertation would focus on one specific medieval Jewish exegete, I realized how privileged I was to be working under the direct guidance of such an outstanding *parshanut* scholar as Prof. Cohen. All three committee members provided many comments that improved the quality of this dissertation.

During my graduate studies at BRGS, I benefitted from the administrative leadership of two dedicated deans, the late Prof. Arthur Hyman, ל"ר, and the current dean, Prof. David Berger. Both deans were generous in their support of my research. Dean Hyman made it possible for me to study Arabic abroad, and Dean Berger made it possible for me to attend several academic conferences later in my doctoral studies. Dr. Berger's Jewish History courses broadened my perspective on medieval Judaism beyond my narrow focus on biblical exegesis, and he helped me clarify several issues related to Jewish messianism that arose in the context of my dissertation.

I am indebted to Prof. Daniel Rynhold, Director of the PhD. Program at BRGS, for guiding me through the formal steps and requirements toward completing my doctorate in addition to answering several queries of mine related to Jewish philosophy.

In addition to my advisors and the BRGS administration, I am indebted to the other professors who taught me at BRGS: Profs. Barry Eichler, Elazar Hurvitz, Ephraim Kanarfogel, and Yeshayahu Maori. In addition to the knowledge that I gained from their courses, I am grateful for the guidance that I received from Prof. Eichler, whom I was fortunate to work under during his tenure as Yeshiva College dean, and Prof. Kanarfogel, who served as the rabbi of my family's synagogue throughout my youth.

In addition to the professors who taught me in a formal classroom setting, I am indebted to Prof. Moshe Bernstein of Yeshiva College and Prof. Jonathan Dauber of BRGS for their insightful comments on several difficult passages in Ibn Ezra, and to the other BRGS professors who were constantly available for discussions about many areas of Jewish Studies: Profs. Steven Fine, Shalom Holtz, Aaron Koller, Ronnie Perelis, and Daniel Tsadik.

I am grateful to the BRGS administrative staff for their assistance throughout my years at BRGS, especially the school's academic administrator, Ms. Sheniagia Washington, and its director of admissions, Ms. Rona Steinerman.

My research required me at times to consult unpublished Karaite commentaries that appear only in Judeo-Arabic manuscripts. I am thus indebted to several scholars of Karaite exegesis who shared their own research materials (including unpublished critical texts and translations of Yefet b. Eli's commentaries) and also assisted me in locating Karaite interpretations that are not currently available in print: Dr. Meirav Nadlev-Akirav, Prof. Meira Polliack, Dr. Kees de Vreugd, and Prof. Michael Wechsler. Without their assistance, it would have been impossible to compare Ibn Ezra with his Karaite predecessors in a meaningful way.

I am indebted to the scholars and staff of Bar Ilan University's Institute for Jewish Bible Interpretation for allowing me to browse their materials during two brief visits to Israel. I am especially grateful that Prof. Uriel Simon and Ms. Esther Cohen granted me access to notebooks that Prof. Simon and his students had written several decades ago, in which they collated textual variants of Ibn Ezra to Minor Prophets. Conversations that I had with Drs. Ayala Mishaly and Jair Haas during my visits to the institute gave me valuable insights into the process of preparing Ibn Ezra's commentaries for publication.

I am also indebted to Prof. Michael Segal for his assistance in identifying variants of the Masoretic text, and to Profs. Robert Harris and Yitzhak Berger for their insights into medieval Northern French exegesis.

I am grateful to the independent scholars and personal friends who provided assistance. Hillel Novetsky of AlHatorah.org assisted with resolving a textual issue in the commentary of Eliezer of Beaugency. Chana Sce read a draft of my supercommentary to Haggai and the first chapter of Zechariah.

I am especially indebted to my longtime friend Mitchell First, who introduced me to the topic of rabbinic chronologies of the Persian Period when I was a teenager. He has discussed different aspects of these chronologies with me on countless occasions since then. He read most of the analytic introduction and offered many helpful comments, including several invaluable suggestions for improving the chapter about Ibn Ezra's chronology of the Persian Period.

I am indebted to the entire library staff of Yeshiva University, especially the staff of the Gottesman Library of Jewish Studies: Leah Adler, Zvi Erenyi, Moshe Schapiro, Carla Hanauer, and Rachel Berliner. I am indebted to the library staff of the National Library of Israel – especially Ezra Chwat, Yael Okun, and Zmira Reuveni – for providing me with digital files of microfilms of several Ibn Ezra manuscripts, and to Ina Cohen of the Jewish Theological Seminary's library for providing me with access to her library's microfilms of Ibn Ezra manuscripts. I am also indebted to the host libraries of these manuscripts (listed at the end of the analytic introduction) for granting me permission to view their manuscripts.

It would not have been possible to complete this dissertation without the ongoing support and encouragement of my family. My mother, Rachel Frazer, and my father, Chaim Frazer, encouraged me to pursue a PhD. from the moment I expressed an interest in doing so.

Maurice Tonkin, my late grandfather, was a constant source of support throughout my doctoral studies. Even as his health slowly declined, he constantly asked about my research and the progress of my dissertation. He passed away in May 2017 knowing that I was nearing the end of my dissertation but unfortunately did not have the opportunity to read the finished product. I have dedicated this dissertation to his memory.

Finally, אהרונה חביבה, I could not have completed my dissertation without the support, encouragement, and sacrifices made by my wife, Azadeh. Over the past several years, I spent many weekends and vacation days in libraries. I would not have been able to do so without both her encouragement and her enabling me on a practical level to make time for research and writing.

I conclude with the same words as the end of Ibn Ezra's commentary to Malachi:

ברוך נותן ליעף כח ולאין אונים עצמה ירבה

Ezra Frazer

May 24, 2018

י' סיון תשע"ח

Dedication

To the memory of my grandfather, Maurice Tonkin

1918-2017

His ongoing support and encouragement sustained me throughout the writing of my dissertation.

He left this world shortly before its completion

לע"נ מו"ז משה בן שמחה ז"ל

איש נעים הליכות

שאהב את הבריות

הלך בדרך ישרה

נשא ונתן באמונה

ישב בתוך עמו

נתן לדל מלחמו

חכם שלמד מכל אדם

מבשרו לא התעלם

ראה את הנולד בחכמתו

מאחיו האביון לא קפץ ידו

נקי כפים ובר לבב

קיים "והאיש משה ענו"

יהי זכרו ברוך

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Chapter I: Overview | 1 |
| Chapter II: Ibn Ezra and the Masoretic Text | 9 |
| Chapter III: Ibn Ezra's sources..... | 13 |
| Aramaic Translations | 14 |
| Talmud and Midrash | 16 |
| Geonic-Andalusian Rabbanite Sources | 22 |
| Rabbanite Philologists..... | 22 |
| Rabbanite Exegetes | 33 |
| Karaites Sources..... | 38 |
| Daniel Al-Qumisi | 39 |
| Yefet b. Eli | 39 |
| Jeshuah b. Judah | 44 |
| The Case of Zech. 7-8 – Fast Days..... | 46 |
| Conclusion..... | 57 |
| French Exegetes: Rashi & Joseph Kara..... | 58 |
| Chapter IV: Influence on Others | 69 |
| Maimonides | 69 |
| Eliezer of Beaugency..... | 70 |
| Poznanski's Data | 71 |
| The Case of Hag. 2:10-19..... | 82 |
| Additional Parallels | 84 |
| Radak..... | 88 |
| Tanḥum ha-Yerushalmi | 94 |
| Chapter V: The Oral Commentary | 104 |
| Disagreements between the Oral and Written Commentaries..... | 109 |
| When the Oral Commentary Follows Early Rabbinic Sources | 110 |
| When the Oral Commentary Follows Earlier <i>Peshat</i> Exegetes..... | 112 |
| Other Discrepancies between the Commentaries | 114 |
| Chapter VI: Historical and Eschatological Prophecy | 123 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Conditional Prophecy | 125 |
| Undocumented Fulfillment..... | 126 |
| Applications to Haggai and Zechariah | 128 |
| Applications to Malachi | 138 |
| Conclusion..... | 139 |
| Chapter VII: Neo-Babylonian and Persian Chronology | 141 |
| Chronology According to Modern Scholarship..... | 141 |
| Babylonian Kings | 142 |
| Persian Kings..... | 142 |
| Key Dates | 143 |
| Biblical Sources..... | 143 |
| Babylonian Kings | 144 |
| Median Kings | 145 |
| Persian Kings..... | 145 |
| The Rabbinic Chronology | 149 |
| Yefet b. Eli's Chronology..... | 151 |
| Ibn Ezra's Chronology | 153 |
| Conclusion..... | 162 |
| Chapter VIII: Ibn Ezra and Significance Minimalism..... | 163 |
| Introduction | 164 |
| Areas Where Ibn Ezra Appears to be a Minimalist: | 168 |
| Areas Where Ibn Ezra Appears to be a Maximalist: | 173 |
| Areas Where Ibn Ezra is Inconsistent | 183 |
| Ibn Ezra's Predecessors..... | 186 |
| Conclusion..... | 191 |
| Chapter IX: The Critical Text..... | 193 |
| Earlier Scholarship | 194 |
| Chapter X: The Manuscripts and Their Abbreviations | 203 |
| Oral Commentary | 204 |
| Standard Commentary | 206 |
| Chapter XI: Methodology of the Supercommentary | 209 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Chapter XII: Methodology of the Translation..... | 214 |
| Ibn Ezra to Haggai – Standard Commentary..... | 220 |
| Chapter 1..... | 220 |
| Chapter 2..... | 230 |
| Ibn Ezra to Zechariah – Standard Commentary..... | 249 |
| Chapter 1..... | 251 |
| Chapter 2..... | 262 |
| Chapter 3..... | 270 |
| Chapter 4..... | 281 |
| Chapter 5..... | 289 |
| Chapter 6..... | 295 |
| Chapter 7..... | 302 |
| Chapter 8..... | 310 |
| Chapter 9..... | 322 |
| Chapter 10..... | 333 |
| Chapter 11..... | 338 |
| Chapter 12..... | 349 |
| Chapter 13..... | 357 |
| Chapter 14..... | 361 |
| Ibn Ezra to Malachi – Standard Commentary..... | 376 |
| Chapter 1..... | 376 |
| Chapter 2..... | 385 |
| Chapter 3..... | 394 |
| Ibn Ezra to Haggai – Oral Commentary..... | 407 |
| Chapter 1..... | 407 |
| Chapter 2..... | 408 |
| Ibn Ezra to Zechariah – Oral Commentary..... | 411 |
| Chapter 1..... | 411 |
| Chapter 2..... | 412 |
| Chapter 3..... | 415 |
| Chapter 4..... | 418 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Chapter 5 | 421 |
| Chapter 6 | 423 |
| Chapter 7 | 425 |
| Chapter 8 | 427 |
| Chapter 9 | 428 |
| Chapter 10 | 435 |
| Chapter 11 | 437 |
| Chapter 12 | 442 |
| Chapter 13 | 444 |
| Chapter 14 | 446 |
| Ibn Ezra to Malachi – Oral Commentary | 452 |
| Chapter 1 | 452 |
| Chapter 2 | 456 |
| Chapter 3 | 460 |
| References | 466 |
| Hebrew Critical Texts | א |
| ספר חגי, פירוש רגיל | א |
| ספר זכריה, פירוש רגיל | ט |
| ספר מלאכי, פירוש רגיל | מג |
| ספר חגי, פירוש בעל פה | נב |
| ספר זכריה, פירוש בעל פה | נד |
| ספר מלאכי, פירוש בעל פה | סו |

Chapter I: Overview

Abraham Ibn Ezra (ca. 1092-1167)¹ is primarily known as one of the most important biblical exegetes of the Middle Ages. He was also an accomplished grammarian, translator, philosopher, astronomer, astrologer, and composer of both religious and secular poetry. A product of Muslim Spain, Ibn Ezra spent the last third of his life traveling throughout Christian Europe. As he wandered from Spain to Italy to France to England, he introduced the Arabic sciences that he studied in Muslim Spain to both Jews and non-Jews, in addition to producing his own original scholarship. Ibn Ezra's accomplishments in such a vast array of disciplines have prompted scholars to describe him as one of "the last creative geniuses of the Spanish golden age"² and "a Renaissance man."³

As a biblical commentator, Ibn Ezra was committed to the *peshat*, the plain sense of Scripture.⁴ In an introductory poem to his commentary on the Pentateuch, Ibn Ezra writes of his exegesis: "It is bound by the cords of grammar and approved by the eye of reason" (ובעבותות הדקדוק נקשר ובעיני הדעת יכשר).⁵ On the basis of this phrase, his exegetical

¹ Many reference works date Ibn Ezra's life from 1089 to 1164. Itamar Kislev (282-297) devoted a recent study to this topic. Kislev observes that most scholars have accepted the dates of 1089-1164, but Kislev himself argues in favor of dating Ibn Ezra's life to 1092-1167.

² Simon and Jospe, "Ibn Ezra, Abraham ben Meir."

³ Rodríguez Arribas, "Ibn Ezra, Abraham."

⁴ For a recent overview of Ibn Ezra's exegetical methodology, see Uriel Simon. "Ibn Ezra, Abraham ben Meir" *Encyclopedia of the Bible Online*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter. 2016. Retrieved 16 Feb. 2018, from https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:2484/view/EBR/MainLemma_1894

⁵ Simon, *ibid.* For a thorough analysis of this phrase, as well as its relationship to Ibn Ezra's conception of *peshat*, see Simon (שני עקרונות-יסוד), reprinted in *אזן מלין תבחן* (13-30).

methodology has been described by Uriel Simon, a leading Ibn Ezra scholar, as “satisfying the dual test of meticulous philology and strict rational plausibility.”⁶

His insistence that exegesis be rationally plausible means that in practice, his understanding of Scripture’s *peshat* goes beyond mere literal interpretation.⁷ In the introduction to his long commentary on Genesis, for example, he observes that no rational reader could accept the literal interpretation of Deut. 10:16 – “Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart” – since that would lead to an absurd religious obligation to murder oneself. Indeed, rather than limiting his commentaries to pure grammatical analysis, Ibn Ezra’s sensitivity to biblical language led him to recognize phenomena “of usage, style, and rhetoric” – such as ellipsis and transposition – to an extent that was “far ahead of his time.”⁸

Due to Ibn Ezra’s popularity, many scholarly works have been devoted to his biblical exegesis. However, the vast majority of these studies have focused on his commentary to the Pentateuch, while a smaller number have studied specific books from the Writings (according to the tripartite Jewish canon), such as Esther.⁹ Much less attention has been paid to his commentaries to Isaiah and Minor Prophets, which are his only surviving commentaries to Prophets. In the 19th century, Michael Friedlander published a study of Ibn Ezra’s Isaiah commentary, and Uriel Simon published a critical edition of Ibn Ezra to Hosea, Joel and Amos in 1989 with a comprehensive supercommentary.

⁶ Simon, *ibid.*

⁷ For examples of non-literal exegesis by Ibn Ezra, see Strickman, “Abraham Ibn Ezra’s Non-Literal Interpretations.” In general, it is misleading to characterize medieval *peshat* exegesis as “literal” interpretation. Medieval exegetes’ conceptions of *peshat* varied greatly depending on a myriad of factors (e.g., their cultural contexts, literary sensitivities, knowledge of philology, and attitudes toward philosophy and the natural sciences). See, for example, the thorough studies of Ahrend (לבירור המושג פשוטו של מקרא) and Weiss Halivni, and Cohen’s recent survey of the state of scholarly research (הרהורים על חקר המונח פשוטו של מקרא).

⁸ N. Sarna (“Abraham Ibn Ezra as an Exegete,” in Twersky and Harris 10).

⁹ See note 34 below.

Due to the relatively limited attention that has been paid to his exegesis of Prophets, I decided to focus on Ibn Ezra's commentaries to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. By selecting a portion of Minor Prophets for my dissertation, I benefitted from studying Simon's critical text and supercommentary to Hosea, Joel, and Amos and applying many aspects of his methodology to my critical edition and supercommentary.¹⁰ In addition to shedding light on Ibn Ezra's general approach to prophecy, focusing on these three specific prophets allows us to analyze his understanding of Second-Temple history.

Another important focus of my research is a second, shorter ("oral") commentary. This work contains Ibn Ezra's exegesis to many verses in Minor Prophets, often commenting on the same verses as Ibn Ezra's own ("standard") commentary. Ibn Ezra's precise role in the composition of this shorter commentary is discussed in detail below (p. 104ff.), but its final version appears to have been written by a student with firsthand knowledge of Ibn Ezra's teachings. Since this shorter commentary was compiled in Italy at least eleven years before Ibn Ezra wrote his own commentary to Minor Prophets in France (in 1156),¹¹ it can provide valuable insight into the evolution of Ibn Ezra's views over the course of his travels. Furthermore, a comparison of this commentary to Ibn Ezra's standard commentary can reveal differences between Ibn Ezra's own writing and how his views are presented by his students. Throughout this dissertation, I refer to this earlier, shorter commentary as the "oral commentary," because it represents teachings that were communicated orally by Ibn Ezra (p. 104 below).

¹⁰ See pp. 193-202 below for specific methods that I adopted based on Simon's critical edition of Hosea, Joel, and Amos.

¹¹ The precise date and location of Ibn Ezra's standard commentary appear in the colophon at the conclusion of Malachi, so I discuss it in my supercommentary *ad loc.* Sela and Freudenthal (18, 27) date the oral commentary somewhere between 1142 and 1145 on the basis of comparisons to some of Ibn Ezra's other commentaries.

My dissertation begins with an analytic introduction that examines several methodological aspects of Ibn Ezra's exegesis to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Following this introduction, I present a critical edition and translation of Ibn Ezra's commentaries to those books. The English translation is accompanied by a supercommentary in which I elucidate Ibn Ezra's comments and compare them with his other writings and with the interpretations of other medieval Jewish exegetes.

The analytic introduction opens by briefly examining the biblical texts that Ibn Ezra used, especially whether any meaningful discrepancies exist between them and standard editions of the Masoretic text. Next, I move from the biblical text to the secondary sources that influenced Ibn Ezra, beginning with his use of sources from the Rabbinic Period. Since there is no rabbinic Midrash dedicated exclusively to Minor Prophets, I discuss Ibn Ezra's use of rabbinic translations of the Bible into Aramaic, as well as his use of teachings scattered across the larger corpus of rabbinic literature that are relevant to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

Ibn Ezra's relationship with rabbinic traditions and exegesis is especially complex in legal passages, where his professed loyalty to the rabbinic legal tradition tempered his exegetical independence and commitment to the plain sense of Scripture.¹² That legal tradition is based upon interpretations of many verses that seem at odds with rigorous philological analysis, so the ways in which Ibn Ezra navigates this tension have been the subject of considerable scholarly discussion.¹³ While cases of legal exegesis rarely arise in

¹² Ibn Ezra emphasizes his fealty to rabbinic law in his introductions to both his commentaries on Genesis, presumably in order to stress that it is central to his exegetical methodology.

¹³ See note 32 below.

Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi,¹⁴ Ibn Ezra's commentaries to these books do serve as an interesting case study for other ways in which he utilizes rabbinic texts: as a historical source, as a source of some exegesis that *does* conform to his rules of *peshat*,¹⁵ and as an authoritative source for religious doctrine.¹⁶

After discussing those earlier sources, I examine Ibn Ezra's medieval predecessors. I sort his sources from Islamic lands – which he would have studied in his early years – into three groups: Rabbanite philologists, Rabbanite biblical exegetes, and Karaite biblical exegetes. While some of his predecessors do not fit easily into just one category (see note 38 below), this categorization nonetheless calls attention to the fact that certain earlier figures influenced him almost exclusively in the realm of philology, while others influenced him in many aspects of biblical exegesis. Moreover, by categorizing Karaite exegetes separately, I seek to highlight his willingness to learn from Karaite sources despite his strong ideological opposition to Karaism. Finally, I explore French rabbinical sources that he might have first encountered when he traveled to Christian lands later in life.

After surveying Ibn Ezra's sources, my introduction turns to Ibn Ezra's influence on three of his most prominent successors in the field of Jewish biblical exegesis: Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, and Tanḥum ha-Yerushalmi. All three of these exegetes broadly fit the description of *peshat* exegetes who lived within the first 150 years after Ibn Ezra. This study reveals Ibn Ezra's relative influence in different regions (Northern France, Provence, and

¹⁴ See, however, my supercommentary to Hag. 2:11.

¹⁵ Ibn Ezra contends that the rabbis of the Talmud and Midrash understood the text's *peshat* in addition to their additional, homiletical interpretations; see Cohen, *Three Approaches* 228-232.

¹⁶ See, for example, Ibn Ezra's acceptance of the rabbinic view that Darius was the son of Ahasuerus and Esther (Hag. 1:1), which he likely considered to be the simple interpretation of Ezra 4:5-7. He also uses rabbinic texts as a source of information regarding the Hasmonean Revolt (Zech. 9:9), for which there are no explicit biblical sources. Regarding doctrine, see Zech. 12:1 for Ibn Ezra's belief in Messiah son of Joseph, a messianic figure who is never mentioned explicitly in the Bible. I discuss each example in my supercommentary *ad loc*.

Egypt, respectively) from the late twelfth century (when Eliezer lived) through the thirteenth century (when Tanḥum lived).¹⁷ Before discussing Ibn Ezra's influence on these three exegetes at length, I first briefly discuss whether any material in Ibn Ezra's commentaries to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi influenced Moses Maimonides.¹⁸ Although Maimonides is not known primarily for his biblical exegesis, I have included this brief discussion due to ongoing scholarly interest in the question of whether Ibn Ezra directly influenced Maimonides (see note 122 below).

Following the discussion of Ibn Ezra's sources and successors, my introduction then studies his own exegesis of Minor Prophets. This portion of the analytic introduction begins with an analysis of the oral commentary in order to determine whether it should be considered a reliable source of his exegesis, as well as to assess the significance of discrepancies between it and the standard commentary.

Following my analysis of the oral commentary, I address two additional topics of particular relevance to Ibn Ezra's exegesis to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi in which Ibn Ezra adopts a fundamentally different approach than his predecessors.

First, I explore Ibn Ezra's "historical exegesis," namely, his tendency to interpret some prophecies as having been fulfilled close to the prophet's own time. By identifying his criteria for determining whether a prophecy was historical or messianic, I distinguish between Ibn Ezra's own methodology and that of Ibn Chiquitilia (also known for his

¹⁷ Eliezer was active in the middle of the 12th century (A. Grossman, "The School of Literal Jewish Exegesis in Northern France" in *Sæbø* 363) and thus would have been a younger contemporary of Ibn Ezra. Radak was born ca. 1160 (M. Cohen, "The Qimḥi Family" in *Sæbø* 389), so he was a young child when Ibn Ezra died. Tanḥum lived ca. 1220-1291 (Fenton, "The Post-Maimonidean Schools of Exegesis in the East" in *Sæbø* 451), so his exegesis was written approximately a century after Ibn Ezra's death.

¹⁸ Maimonides was born shortly before Ibn Ezra left Spain. Regarding his exact date of birth, see note 121 below.

historical exegesis).¹⁹ Ibn Ezra's commentary to Zechariah is especially instructive for understanding his criteria for deciding when to interpret a prophecy historically and when to interpret it as eschatological. I consider whether his determinations of whether a prophecy was historical or eschatological were guided primarily by ideological and/or polemical concerns or by his philological-contextual methodology for uncovering a text's plain sense.

In the next section, I analyze the methods through which Ibn Ezra reconstructed the chronology of the Neo-Babylonian and Persian emperors who appear in the Bible. This chronology is directly relevant to prophecies in Haggai and Zechariah that are dated to the reign of Darius. Ibn Ezra's reconstruction of this chronology differs from alternative reconstructions that appear in earlier rabbinic sources, as well as Karaite sources. I argue that Ibn Ezra utilized a series of exegetical methods to create his own original reconstruction of this chronology. In doing so, he sought to address flaws that he saw in both the standard rabbinic chronology and the Karaite chronology.²⁰

The final chapter about Ibn Ezra's methodology extends its scope beyond Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi in search of a broader perspective on when Ibn Ezra derives meaning from seemingly minor textual nuances and peculiarities ("significance maximalism") and when he argues that a nuance or peculiarity is too insignificant to convey meaning ("significance minimalism"). Although I have limited the rest of my introduction to matters that have particular relevance to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, I made an exception in this last chapter. Because several of Ibn Ezra's comments to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi

¹⁹ Uriel Simon ("Ibn Ezra between Medievalism and Modernism") has distinguished between the fundamental approaches of Ibn Ezra and Ibn Chiquitilia to other prophetic works, such as the latter part of Isaiah. But the prophecies of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi have been discussed in many fewer scholarly studies of Ibn Ezra (e.g., Simon, *אזן מלין תבחן*, 309-351).

²⁰ These methods include: claiming that the same character has multiple names, claiming that a number or date is imprecise, and questioning the authenticity of extra-biblical sources and traditions.

deviated from his reputation as a “significance minimalist,” I chose to discuss the issue in my introduction. However, it is impossible to confine discussion of such a broad issue to just 19 chapters of the Bible, so I also drew upon examples from his other biblical commentaries and his grammatical works.

The topic of significance minimalism and maximalism warrants this elaboration due to its importance for understanding the range of exegetical approaches that fall within the general category of medieval *peshat*. Exegetes who share a commitment to the plain sense of Scripture nevertheless vary regarding which textual features they deem meaningful to Scripture’s plain sense. By determining which textual features are consistently treated as meaningful or meaningless by Ibn Ezra, it becomes possible to contrast his exegetical methodology with medieval *peshat* exegetes who adopt more minimalistic or maximalistic approaches.

My analytic introduction concludes with the technical aspects of producing a critical text, translation, and supercommentary. These final sections detail which manuscripts I used, how I designed my base text and apparatus for variants, what types of issues I chose to address in the supercommentary, and how I handled the challenges of faithfully rendering a medieval Hebrew text in English.

The ultimate aim of this work is to situate Ibn Ezra within the tradition of Jewish Bible interpretation. By including the text and supercommentary, it further endeavors to make Ibn Ezra’s writings accessible to readers who might have difficulty understanding them in their original Hebrew form.

Analytic Introduction

This introduction surveys a range of methodological issues that arise in Ibn Ezra's commentaries to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. With the exception of the discussion of significance minimalism and maximalism, our discussion limits itself to these books and to sources from elsewhere in Ibn Ezra's writings that directly relate to his commentaries to these books.

Chapter II: Ibn Ezra and the Masoretic Text

As a matter of principle, Ibn Ezra firmly believed that the Masoretic text faithfully represents the Bible's authentic text.²¹ Consequently, his commentaries do not suggest textual emendations, nor do they devote significant attention to matters of lower criticism. Nonetheless, it is worth examining the extent to which the biblical text that he cites corresponds to present-day editions of the Masoretic text.²²

Ibn Ezra raises the issue of textual variants in the standard commentary to Zech. 12:5, where he cites a dispute between Tiberian and Babylonian Masoretes regarding the correct vocalization of the word וְנִסְתָּם (see p. 14 below). In addition to that explicit discussion of textual variants, a superficial reading of Ibn Ezra's commentaries might lead the reader to conclude that his citations of biblical quotes frequently differ from standard editions of the Masoretic text. In truth, the number of cases in which Ibn Ezra's commentaries reflect an actual textual variant is quite small. Because scribes of medieval commentaries were routinely inconsistent regarding plene and defective spellings, there is no indication that Ibn Ezra or subsequent copyists of his commentary ever attempted to match the Masoretic text's precise spelling.²³ Therefore, the only deviations from the Masoretic text that warrant serious consideration are those that meet two conditions: They are not a mere plene or defective spelling of the word in the Masoretic text, *and* they are attested in other witnesses

²¹ For thorough analysis of Ibn Ezra's belief that the Masoretic text is absolutely correct, see Simon (און מלין (תבחי 135-225).

²² For the Masoretic text, I used the biblical text of the HaKeter edition (Cohen, מקראות גדולות הכתר).

²³ See below (pp. 196 and 199) regarding my decision to omit plene and defective spelling variants from the critical apparatus.

of the Masoretic text. A survey of cases that match these criteria leads to the conclusion that most of them do not represent a variant reading of the biblical verse but instead fit into one of three categories:

1. **Imprecise Paraphrases:** Ibn Ezra often embeds the phrases from the verse within his own comments, a writing style that is especially common in the oral commentary. At times, it is not entirely clear where the citation of the verse ends and Ibn Ezra's own paraphrase begins. When the words in a sentence largely match the Masoretic text but contain a slightly different word order or pronoun, Ibn Ezra may simply be citing the verse imprecisely. In these cases, the deviation represents neither an exegetical comment nor a variant reading of the Masoretic text. For example, when the oral commentary to Mal. 3:5 writes, "I will be a swift witness against the *adulterers*, and against the *sorcerers*," there does not appear to be any significance to its reversal of the prepositional phrases from the Masoretic text's order ("I will be a swift witness against the *sorcerers*, and against the *adulterers*"). Similarly, the oral commentary's use (according to most manuscripts) of הַנְּבִיאִי instead of הַנְּבִיאִי אֶנְכִי to begin the declaration, "Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you" (Mal. 3:23), likely reflects a lack of concern for citing with precision. The substitution of הַנְּבִיאִי is probably not a variant in the Masoretic text, an error, or a deliberate change for exegetical purposes.
2. **Exegetical Paraphrases:** In some passages that cite a verse nearly verbatim, the minor deviation represents an exegetical comment. For example, the oral commentary to Mal. 2:3 cites that verse as, "And he shall carry you *to Me*" (אֵלַי), while the Masoretic text reads אֵלָיו ("to him/it"). As explained in my supercommentary *ad loc.*, Ezra is arguing that God (the speaker) is the antecedent of the pronominal suffix of אֵלַי; Ibn Ezra is *not*

claiming that the biblical text reads אֵלֵי. Similar examples occur in the oral commentary to Zech. 3:7 (וְגַם) and Mal. 2:15 (יִבְגֵּד). I discuss several examples of exegetical paraphrase later in this introduction (note 185 below).

3. **Erroneous Citations** – In a small number of cases, deviations from the Masoretic text appear to be the result of human error, either by Ibn Ezra himself or by subsequent scribes:
 - a. **Citations from Memory** – As Uriel Simon has already observed (supercommentary to Hos. 14:10), Ibn Ezra cites verses from memory and sometimes misremembers their precise wording. This is evident when one finds verses that Ibn Ezra cites more than once in his writings with the same deviation from the Masoretic text, yet no evidence exists for a variant reading of the verse in accordance with this deviation. Several errors of this type occur in our material.²⁴ The most striking example is the standard commentary to Zech. 1:14, where he cites וַיִּקְנְאוּ אֹתוֹ פְּלִשְׁתִּים (“The Philistines were jealous of him”) as וַיִּקְנְאוּ בְּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים and then utilizes the word בּו – which is not attested in Masoretic witnesses of the actual verse – as a proof-text regarding the connotation of the root קנא when followed by the preposition בּו.
 - b. **Aramaic Verses** – When Ibn Ezra cites the Aramaic portions of the Bible, the quotes tend to be rife with errors – the details of which vary greatly from manuscript to manuscript. Presumably, these widespread errors stem from the scribes’ lack of familiarity with the Aramaic verses that he was citing.²⁵

²⁴ For other inaccurate quotes that might be the result of Ibn Ezra citing a proof-text from memory, see Hag. 1:1 (regarding the names Refaiah and Pedaiah in I Chron. 3:19 and regarding Michal’s sons in II Sam. 21:8), Zech. 3:4 (replacing אָת with אֵל in II Sam. 2:21), Zech. 8:19 (replacing קִיְמוֹ with קָבְלוֹ in Est. 9:31), Zech. 13:7 (regarding the text of Job 14:21), and Mal. 3:24 (replacing לִיְהוָה with יְהוָה in I Chron. 12:18).

²⁵ See, for example, the oral commentary to Zech. 4:6 (citing Ezra 5:1). In a similar vein, the standard commentary to Mal. 1:1 appears to cite the Hebrew equivalent of an Aramaic verse from Ezra 6:16 (replacing

In a small number of cases, Ibn Ezra's deviation from the Masoretic text does correspond to a variant reading attested elsewhere and thus might indicate that he (or a subsequent scribe) possessed a Bible with that variant reading.²⁶ None of these cases can be identified with absolute certainty as a variant reading of the verse, however, since they could also fit into one of the above categories.²⁷

(ויעשו with ועבדו), which might be a conscious or subconscious decision by Ibn Ezra to render the verse in Hebrew. Alternatively, it could be a scribal error, although it is written ויעשו in all manuscripts.

²⁶ The case most likely to indicate a variant text of the Bible is the oral commentary to Zech. 10:5, which employs the word נחלתי instead of הלקתי for "my field" in his citation of Jer. 12:10. That variant appears to have been known to other medieval exegetes (Rashi, Isa. 22:5, 63:6, Amos 5:11, and Zech. 10:5; Isaiah of Trani, Amos 5:11, Ps. 60:14, and 102:7). Indeed, Benjamin Kennicott's eighteenth-century publication of Masoretic variants lists many manuscripts that read נחלתי instead of הלקתי in Jer. 12:10, which increases the likelihood that Ibn Ezra saw the word נחלתי in a manuscript of that verse. (Throughout this dissertation, all references to Kennicott's work refer to his notes to the biblical verse under discussion.)

Other possible examples of a variant reading of the Masoretic text are the standard commentary to Hag. 2:17 (replacing אַת with ואת); Zech. 11:7 (regarding multiple textual issues in Neh. 5:14), 12:11 (regarding the enclitic ן in מְגִדוֹן), and 14:19 (replacing זאת with וזאת); Mal. 1:4 (regarding the correct spelling of שׁ in Prov. 30:8) and 2:17 (replacing עשה with עושי); both commentaries to Zech. 12:10 (replacing אַלִי with אֵלִי); and the oral commentary to Zech. 12:11 (regarding the name Hadad-rimmon). I discuss the specifics of each case in my supercommentary.

²⁷ For example, the base manuscript of the oral commentary to Zech. 5:9 writes "between sky and earth," when virtually all editions of the Masoretic text read "between earth and sky." In his collection of Masoretic variants, Kennicott (*ad loc.*) does cite one manuscript that reads "between sky and earth," so Ibn Ezra (or the student who wrote the oral commentary) might have seen that variant text. However, some manuscripts of the oral commentary follow the standard Masoretic reading of "between earth and sky." Even if one assumes that the base manuscript is correct and the other manuscripts reflect a scribal emendation to align the oral commentary with the standard Masoretic reading, the oral commentary does not necessarily support an alternate reading of the Masoretic text, since it frequently paraphrases and cites imprecisely.

Chapter III: Ibn Ezra's sources

Like many medieval exegetes, Ibn Ezra frequently presents earlier interpretations without attribution, so there is no foolproof way to determine his sources.²⁸ Attempts to do so must begin by identifying which earlier sources contain similar content to Ibn Ezra's interpretations. As I list cases of similar content between Ibn Ezra and a predecessor, I further attempt to assess whether he and his predecessor merely express similar ideas or also contain stronger parallels, such as similar Hebrew phraseology or similar proof-texts. In some cases, it can be assumed that Ibn Ezra had *some* earlier source for his interpretation, because he introduces it with a phrase that points to an anonymous view (e.g., יש אומרים, "Some say..."). Similarly, if he opens a comment by stressing that his interpretation is the true *peshat*, it can be assumed that he was familiar with sources that suggested a different interpretation, which he is rejecting. When Ibn Ezra does not allude to any connection between an interpretation and earlier sources, it is harder to determine whether he simply appropriated his predecessor's interpretation or they independently developed the same interpretation.

This section begins with material from the Rabbinic Period and then proceeds to material from closer to his own time. I first examine Ibn Ezra's predecessors in the Geonic-

²⁸ In the case of Ibn Ezra, even his explicit citations do not always tell the entire story of his sources. As will be discussed below (especially regarding Yefet b. Eli, the prominent Karaite exegete), many of the interpretations that he presents *with* attribution do not appear in the sources to which he attributes them, probably because he was citing them from memory.

Andalusian world in which he was educated and then look at sources that he might have encountered as he traveled through Christian Europe.

Aramaic Translations

Throughout his biblical commentaries, Ibn Ezra occasionally cites the *Targumim* (the traditional Aramaic translations of the Bible), but they do not seem to constitute a major source for his interpretations.²⁹ In our books, too, there are only two cases in which Ibn Ezra explicitly cites a Targum:

1. He cites Jonathan's Aramaic translation regarding the vocalization of the word ונסתם (Zech. 14:5). He appears to link Jonathan's view to the Babylonian Masoretes, who vocalized the word as וְנִסְתָּם instead of the Tiberian vocalization, וְנִסְתָּם (but cf. Ibn Ezra's grammatical writings, where he implies that Jonathan's translation of ונסתם represents a homiletical interpretation rather than a textual variant: שפה ברורה, Lippmann 11a-b, González and Sáenz-Badillos 9*; יסוד דקדוק, Aloni 88).
2. The oral commentary to Zech. 7:3 cites Onkelos (Lev. 22:2) as a proof-text for the meaning of the root גזר.

²⁹ See the examples cited by Melammed (מפרשי המקרא 616-617). Reifmann (עיונים במשנת הראב"ע 83-88) argues that Onkelos influenced Ibn Ezra's commentaries on the Pentateuch far more than Jonathan influenced his commentaries on Isaiah and the Minor Prophets. Reifmann contrasts explicit citations of Jonathan, which demonstrate influence, with cases in which Ibn Ezra cites another source (or no source at all) for an interpretation that he *could have* cited from Jonathan. In Reifmann's opinion, the latter category indicates that either Ibn Ezra was unfamiliar with Jonathan's translation of those verses or deliberately chose to ignore it. One could question the validity of Reifmann's methodology, especially regarding Ibn Ezra, who frequently misattributes interpretations or cites them anonymously. Nevertheless, my study of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi has not found evidence to dispute Reifmann's fundamental claim that Jonathan did not heavily influence Ibn Ezra's commentaries to Prophets. An assessment of Onkelos' influence over Ibn Ezra's commentaries to the Pentateuch is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Nevertheless, Ibn Ezra's admiration for Onkelos is evident in the closing lines of his introduction to the Pentateuch, where he remarks that Onkelos "translated truthfully" (תרגם אמת) and only deviated from the plain sense of Scripture in select cases (cf. Lancaster 171-174). For a list of cases in which Onkelos is cited by Ibn Ezra's commentaries to the Pentateuch, see Chamiel (המקרא ותרגומו) 36-37).

When Ibn Ezra does not cite Jonathan by name, it is difficult to determine whether Jonathan influenced him, even if they share an interpretation. For example, they both interpret the word *בְּמִלְאָכּוֹת* (Hag. 1:13) as *בְּשִׁלְיָחוֹת* (“in the agency of...”), but this view is shared by virtually all medieval exegetes, including several who preceded Ibn Ezra.³⁰ Hence, although Jonathan might be the oldest source of this interpretation, one cannot characterize Jonathan as influencing Ibn Ezra to interpret the word *בְּמִלְאָכּוֹת* in this manner. Nevertheless, two cases stand out, in which there may be a stronger connection between Jonathan’s translation and Ibn Ezra’s comment, despite the fact that Ibn Ezra does not mention Jonathan by name:

1. **Zech. 12:11** – The oral commentary interprets “the wailing at Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddon” as “the wailing over Ahab, whom Hadarimmon killed, and over Josiah, who was killed in the plain of Megiddon” (כּמספּד אַחאַב אַשר הרגו הדרמון וכּמספּד יוּשִׁיָּהוּ אַשר נהרג בּבּקעַת מגדון). That comment closely parallels Jonathan’s Aramaic translation: כּמספּד אַחאַב בר עמרי דקטל הדר רמון בר טב רמון וכּמספּד יוּשִׁיָּהוּ בר אמון דקטל פרעה חגירא בּבּקעַת מגדון.³¹ Although the Talmud (bMeg. 3a and bM.K. 28b), Rashi, and Joseph Kara all share this interpretation, they all attribute it to the Targum, so perhaps it can be considered a case of Jonathan’s influence on Ibn Ezra. However, the standard commentary characterizes this interpretation as *derash* and prefers a different interpretation (see p. 111 below).
2. **Mal. 2:12** – Regarding the difficult phrase *עֵר וְעֵנָה*, Ibn Ezra remarks: “From context, [עֵר וְעֵנָה] means “בְּנִין וְנִכְדִים” (a son or grandson). Ibn Ezra’s *בְּנִין וְנִכְדִים* is the Hebrew

³⁰ The interpretation of *בְּמִלְאָכּוֹת* as *בְּשִׁלְיָחוֹת* is shared by Jonathan, Ibn Balaam, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak, and Eliezer of Beaugency. Given the simplicity of the interpretation, it would be difficult to consider it a case of any particular predecessor’s influence on Ibn Ezra, or of Ibn Ezra’s influence on any particular successor.

³¹ Throughout this dissertation, citations of Jonathan and Onkelos are based on textual databases in the “Targumic Studies Module” of *The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project* (<http://call.cn.huc.edu/>; last accessed July 27, 2017).

equivalent of Jonathan's Aramaic translation of עַר וְעִנְיָהּ as בר ובר בר (cf. Onkelos and Pseudo-Jonathan to Gen. 21:23).

In addition to these two cases, Jonathan was one rabbinic source for traditions that Ibn Ezra also knew from multiple rabbinic works including the Talmud. Hence, in some cases where Ibn Ezra adopts an earlier rabbinic tradition (the focus of our next section), Jonathan's translation is one of several texts that influenced him, but it is difficult to single out Jonathan as Ibn Ezra's source. Certain of these rabbinic traditions were adopted by the oral commentary, but Ibn Ezra subsequently rejects them in the standard commentary (see p. 110 below).

Talmud and Midrash

Ibn Ezra's commitment to the plain sense (*peshat*) of the text has been documented at length. While some scholars have focused on how Ibn Ezra balances his commitment to *peshat* with his loyalty to rabbinic law,³² that tension arises primarily in legal sections of the Pentateuch and not in Prophets. Hence, in our material, Ibn Ezra presumably did not feel obliged to accept interpretations from midrashic literature. Nevertheless, Ibn Ezra believed that the sages of the Rabbinic Period understood the plain sense of Scripture, in addition to their homiletical interpretations. Accordingly, Ibn Ezra accepts that some interpretations from rabbinic literature should be viewed as *peshat*.³³ It is thus not surprising that he

³² Regarding Ibn Ezra's legal exegesis, see Weiss (אבן עזרא והקראים בהלכה), Maori ("The Approach of Classical Jewish Exegetes"), Lockshin, and Japhet ("The Tension between Rabbinic Legal Midrash and the 'Plain Meaning'").

³³ For example, in the introduction to his long commentary to Genesis, he remarks that the rabbis "undoubtedly knew the *peshat*, for all wisdom was bestowed upon them" (והם ידעו הפשט כי להם נתנה כל חכמה). Hence, although many of their interpretations are intended to add deeper meaning to Scripture, they "sometimes interpret Scripture in accordance with its rules" of grammar and syntax (פעם יפרשו הכתוב כמשפטו). For further discussion of Ibn Ezra's contention that these earlier rabbis understood the plain sense of Scripture, see Cohen (*Three Approaches* 228-232).

incorporates material from rabbinic literature to support his understanding of the plain sense of Scripture in several cases in our material:³⁴

1. **Hag. 1:1** – He describes Darius as “Darius the Persian, about whom our early sages said that he is the son of Queen Esther” (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
Elsewhere (Dan. 9:1), Ibn Ezra presents the assertion that Darius was Esther’s son as his own view. As I discuss at length below (pp. 141-160), Ibn Ezra’s own understanding of Persian chronology differed in significant ways from the accepted rabbinic chronology. Nonetheless, it led him to conclude that Darius was the son of Ahasuerus. While Darius’ mother could have been Queen Vashti or one of Ahasuerus’ many wives and concubines, Esther – who was the reigning queen at the end of Ahasuerus’ life – apparently struck him as the most likely woman to be Darius’ mother.³⁵
2. **Hag. 1:1** – He writes that Michal’s “sons” in II Sam. 21:8 were, in fact, her nephews – sons of her sister, Merab – whom she adopted. He presents this interpretation as his

³⁴ For an interesting case study in Ibn Ezra’s relationship with midrashic exegesis to a non-legal section of the Bible, see the studies of Davidovitz (יחס הראב"ע למדרשי חז"ל) and Walfish regarding Ibn Ezra’s commentaries to Esther.

³⁵ His assertion that Esther was Darius’ mother is especially noteworthy since the standard rabbinic chronology in the classical work *Seder Olam Rabbah* presents Darius as the son of Ahasuerus but does not identify Darius’ mother. The claim that he was “Esther’s son, pure from his mother but impure from his father” is the view of R. Judah b. Simeon (Lev. R. 13:5, Esth. R. 8:3) but does not necessarily represent the consensus of earlier sages (see p. 161ff. below)

Evidently, Ibn Ezra was not bothered by the implications of R. Judah b. Simeon’s interpretation for Darius’ age. Esther became queen in Ahasuerus’ seventh year (Est. 2:16). According to Ibn Ezra’s calculations, Ahasuerus ruled for approximately fourteen years, and then Darius ruled for approximately twelve years. Consequently, if Darius were Esther’s son, he would have succeeded his father as a very young boy and then died before his twentieth birthday. The Second Temple’s construction – the most significant event of Darius’ reign from the perspective of the Jewish community – would have been completed during Darius’ childhood. While the Bible contains multiple examples of child kings, it is interesting that Ibn Ezra does not even raise the possibility of Darius being the son of Vashti or another woman and thus being at least a teenager when he permitted the Temple to be rebuilt.

- own view, but it comes from earlier rabbinic literature (yKidd. 4:1, bSanh. 19b) and was also adopted by some earlier exegetes (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
3. **Hag. 2:9** – Ibn Ezra cites several explanations of Haggai’s prophecy that the Second Temple would be “greater” than the First Temple, including: “Yefet said that the First Temple stood for 410 years, while the Second Temple stood for 420 years.” Ibn Ezra apparently forgot the correct source of this interpretation (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*); it actually comes from the Talmud (yMeg. 1:12; cf. bB.B. 3b).
 4. **Zech. 9:9** – Ibn Ezra approvingly cites a tradition that the Hasmoneans initially built a menorah out of iron, due to their poverty. Only later did they amass enough wealth to replace the iron menorah with silver, and eventually replace the silver menorah with gold (bR.H. 24b). This tradition supports his claim that Zech. 9:9 describes Judah Maccabee, who was too poor to own a horse. Thus, he incorporates a rabbinic tradition about the Hasmoneans into his own interpretation of Zech. 9:9. While adopting this one detail from rabbinic literature, he rejects the messianic reading of Zech. 9:9, which was widespread in rabbinic literature.
 5. **Zech. 12:1** – Ibn Ezra’s comment that the skies and earth “would not have been created if not for Israel” is likely taken from midrashic literature (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
 6. **Zech. 12-13** – He interprets Zech. 12-13 as presenting a narrative of the Messiah son of Joseph. This figure is never mentioned in Scripture, but he is alluded to in several rabbinic sources that associate Zech. 12:10 with his death.³⁶

³⁶ I elaborate on the role of Messiah son of Joseph in Ibn Ezra’s exegesis below (p. 34) and in my supercommentary to Zech. 12:1.

7. **Zech. 14:17** – In order to explain the connection between rain and the Feast of Booths, Ibn Ezra observes that during this festival, “Our sages transmitted to mention ‘the power of [God to bring] rain’ (mTan. 1:1) and to beg for mercy regarding it” (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). In this case, he is not appealing to rabbinic exegesis of the Bible but merely utilizing rabbinic law as proof that the Feast of Booths falls out at the start of the rainy season in Israel.
8. **Zech. 14:21** – Ibn Ezra maintains that the Hebrew word כנעני (literally, “Canaanite”) can also mean “trader,” and he argues that it means “trader” in this verse. His interpretation of “Canaanite” as “trader” in this verse appears in the Talmud (bPes. 50a) but is also shared by Jonathan and many later exegetes, so it is not clear whether the Talmud or other exegetes inspired it.
9. **Mal. (postscript)** – Ibn Ezra observes that Elijah appeared to the sages of the Talmud, although he does not cite any specific example from the Talmud. He utilizes this historical information to argue that Elijah never died.

In another type of interaction with rabbinic literature, Ibn Ezra sometimes presents his own *peshat* interpretations in a manner that implicitly or explicitly criticizes rabbinic interpretations that he feels did not fit the text’s plain sense:

1. **Hag. 2:11-14** – Commenting on 2:11, Ibn Ezra remarks: “We have seen according to the plain sense that Haggai did not tell the priests that they did not rule correctly.” According to the Talmud, Haggai was quizzing them on the laws of ritual purity, ultimately criticizing them for ruling incorrectly on one of the scenarios that he presented. Ibn Ezra rejects this entire reading of the passage. He argues that, in fact, Haggai presented legal queries that the priests were obviously going to answer

correctly. However, Haggai's true intention was not to discuss these laws with the priests but rather to use them as an allegory for the people's sinful behavior. Hence, Haggai's assertion, "Whatever they offer there is unclean" (2:14), is not a legal verdict that their offerings were ritually "unclean." Rather, Haggai is arguing that the people's conduct has driven away God's presence. By insisting that his interpretation is "the plain sense," Ibn Ezra is acknowledging that he is familiar with the earlier rabbinic interpretation of the passage, but it does not conform to his understanding of the text's plain sense.

2. **Zech. 1:8** – Regarding the red horse, Ibn Ezra writes: "As for he who explained that... 'red' is like blood, for the spilling of blood – these are like words of *derash*" (cf. Cohen, *Three Approaches* 245-248). He might be alluding to an interpretation from the Talmud (bSan. 93a), although Ibn Ezra links this view with a homiletical interpretation of Gideon's dream that does not appear in the Talmud. Therefore, he might be attacking a different exegete who suggested both of those interpretations. Regardless, Ibn Ezra clearly rejected additional details of the Talmud's interpretation of Zech. 1:8 that he does not even mention (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
3. **Zech. 3:3** – The standard commentary rejects the claim that Joshua's "filthy garments" symbolized the sin of his grandchild's intermarriage – a view that appears in the Talmud (bSan. 93a) and appears to have been accepted by the oral commentary.
4. **Zech. 3:8** – Ibn Ezra writes: "I, too, [interpreted] according to the method of *derash* that the numerical value of מִנְחֵם equals מְנַחֵם (Menaḥem)." Although Ibn Ezra presents this interpretation as his own, it appears in the Jerusalem Talmud (yBer. 2:4). Ibn

Ezra likely read or heard of it rather than inventing it himself, but perhaps he forgot its source. Regardless, Ibn Ezra labels this interpretation as *derash* and makes clear that the plain sense of this prophecy is addressing Zerubbabel rather than a future messianic figure. He might have felt compelled to address the messianic interpretation of this verse since it was adopted by Yefet and other Karaites, in addition to rabbinic sources.³⁷

5. **Zech. 5:1** – Ibn Ezra writes: “There are some exegetes who said [that עָפָה means] ‘folded.’” This view appears in the Talmud (bEr. 21a), although Ibn Ezra might be citing it from Ibn Janah (השרשים 359), who presents it as one interpretation of the word.
6. **Zech. 9:9** – Ibn Ezra rejects the messianic interpretation of the “king,” which appears in the Talmud (bSan. 98a-99a) and many other sources.
7. **Zech. 12:11** – The standard commentary’s assertion, “It is the manner of *derash* for [Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddon] to be an allusion to Ahab and Josiah,” is dismissing a view that appears in the Talmud (bMeg. 3a and bM.K. 28b), although Ibn Ezra’s primary source for the interpretation might be Jonathan *ad loc.* The oral commentary accepts this interpretation (see p. 15 above).
8. **Zech. 14:1** – Ibn Ezra rejects “the one who explains that *the enemy’s* spoil shall be divided.” His source could be either Jonathan or other midrashic works (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
9. **Mal. 1:1** – Ibn Ezra rejects the identification of Malachi with Ezra, which is one view in the Talmud (bMeg. 15a).

³⁷ Regarding the general phenomenon of Ibn Ezra presenting interpretations that do not meet his own criteria for *peshat* exegesis, see Cohen (*Three Approaches* 268-271).

Geonic-Andalusian Rabbanite Sources

As a product of Golden-Age Spain, Ibn Ezra's worldview and methodology were primarily shaped by the interpretive methods of the Spanish *peshat* tradition and its forerunners elsewhere in Muslim lands. His commentaries' rich philological analysis, literary and historical sensitivity, rationalism and independence from aggadic interpretations all have their roots in this cultural milieu. His relationship with earlier Karaite exegetes is the subject of a separate chapter. In this section, we survey Ibn Ezra's Rabbanite sources.

Rabbanite Philologists³⁸

The Spanish *peshat* tradition heavily emphasized philology, thanks to the groundbreaking achievements of several medieval Spanish philologists.³⁹ Luba Charlap concludes her comprehensive study of Ibn Ezra's linguistic system by characterizing his grammatical views as eclectic, arguing that he cannot be viewed as a disciple of any one specific predecessor (ע"ר 249-256). While Ḥayyuj and Ibn Janah were clearly the most influential grammarians on his linguistic system, Charlap demonstrates that Ibn Ezra disagrees with each of them regarding various linguistic issues. Indeed, a close examination of his linguistic comments to our material shows that he drew upon the works of several different grammarians, despite wide-ranging disagreements between them. In some cases, one observes the clear influence of one grammarian or another, while many of his

³⁸ I have sorted Ibn Ezra's Geonic-Andalusian predecessors into two groups – philologists and exegetes – based on the nature of the content in Ibn Ezra's commentaries that is drawn from these earlier sources. This categorization is somewhat artificial, however, because some of these figures made significant contributions to both philology and other areas of exegesis (especially Saadiah and Ibn Chiquitilia). Nevertheless, I believe this categorization is helpful for our purposes, since Ibn Ezra's use of the "philologists" is exclusively in that discipline, whereas the vast majority of his comments that appear to reflect Saadiah's or Ibn Chiquitilia's direct influence have little to do with philology.

³⁹ For an overview of these philologists' contributions to biblical exegesis, see Sáenz-Badillos, "Early Hebraists in Spain" (in *Sæbø* 96-109), and Maman, "The Flourishing Era of Jewish Exegesis in Spain" (in *Sæbø* 261-281).

comments reflect a broad consensus among earlier Spanish grammarians. In this section, I survey those comments of Ibn Ezra that clearly endorse or reject the views of specific grammarians. Full citations and analysis of each case appear in my supercommentary to the relevant passage; the present discussion limits itself to the relevance of each passage to Ibn Ezra's relationships with his predecessors.

Menaḥem Ibn Saruk

Ibn Ezra cites Ibn Saruk once (Hag. 2:12), regarding the relationship between the meaning of the root שדק and the root's usage to describe the prohibition against planting other crops in a vineyard (Deut. 22:9). In that case, Ibn Ezra wholeheartedly endorses Ibn Saruk's novel interpretation.⁴⁰

In several other instances, Ibn Saruk and Ibn Ezra appear to agree about the meaning of a word, either based on the definitions that they offer or their choice of proof-texts.⁴¹ However, it is doubtful whether one can attribute these parallels to Ibn Saruk's direct influence. Ibn Ezra's lexical comments typically address words that appear a limited number of times in the Bible, so it is to be expected that his proof-texts would also appear in any lexicon that cites several examples per entry, as Ibn Saruk's does. Indeed, many of the same lemmas and proof-texts appear together in Ibn Janah's lexicon and/or in the writings of other grammarians and exegetes. Hence, it is difficult to isolate any one figure as the individual who influenced Ibn Ezra's choice of a proof-text. Nevertheless, two cases stand out in which

⁴⁰ It is questionable whether Ibn Saruk himself actually wrote the passage that Ibn Ezra cites, but Ibn Ezra clearly believed Ibn Saruk to have written it (see my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

⁴¹ I observed twenty cases in which Ibn Ezra and Ibn Saruk appear to share a lexical interpretation, primarily based on shared proof-texts: Hag. 1:4 (ספונים), 1:13 (מלאכות), 2:17 (שדפון), and 2:19 (מגורה); Zech. 1:16 (קו), 2:17 (נעור), 4:2 (גלה and מוצקות), 4:9 (תבצענה), 5:1 (עפה), 5:3 (נקה), 7:2 (one interpretation of מלך רגם), 7:5 (the suffix of צמחני), 10:9 (נאזרעם as a metaphor), 10:10 (ימצא), 12:2 (ספ), 12:6 (כיור), and 14:20 (מזרקים); Mal. 1:4 (רששונו) and the oral commentary to Zech. 12:3 (שרוט ישרטו), 12:5 (אמצה), and 13:7 (עמית). Page references to Ibn Saruk's lexicon appear in my supercommentary to these verses.

Ibn Saruk and Ibn Ezra share more than just a lexical definition, perhaps indicating direct influence of the former on the latter:

1. **Zech. 4:2** – In his entry for the word נִלְקָה, Ibn Saruk expounds on the symbolism of Zechariah’s vision, explaining that the “golden” oil (cf. Zech. 4:12) was squeezed out of the olives and into the seven pipes that fed into the seven branches of the lampstand without any outside force squeezing them (מהברת מנחם, Philipowski 54-55, Sáenz-Badillos 103*-104*). According to Ibn Saruk, the fact that this process occurred without any outside force pressing the olives symbolized the manner in which God would rebuild the Second Temple through His spirit (cf. Zech. 4:6), without human power. Ibn Ezra explains the vision’s symbolism in the same way.
2. **Zech. 5:3** – In addition to agreeing that the word נִקָּה connotes going unpunished, they both maintain that the full sentence, “Everyone who has stolen and everyone who has sworn has gone unpunished,” was written on both sides of the scroll (rather than one clause being written on each side of the scroll).

In several cases, it is clear that Ibn Ezra disagrees with the way in which Ibn Saruk interprets a word, although Ibn Ezra never cites Ibn Saruk’s interpretations to these words.⁴²

Judah Ibn Quraysh

Ibn Ezra lists Ibn Quraysh among his illustrious predecessors in the field of Hebrew grammar (*Moznayim*, Jiménez Patón 4*), and he does occasionally cite Ibn Quraysh by name (e.g., Exod. 1:16, Amos 6:10). Ibn Ezra never cites Ibn Quraysh explicitly in these commentaries, but he does adopt or reject several of Ibn Quraysh’s views:

⁴² See Ibn Ezra’s comments to Zech. 11:5 (וַיִּמְצְאוּ), from Ibn Ezra’s proof-text in Lev. 9:12), 11:7 (הַקְּלִים), 13:5 (הַקְּנִי), and 14:5 (אֶצֶל).

1. **Zech. 4:9** – Ibn Ezra adopts the same proof-text (Isa. 10:12) as Ibn Quraysh in order to determine the meaning of תְּבַצְעֵנָה as: “They will complete.” However, this proof-text is shared by many exegetes (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*), so it is difficult to establish any direct influence from Ibn Quraysh on the basis of this example.
2. **Zech. 6:3** – Ibn Ezra and Ibn Quraysh both appear to interpret אֶמְצִים as a shade of red, but this interpretation is also shared by Ibn Janah, so it is difficult to consider Ibn Quraysh as Ibn Ezra’s immediate source.
3. **Zech. 11:13** – Ibn Ezra implicitly rejects the interpretation of הַיֹּצֵר as “the treasury” (equivalent to הַאֲוִצֵר) which was shared by several of Ibn Ezra’s predecessors. Elsewhere, he explicitly dismisses this interpretation while observing that it was attributed to Ibn Quraysh (ההגנה, Oshri 93).

Dunash’s Critiques of Saadiah

Ibn Ezra never cites Dunash⁴³ explicitly in these commentaries. However, a small number of his comments relate to views of Dunash that he discusses in ספר ההגנה, the grammatical work in which he defends Saadiah from Dunash’s critiques.⁴⁴ The last three of these five cases share the common thread that Dunash’s interpretations resulted from the

⁴³ Ibn Ezra attributed the critiques of Saadiah known as תשובות דונש על רס"ג to Dunash Ibn Labrat. The authorship of this work continues to be debated by modern scholars. For a recent argument against Dunash’s authorship, see Hazon (ספר תיקון השגגות - תשובות אדניה על רס"ג). For different arguments in defense of some connection between the work and Ibn Labrat, see Steiner (*A Biblical Translation in the Making* 135 n. 34) and Gaash (ספר תשובות דונש הלוי). Throughout this dissertation, I refer to the author of this work simply as “Dunash” (without a family name), since Ibn Ezra attributed it to “R. Adonim” (Dunash’s Hebrew name) and the author’s true identity has not been definitively established. I do not add a last name due to the uncertainty of whether Ibn Labrat was the author.

⁴⁴ Earlier editions of ספר ההגנה were printed under the title שפת יתר. Regarding the reasons for this error, see the sources cited by Sela and Freudenthal (29-30).

exegetical method of “substitution,” which Ibn Ezra fundamentally rejects (see note 194 below).

1. **Zech. 1** – In his introduction to Zechariah, Ibn Ezra discusses Zechariah’s prophetic style. While not mentioning Dunash, his discussion of one prophet’s style reflects his rejection of Dunash’s belief that prophets did not have unique styles because they all convey the word of God (ההגנה, Oshri 88).⁴⁵
2. **Zech. 4:14** – Ibn Ezra writes that יִצְהָר means “oil” in our verse, so “the two sons of הַיִּצְהָר” are Zerubbabel and Joshua, who were anointed with oil. While he does not cite Dunash in his commentary to Zechariah, he is clearly rejecting Dunash’s claim that the word יִצְהָר is a proper name, Izhar, in our verse. Indeed, several of Ibn Ezra’s grammatical works (cited in my supercommentary *ad loc.*) mock Dunash’s interpretation of יִצְהָר as a proper name in this verse.⁴⁶
3. **Zech. 11:13** – Ibn Ezra implicitly rejects the interpretation of הַיִּזְצֹר that Dunash cites from Ibn Quraysh (no. 3 above).
4. **Zech. 14:5** – Ibn Ezra interprets עִמָּךְ (literally, “with you”) as “to you,” referring to Jerusalem. Although he does not cite a dissenting view in his commentary, he is rejecting Dunash’s interpretation of עִמָּךְ as “with *Him*” (referring to God) – an interpretation that Ibn Ezra explicitly rejects in ההגנה (Oshri 96).
5. **Mal. 2:15** – The oral commentary appears to interpret the third-person verb אֵל יִבְגֵּד (“let no one deal treacherously”) as an imperative: “Do not deal treacherously” (אֵל

⁴⁵ See my supercommentary to Ibn Ezra *ad loc.* for references to scholarly discussion of Ibn Ezra’s notion of prophetic styles.

⁴⁶ For further discussion of Ibn Ezra’s critique of Dunash and his own views about proper nouns, see Charlap (101-107) תורת הלשון של ראב"ע).

(תבגוד). That view is shared by several of Ibn Ezra's predecessors, including Dunash, but Ibn Ezra rejects it in other writings (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

Judah Ḥayyuj

Ibn Ezra held Ḥayyuj in high esteem,⁴⁷ and – as Charlap (*ibid.*) has shown – Ibn Ezra agrees with many of Ḥayyuj's views. Although Ibn Ezra never cites Ḥayyuj by name in our material, several of his comments reflect Ḥayyuj's influence. In three cases, Ibn Ezra addresses an etymological difficulty that was subject to a dispute between Ḥayyuj and Ibn Janaḥ. In the first two cases, he sides with Ḥayyuj, while he sides with Ibn Janaḥ in the third case:

1. **Zech. 2:17** – Ibn Ezra cites a debate regarding the etymology of the word נָעוּר. In the standard commentary, he clearly believes that the view of Ḥayyuj – that the נ is a *nif'al* prefix, preceding the hollow⁴⁸ root עור (roused) – is more correct than Ibn Janaḥ's view that the root of נָעוּר is נער (growled).⁴⁹
2. **Mal. 2:5** – Ibn Ezra identifies the root of נָחַת as the geminate root חתת, which is Ḥayyuj's position, while Ibn Janaḥ was unsure whether the root was חתת or נחת.

⁴⁷ In addition to Ibn Ezra's decision to translate Ḥayyuj's works into Hebrew, his appreciation of Ḥayyuj is evident in his celebrated comment that “a deep slumber from the Lord” fell upon early Hebrew grammarians until “God opened the eyes of R. Judah” to the rules of weak letters (שפה ברורה, Lippmann 25b, González and Sáenz-Badillos 31*).

⁴⁸ Throughout this dissertation, I refer to roots with a ו or י as their middle consonant as “hollow roots,” although Ibn Ezra himself might have objected to this characterization. Ḥayyuj and Ibn Ezra disagree regarding the fundamental nature of these roots: Ḥayyuj views them as trilateral, just as he argued that roots with weak initial or final consonants are trilateral despite the weak letter's absence in some forms. Ibn Ezra differentiates between hollow roots and other weak roots, arguing that the others consist of three consonants, while hollow roots have only two true consonants. For a summary and analysis of their dispute, see Charlap (תורת הלשון של (ע"ר אב"ע 68-76).

⁴⁹ The oral commentary presents both views without expressing a preference, but it is clear from the standard commentary that Ibn Ezra considers Ḥayyuj's view to be etymologically correct, despite his comment that “the one who explained that” נָעוּר derives from the root נער (to growl) “thought a correct idea” (because the metaphor of a growling lion would have fit the verse if only it were etymologically correct).

3. **Zech. 10:6** – Ibn Ezra identifies the word **וְהוֹשִׁבוּתֵימ** as a composite verb, combining **וְהוֹשִׁיבוּתֵימ** (“I will return them”) and **וְהוֹשִׁבְתֵימ** (“I will settle them”). Ḥayyuj understands **וְהוֹשִׁבוּתֵימ** as simply being an irregular form of **וְהוֹשִׁבְתֵימ**, while Ibn Janah proposes the same interpretation as a composite word that Ibn Ezra adopts.

In addition to the case of **וְהוֹשִׁבוּתֵימ**, there are a small number of additional cases in which Ibn Ezra apparently disagrees with Ḥayyuj, despite not citing him by name:

4. **Zech. 4:7** – Ibn Ezra appears to maintain that the word **תְּשֹׁאוֹת** (“shouts” or “noise”) has the same etymology as **שֹׁאוֹן** (“tumult”).⁵⁰ Ḥayyuj derives the latter from the final-weak root **שׂאה** while implying that the former derives from the hollow root **שׂוא**, although he may believe that they have similar meanings.⁵¹
5. **Zech. 13:5** – Ḥayyuj adopts Ibn Saruk’s interpretation of **הִקְנִי** as “taught me to tend to livestock,” a denominal interpretation based on the noun **מִקְנֵה** (livestock). Ibn Ezra interprets **הִקְנִי** as “bequeathed [soil] to me.”
6. **Zech. 14:7** – Ḥayyuj appears to understand the phrase “neither day nor night” as indicating that God will miraculously create a new entity that is a mix of day and night. According to Ibn Ezra, however, the verse merely indicates that heavy clouds will make it difficult to discern whether it is daytime or nighttime.
7. **Zech. 14:20** – In explaining the etymology of **מְצִלוֹת**, Ḥayyuj, Ibn Janah, and Ibn Ezra all agree that it derives from the geminate root **צִלל** in Hebrew. However, the

⁵⁰ It is not clear from Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Zechariah that the two words share the same etymology (in addition to a common meaning), but his commentary to Isa. 22:2 does link them etymologically.

⁵¹ The text of Ḥayyuj’s entry for the root **שׂאה** varies greatly in different editions. Ibn Chiquitilia’s translation (Nutt 95-96) explicitly writes that **תְּשֹׁאוֹת** and **שֹׁאוֹן** share a common meaning (עניין), but each has a different root (עקר). However, the comments about **תְּשֹׁאוֹת** in Ibn Chiquitilia’s translation repeat themselves twice in three lines, such that his text has likely been corrupted. In both Ibn Ezra’s translation (Dukes 137) and Wated and Sivan’s critical text (293), Ḥayyuj asserts that **תְּשֹׁאוֹת** does not derive from the root **שׂאה** (as **שֹׁאוֹן** does), but he does not explicitly address the meaning of **תְּשֹׁאוֹת**.

Hebrew root צלל is a homonym with two Arabic cognates – ظلل (in causative stems: providing shelter or protection from the sun) and صرلل (making a sound; e.g., ring, tinkle). Based on their explanations of the meaning of מצלות, Ḥayyuj and Ibn Janah appear to understand it as a cognate of ظلل since it is something that the horses wore for protection (cf. Tanḥum). Ibn Ezra, by contrast, interprets מצלות as bells that would make noise as the animals walked, presumably viewing צלל in this instance as a cognate of صرلل

Although Ibn Ezra does not cite Ḥayyuj by name in our material, several of Ibn Ezra's comments appear to be based on Ḥayyuj's writings. It is difficult to quantify this influence, since Ḥayyuj is not the only possible source in many cases of agreement between Ḥayyuj and Ibn Ezra. For example, both Ḥayyuj and Ibn Ezra interpret the adjective עפה (describing the scroll in Zech. 5:1) as "flying." This widespread interpretation already appears in much earlier sources, such as Jonathan (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*), so Ḥayyuj was certainly not Ibn Ezra's only source for it. One wonders, however, whether the support of Ḥayyuj – whom Ibn Ezra greatly admired as a philologist – helped convince Ibn Ezra to prefer it over other interpretations (such as "folded").

Jonah (Marwan) Ibn Janah

Without question, the Spanish philologist Jonah Ibn Janah (Spain, ca. 990-1050) was one of the greatest influences on the grammatical portions of Ibn Ezra's commentary.⁵² Ibn Ezra cites him by name twice in our material:

⁵² For recent discussion of his exegetical methodology, see Cohen (*Opening the Gates of Interpretation* 57-66).

1. **Zech. 3:5** – “‘And I said’ (וַאֲמַר) – R. Marwan [Ibn Janah] said that it is instead of ‘He said’” (וַיֹּאמֶר). Ibn Ezra rejects this interpretation as part of his fundamental opposition to the exegetical method of substitution that Ibn Janah frequently employs.⁵³
2. **Zech. 7:14** – Ibn Ezra disputes Ibn Janah’s interpretation of the word וַאֲסַפְרָם, although due to the cryptic nature of Ibn Ezra’s comments, neither Ibn Ezra’s nor Ibn Janah’s view is entirely clear (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

In addition to these cases, there are several dozen instances in which Ibn Ezra appears to be interacting with Ibn Janah’s views, including a sizeable number of cases in which Ibn Ezra agrees with him,⁵⁴ a comparable number of cases in which they disagree,⁵⁵ and cases where Ibn Janah’s view is one of several that Ibn Ezra cites without expressing a preference for one

⁵³ See p. 26 above and note 194 below.

⁵⁴ For the clearest cases of agreement between Ibn Ezra and Ibn Janah, see Hag. 1:1 (the dual meaning of חָדָשׁ, but cf. Zech. 8:19), 1:14 (the vocalization of וַיִּעַר), 2:10 (the syntax of I Kings 6:1), and 2:12 (the meaning of וּמִשְׁתֵּי in Deut. 22:9); Zech. 1:8 (the meaning of שְׁרָקִים), 2:11 (the vocative הוּי), 3:9 (the transitivity of וּמִשְׁתֵּי), 4:12 (“gold” as a metaphor for pure oil), 5:11 (the composite vocalization of וְהִגִּיחָהּ), 6:3-7 (אֲמָצִים as a shade of red), 9:12 (the meaning of לְבַצְרוֹן), 10:6 (the composite vocalization of וְהוֹשִׁבוּתֵימָם), 11:5 (the vocalization of וַאֲעִשָׂה), 11:13 (the difference between יָקָר and יִקָּר), 12:2 (the proof-texts for the meaning of סָפָר), and 14:10 (the etymology of בָּזָאוּ in Isa. 18:2); and Mal. 2:17 (the syntactical function of the question, “Where is the God of justice?”) and 3:2 (the etymology of מְכַלְכֵּל). In many of these cases, their shared interpretation was also suggested by Saadiah, Dunash, Ibn Balaam, or – most often – Hayyuj, so it is unclear whether one should view them as Ibn Janah’s influence over Ibn Ezra or the influence of the broader Geonic-Andalusian philological tradition over him.

⁵⁵ For cases of clear disagreement, see Hag. 2:12 (the meaning of קָדְשָׁהּ in Deut. 23:18), 2:15 (the meaning of וּמְעַלָּה), 2:17 (the syntax of וַאֲזַיֵּן אֶתְכֶם אֵלַי), and 2:19 (the function of the prefix הַ in הַעֲוֹד); Zech. 1:12 (the contextual meaning of וַיִּעַן), 2:17 (the etymology of נָעוּר), 5:3 (the meaning of נִקְהָה), 5:8 (the referent of “that is Wickedness”), 5:11 (whether צִמְחוּתָגִי in Ps. 88:17 is composite), 9:15 (the syntactical function of “sling-stones”), 10:8 (the syntactical usage of כְּמוֹ), 11:13 (the contextual meaning of הַיִּצְרָר), 12:6 (the contextual meaning of אֶשׁ כִּכְיֹר), 13:7 (the meaning of הַצִּעֲרִים), 14:10 (the etymology of וַיִּרְאֶמָהּ), 14:16-17 (the syntax of הַלְמַלְךָ הַ), and possibly 14:20 (the etymology of מְצִלוֹת); Mal. 1:11 (how to justify God’s claim that Gentiles worship Him), 2:15 (the subject of יִבְגֵּד), and 3:7 (whether the prefix לְ of לְמִימֵי is meaningless). Each dispute is explained in the supercommentary to that verse. For purposes of this list, I am assuming that in cases where the standard and oral commentaries disagree, the standard commentary reflects Ibn Ezra’s own views more accurately than the oral commentary. In several of the aforementioned points of disagreement between Ibn Ezra and Ibn Janah, the oral commentary may accept Ibn Janah’s view, as I discuss below (pp. 112-114).

over another.⁵⁶ Unfortunately, it is difficult to quantify these cases in a precise way due to many of the same issues that have arisen in our discussions of Ibn Ezra's other sources, particularly the fact that many of Ibn Janah's interpretations also appear in other sources that Ibn Ezra knew. Thus, the many parallels between Ibn Ezra's and Ibn Janah's interpretations might be a reflection of the latter's influence on the overall tradition of medieval Spanish philological exegesis rather than direct influence on Ibn Ezra.

Judah Ibn Balaam

It is difficult to assess the extent of Ibn Balaam's influence on Ibn Ezra. Most of Ibn Balaam's commentary to Minor Prophets is lost, so it is only possible to examine the surviving fragments (published by Poznanski) and Ibn Balaam's grammatical writings. Ibn Ezra cites Ibn Balaam by name once, regarding the meaning of מְמַזְרֵר in Zech. 9:6, but his attribution of that interpretation to Ibn Balaam is likely erroneous (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). In several other cases where Ibn Ezra interprets a verse in the same manner as Ibn Balaam, the interpretations appear in earlier sources that heavily influenced Ibn Ezra, such as Ḥayyuj or Ibn Janah.⁵⁷ Hence, one cannot view Ibn Balaam as Ibn Ezra's primary source for those interpretations. Similarly, Ibn Ezra rejects several anonymous interpretations that appear in Ibn Balaam's writings but also appear in the works of Ḥayyuj and/or Ibn Janah.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ For example, Hag. 1:13 (the etymology of מְלֹאֲךָ), Zech. 2:16 (the transitivity of וְנָחַל), and Mal. 1:11 (the syntactic category of מְקַטֵּר). In other cases, Ibn Ezra partially agrees with Ibn Janah, such as regarding the phrase וְשִׁכְרַר הַבְּהֵמָה אֵינְנָה (“And profits from beasts were nothing”; Zech. 8:10). In that case, they agree that שִׁכְרַר is the referent of the feminine suffix of אֵינְנָה (cf. Ibn Chiquitilia's dissenting view that Ibn Ezra dismisses), but they disagree about how to reconcile the apparent gender disagreement between a masculine noun and a feminine pronominal suffix.

⁵⁷ See Hag. 1:13 (regarding the meaning of בְּמִלְאָכֹת), Zech. 1:8 (regarding the horses' colors), 2:16 (regarding the valency of וְנָחַל), 2:17 (regarding the meaning of נָעוּר), Mal. 1:10 (regarding the meaning of תְּאִירֵי) and 3:8 (regarding the meaning of קִבְּעִים). In the case of Hag. 1:13, Ibn Ezra's interpretation is so widespread that it is difficult to view any specific exegete as his source.

⁵⁸ See Zech. 3:5 (regarding the interpretation of נֶאֱמַר as a third-person verb) and 8:19 (regarding the meaning of חֲדָשׁ). In the case of Zech. 3:5, Ibn Ezra explicitly names Ibn Janah as his source.

Nevertheless, there are two instances in which Ibn Ezra adopts a view that appears to be unique to him and Ibn Balaam:

1. Ibn Balaam and Ibn Ezra both cite Ibn Chiquitilia's view that the "king" of Zech. 9:9 was Nehemiah, and they both reject this view on the grounds that Nehemiah was a governor rather than a king.
2. They both interpret the assertion that evildoers "have indeed done evil yet are built up; they have indeed dared God and escaped" (Mal. 3:15) as a false accusation, alleged by those who do not understand the ways of God.

One additional noteworthy point for comparison between Ibn Balaam and Ibn Ezra is their disapproval of Moses Ibn Chiquitilia's claims that hardly any prophecies are eschatological. Ibn Chiquitilia's and Ibn Ezra's respective attitudes toward historical and eschatological prophecy are the subject of a separate chapter of this dissertation, but it is sufficient for the present comparison between Ibn Ezra and Ibn Balaam to note that Ibn Ezra *does* consider the last three chapters of Zechariah to be eschatological and sharply criticizes Ibn Chiquitilia for claiming that these prophecies were already fulfilled.⁵⁹ Ibn Balaam similarly closes his commentary to Mal. 3:24 (partially translated into Hebrew by Tal, דרכי פרשנותו 184 n. 51) by attacking Ibn Chiquitilia for interpreting virtually all the prophecies in Minor Prophets as having already been fulfilled. However, a fundamental difference exists between Ibn Ezra's and Ibn Balaam's arguments against Ibn Chiquitilia. Ibn Balaam presents an ideological objection to Ibn Chiquitilia's method of interpretation, since it weakens the hearts of faithful Jews who long for a future redemption. By contrast, Ibn Ezra

⁵⁹ Ibn Ezra only mentions Ibn Chiquitilia by name in 13:1, but throughout those chapters, he criticizes interpretations that go hand-in-hand with Ibn Chiquitilia's interpretation of that verse.

limits his criticism to Ibn Chiquitilia's allegorization of prophecies that could be fulfilled in the future according to their literal meaning. In those cases, Ibn Ezra objects to allegorizing the prophecies in order to claim that they have already been fulfilled (as Ibn Chiquitilia does). Unlike Ibn Balaam, Ibn Ezra has no fundamental objection to reinterpreting a prophecy as having already been fulfilled even if the vast majority of earlier Jewish exegetes assumed the prophecy to be eschatological.⁶⁰

Rabbanite Exegetes

Ibn Ezra was influenced by several Geonic-Andalusin figures whose areas of knowledge extended beyond philology into other areas of exegesis.

Saadiyah Gaon

Saadiyah's name does not appear in Ibn Ezra's commentaries to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Nevertheless, studies have demonstrated in other contexts that – in addition to many explicit citations⁶¹ – Saadiyah frequently influenced Ibn Ezra even when Ibn Ezra does not mention his name.⁶² Several such examples occur in our material, each of which is discussed in my supercommentary to the relevant verses:

1. **Zech. 3:1** – Saadiyah – like Ibn Ezra – maintains that the “adversary” of Zech. 3:1 is a human who symbolizes the Jews' human enemies during that period.

⁶⁰ See Simon, און מלין תבהן, 314-315.

⁶¹ A search of Ibn Ezra's commentaries in the electronic version of the HaKeter Rabbinic Bible for terms like סעדיה or סעדיה גאון demonstrates that over the course of Ibn Ezra's biblical commentaries, he cites Saadiyah over 200 times. Melamed discusses many of these explicit citations (מפרשי המקרא 654-664).

⁶² Bromberg (השפעת רבינו סעדיה גאון) lists several hundred possible parallels between Saadiyah's and Ibn Ezra's interpretations of verses in the Pentateuch where Ibn Ezra does not cite Saadiyah by name. For a discussion of similar parallels in Ibn Ezra's commentary to Job, see Simon's observation (*Four Approaches*, 262 n. 28), based on Galliner (18-19). For examples of Ibn Ezra emulating Saadiyah's exegetical methodology, see Steiner (*A Biblical Translation in the Making* 32-44). For further discussion of Ibn Ezra's attitude toward Saadiyah, see Sáenz-Badillos (“Abraham Ibn Ezra and Sa'adia on Hebrew Grammar”) and Avishur.

2. **Zech. 3:7** – Saadiah interprets the promise that Joshua “will walk among these attendants” as a reward in the afterlife. Ibn Ezra’s view is not entirely clear but might reflect Saadiah’s influence (cf. my supercommentary to the oral commentary *ad loc.*).
3. **Zech. 12:1** – Ibn Ezra interprets the verse as alluding to the notion that man is a microcosm of the Universe, adding: “This matter requires a lengthy explanation.” While Ibn Ezra likely had other sources for the idea that man is a microcosm (e.g., Ibn Gabirol), the connection to this specific verse might have been influenced by Saadiah’s use of the same verse as evidence that the universe was created for the sake of mankind.
4. **Zech. 12-13 and Mal. 3:1** – In attempting to identify God’s “messenger” in Mal. 3:1, Ibn Ezra writes, “It is possible that he is the Messiah son of Joseph.” The identification of that “messenger” with the Messiah son of Joseph was suggested by Saadiah and later by Hayya Gaon.⁶³

Moreover, Saadiah likely influenced Ibn Ezra’s decision to interpret Zech. 12-13 as an eschatological vision in which the main protagonist is the Messiah son of Joseph. As my supercommentary to Zech. 12:1 discusses, this messianic character is barely alluded to in the Talmud, while the apocalyptic Book of Zerubbabel (which offers a detailed narrative of the Messiah son of Joseph) was viewed suspiciously by Ibn Ezra. So the fact that Saadiah’s eschatology includes the Messiah son of Joseph might have convinced Ibn Ezra to accept this character. On the other hand, Ibn Ezra offers no indication that he would accept Saadiah’s

⁶³ See references in my supercommentary to Zech. 12:1 and Mal. 3:1.

contention that the narrative of the Messiah son of Joseph is just one possible way in which the redemption might unfold.⁶⁴

- 5. Mal. 3:6** – Both Saadiah and Ibn Ezra interpret God’s statement, “I have not changed,” as a fundamental assertion that God does not undergo any changes.

In at least two cases, Saadiah and Ibn Ezra share interpretations that are so widespread that one cannot necessarily view Saadiah as the decisive influence on Ibn Ezra: the claim that Michal’s “sons” in II Sam. 21:8 are nephews whom she adopted (Hag. 1:1) and the interpretation of הוי as vocative in Zech. 2:10. In the former case, Saadiah and Ibn Ezra are both adopting an earlier midrashic tradition, while the latter interpretation is implied by Jonathan and subsequently endorsed by Ibn Janah.

In other cases, Ibn Ezra seems to disagree with Saadiah despite not mentioning him explicitly: the meaning of the root קדש in Deut. 22:9 and 23:18 (Hag. 2:12), the symbolism of “the top stone” (Zech. 4:7), the color of the horses in the fourth chariot (אֲמָצִי; Zech. 6:3), the transitivity of וְאֶסְפְּרָם (Zech. 7:13), the symbolism of the “scroll of remembrance” (Mal. 3:16), and perhaps the fate of Elijah (postscript to Mal. 3).⁶⁵ In none of these cases, however, does Ibn Ezra seem to be specifically attacking Saadiah. Rather, he adopts views that differ from those of many predecessors, including Saadiah.

In one final case of interest, Ibn Ezra implicitly rejects a view that he clearly associated with Saadiah, since he attributes it to Saadiah in other of his writings:

⁶⁴ Regarding this last aspect of Saadiah’s eschatology, see Sysling (“Saadya’s Portrayal of the Messiah ben Joseph”) and Schlossberg (הזיקה בין החזרה בתשובה לבין הגאולה במשנת רס"ג).

⁶⁵ This last case is less clear than the others due to two factors: 1) conflicting accounts of Saadiah’s view and 2) the possibility that Ibn Ezra maintained an esoteric view that differs from his words’ plain sense (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

6. **Zech. 1:10** – Ibn Ezra writes that the Satan of Job 1-2 is an angel, as if this fact is universally accepted. Elsewhere, however, he cites Saadiah as claiming that this character was a human adversary. Ibn Ezra implies that Saadiah himself knew that his view was untenable and was simply offering an interpretation that would be palatable to the masses who could not grasp the true essence of Satan (ההגנה, Oshri 82; cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

Moses Ibn Chiquitilia

Ibn Ezra cites Ibn Chiquitilia over 260 times in his biblical commentaries (Melammed, מפרשי המקרא 664).⁶⁶ Because Ibn Chiquitilia's exegesis is rooted in the Spanish philological tradition and a commitment to the plain sense of the text, it is not surprising that Ibn Ezra drew heavily upon it.⁶⁷ Ibn Ezra was also heavily influenced by Ibn Chiquitilia's historical approach to interpreting prophecy, as is discussed below (p. 123ff.). In our material, Ibn Ezra cites him explicitly six times:

1. **Hag. 1:1** – Ibn Ezra challenges Ibn Chiquitilia's view that the word חֵדָשׁ refers specifically to the start of a month, rather than the entire month.⁶⁸
2. **Hag. 2:9** – Ibn Chiquitilia is cited as explaining Haggai's promise that the Second Temple would be "greater" than the First Temple as a conditional promise that went unfulfilled because the people never merited its fulfilment. Ibn Ezra cites other explanations of how the Second Temple was "greater," and does not express a clear preference for any one of these views.

⁶⁶ For many examples, see Melammed (מפרשי המקרא 664-669).

⁶⁷ See, for example, Uriel Simon's observation regarding Ibn Ezra's use of Ibn Chiquitilia in his commentaries to Psalms (Simon, *Four Approaches* 158-159). For an overview of Ibn Chiquitilia as an exegete, see Maman, "The Flourishing Era of Jewish Exegesis in Spain" (in Sæbø 275-277).

⁶⁸ In Zech. 8:19, Ibn Ezra appears to adopt Ibn Chiquitilia's view regarding this word (cf. my supercommentary to both verses and pp. 51-53 below).

3. **Zech. 1:8** – Ibn Chiquitilia is cited as interpreting the word מַצְלָה as “a pool of water” and not as a proper noun. Ibn Ezra also cites another interpretation of מַצְלָה and does not express a preference for either view.
4. **Zech. 8:10** – In his discussion of the referent of the feminine pronominal suffix in the word אֵינָנָה, Ibn Ezra cites an interpretation from Ibn Chiquitilia that Ibn Ezra himself appears to reject.⁶⁹
5. **Zech. 9:9** – Both of Ibn Ezra’s commentaries reject Ibn Chiquitilia’s view that the “king” of Zech. 9:9 was Nehemiah.⁷⁰
6. **Zech. 13:1** – Ibn Ezra writes that Ibn Chiquitilia considers the fountain Jerusalem to be a metaphor, while Ibn Ezra himself interprets it literally. Ibn Ezra reiterates his opposition to allegorical interpretation of Zech. 13-14 in 14:7 and 14:21; presumably Ibn Chiquitilia was the source of all of these allegorical interpretations (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). This disagreement between Ibn Ezra and Ibn Chiquitilia relates to their respective views regarding whether these prophecies should be interpreted as historical or eschatological, as I discuss in a separate chapter (p. 123ff.).

Judah Halevi

Ibn Ezra knew Judah Halevi personally and cites him many times.⁷¹ In our material, Ibn Ezra cites him once by name (Zech. 8:6). According to Halevi, the prophecy that Jerusalem’s repopulation “shall also be wondrous (יִפְלֵא) in My eyes” should be understood as

⁶⁹ This dispute may depend upon a deeper difference of opinion between Ibn Ezra and Ibn Chiquitilia regarding the rules of gender agreement in Biblical Hebrew grammar; cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*

⁷⁰ See p. 32 above regarding Ibn Balaam’s objections to Ibn Chiquitilia’s interpretation of this prophecy. I elaborate on the debate surrounding this prophecy in this introduction’s chapter about historical and eschatological prophecy (p. 123ff.).

⁷¹ See Ben-Menahem (עזרא אבן עזרא 224-240) and Elyakim (הקשרים בין ריה"ל וראב"ע) for further discussion of Judah Halevi’s place in Ibn Ezra’s biblical exegesis.

a question: “*Shall it* also be impossible (אִפְּלֵא) in My eyes?” Ibn Ezra implies that Halevi was driven by theological considerations, as he could not accept a declarative sentence which might assert that something is “impossible” for God (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Interestingly, the oral commentary interprets Zech. 8:6 in the exact manner that the standard commentary attributes to Halevi, implying that Ibn Ezra initially accepted Halevi’s interpretation. However, in the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra deems this view “unnecessary” and instead proposes a theologically-sound way to read Zech. 8:6 as a declarative sentence.

In one other parallel, Ibn Ezra and Halevi both appear to agree that Elijah never died (cf. my supercommentary to Ibn Ezra’s postscript to Mal. 3). However, one could question the significance of this parallel, since they are both adopting a widespread view from earlier rabbinic literature, and Halevi’s discussion of this issue (*Kuzari* 1:115) is too terse to shed meaningful light on his understanding of Elijah’s disappearance in II Kings 2.

Karaite Sources

Scholars have long observed that Ibn Ezra has a complex relationship with Karaite exegesis. At times, he cites earlier Karaite exegetes by name – especially Yefet b. Eli and Jeshuah b. Judah – and accepts their interpretations.⁷² On the other hand, both of his introductions to the Pentateuch assail the Karaites’ legal methodology. He also polemicizes against many specific Karaite interpretations throughout his commentaries, sometimes explicitly citing their interpretations and sometimes attacking them implicitly.⁷³ The purpose

⁷² Regarding this phenomenon, see Melammed (מפרשי המקרא 676-678) and Zer (ראב"ע ופרשנות המקרא הקראית).

⁷³ For a list of Ibn Ezra’s explicit and implicit polemics against Karaite legal exegesis (in his commentaries to the Pentateuch only), see Weiss, אבן עזרא והקראים בהלכה.

of this chapter is to examine his relationship with Karaite exegesis to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

Daniel Al-Qumisi

I have found no evidence of Ibn Ezra being directly influenced by Daniel al-Qumisi's commentary to Minor Prophets. This lack of evidence supports the prevailing assumption among scholars that Ibn Ezra was not familiar with al-Qumisi (e.g., Simon, *בין המפרש לקוראיו*, 39).

Yefet b. Eli

Ibn Ezra cites Yefet b. Eli (10th century) more than any other Karaite exegete. Unfortunately, as of the time of this writing, Yefet's commentaries to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi remain unpublished. It was thus not possible to research the entirety of Yefet's commentary to this body of material. I am grateful, however, to Dr. Meirav Nadler-Akirav and Kees De Vreugd for sharing with me portions of early drafts of critical texts that they are currently preparing. Thanks to the texts that they shared with me, I was able to study Yefet's commentary to the first four chapters Zechariah and selections from the rest of Zechariah from De Vreugd's forthcoming critical edition, as well as selections of Yefet's commentary to Haggai and Malachi from Nadler-Akirav's forthcoming critical edition. I also accessed individual paragraphs of Yefet's commentaries that appear in other studies.⁷⁴ Although a more comprehensive comparison of Yefet and Ibn Ezra will be necessary once Yefet's complete commentaries are published, this sample was sufficient to make several observations that are discussed below.

⁷⁴ For example, Erder (הצומות בהלכה הקראית הקדומה) cites portions of Yefet's commentary to Zech. 7-8 that deal with fast days. Schlossberg (עיבוד מהמאה ה-16) cites portions of Yefet's translation and commentary to Malachi in order to compare them to a later adaptation of Yefet's translation.

Although some sections of Yefet's commentary contain anti-Rabbanite polemics that Ibn Ezra could not accept,⁷⁵ much of his commentary analyzes the text in a manner that is compatible with Ibn Ezra's own *peshat* methodology. Therefore, it is not surprising that Ibn Ezra cites many interpretations from Yefet, although scholars have observed that many of these citations are erroneous.⁷⁶ Indeed, in the books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, Ibn Ezra cites Yefet explicitly 11 times, but many of these citations are clearly inaccurate:

1. **Hag. 2:9** – Ibn Ezra cites Yefet as explaining that the Second Temple was “greater” than the First Temple in the sense that it stood for 420 years, whereas the First Temple stood for only 410 years. This interpretation is widespread in rabbinic literature, so its attribution to Yefet is likely erroneous (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
2. **Zech. 1:5-6** – Ibn Ezra cites a lengthy explanation of these verses from Yefet. The citation bears only a slight resemblance to Yefet's actual commentary, while differing from it in many key ways (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
3. **Zech. 1:8** – Ibn Ezra claims that Yefet interprets the word מַצְלָה as the proper name of a place called Metzullah rather than a common noun connoting deep waters. The attribution of this interpretation to Yefet is likely erroneous (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
4. **Zech. 1:9** – Ibn Ezra cites Yefet as equating “the angel who talked with” Zechariah with the man “who was standing among the myrtles.” This citation accurately represents Yefet's own commentary, although Ibn Ezra himself disagrees with it.

⁷⁵ Kees De Vreugd published several anti-Rabbanite polemics from Yefet's commentary to Zechariah (“Yefet ben ‘Eli's Commentary”).

⁷⁶ See, for example, Simon's supercommentary to Hos. 4:3 and Polliack and Schlossberg, פירוש יפת 95-96.

5. **Zech. 5:1** – Ibn Ezra cites Yefet as interpreting the “עֲפָה” scroll” as a scroll that was “spread open” rather than a “flying” or “folded” scroll.
6. **Zech. 7:2** – Ibn Ezra cites Yefet as interpreting “Regem-melech” as a title rather than a proper name. It is possible that Ibn Ezra himself agrees with this interpretation (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
7. **Zech. 8:23** – Ibn Ezra cites Yefet as interpreting the latter part of Ch. 8 as a messianic prophecy. Indeed, Yefet writes about 8:14-23, “These are the tidings containing the great things which Israel is awaiting in the time to come” (trans. Kees De Vreugd). Ibn Ezra himself disagrees with Yefet’s characterization of these verses.⁷⁷
8. **Zech. 11:3** – Ibn Ezra cites Yefet as interpreting, “For the Jordan is ravaged,” as referring to “Israelites who were beyond the Jordan [River].” Although Ibn Ezra suggests other ways to interpret this phrase, he adds that Yefet, “too, is correct in my view.”
9. **Zech. 13:7** – Ibn Ezra cites Yefet as interpreting הַצִּעֲרִים (“the little ones”) as young sheep. Ibn Ezra’s own understanding of this word is unclear, but he likely interprets הַצִּעֲרִים as “the tormenters” (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
10. **Mal. 2:6** – Ibn Ezra cites Yefet as applying Malachi’s description of the ideal priest (“Proper rulings were in his mouth...”) to Aaron. This interpretation does appear in Yefet’s commentary, but Ibn Ezra himself disagrees with it (see below p. 45).
11. **Mal. 2:12** – Ibn Ezra cites a cryptic interpretation of the phrase עָר וְעִנָּה from Yefet that does not appear to reflect Yefet’s own view (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

⁷⁷ See p. 56 below regarding the relationship between this disagreement and a larger debate between Rabbanites and Karaites.

The above citations of Yefet attest to the range of areas in which Ibn Ezra drew upon Yefet's commentary: Almost half of the interpretations address the meanings of difficult words, while others address the deeper meanings of allegories, as well as the question of whether prophecies were fulfilled in Zechariah's time or will only be fulfilled in the future. In none of these cases does Ibn Ezra attack Yefet's view with the biting language that he sometimes employs against those with whom he disagrees, nor does he overtly link his rejection of any of Yefet's views to the fact that Yefet was a Karaite (although the case of Zech. 8:23 may depend on Karaite-Rabbanite disagreements; see p. 56 below). The fact that several of these interpretations were apparently misattributed to Yefet means – on the one hand – that they attest to the high esteem in which Ibn Ezra held Yefet, such that Ibn Ezra associated many noteworthy interpretations with him. On the other hand, the proliferation of misattributed interpretations makes it difficult to gauge the extent to which Yefet's actual commentary influenced Ibn Ezra.

In addition to citing Yefet by name, Yefet may be Ibn Ezra's source for several interpretations which he presents without attribution:

1. **Hag. 1:11** – Both Yefet and Ibn Ezra appear to interpret the word **הָרֵב** as “drought” rather than “destruction” (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). However, most exegetes prefer “drought,” based on the context of that passage, and some witnesses of Jonathan's translation read **יובשא** (“dryness”). Hence, Ibn Ezra could have reached his interpretation on his own or under the influence of earlier sources than Yefet.
2. **Hag. 2:14** – According to Yefet, **הָעַם** refers to the entire nation, while **הַגִּי** alludes specifically to the priests. Ibn Ezra writes the reverse: “**So is this people (הַעַם)** – they are the priests – **and so is this nation (הַגִּי)** – they are Israel.” Since both Ibn Ezra

- and Yefet were concerned with the seeming redundancy in the use of both **הַקָּהָן** and **הַגִּבּוֹרִים** to refer to the same people, and earlier rabbinic exegetes do not interpret either word as referring exclusively to priests, Yefet likely inspired Ibn Ezra's attempt to distinguish between the synonyms (see p. 188 below).
3. **Zech. 1:5** – Ibn Ezra remarks regarding the “man” in Zechariah's vision: “This **man** was an angel, like ‘the man Gabriel’” (Dan. 9:21). Yefet cites the same proof-text to support the same argument.
 4. **Zech. 2:8** – Ibn Ezra derives from the description of a “young man” (**נֶעַר**) that “three prophets prophesied when they were young men: Zechariah, Samuel, and Jeremiah.” Yefet similarly infers from this description that Zechariah was too young to have seen the First Temple himself. Not all exegetes agree that **נֶעַר** means “young man” in this verse, and some exegetes even doubt whether word **נֶעַר** refers to Zechariah in this verse (see my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Hence, Yefet might have influenced Ibn Ezra to interpret that word as referring to Zechariah and indicating his young age.
 5. **Zech. 3:5** – Commenting on the sentence, “They placed the pure diadem on his head and clothed him in [priestly] garments,” Ibn Ezra argues that the events happened in the reverse order of how they were written: “A **pure diadem** had been placed **upon his head**, and they **had already clothed him in garments**.” Yefet, too, cites a view that Joshua was clothed in new garment *before* the diadem was placed upon his head.
 6. **Zech. 7:5** – Yefet and Ibn Ezra both interpret the phrase **כָּל עַם הָאָרֶץ** (“all the people of the land”) as referring to Jewish communities in both Jerusalem and Babylonia, rather than being limited to those Jews who lived in the same “land” as Zechariah. Most

other exegetes do not comment on this phrase, so Yefet likely inspired Ibn Ezra's comment.⁷⁸

As mentioned above, this list is based on a limited sampling of Yefet's commentary. But it suffices to demonstrate that Ibn Ezra frequently attributes interpretations to Yefet that were not his.⁷⁹ At the same time, Ibn Ezra also incorporated many of Yefet's actual interpretations without attribution. Moreover, when Ibn Ezra engages Yefet's interpretations (or interpretations that he misattributes to Yefet), he assesses them based on the merits of Yefet's position rather than summarily dismissing them as tainted by Karaism.

Jeshuah b. Judah

In the books of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, Ibn Ezra cites Jeshuah b. Judah (11th century) twice:⁸⁰

1. **Hag. 2:10** – Jeshuah maintains that “the ninth month” is counted from the first month of Darius' reign. Ibn Ezra dismisses this view, forcefully arguing that the Bible counts years – but not months – to the reigns of kings. Hence, “the ninth month” must necessarily be the month of Kislev – the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar year (which begins in Nisan).

⁷⁸ For Yefet, the interpretation of כָּל עַם הָאָרֶץ as the entire worldwide Jewish community is essential to his argument that the minor fasts were accepted by consensus and not by one specific sub-group of Jews.

⁷⁹ This phenomenon of Ibn Ezra's misattribution of sources has been observed by other scholars (cf. Simon's supercommentary to Hos. 4:3; Polliack and Schlossberg, פִּירוּשׁ יִפֶּת, 95-96). These errors probably resulted from the fact that Ibn Ezra wrote his commentaries during the last third of his life, while he was frequently relocating, and did not necessarily have access to texts that he studied dozens of years earlier in Spain. He therefore cited these interpretations from memory, sometimes forgetting an interpretation's nuances and/or its original source.

⁸⁰ Jeshua's commentary to Minor Prophets has not survived, so it is not possible to confirm whether Ibn Ezra is citing him accurately.

2. **Mal. 2:6** – Jeshuah interprets Malachi’s description of the ideal priest (“Proper rulings were in his mouth...”) as a description of Phineas. Ibn Ezra also cites Yefet as applying this description to Aaron, but Ibn Ezra himself views it as a description of how an ideal priest should behave, rather than describing a specific historical figure.

Neither of these cases bears an obvious connection to any fundamental disagreement between Rabbanites and Karaites. In the case of Mal. 2:6, both exegetes whom Ibn Ezra cites are Karaites, but their interpretations are attested in earlier rabbinic literature, too (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*), so it is unlikely that Ibn Ezra’s criticism of them derives from anti-Karaite animus.

As for Hag. 2:10, the question of whether the Bible ever counts months from the start of a king’s reign should not depend on whether one is a Rabbanite or Karaite. However, it is worth noting that the prophecies of Hag. 2:10 and 2:20 are both dated to the 24th day of the ninth month. If one interprets this date as the 24th of Kislev (as Ibn Ezra and most exegetes do), then it could potentially be interpreted as a biblical source for Hanukkah. This post-biblical holiday begins on the 25th of Kislev but was rejected by Karaites on the grounds that it lacks any basis in Scripture. Accordingly, a Karaite exegete could have had a polemical motivation for reinterpreting “the ninth month” in Hag. 2:10 and 2:20 so that it would not refer to Kislev. However, there is no indication from early rabbinic texts or medieval Rabbanite exegetes that they viewed Hag. 2:10 or 2:20 as a biblical source for Hanukkah.⁸¹

⁸¹ Regarding the surprising lack of attention to these verses in rabbinic discussions of Hanukkah, cf. Bin-Nun (יום ייסוד היכל ה').

The Case of Zech. 7-8 – Fast Days

In addition to cases in which a specific comment of Ibn Ezra engages Karaite exegesis, his entire discussion of the four fast days⁸² (Zech. 7-8) must be understood in light of differences between Karaite and Rabbanite practices.

The status of fast days in early Karaism has been discussed at length by Erder (הצומות (בהלכה הקראית הקדומה), who observes several differences between Rabbanite and Karaite approaches to the Four Fasts, as well as internal division among Karaites. We will list here those differences that are essential to understanding Ibn Ezra's comments:

1. **Dates** – On what dates must one fast? Are these dates chosen primarily to commemorate events from the First Temple's destruction or the Second Temple's destruction?
 - a. Rabbanites observe the fasts of the 4th and 5th months (Tammuz and Ab, respectively) on dates that mark the Second Temple's destruction – the 17th of Tammuz (when Jerusalem was breached according to rabbinic tradition) and the 9th of Ab (when the Temple was set ablaze). The other two fasts continued to commemorate First-Temple events: The fast of the 7th month was observed on the 3rd of Tishrei to commemorate Gedaliah's murder, while the fast of the 10th month was observed on the 10th of Tebeth and commemorated the start of the siege against First-Temple Jerusalem.⁸³

⁸² Throughout the rest of this chapter, I capitalize "Four Fasts" as a proper title, in accordance with the Hebrew phrase *צומות ד'* that is used as a legal term in medieval rabbinic texts. This term designates the Four Fasts as a specific group, frequently contrasted with the more stringent fast of Yom Kippur, the less stringent Fast of Esther, or spontaneous fasts that were observed in response to one-time events.

⁸³ The date of the fast of Tebeth was debated in the Talmud (*yTan* 4:5, *bR.H.* 18b), but Rabbanite Jews in subsequent generations adopted the view that it should be observed on the 10th of Tebeth, rather than the 5th.

- b. Karaites maintained that the fasts commemorated First-Temple calamities exclusively, so they observed the fast of the 4th month on the 9th of Tammuz, the fast of the 5th month on the 7th and 10th of Ab,⁸⁴ and the fast of the 10th month on the 10th of Tebeth.⁸⁵ They did not accept rabbinic traditions for the dates from the Second Temple's destruction.⁸⁶ They observed the fast of the 7th month on the 24th of Tishrei (see below).
- c. The fast of the 7th month was especially controversial. Two pieces of biblical evidence existed for a fast of mourning in Tishrei, but each source lacked some key information.⁸⁷ The story of Gedaliah's murder in Tishrei provided a reason to mourn but did not specify on which day of the month he was murdered. A second source – the later observance of a fast on the 24th of Tishrei in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah (Neh. 9:1) – documented an actual fast in the 7th month but did not link this observance with the First Temple's destruction. The Rabbanites maintained that the fast to which Zechariah alludes was observed on the 3rd of Tishrei and commemorated Gedaliah's murder, but they debated whether the murder occurred on the 3rd of Tishrei or

⁸⁴ In Ab, Karaites fasted on the 7th and 10th due to the contradiction between II Kings (25:8) and Jeremiah (52:12) regarding the date that the First Temple was burned down. Qirqisani suggested that the Babylonians set fire to the Temple twice. Yefet (Zech. 8:19) argued that we have no reliable tradition for the date of the Second Temple's destruction, since no prophets were around to record it. To him, the Rabbanites' tradition is unreliable, since rabbinic sources also attempt to tie the 9th of Av to the First Temple, which is against Scripture:

The Scriptures tell us however that it was on the seventh and on the tenth of the month. When we see them (the Rabbanites) contradicting the Scriptures, then we need not accept from them what they tell us, namely that the two Temples were burned on the Ninth of Ab (trans. Kees de Vreugd).

⁸⁵ Accordingly, the 10th of Tebeth was the only one of the four fasts that Karaites and Rabbanites observed on the same date.

⁸⁶ Yefet dismisses the Rabbanites' traditions of the 17th of Tammuz and 9th of Ab as unreliable (see note 84 above).

⁸⁷ The fast of Yom Kippur also takes place in Tishrei (on the 10th of the month), but Karaites and Rabbanites alike understood the fasts of Zech. 7-8 to be later fasts of mourning. Thus, they did not consider Yom Kippur (which is mandated in Lev. 23:26-33 and Num. 29:7-21) relevant to this prophecy.

the 1st of Tishrei.⁸⁸ Karaites fasted on the 24th of Tishrei, in accordance with Neh. 9:1, but they struggled to find a connection between that date and a historical event worthy of mourning for posterity.⁸⁹

2. By what authority are Jews obligated to fast on these days?
 - a. Rabbinic law typically distinguishes between “biblical” commandments (which ordinarily have some source in the Pentateuch) and rabbinical commandments that the Sages legislated. Within that system, the fast days are considered rabbinic legislation. However, the Talmud (bR.H. 19a) indicates that the Four Fasts enjoy a somewhat loftier status than other rabbinic enactments – at least inasmuch as people view them with greater severity – because they appear in the Prophets (i.e., our passage in Zechariah).⁹⁰ Fundamentally, though, these fasts are not considered “biblical,” because they have no source in the Pentateuch.
 - b. The Karaites debated the legal source for observing these fasts. Al-Qumisi (Zech. 7:5) interpreted several prophecies relating to fasts and/or mourning as a mandate to fast throughout the period of exile (Jer. 6:26, Joel 1:13-14, and Isa. 62:7). Qirqisani (Nemoy 916-917, 924) and Yefet (Zech. 8:19)

⁸⁸ They explained that if the latter possibility was correct, then the fast was pushed off from the murder’s historical anniversary so as to not conflict with the holiday of Rosh Hashanah.

⁸⁹ Yefet and Jacob b. Reuben cite a debate about whether the fast of Tishrei is for Gedaliah’s murder, for the group that fled to Egypt after the First Temple’s destruction, or for the final exile of Jer. 52:30; Yefet leans toward this last possibility. Levi b. Yefet also raises the possibility that the 24th of Tishrei was instituted as a fast at the end of the series of holidays in Tishrei in order to mourn the absence of the Temple’s rituals on these holidays (ספר מצוות, “Sabbath and Festivals” 17:7). By linking Neh. 9:1 to Zechariah’s “fast of the seventh month,” Karaites had evidence that the fasts were observed while the Second Temple was standing (cf. Erder, *ibid.* 525 n. 82).

⁹⁰ The Talmud terms this loftier status דברי קבלה (“words of the received tradition”), which it ranks below “words of the Torah” but above other enactments that were legislated by “words of the scribes” (דברי סופרים). The context of the Talmud’s discussion is the severity with which the masses treat holidays that appear in the Pentateuch as opposed to holidays that were added by later sages. The Talmud argues that the masses view the Fast of Gedaliah as more severe than other rabbinically-ordained special days because it is rooted in דברי קבלה, meaning that it is attested in Prophets.

maintained that the Four Fasts are binding by virtue of being accepted by a consensus of the entire Jewish people. Qirqisani observed that Scripture attests to the practice of adopting fasts not only in Zech. 7-8 but also in I Sam. 31:13, regarding the men of Jabesh-gilead⁹¹.

3. Did Zechariah respond that they should fast or should not fast during the Second Temple?
 - a. The Talmud does not fully address how the fast days were marked while the Second Temple was standing, but one passage (bR.H. 18b-19a) strongly implies that the fasts were observed as days of celebration during the Second Temple Period, and that is Ibn Ezra's assumption.⁹²
 - b. Erder notes that the early Ananites also maintained that the obligation to fast was canceled with the Temple's reconstruction. However, subsequent Karaite leaders argued that Zechariah intended for the fasts to continue until the full

⁹¹ Regarding the precise meaning of Qirqisani's terminology, see Erder (*ibid.* 509 n. 6).

⁹² Two phrases in this lengthy passage indicate that the Jews did not fast while the Temple was standing. First, the Talmud asserts that in times of "peace" (שלום) the Four Fasts are celebrated as days of "joy and gladness," while they are mandatory fasts of mourning in times of persecution. The Talmud does not elaborate on the definition of "peace" for these purposes, but R. Ḥannanel b. Ḥushiel's commentary *ad loc.* interprets it as "as long as the Temple is standing" (כל זמן שבית המקדש קיים). Other medieval commentaries disagree with him and interpret "peace" in other ways (e.g., Rashi s.v. שיש שלום). But R. Ḥannanel's commentary would have been the primary commentary studied in Muslim Spain where Ibn Ezra was educated.

Second, later in the same passage, the Talmud proceeds to discuss events that fall out on the 3rd of Tishrei (including the Fast of Gedaliah). In that discussion, the Talmud implies that – in accordance with Zech. 8:19 – the 3rd of Tishrei was a festive day as long as the Second Temple stood. Hence, even those medieval commentaries who disagree with R. Ḥannanel's definition of "peace" acknowledge that Jews did not fast during the Second Temple Period (cf. Rashi, bR.H. 19a s.v. ותפוק ליה). Presumably, if the Fast of Gedaliah was a festive day at that time, then so were the rest of the Four Fasts.

However, Maimonides (commentary to mR.H. 1:3) writes that Jews continued to fast on the 9th of Ab during the Second Temple despite not being obligated to fast on the other three dates. His view has generated much discussion among later rabbinic scholars, who assumed that none of the fasts were mandatory during that period. [For a summary of rabbinic analysis of this topic, see Ovadia Yossef, שו"ת יביע אומר (Jerusalem, 1956-1993) vol. 1 no. 33.] Most likely, it would not have occurred to Ibn Ezra to distinguish between the 9th of Ab and the other three fasts in the way that Maimonides subsequently does. Ibn Ezra presumably believes – like most medieval commentators on the Talmud – that Zechariah 8:19 teaches that the Four Fasts *all* became days of "joy and gladness" with the Second Temple's construction.

redemption.⁹³ Indeed, Yefet (Est. 4:17, Wechsler 239-240) goes so far as to claim that the Jews' near annihilation by Haman was divine retribution for their abandonment (following Cyrus' declaration) of fasts and mourning practices over the First Temple's destruction!

In light of this background, it is possible to appreciate the polemical nature of Ibn Ezra's commentary to Zech. 7-8. Regarding the fasts' dates, he acknowledges that Zechariah is alluding to the First-Temple dates in Tammuz and Ab, but promptly adds that the fasts are now observed on the Second-Temple dates:

It mentions this fast day because the Temple was burned down on the tenth [day] of **the fifth month**. Let there not be any doubt in your heart because you find that it was burned down on the seventh [day] of the [fifth] month, because the meaning is: Its edges were burned. Jerusalem was destroyed for the second time, in the days of Titus, on the ninth of Ab, and we fast on account of that second destruction (7:3).

When addressing the question of whether the First Temple was destroyed on the 7th or 10th of Ab, he insists that "there not be any doubt in your heart," perhaps mocking the Karaites who fast on both days due to their doubt. Not surprisingly, he downplays the significance of the 7th of Ab and treats the 10th of Ab as the primary day of the First Temple's destruction.⁹⁴ By emphasizing the 10th of Ab rather than the 7th, he highlights the date that also has significance in the rabbinic tradition as the date when the Second Temple's

⁹³ Qirqisani (Nemoy 917), Hadassi (אשכל הכפר) alph. 243).

⁹⁴ Ibn Ezra reiterates that this fast was originally observed on the tenth of Ab when it arises again later in Zechariah (8:19).

destruction was completed. At the same time, Ibn Ezra's commitment to *peshat* did not permit him to uphold a rabbinic tradition that attributes a meaningful role to the 9th of Ab during the First Temple's destruction.⁹⁵

As for the fast of the 7th month, the sheer length of Ibn Ezra's discussion of it shows his determination to thoroughly refute the Karaite position.

The fast of the seventh month – No number is written for the day of the month. The heretics said that it is the day that they fasted at the end of the Feast of Booths, which is written in Ezra (=Neh. 9:1). But they err, because [the nation] fasted then due to “the trespass of those who had returned from exile” (Ezra 9:4), but it is not written that any evil befell Israel in the seventh month except for the matter of Gedaliah. [Regarding Gedaliah, it] is written “in the seventh month” (II Kings 25:25, Jer. 41:1). Since it does not mention the day of the month, it is possible that [Gedaliah's assassination] happened at the start of the month, when the moon is new (חִדּוּשׁ), like “new moon (שָׁבָעַת) and Sabbath” (Isa. 1:13) [and], “On the third new moon (שָׁבָעַת) after the Israelites had gone forth [from the land of Egypt, on that very day, they entered the wilderness of Sinai]” (Exod. 19:1). As for when Scripture states “on the first of the month” (בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ), it is said for emphasis, that the listener should not entertain the thought that it is not the first day. Indeed, Scripture [states]: “Your new moons (חֲדָשֵׁיכֶם) and your appointed feasts” (Isa. 1:14).

⁹⁵ “On the seventh [of Ab], Gentiles entered the Temple, and they ate and damaged it on the seventh and eighth; on the ninth, close to nightfall, they ignited the fire, and it continued to burn throughout the [tenth] day” (bTan. 29a). Ibn Ezra essentially conceded the correctness of Yefet's argument (n. 84 above) as it pertains to the First Temple. However, when he discusses the fasts' dates again (8:19), he makes some attempt to associate the 9th of Ab with the First Temple: “Jerusalem was conquered the second time on the ninth day of Ab, and the First Temple was also burning on [the ninth, so] they established” the fast on the 9th.

And there can be no objection from the word “in the beginnings of your new moons” (וּבִרְאשֵׁי הַחֲדָשִׁים; Num. 28:11), because they are the new moons of Nisan, and it is [further] written there: “[That shall be] the monthly (חֲדָשׁ בְּחֲדָשׁוֹ) burnt offering [for each new moon of the year]” (Num. 28:14). But we will accept the meaning of “in the day of your gladness, and in your set feasts, and in the beginnings of your months” (וּבִרְאשֵׁי חֲדָשֵׁיכֶם; Num. 10:10) from the oral tradition. Hence, Gedaliah was killed on Rosh Hashanah; therefore they established [the fast] on the third day. Alternatively, we received thus from the mouths of our holy fathers.

The polemical nature of Ibn Ezra’s attack against “the heretics” is quite explicit. His essential argument can be reduced to the following points:

- The narrative in Neh. 9 bears no relevance to the fasts in Zech. 7-8, because the former was a one-time fast that was called to address a timely crisis as opposed to the Four Fasts that are observed for posterity to commemorate historical events.
- The only tragic event related to the First Temple’s destruction that clearly transpired in the seventh month is Gedaliah’s murder.
- One could argue that Gedaliah’s murder has a specific date in Scripture by accepting that the word חֲדָשׁ can refer specifically to the first of the month. Such an interpretation supports the Rabbanite practice of fasting on the 3rd of Tishrei, since the Sages would have delayed the fast in order to not conflict with Rosh Hashanah on the 1st of Tishrei.
- If one does not accept the aforementioned interpretation of חֲדָשׁ, then the date of Gedaliah’s assassination must have been transmitted via a reliable oral tradition.

Clearly, Ibn Ezra's argument carries more weight in the context of an anti-Karaite polemic if one accepts the interpretation of שָׁנָה that would anchor the assassination's precise date in Scripture. Perhaps for that reason, Ibn Ezra presents this view favorably and seeks to neutralize verses that seemingly undermine it. In other writings of his, he attributes this interpretation of שָׁנָה to Ibn Chiquitilia and does not always present it favorably.⁹⁶

Regarding the authority upon which the obligation to fast rests, Ibn Ezra was naturally committed to the rabbinic view that these fasts were not "biblical" in the sense of being anchored in the Pentateuch. However, unlike the passage in the Talmud (bR.H. 18b-19a) – which highlights that these fasts *are* mentioned in Prophets (cf. note 90 above) – Ibn Ezra seems eager to downplay the authority of these fasts. In particular, he stresses that no prophet formally commanded the people to fast. Although the prophet Zechariah was consulted about the fasts, he explains:

The priests did not know how to respond because this fast is not written in the Torah, but rather they accepted it upon themselves when they saw the First Temple's destruction.⁹⁷

Similarly, Ibn Ezra interprets the question, "Did you fast for Me" (7:5), as: "[Did] you fast on My account' or 'in My honor,' for I did not command you to fast?" And God's reference to prophets (7:7) is understood by Ibn Ezra to contrast the fasts with other things that God *did*

⁹⁶ See my supercommentary to Hag. 1:1. Ibn Ezra sounds less supportive of Ibn Chiquitilia's interpretation of שָׁנָה in his commentaries to Exod. 12:2 and Hag. 1:1. However, Ibn Ezra presents the interpretation in a positive light in Num. 28:11 and Exod. 19:1, so it is not clear that his enthusiasm for this interpretation in our case is purely a function of his polemical agenda.

⁹⁷ Contrast Ibn Ezra's comments with Maimonides (*Laws of Fasts* 5:4), who introduces the Four Fasts as follows: וארבעת ימי הצומות האלו הרי הן מפורשין בקבלה ("These four fast days are explicit in the received tradition"), invoking the Talmud's term קבלה for the prophetic tradition.

command via His prophets: “**Have I not commanded words exclusively through the prophets?** So which one prophesied at My behest to fast?”

By repeatedly emphasizing that these fasts were accepted by the people and not ordained by God or His prophets, Ibn Ezra certainly would have rejected those Karaite interpretations that saw the Four Fasts as mandated by the prophets (p. 48 above). Interestingly, his view is not that different from Yefet, who compares both the Four Fasts and the observance of Purim to the family custom of Jonadab b. Rechab (Jer. 35:6-7, Wendkos 193-194).⁹⁸ However, unlike Yefet, Ibn Ezra argues that the phrase “the obligation of the fasts with their lamentations” (Est. 9:31) represents a source in Scripture for drawing a parallel between the Four Fasts and Purim as observances that were accepted by the Jewish people. Ibn Ezra makes this assertion not only in both his commentaries to Esther but also as a digression in his commentary to Zech. 8:19:

But Scripture does not mention the Fast of Esther – although the time of Ahasuerus had already passed – because the establishment of the fast is not written in the Scroll [of Esther], since all of Israel fasted for three days in Nisan. As for the words of Scripture “the obligation of the fasts with their lamentations” (Est. 9:31), its explanation is not as many people think, but [rather] this is its explanation: The Jews undertook and accepted the days of Purim upon themselves (cf. Est. 9:27,30), to rejoice on them, even though the prophets did not command them [to do so]. Rather, they – the children – are

⁹⁸ This passage is translated into English in Wechsler’s supercommentary to Esther Est. 9:27 (305 n. 692). Indeed, Yefet (Est. 9:31, Wechsler 311-312) advocates for celebrating Purim on the 14th and 15th of Adar and fasting on the 13th of Adar (when the Rabbanites also had the custom to fast), which was not the prevalent Karaite custom (see below).

obligated to do what their fathers accepted, “just as they have accepted for themselves the obligation of the fasts” (cf. Est. 9:31) – these four aforementioned [fasts] – which were not from the word of a prophet.

As I discuss in my supercommentary, some Rabbinic sources view Est. 9:31 as alluding to the Fast of Esther that they observed on the 13th of Adar (cf. First, “The Origin of Ta‘anit Esther”), so it is possible that Ibn Ezra is criticizing some of his Rabbanite peers for misinterpreting the verse. But in addition to criticizing a rabbinic interpretation which did not conform to his understanding of *peshat*, Ibn Ezra might also be criticizing those Ananites or Karaites who sought to derive an obligatory series of fasts from that phrase in Est. 9:31. Based on that phrase, Ananites fasted on the 14th and 15th of Adar and held a 70-day fast that concluded on the 23rd of Sivan.⁹⁹ Although Karaite leaders subsequently rejected these Ananite fasts,¹⁰⁰ Saadiah (Est. 9:23) polemicized against them in his commentary to Esther, including an attack against Anan’s claim that the acceptance of Purim was not binding since it originated with a minority of Jews (the Jews of Susa).¹⁰¹ Unlike Saadiah’s time, the Ananites

⁹⁹ Anan b. David required fasting for 70 days from the 13th of Nisan to the 23rd of Sivan and on both days of Purim, the 14th and 15th of Adar (Harkavy, *מספרי המצות* 40, 130, 149, 157, and 164). For discussion of these fasts, see Erder (*הצומות בהלכה הקראית הקדומה*) 528-534).

¹⁰⁰ See Levi b. Yefet (*ספר מצוות*, “Sabbath and Festivals” 17:9) in addition to sources cited by Erder, *ibid*.

¹⁰¹ See Wechsler (“Innovative Aspects” 4-5). Saadiah adduced from Est. 9:23 “that it is incumbent on the rest of the (Jewish) people to accept a tradition from some of the people if (the latter) have reliably transmitted it to (the former), for the residents of Susa constituted only a small portion of the (Jewish) people. So too with regard to every prophetic revelation disclosed during the Exile—(i.e.,) the prophetic revelation of Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, and the narratives of Daniel, and the narratives of Ezra, and what was recorded in Chronicles, some of which was disclosed in the land of Iraq, and some of it in the Land of Israel, and some of which was reliably transmitted only by a small portion of the (Jewish) people to the rest of them and it was incumbent on the rest of them to accept it, and so they accepted it. *This is one of the strongest refutations of those who oppose the rabbinic sages of blessed memory, saying that it is not incumbent to accept any tradition other than what has been reliably transmitted by the people as a whole*” (trans. Wechsler 396; emphasis added).

were no longer an active sect by Ibn Ezra's time,¹⁰² but he might have nevertheless been inspired by Saadiah's comments to attack those who utilize Est. 9:31 in order to claim that Purim is a fast rather than a festival. Through his interpretation of "the obligation of the fasts with their lamentations," Ibn Ezra removes this phrase from any discussion of these Ananite fasts by asserting that "the fasts" in this verse have nothing to do with any fast in the Purim narrative or its later commemoration. Moreover, by drawing a parallel between the Four Fastes and the establishment of Purim as events that derive from the same authority, he elevates Purim to the same legal status as fast days which Karaites attributed to such an authoritative tradition that they were not suspended when the Second Temple was rebuilt.

One final element of Ibn Ezra's commentary to Zech. 7-8 with polemical overtones is his citation and rejection of Yefet regarding the closing prophecy of Ch. 8 (above p. 41). Yefet interprets this prophecy as messianic "tidings containing the great things which Israel is awaiting" (trans. Kees De Vreugd). Ibn Ezra himself disagrees with Yefet's characterization of these verses: "Yefet said that this prophecy is [intended] for the future, but the correct [interpretation] is that it is connected" (8:23).¹⁰³ Their disagreement seemingly corresponds to the fundamental dispute

¹⁰² "[Ananites] remained few in number (in Iraq, Syria and Spain). They seem to have disappeared some time during the 11th century" (Lasker, Daniel J., et al. "Karaites." *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, edited by Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 2nd ed., vol. 11, Macmillan Reference USA, 2007, pp. 785-802. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, yulib002.mc.yu.edu%3A8443%2Flogin%3Furl%3Dhttp%3A%2F%2Fgo.galegroup.com%2Fps%2Ffi.do%3Fp%3DGVRL%26sw%3Dw%26u%3Dnysl_me_yeshival%26v%3D2.1%26id%3DGALE%257CCX2587510743%26it%3Dr%26asid%3D7e3201174f4aa5c662fa5bf5d253e9d8. Accessed 25 July 2017).

¹⁰³ I am assuming that this comment is Ibn Ezra's final comment to Ch. 8 and refers backward to the previous several verses. Because manuscripts of Ibn Ezra's commentary do not contain chapter divisions, this comment could theoretically address the opening verses of Ch. 9 rather than the closing verses of Ch. 8. If this comment relates to the beginning of Ch. 9, then Ibn Ezra's debate with Yefet would revolve around the vision of Hadrach and Damascus (9:1-8) and be irrelevant to our discussion. However, he comments at the end of 9:1: "This prophecy, too, is connected to the Second Temple." Presumably, that latter comment indicates that his initial

between Rabbanites and Karaites regarding the status of the fasts while the Second Temple was standing. As a Karaite, Yefet must maintain that the prophecy that the fast days “shall be occasions for joy and gladness” has not yet been fulfilled, whereas Ibn Ezra believes that these fast days were days of “joy and gladness” in Zechariah’s own time.

Conclusion

In sum, throughout Ibn Ezra’s commentary to our material, he engages with Karaite exegetes by citing their interpretations, sometimes by name and sometimes without attribution. In general, he assesses their views in a matter-of-fact way: accepting, rejecting, or appropriating them purely on the basis of whether they meet his standards for *peshat*. Chapters 7-8 of Zechariah, however, deviate from this characterization. The discrepancies between Karaite and Rabbanite perspectives on the Four Fasts prompted Ibn Ezra to write at greater length than the rest of his commentary in order to defend Rabbanite views regarding the fasts’ dates and their status in Zechariah’s time.

Interestingly, the polemical tone and content in Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Zech. 7-8 are completely lacking from the oral commentary. One wonders whether this fact indicates that Ibn Ezra did not teach this material to his student, perhaps

dispute with Yefet addresses the final verses of Ch. 8, which Ibn Ezra maintained were “connected” to Zechariah’s prophecies to his own generation regarding the fast days. He then adds at the end of 9:1 that the opening prophecy of Ch. 9, “*too*, is connected to the Second Temple.”

thinking that his student in Italy would be unfamiliar with the Karaite understandings of these fasts.¹⁰⁴

French Exegetes: Rashi & Joseph Kara

Ibn Ezra makes for an interesting case study in the relationship between Spanish and French exegesis due to his unusual experience as a product of Muslim Spain who traveled through France starting in his 50's. This unique biography begs the question of how open Ibn Ezra was to the new exegetical approaches that he encountered in France, as well as the extent to which French exegetes were influenced by their exposure to his Spanish *peshat* tradition.

Not surprisingly, therefore, Ibn Ezra's relationship with French *peshat* exegesis has been the subject of much scholarly debate.¹⁰⁵ Ibn Ezra's limited explicit citations of Rashi throughout his biblical commentaries and his denigration of Rashi in a celebrated passage of שפה ברורה (Lippmann 5a, González and Sáenz-Badillos 4*) prompted Simon to initially argue that he treated Rashi's exegesis as insufficiently serious for him to analyze and respond to (40 ראב"ע בין המפרש לקוראיו). Aharon Mondschein has countered that Ibn Ezra in fact

¹⁰⁴ Alternatively, it is possible that Ibn Ezra taught his student about the divergent Rabbanite and Karaite positions, but the student – to whom this context might have been unfamiliar – either did not understand this material or did not deem it important enough to include in the oral commentary.

¹⁰⁵ My study does not address Ibn Ezra's relationship with two of his great contemporaries in France, Rashbam and Joseph Bekhor Shor, since neither of them has an extant commentary to Minor Prophets. Regarding the relationship between Ibn Ezra and Rashbam, see Simon (לדרכו הפרשנית), Margaliyot (היחס), Lockshin, Mondschein (לשאלת היחס), Mardler (תגובתו של ראב"ע), Kislev ("The Relationship" and פירושיהם), and Jacobs. Regarding possible influence between Ibn Ezra and Joseph Bekhor Shor, see Nevo, היחס בין פירושי התורה).

In the case of Rashbam, however, it has been suggested that he authored a lost commentary to Prophets, based on citations of Rashbam in Abraham b. Azriel's ערוגת הבשם and some medieval manuscripts (cf. Poznanski, מבווא על חכמי צרפת מפרשי המקרא, XL; Urbach, ערוגת הבשם II:17 n. 6, II:242 n. 9, and especially IV:153-154). Recently, the website AlHatorah.org has attempted to collect these citations and thus piece together as much as possible of his commentary to Prophets in an online collection entitled רשב"ם המשוחזר ("Reconstructed Rashbam"; <http://mg.alhatorah.org/Editions>). As more passages are added to this reconstructed commentary, a new study could shed additional light on the issue of mutual influence between Rashbam and Ibn Ezra.

responds anonymously to Rashi's exegesis on many occasions (ואין ספרייתו של ראב"ע) and (בספריו פשט).¹⁰⁶ Mondschein (האם הכיר ראב"ע) has further argued that Ibn Ezra had some familiarity with Joseph Kara's exegesis, but little direct evidence exists for this claim.¹⁰⁷ In our material, Ibn Ezra never cites Rashi or Joseph Kara by name, which raises the possibility that he never saw their commentaries to these books. Nevertheless, his introduction to Zechariah recounts:

I saw books by sages who were in France, who explained the visions that Zechariah saw retrospectively, referring to events that had already occurred by this prophet's time, like Judah being exiled to Babylon due to "the ephah" (5:6); as for the "two staffs" (11:7), [the French sages] explained that they are Israel and Judah.

Although he never identifies these French sages, the content that he attributes to them could fit either Rashi's or Joseph Kara's commentary to those passages. Alternatively, given that Ibn Ezra is objecting to the fundamental approach of those who interpret Zechariah's prophecies retrospectively, he might have intended both Rashi and Joseph Kara – perhaps in addition to commentators who are no longer known – in a deliberate generalization, "books by sages who were in France."

¹⁰⁶ In his later writings, Simon has moved closer to Mondschein's position on this issue; cf. Simon (אין מלין תבהן) 46 n. 56) and Mondschein (על ספרו של אוריאל סימון) (302-303).

¹⁰⁷ Since the number of parallels between them is small, Mondschein admits that Ibn Ezra might not have possessed complete written texts of Kara's commentaries but likely learned orally about individual interpretations. Given the small number of examples that Mondschein marshals, his case for Joseph Kara's influence seems to derive primarily from the logical argument that Joseph Kara's commentaries to Bible and liturgy must have been known to any scholar who traveled throughout France in the three or four decades immediately after Kara's death (as Ibn Ezra did).

In order to establish that an Ibn Ezra knew a specific interpretation of Rashi or Joseph Kara, it must meet two criteria:

1. It must not appear in earlier sources to which Ibn Ezra had access. This criterion eliminates any interpretations that the French exegetes adopted from Jonathan, the Talmud or midrashic literature, or earlier grammarians to which they had access (e.g., Ibn Saruk).¹⁰⁸ Moreover, even when the French exegetes suggest an interpretation that they did not borrow from earlier sources, they cannot be considered Ibn Ezra's source if that same interpretation appears in works from Muslim lands that were unknown in France but were known to Ibn Ezra (e.g., Karaite works, Spanish grammarians, other Judeo-Arabic texts), since Ibn Ezra presumably adopted the interpretation from those sources.
2. Even if Ibn Ezra and the French exegetes share an interpretation that was not suggested by any of their predecessors, one cannot assume that they influenced Ibn Ezra if the interpretation appears straightforward enough that each exegete could have plausibly developed it independently. For example, if Ibn Ezra cites the same proof-text as Rashi or Joseph Kara for the meaning of a rare word, they might have independently chosen the best proof-text from a limited number of relevant verses.

¹⁰⁸ For example, both commentaries to Zech. 5:1 reject the view of "some exegetes" (יש מפרשים) who interpret the adjective עָפָה (describing the scroll) as "folded" rather than "flying." The interpretation of "folded" is cited by both Rashi and Kara, but it already appears in the Talmud (bEr. 21a). Hence, this case does not prove that Ibn Ezra saw Rashi's or Kara's commentary. Admittedly, one might argue that Ibn Ezra does not automatically cite every fanciful midrashic interpretation, so his decision to cite this interpretation and to attribute it to "some exegetes" implies that he saw the view appear in medieval exegesis. Nevertheless, the interpretation of "folded" is also cited by Ibn Janah (השרשים 359). Hence, Ibn Ezra's decision to cite and reject this view – rather than ignoring it – can easily be attributed to its presence in Ibn Janah's writings and cannot prove that he was familiar with French exegesis.

With those qualifications in mind, I have observed a small number cases that warrant consideration, beginning with parallels between Ibn Ezra and Rashi or both French exegetes and continuing with parallels between Ibn Ezra and Joseph Kara (starting with no. 10):

1. **Zech. 4:7** – Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Ibn Ezra all agree that the “top stone” is the stone of the plumb line that is mentioned three verses later (4:10). The oral commentary interprets the “top stone” differently (see below, p. 116) – as do Yefet and Jonathan¹⁰⁹ – so it is tempting to think that exposure to Rashi and/or Kara upon Ibn Ezra’s arrival in France prompted him to change his mind and reject the oral commentary’s interpretation. However, connecting the stone of 4:7 with the stone of 4:10 seems like an interpretation that multiple exegetes could have reached independently of one another. Moreover, closer examination reveals a significant difference between the French exegetes and Ibn Ezra: He further equates the “top stone” of 4:7 with the “single stone with seven eyes” in 3:9, while Rashi and Kara interpret that stone as the cornerstone from the failed attempt to rebuild the Temple during Cyrus’ reign.
2. **Zech. 6:1** – Ibn Ezra writes that every chariot has four horses, apparently based on I Kings 10:29 (cf. my supercommentary). Rashi (*ad loc.* and II Sam. 8:4) interprets I Kings 10:29 the same way. However, it is possible that they both reached this interpretation independently. Moreover, Rashi does not present this interpretation in his commentary to Zechariah, so even if Ibn Ezra adopted this interpretation from him, Ibn Ezra would have seen it in Rashi to Samuel or Kings, not to Zechariah.

¹⁰⁹ Jonathan and Yefet maintain that the “top stone” alludes to the Messiah.

On the same verse, Rashi and Ibn Ezra both explain that the mountains were made of copper because copper symbolizes firmness. They may have reached this interpretation independently, as they agree about little else regarding the vision's meaning.

3. **Zech. 6:14** – Rashi and Ibn Ezra agree that Helem is another name for Heldai. This interpretation is relatively obvious, because both names appear alongside Tobijah and Jedaiah as the third member of a group.
4. **Zech. 7:5** – Rashi interprets צַמְתָּנִי as: “You fasted in my honor” (לְכַבּוֹדִי). Ibn Ezra suggests the exact same word, לְכַבּוֹדִי, as one possible interpretation.
5. **Zech. 9:12** – The oral commentary interprets the word מִשְׁנָה as “double,” while the standard commentary interprets מִשְׁנָה as “second,” meaning that God will send a “second announcer” (מְגִיד מִשְׁנָה) with more good tidings. The latter interpretation bears some similarity to Rashi and Joseph Kara, who also interpret מִשְׁנָה as “second,” but not enough to establish influence (see note 187 below).
6. **Zech. 10:5** – Rashi and the oral commentary cite the same proof-text (בְּטָסוֹ in Jer. 12:10) for the meaning of בּוֹסִים (trampling).
7. **Zech. 12:12** – Ibn Ezra cites and rejects an anonymous view that “the family of the House of Nathan” refers to the descendants of King David’s son Nathan. Rashi, too, anonymously cites the same view. However, the claim that Rashi was Ibn Ezra’s source for this view is somewhat undermined by the fact that Ibn Ezra makes no mention of Rashi’s own view (that the Nathan of 12:12 is the prophet Nathan).
8. **Zech. 14:7** – Ibn Ezra attacks those who interpret “day” and “night” as “an allegory for exile and salvation,” instead arguing that the verse must be interpreted literally.

Both Rashi and Joseph Kara advocate for that allegory,¹¹⁰ so Ibn Ezra might have encountered their allegorical readings in France. However, he cites other figurative interpretations of Zechariah’s eschatological visions from Ibn Chiquitilia, so it is likely that Ibn Chiquitilia’s lost commentary also interpreted this verse figuratively.

9. **Zech. 14:20** – According to Ibn Ezra, “the bells” and “the metal pots” are one and the same: The bells shall be made into metal pots for the Temple. Rashi and Joseph Kara share this view, but it seems entirely plausible that they would reach this interpretation independently.
10. **Hag. 1:9** – It is unclear whether the first half of the verse describes the recent past,¹¹¹ the present,¹¹² or the future. The oral commentary interprets it as a warning about the future: “You *will expect much and get little*, and even that little, when you bring it **home, I will blow on it.**” By contrast, the standard commentary interprets the verse as a description of the recent past: “*Until now, you looked for much, and when you brought it into your homes, I would blow on it.*” The former interpretation is consistent with Yefet’s translation (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*), while the latter matches the view of Joseph Kara, who opens his commentary to this verse by remarking, “Originally, it was thus” (כך היה בתחילה). It is therefore possible that Ibn Ezra was influenced by Kara to change his understanding of this verse, but it is also possible that he developed his own independent interpretation over time. Indeed, Joseph Kara’s and the standard commentary’s readings of Hag.

¹¹⁰ Between the two French exegetes, Joseph Kara’s formulation of the allegory sounds closer than Rashi’s to the view that Ibn Ezra quotes.

¹¹¹ “Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it” (KJV, JPS 1917).

¹¹² “{You} look for much, but behold, {it comes} to little; when you bring {it} home, I blow it {away}” (NASV).

1:9 appear to differ regarding a subtle nuance: Kara's comment, "Originally, it was thus, when it was not yet [the Temple's] time to be rebuilt," downplays the people's guilt in failing to rebuild the Temple. By contrast, Ibn Ezra stresses that the end of the verse explains the cause of their dire situation – "Because of My House which lies in ruins, while you all hurry to your own houses!"¹¹³

11. **Hag. 1:11** – Ibn Ezra and Joseph Kara both use the root גזר ("to decree") to explain the word נִאֲקְרָא. The root קרא has a broad range of potential connotations, so different exegetes could independently decide to employ the root גזר as a synonym when seeking to demonstrate that קרא connotes a decree. Indeed, Jonathan employs the root גזר for that purpose in Jer. 36:9, and later exegetes also employ גזר to explain קרא on occasion (e.g., Menahem b. Simeon, Jer. 4:20). Nevertheless, it is striking to observe the sheer number of cases in which Joseph Kara uses the root גזר in this manner (II Kings 8:1, Isa. 22:12, 44:7, and 51:2; Ezek. 36:29; Amos 7:4; second commentary to Lam. 1:15; cf. Isa. 45:4, Joel 3:5). In all of these cases, Rashi either interprets the word from the root קרא differently (e.g., Isa. 44:7 and 51:2, Amos 7:4) or simply does not comment on the word. There is one possible case of Rashi's commentary using גזר as a synonym for קרא, Jer. 36:9. However, that comment might be a gloss,¹¹⁴ and furthermore, it is simply adopting the language of Jonathan's translation of that verse

¹¹³ Joseph Kara's decision to ignore the second half of the verse and to thus de-emphasize the people's past guilt (by not yet beginning the Temple's reconstruction) does not appear to be coincidental. Rather, it likely stems from his earlier comment (Hag. 1:2) that the second year of Darius (the date of Haggai's prophecy) was the designated time (צֵת) for the Temple's reconstruction. In his view, it seems that God pre-ordained that time, such that any earlier attempts to rebuild the Temple would have been doomed to fail (as happened in Ezra 4:24, which classical exegetes dated before Darius' second year).

¹¹⁴ The relevant comment – which interprets the phrase קראו צום ("They proclaimed a fast") as גזרו תענית ("They decreed a fast") – is missing in most printed editions of Rashi. It appears in some manuscripts, and the HaKeter edition identifies it as being a later addition by Rashi himself. As a later addition, it could have been inspired by Joseph Kara. Unfortunately, Kara's own Jeremiah commentary does not comment on Ch. 36 until v. 22, so we do not know how he interpreted that phrase in 36:9.

(גזרו צומא). Hence, Kara was not simply expressing the standard French interpretation of the root קרא in so many verses. Rather, he was greatly expanding the number of verses in which the root קרא connotes the issuance of a decree.

In our verse, Ibn Ezra does not appear to have based his comment on any other known predecessors. Neither Jonathan's Aramaic translation (וקרית), preserving the same root as (ואקרא) nor Yefet's Arabic translation (ונאדית), using the third verbal pattern of the root نـدـى ¹¹⁵ indicates a narrow connotation of “decreed.” Thus, Ibn Ezra could potentially have been inspired by Joseph Kara's commentaries to use גזר as a synonym for קרא. In addition to our verse, Ibn Ezra employs גזר for this purpose in Joel 3:5, and as one possible interpretation in Isa. 22:12. Indeed, the earlier oral commentary to Joel 3:5 interprets קרא in that verse as literal “calling,” so perhaps exposure to Kara's interpretation prompted Ibn Ezra to change his own view. However, it seems doubtful that this case alone could prove that Ibn Ezra was familiar with Kara's commentaries, since he could have chosen the same synonym on his own.

12. **Zech. 6:15** – Zechariah prophesies, “Those who are far off shall come and take part in the building of the Temple of the Lord.” Joseph Kara identifies “those who are far off” with Jewish exiles who will return from Babylonia. The oral commentary identifies them as faraway “nations” (עממים), presumably meaning Gentiles, but the standard commentary writes: “**Those who are far off** – They are Israelites.” It is possible that exposure to Joseph Kara's interpretation prompted Ibn Ezra to reject

¹¹⁵ Blau (מילון 687) cites several uses of the root نـدـى in Judeo-Arabic literature. In addition to the broader meaning of “proclaim,” Blau presents other specific connotations for the Judeo-Arabic verb נאדי , such as offering an item for auction. Interestingly, the fifth form of this root can mean “to become moist” (Lane 3030), making it somewhat ironic that Yefet uses this same root in our verse (albeit in a different verbal pattern) for the declaration of a drought.

his earlier view that “those who are far off” are Gentiles, but this suggestion is little more than conjecture. It assumes not only that the oral commentary is completely faithful to Ibn Ezra’s personal views but also that he would not have changed his mind on his own; both assumptions are questionable.¹¹⁶

13. **Zech. 14:3** – Ibn Ezra and Joseph Kara cite the same proof-text (Exod. 14:25) to demonstrate that Zechariah is alluding to the splitting of the Red Sea when he mentions “the day of battle.” However, the connection between Zech. 14:3 and the splitting of the sea appears already in Jonathan and other midrashic sources (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*), so the choice of Exod. 14:25 as a proof-text seems insufficient to demonstrate influence.

In addition to these examples, one additional method could be used for gauging Ibn Ezra’s familiarity with Rashi’s and Kara’s commentaries. In his study of the relationship between Rashi’s and Ibn Ezra’s commentaries to the Pentateuch, Mondschein has argued that many cases in which Ibn Ezra emphasizes that his own interpretation is *peshat* or that an anonymous interpretation is *derash* likely indicate a subtle way to reject Rashi’s interpretations without naming him and thereby offending French Jews who revered Rashi (ואין בספריו פשט) 228-231). The underlying logic behind this claim is that Ibn Ezra does not cite or criticize every known homiletical interpretation of every verse, so his decision to single out some of these interpretations for criticism stems from them being widely known by the Jews in whose communities he composed his commentaries. If one looks at the 9 aforementioned cases in which Ibn Ezra implicitly rejects a rabbinic teaching despite not

¹¹⁶ A subsequent chapter of this dissertation addresses the relationship between the oral commentary and the standard commentary (p. 104ff.).

citing a source (pp. 19-21 above), all 9 interpretations appear in Rashi,¹¹⁷ and 6 of them also appear in Kara.¹¹⁸ While this can lend further support to the argument that Ibn Ezra was familiar – at a minimum – with Rashi’s commentary, some caution is in order. First, Rashi himself seems to acknowledge that two of these rabbinic interpretations are not the plain sense of the text.¹¹⁹ Furthermore, several of these interpretations of “*derash*” also appear in earlier Karaite or Andalusian works, so it is difficult to know whether Ibn Ezra is attacking them because they are popular within the community in which he composed his commentaries or in the community in which he received his education.¹²⁰

In sum, several types of circumstantial evidence indicate that Ibn Ezra was familiar with the exegesis of Rashi and/or Joseph Kara: his comment that he “saw books by sages who were in France,” several interpretations that parallel those of Rashi and Joseph Kara, and several cases in which he might be indirectly criticizing their interpretations. However, his familiarity with either of their commentaries cannot be established definitively, since many of their parallel interpretations could be the result of great minds thinking alike, and many of Ibn Ezra’s attacks against anonymous homiletical interpretations could have also been

¹¹⁷ In the case of identifying Malachi with Ezra, Rashi cites this tradition in his commentary to Mal. 2:11, not on the same verse where Ibn Ezra rejects it (1:1).

¹¹⁸ Joseph Kara does not agree with the interpretations of “*derash*” that Ibn Ezra cites to Zech. 3:8 (linking the “branch” to the Messiah instead of Zerubbabel), Zech. 14:1 (that *the enemy’s* spoil shall be divided) and Mal. 1:1 (that Malachi is Ezra)

¹¹⁹ Rashi cites the tradition that the “branch” is the Messiah only in his commentary to Zech. 6:12, while Ibn Ezra addresses this tradition at length in Zech. 3:8. In the case of Zech. 5:1 (the meaning of עָפָה), Rashi cites the interpretation of “folded” from the Sages but proceeds to cite Jonathan’s interpretation of “flying,” which is shared by Ibn Ezra.

¹²⁰ The interpretation of עָפָה as “folded” is cited by Ibn Janah (השרשים 359). The Karaites shared the homiletical interpretation of Joshua’s “filthy clothes” (Zech. 3:3) symbolizing his progeny’s sins, and the messianic reading of the “branch” in 3:8 is a widespread Karaite interpretation that Yefet strongly endorses. Ibn Ezra’s rejection of symbolism in Zech. 1:8 is also likely directed – at least in part – against Yefet (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). And the messianic reading of Zech. 9:9 was so common among Jews and Christians that it is difficult to link any one figure to Ibn Ezra’s passing reference to it (before Ibn Ezra offers a detailed rebuttal of Ibn Chiquitilia’s historical interpretation). In the case of Zech. 9:9, however, Ibn Ezra might have objected to Rashi in particular due to Rashi’s categorical statement that it is “impossible” to interpret it as anything but messianic (אי אפשר לפותרו אלא על מלך המשיח).

directed either at the Talmud and Midrash or at his predecessors in Muslim lands. When he “saw books by sages who were in France,” we cannot know for sure whether these were the same “books” of French exegesis that we know today or lost sources (see note 105 above).

Chapter IV: Influence on Others

Maimonides

Moses Maimonides was at least 43 years younger than Ibn Ezra and would have been a young child when Ibn Ezra left Spain in 1140.¹²¹ Although Maimonides never cites Ibn Ezra's writings, one might expect Ibn Ezra's teachings to have influenced Maimonides. Indeed, Twersky lists a dozen cases where parallels between the writings of these two Spanish rabbis might indicate that Ibn Ezra influenced Maimonides, yet he acknowledges that these parallels do not prove direct influence (ההשפיע ראב"ע על רמב"ם in Twersky and Harris 21-48).¹²² Several comments of Maimonides bear some connection to Ibn Ezra's commentaries that I have studied, but in most cases, the connection is tenuous or indirect.¹²³ In two cases, the connection between Ibn Ezra and Maimonides appears to be somewhat stronger:

¹²¹ Maimonides' birth has been dated to 1135 or 1138, with current scholarly consensus favoring 1138. For a discussion of his correct birthdate, see Davidson 6-9.

¹²² For further scholarly discussion of this topic, see sources cited by Cohen (*Opening the Gates of Interpretation* 25-26). In addition to the parallels cited by Twersky, I am indebted to Hillel Novetsky for bringing to my attention another possible parallel: Ibn Ezra (Gen. 22:5) maintains that Isaac had not yet reached adulthood at the time of his binding, arguing that Isaac would have merited greater reward than Abraham had he consented as an adult to be sacrificed. A similar argument is attributed to Maimonides by the Genesis commentary of his son, Abraham Maimonides (Gen. 22:1, accessed March 25, 2018 at http://mg.alhatorah.org/Dual/R_Avraham_b_HaRambam/Bereshit/22.1).

¹²³ See my supercommentary to Hag. 2:2, 2:6, 2:12, and 2:21; Zech. 1:1 (introduction), 1:8, 6:5, 7:19, 9:9, 11:7-8, 12:1, 14:5, and 14:9; Mal. 1:1, 3:1, 3:6, and 3:24 (postscript). None of these examples prove direct influence, either because one of their views is unclear or because they are addressing issues that were discussed by their predecessors. In cases where Ibn Ezra is drawing upon his predecessors, Maimonides might have been engaging those same earlier texts – rather than Ibn Ezra – when he agreed or disagreed with interpretations that also appear in Ibn Ezra's commentaries.

1. **Zech. 14:9** – According to Ibn Ezra, Zechariah’s prophecy that one day the Lord will be “with one name” means that the Tetragrammaton “will be pronounced by all as it is written.” As Radak observes, Maimonides appears to share Ibn Ezra’s belief that, following the redemption, people will refer to God by the Tetragrammaton, and Maimonides, too, cites Zech. 14:9 as his proof-text (*Guide* 1:62).
2. **Zech. 14:16** – Ibn Ezra implies that the Davidic Messiah will descend specifically from Solomon and not from a different son of David. While it is unclear whether Ibn Ezra considers Solomonic lineage to be an essential requirement of the Messiah, Maimonides insists in several of his writings that the Messiah must descend from Solomon (see my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

These two examples do not suffice to prove Ibn Ezra’s influence on Maimonides, since Maimonides could have developed either interpretation on his own, or the views could have been traditions of Golden Age Spain that they both learned orally. In the case of Zech. 14:16, it is not entirely clear that Ibn Ezra requires the Messiah to descend from Solomon. However, given that these two parallels are separated by a mere handful of verses, it is tempting to consider the possibility that Maimonides was familiar with Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Zech. 14 and adopted elements of it.

Eliezer of Beaugency

Scholars have not conclusively determined whether Eliezer of Beaugency was familiar with the commentaries of Ibn Ezra. In order to convincingly prove that Eliezer of

Beaugency read Ibn Ezra's commentaries, one would seek comments of his that meet the following criteria:

- A) They do not appear in other sources that were clearly known to Eliezer, such as the Talmud, Jonathan's translation, or earlier French exegesis.¹²⁴
- B) The interpretation is sufficiently novel that it is difficult to imagine two exegetes independently reaching the same conclusion simply by reading the text carefully.
- C) In order to further reduce the likelihood that they independently developed the same interpretation, the exegetes' respective presentations of this shared interpretation should ideally contain similar phraseology and cite the same proof-texts.

Poznanski's Data

Poznanski devotes two pages to Ibn Ezra's possible influence on Eliezer (מבוא על חכמי צרפת מפרשי המקרא CXXXVI-CXXXVII), listing several parallels between the two exegetes' commentaries. Since their lives overlapped, and since Ibn Ezra spent part of his life in France, Poznanski surmises that perhaps Ibn Ezra and Eliezer heard of one another's interpretations to certain verses. Let us examine Poznanski's examples in light of the above criteria and then proceed to other possible examples from this dissertation's material:

1. **Isa. 11:4**¹²⁵ – Commenting on the phrase, “Thus he shall judge the poor with equity,” both Ibn Ezra and Eliezer of Beaugency explain the nature of this judgment by paraphrasing the biblical prohibition against unfairly favoring the poor in court

¹²⁴ In order to assess whether an interpretation was suggested by earlier French exegetes, I compared Eliezer's comments with those of Rashi and Joseph Kara. However, if Rashbam did indeed compose a commentary to Minor Prophets (see note 105 above), then Eliezer's commentary was likely influenced by Rashbam, too.

¹²⁵ Poznanski erroneously cites this verse as Isa. 14:4.

- (Exod. 23:3, Lev. 19:15). While Eliezer's French predecessors do not mention that prohibition in their commentaries to Isa. 11:4, one could argue that its relevance to Isa. 11:4 is sufficiently intuitive that Ibn Ezra and Eliezer could have made the connection independently of one another.
2. **Isa. 16:6** – Eliezer's interpretation of בְּדָוִי as "his thoughts" corresponds to one of Ibn Ezra's two interpretations, and they both cite Job 11:3 as a proof-text. However, there are a limited number of potential proof-texts for that meaning of בְּדָוִי, and Eliezer cites two of them. Hence, any claim of influence must base itself on the very concept of interpreting בְּדָוִי as "his thoughts" and not on the specific verses that the exegetes chose as a proof-text.
 3. **Isa. 22:5** – Both exegetes interpret the phrase מְקַרְקַר קֵר as "breaking down the walls." While this interpretation was widespread among medieval exegetes, Ibn Ezra and Eliezer both add that the verb מְקַרְקַר thus denotes breaching a noun (קֵר) of the same etymology (in their view), and they both compare this case to the root שָׂרַשׁ, which means "root" in noun form but also has a verb form "to uproot." The comparison to the root שָׂרַשׁ does not appear in the commentaries of Rashi and Joseph Kara, raising the possibility that Eliezer adopted it from Ibn Ezra.
 4. **Isa. 22:14** – Regarding the word בְּאָזְנַי ("in my ears"), Ibn Ezra maintains that the referent of "my" is God, but he cites and dismisses a view that the referent is the prophet. Eliezer adopts this latter view, which – in principle – he could have learned from Ibn Ezra. However, Jonathan begins his translation of this verse, "The prophet said" (אמר נביא), so Jonathan was likely the target of Ibn Ezra's criticism and the source that inspired Eliezer's comment.

5. **Isa. 38:17** (cited by Poznanski as 38:16) – Both exegetes present the same two possible interpretations of בָּלִי, meaning either “wearing out” (from the root בָּלָה) or “not.” The latter interpretation is proposed by Ibn Saruk (מַחְבֵּרַת מִנְהַם), Philipowski 45, Sáenz-Badillos 84*), Rashi, and Joseph Kara, so the argument in favor of Ibn Ezra’s influence lies solely in Eliezer’s decision to also propose the former meaning.
6. **Hos. 6:1-2** – The prophet proclaims: “He wounded, and He can bind us up. In two days He will make us whole again; on the third day He will raise us up, and we shall be whole by His favor.” Both exegetes attribute significance to specifically the third day as the day of God’s healing, arguing that people who are recuperating from injury typically feel weakest on the third day. Eliezer cites Gen. 34:25 as a proof-text (“on the third day, when they were in pain”). Although this proof-text does not appear in manuscripts of Ibn Ezra’s commentary, Simon (supercommentary *ad loc.*) suggests that it might have appeared in some medieval texts of Ibn Ezra’s commentary, since Radak and Ibn Caspi include it in their citations of Ibn Ezra. Regardless, Eliezer’s choice of Gen. 34:25 as a proof-text cannot be attributed to Ibn Ezra’s influence, since the notion that Gen. 34:25 demonstrates that the third day is *worse* than the first two days is rooted in early rabbinic literature and was accepted by other French sources.¹²⁶ Hence, any claim of influence must be based not on the choice of proof-text but on the very claim that Hosea sought to convey something particularly miraculous by describing God as healing on the third day specifically.
7. **Hos. 7:15** – In reconciling a potential contradiction in the assertion that God both “chastened” (יִסְרֶתִי) and “strengthened” (חִזְקֶתִי) Israel, Ibn Ezra and Eliezer explain

¹²⁶ See Rashbam and Joseph Bekhor Shor (Gen. *ad loc.*), based on the Talmud (mShab. 19:3, bShab. 134b).

that the purpose of Israel's divinely-inflicted suffering was to lovingly discipline them, which would ultimately strengthen Israel. However, Eliezer emphasizes the loving, fatherly nature of the discipline to an extent that Ibn Ezra does not, and there are no shared proof-texts or other indications that Eliezer did not develop his interpretation on his own.

8. **Hos. 13:14** – Regarding the difficult phrase אֶהְיֶה דְבַרְיָךְ מִנְתְּ אֵהְיֶה קְטָבְךְ שְׂאוֹל¹²⁷ both exegetes interpret the unusual noun קְטָבְךְ by citing Ps. 91:6 as a proof-text (מְדַבֵּר בְּאֵפֶל (יִהְיֶה לְךָ מִקְטָב יִשׁוּד צְהָרִים and subsequently observing that the roots דבר and קטב form a parallelism in both verses.¹²⁸ However, the fact that they chose the same proof-text need not indicate direct influence, since the root קטב is only attested four times in all of Scripture, so any exegete who sought proof-texts would have looked to the same limited pool of verses. Moreover, Ibn Ezra and Eliezer disagree regarding the meaning of the word אֶהְיֶה, which the former interprets as “I will be,” but the latter interprets as “it will be.” That disagreement leads them to significantly different understandings of the verse: Ibn Ezra interprets it as a threat of what God will actively inflict upon Israel, while Eliezer explains that God will no longer protect them from diseases that naturally befall them.
9. **Joel 1:7** – Both exegetes interpret the word קֶצֶף based on the same proof-text, “Like foam (קֶצֶף) upon water” (Hos. 10:7). Moreover, they both portray the foam as

¹²⁷ The extreme variation between translations of this phrase conveys the difficulty of its language:

- “O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.” (KJV)
- “Ho, thy plagues, O death! Ho, thy destruction, O netherworld!” (JPS 1917)
- “Where, O Death, are your plagues? Your pestilence where, O Sheol?” (NJPS)
- “O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting?” (NASV)

¹²⁸ By this choice of proof-text, Ibn Ezra and Eliezer further agree that the word דְבַרְיָךְ in Hos. 13:14 is a possessive form of the noun דְבַר; meaning “your pestilence,” and not a possessive form of the noun דְבַר, which would mean “your word” or “your matter.” For a summary of medieval interpretations of this verse, see Simon’s supercommentary *ad loc.*

- something that dissipates over the water, rather than focusing on its bubbles as a metaphor for bubbling rage. The equation between קצפה in Joel 1:7 and קצף in Hos. 10:7 is already made by Ibn Saruk, according to some editions of his text (מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 128),¹²⁹ but Ibn Saruk views the foam as symbolizing bubbling anger.¹³⁰
10. **Jon. 1:12** – Both exegetes cite Ps. 107:30 as a proof-text for the meaning of וַיִּשְׁתַּק. However, the root שתק is attested a mere two times outside of Jonah, and the context of Ps. 107:30 (surrounded by storm imagery) makes it a more compelling proof-text than Prov. 26:20. Hence, they could have easily reached the same proof-text independently of each other.
11. **Mic. 1:14** – Both exegetes identify Achzib with Chezib (Gen. 38:4). Rashi and Joseph Kara do not make this connection, perhaps indicating that Eliezer adopted it from Ibn Ezra. However, Achzib and Chezib are both used in rabbinic texts as a location adjacent to Acre. Depending on which manuscripts of these texts Eliezer saw, he could have easily concluded that Achzib and Chezib are interchangeable without ever seeing Ibn Ezra's commentary.
12. **Mic. 4:14** – Both exegetes interpret the phrase עֲתָה תִתְגַּדֵּי בַת גְּדוּד as a play on words (Ibn Ezra: דָּרַךְ צָחוּת; Eliezer: לִשׁוֹן נוּפֵל), in which the verb תִתְגַּדֵּי means to gash oneself (cf. Deut. 14:1),¹³¹ while the noun גְּדוּד means troops. Most modern translations assume that both words share the same meaning – either, “Muster yourselves in

¹²⁹ Joel 1:7 is missing from the entry for קצף Sáenz-Badillos' critical edition of מחברת מנחם (338*). Sáenz-Badillos' apparatus lists which witnesses include Joel 1:7 and which do not.

¹³⁰ For a survey of different understandings of the foam's symbolism among medieval exegetes, see Simon's supercommentary to both verses.

¹³¹ Ibn Ezra's interpretation of the verb תִתְגַּדֵּי is not entirely clear from the standard commentary, but the oral commentary cites two proof-texts in which the root גדד denotes gashing.

troops” (NASV), or, “You gash yourself in grief” (NJPS), and Rashi and Joseph Kara appear to interpret the verse in the same manner as the NASV.

Interestingly, Eliezer maintains that in this prophecy, Micah is describing Sennacherib’s siege of Jerusalem in Micah’s own time, while Ibn Ezra cites a debate regarding whether Micah is prophesying about the Second Temple or the Messiah. Thus, if Eliezer was familiar with Ibn Ezra’s commentary to this verse, it would be noteworthy that he adopts Ibn Ezra’s lexical interpretation of two words but completely ignores his discussion of the prophecy’s historical context.

13. **Mic. 5:4** – Regarding the phrase “seven shepherds, eight princes of men,” both exegetes consider the numbers to be imprecise (Ibn Ezra: “They are not 15”; Eliezer: ולאן דוקא), and both cite Ecc. 11:2 as a proof-text (“Distribute portions to seven or even to eight”). However, the fundamental claim that the numbers seven and eight are imprecise could be a natural response of any *peshat* exegete to earlier midrashic attempts to identify specific biblical characters as the “seven shepherds” and the “eight princes of men” (cf. bSuk. 52b, cited by Rashi and Joseph Kara *ad loc.*). Moreover, Ecc. 11:2 is the one other biblical verse in which the numbers 7 and 8 appear as a parallelism that could be considered synonymous if one views them as imprecise. Hence, the selection of Ecc. 11:2 as a proof-text need not prove that Eliezer saw Ibn Ezra’s commentaries.

Poznanski’s final five examples come from the books that are studied in this dissertation, so I will elaborate in my analysis of them:

14. **Hag. 1:14-15** – Poznanski writes that both exegetes share the view that the date in v. 15 applies to the events from the previous verse: “(14) They came and set to work on

the House of the Lord of Hosts, their God (15) on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius.” However, the fundamental view that v. 15 does not begin a new sentence is also shared by Rashi. In fact, a closer look at Eliezer’s words indicates that he is attempting to build on Rashi’s understanding. According to the HaKeter edition’s text, Eliezer writes:

(יד) ויעשו מלאכה - לחצוב אבנים ולכרות ארזים לבנותו; אבל בנין לא בנו בו עד יום עשרים וארבעה לחדש הששי, כמו שיוכיח למטה (פס' טו.) (טו) ביום עשרים וארבעה לחדש בששי - התחילו לעשות מלאכה.

They set to work, to quarry stones and to chop cedars in order to build [the Temple.] But they did not engage in actual construction until the 24th day of the 6th month, as [the text] will demonstrate below (v. 15). **(15) On the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month**, they began to set to work.

Before addressing the relationship between Eliezer’s comment and Ibn Ezra, a glaring error in Eliezer’s text must be corrected. According to the above text, Eliezer contradicts himself. His closing comment is explaining – like Rashi and Ibn Ezra before him – that they began work on the 24th of Elul (=the 6th month), because v. 15 does not begin a new sentence but rather provides the date for the events in v. 14: “They came and set to work on the House of the Lord of Hosts, their God (15) on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month.” Eliezer’s own words in v. 15, “They began to set to work,” are a paraphrase of the Bible’s, “They set to work,” in v. 14, indicating that the preparatory acts of quarrying and chopping *began* on the 24th of Elul

However, Eliezer's earlier comment (in v. 14), "They did not engage in actual construction until the 24th day of the 6th month (=Elul)," implies that the 24th of Elul was the date when they *completed* preparatory work and commenced the actual construction!

This contradiction is resolved by a careful reexamination of the sole extant manuscript of Eliezer's commentary to Haggai,¹³² which reveals that the HaKeter edition's text of Eliezer's comment to v. 14 must be corrected accordingly: אבל בנין לא בנו בו עד יום עשרים וארבעה לחדש הששי התשעי, כמו שיוכיח (פס' טז ב', י"ח) – "But they did not engage in actual construction until the 24th day of the 6th-9th month, as [the text] will demonstrate below (v. 15:2:18)."¹³³ According to this emended text, Eliezer is explaining that the entirety of vv. 14-15 describes the preliminary work of cutting stones and chopping wood, while the actual construction only began three months later. This comment is thus elaborating on the comment of Rashi, who similarly restricts the "work" of v. 14 to preparatory activities:

יז-טו(ויבאו ויעשו מלאכה - התחילו מסתתין באבנים ומנסרין בעצים בששי
בעשרים וארבעה לחדש

¹³² MS Oxford Opp. 625. I am indebted to Robert A. Harris and Hillel Novetsky for their assistance in obtaining images of this manuscript and supporting my contention that the word in question should be read as התשעי. Novetsky subsequently corrected his website's text of Eliezer's commentary to read התשעי (the normal spelling of "9th" in Hebrew) and published a digital image of the problematic word from MS Oxford Opp. 625 (http://mg.alhatorah.org/SP/R._Eliezer_of_Beaugency/Chaggai/1).

¹³³ The erroneous reading of הששי by both the HaKeter edition and Poznanski's earlier edition stems from the fact that the word התשעי overlays another word in the manuscript. (See the digital image at http://mg.alhatorah.org/SP/R._Eliezer_of_Beaugency/Chaggai/1 n. 20.) That word apparently was השביעי ("the seventh"), presumably because the scribe's eyes skipped ahead to 2:1, which opens with the word בשביעי. Hence, one can see the outline of the letter ש underneath the letter ת of התשעי, prompting some readers of the manuscript to see two adjacent ש letters and misread the word as הששי. When the scribe overwrote his erroneous השביעי with התשעי, he was forced to use a defective spelling (instead of התשעי) so that he could merge the middle letters בי (of השביעי) into a ש (for התשעי) in a relatively seamless manner. I am indebted to Hillel Novetsky and his daughter Ariella for this diagnosis of the scribe's initial error.

(14-15) They came and set to work – They began hewing stones and sawing wood in the sixth month on the **twenty-fourth day of the month.**

In his comment to v. 14, Eliezer is bothered that the 24th of **Kislev** (=the 9th month) is presented in Ch. 2 as immediately preceding the groundbreaking ceremony. He is therefore clarifying that from 24 Elul through 24 Kislev they spent three months preparing the materials. Following Haggai's prophecies on the 24th of Kislev, they took those materials and laid the Temple's foundation with them.

In sum, although Ibn Ezra and Eliezer do agree that the date in Hag. 1:15 continues a sentence that began in 1:14, this case in no way proves that Ibn Ezra influenced Eliezer. Rather, Eliezer's comment primarily addresses the aforementioned seeming contradiction regarding the month in which the work commenced, and he is essentially paraphrasing Rashi's comment that the "work" in v. 14 was preparatory work. He substantiates that claim by proving from Hag. 2:18 that the actual construction did not begin until three months later.

15. Hag. 2:12 – Poznanski observes that both exegetes maintain that the priests responded correctly to Haggai's legal query. In truth, that detail alone might not suffice to prove influence, but I will return to this passage below, since several additional parallels exist between Ibn Ezra's and Eliezer's interpretations of Haggai's conversation with the priests (Hag. 2:10-19).

16. **Zech. 3:1-2** – Both exegetes explain that the “adversary” (אָדווערסאַר) of Zechariah’s vision represents the enemies who sought to prevent the Jews from rebuilding the Temple and Jerusalem, including an “accusation” (אַנשולדִיגִינג) that they wrote in the days of Ahasuerus (Ezra 4:6). They are both rejecting an earlier rabbinic interpretation according to which the “adversary” of Zech. 3 was the heavenly court’s Satan, who was denouncing Joshua the Priest for his descendants’ intermarriages.

Rashi and Joseph Kara adopt the rabbinic interpretation, which makes it tempting to postulate that Ibn Ezra was Eliezer’s source. However, it is entirely plausible that Ibn Ezra and Eliezer could have reached the same interpretation independently. Any *peshat* exegete seeking an alternative to that rabbinic interpretation would be likely to think of the troubles caused by the Jews’ unfriendly neighbors in Ezra 4, since that takes place during the same general historical period as Zech. 3 and also employs the root אָשׁוּ.¹³⁴

17. **Zech. 9:10** – Both exegetes interpret Zechariah’s promise that the “king” would reign “from sea to sea” as referring to the biblical boundary of Israel by paraphrasing Exod. 23:31 – “from the Sea of Reeds to the Sea of Philistia.” Eliezer differs from Ibn Ezra in that he maintains that the “king” is the Davidic Messiah (rather than Judah the Hasmonean), but Eliezer is nevertheless rejecting the view of Rashi and Joseph Kara *ad loc.* that the Messiah’s dominion “from sea to sea” refers to the entire known world.

However, it appears unlikely that Eliezer adopted his interpretation of “from sea to sea” in Zech. 9:10 from Ibn Ezra. In explaining the meaning of this phrase,

¹³⁴ Indeed, both Radak and Tanḥum adopt this interpretation, although they undoubtedly saw it in Ibn Ezra’s commentary.

Eliezer writes that it parallels David's blessing to Solomon. As noted in the HaKeter edition, Eliezer is alluding to Psalm 72, which opens with the superscription "for Solomon" (לְשֹׁלֹמֹה)¹³⁵ and subsequently proclaims, "Let him rule from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth" (Ps. 72:8). Rashi's commentary to Psalms interprets "from sea to sea" in that verse as referring to the borders of Solomon's kingdom, which included the entire Land of Israel, "from the Sea of Reeds to the Sea of Philistia." Hence, when Eliezer to Zech. 9:10 interprets "from sea to sea" as the borders of Israel and then alludes to Ps. 72:8 as a proof-text, he is interpreting Zech. 9:10 in light of Ps. 72:8 as interpreted by Rashi (even though Rashi himself disagrees with this interpretation of Zech. 9:10). One therefore cannot utilize this interpretation to prove that Eliezer saw Ibn Ezra's commentary to Zechariah.

18. **Mal. 3:10** – At first glance, both exegetes interpret God's promise to "pour out blessings" עַד בְּלִי דַי as "that there shall be more than enough." However, a closer examination reveals that they do not interpret the phrase in the same manner. They, like all exegetes, are reacting to the apparent literal meaning of עַד בְּלִי דַי as "until there will *not* be enough." Ibn Ezra explains that "enough" is being negated not because the blessing will be insufficient, but rather because it will be *not merely* sufficient but abundant. On the other hand, Eliezer writes: שלא אצמצם לומר די לכם בכך ("that I will not limit [the blessing] by saying, 'This is enough for you'"). Eliezer's belief that "enough" is a quote from a conversation indicates that rather than copying Ibn Ezra, he is modifying a widespread rabbinic interpretation of עַד בְּלִי דַי as "until you tire of saying, 'Enough'" (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Eliezer was aware

¹³⁵ The superscription לְשֹׁלֹמֹה could also be rendered "of Solomon" (JPS 1917, NJPS), but Rashi and Eliezer clearly believe it to mean "for Solomon."

of this rabbinic interpretation but undoubtedly realized that it struggles to explain the particle of negation *בְּלִי*.¹³⁶ He thus suggests instead that God is promising that *He* will not restrict the blessing by saying, “Enough!”

In sum, most of Poznanski’s examples do meet criterion A) above (p. 71), as at least some element of Eliezer’s interpretation parallels Ibn Ezra but does not appear in midrashic literature or earlier known French commentaries. However, most if not all of his examples fail at either criterion B) or criterion C). Several of the comments seem to be plausible interpretations for any *peshat* exegete seeking an alternative to midrashic interpretations, and not a single interpretation contains sufficient parallel phraseology to convincingly prove direct influence. Several of the cases do contain shared proof-texts, but these proof-texts are almost always the sole verse or one of a very small number of verses that could support the interpretation in question. The one case that includes an unlikely shared proof is Isa. 22:5 (no. 4), because both exegetes present the same analogy between the verb *מִקְרָקַר* and verbs from the root *שָׂרַשׁ*.¹³⁷

The Case of Hag. 2:10-19

In contrast to the above summary, a closer examination of one case seemingly strengthens the argument that Ibn Ezra did influence Eliezer: Hag. 2:10-19 (no. 15 above). A closer look at that passage reveals several parallels between the two exegetes:

¹³⁶ The Babylonian Talmud, for example, interprets *בְּלִי* as a verb from the root *בלה* (to wear out) – “until your lips grow weary from saying, ‘Enough!’” (bShab. 32b).

¹³⁷ This analogy appears in Ibn Janah (השרשים 460), but one wonders whether Eliezer had direct access to Ibn Janah’s writings.

1. Both exegetes argue that the purpose of Haggai's legal queries was not to test their legal knowledge but rather to present a parable that would set up his rebuke starting in v. 14 ("So is this people...").
2. They both interpret the root *שקד* ("holy") literally in v. 12, contra the widespread rabbinic view that it is a euphemism for "ritually unclean" (*טמא*).
3. Both exegetes maintain that the priests answered Haggai's legal questions correctly, against rabbinic views that the priests erred in their response to at least one question.
4. Both cite Lev. 6:20 ("Anything that touches its flesh shall become holy") in order to prove that the priests ruled correctly that sanctified meat cannot convey its holy state via an intermediary.
5. Both comment that Haggai's query, which literally asks about the legal ramifications "if someone defiled by a corpse touches *all* (*בְּכָל*) of these," actually intends "*any* of these."

The fact that Ibn Ezra and Eliezer agree not only about the fundamental purpose of Haggai's queries (as a parable) but also about details as minor as no. 5 creates the impression that Eliezer read Ibn Ezra's commentary before writing his own. Even in this case, however, one must be cautious before asserting that Eliezer based his comments on Ibn Ezra's. Importantly, all five points of agreement between these two exegetes are points of disagreement between their shared interpretation and the passage in the Talmud that shaped the interpretations of Rashi and Joseph Kara (bPes. 16b-17a; cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Accordingly, one cannot rule out the possibility that the Talmud and the earlier French commentaries were the texts that actually stood front and center in Eliezer's mind when composing his commentary. In his quest to produce a *peshat* commentary free from the

rabbinic exegesis that influenced Rashi and Joseph Kara in this case, he commented regarding each and every detail of the Talmud's interpretation that deviated from the text's plain sense: not just the fundamental claim that Haggai was rebuking them for their misapplication of ritual laws but also the Talmud's interpretations of specific words, such as "holy" or "all of..."

Indeed, Ibn Ezra's commentary to this passage contains additional features that are missing in Eliezer's: more proof-texts for the meaning of קדש that are less obvious than Lev. 6:20 (which addresses the exact circumstances of Haggai's query), a radical explanation for why prostitutes are referred to as קדשים and קדשות, the comparison between Haggai's parable and Nathan's parable, and the claim that "the people" (הָעָם; 2:14) refers specifically to the priests.¹³⁸ Moreover, while Ibn Ezra and Eliezer do agree that Haggai's legal queries are a parable, they disagree regarding the parable's deeper meaning: Eliezer explains that without a reconstructed Temple, the sanctity of the Temple Mount was the equivalent of something that had only received its sanctity through an intermediary (which cannot effectively transfer the sanctity). Ibn Ezra offers multiple interpretations of the parable (cf. my supercommentary), but Eliezer's interpretation is not one of them.

Additional Parallels

Let us also look at several additional verses from Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi in which Ibn Ezra's and Eliezer's comments contain some parallel. I am only considering examples in which Rashi and Joseph Kara do not share the interpretation in question.

¹³⁸ By contrast, Radak and Tanhum – who clearly had access to Ibn Ezra's commentary – do discuss some of these points even if they do not endorse all of them (cf. my supercommentary).

1. **Hag. 2:9** – Eliezer explains that the Second Temple was “greater” (גָּדוֹל) than the First Temple only after Herod renovated it, which is one of several interpretations that Ibn Ezra suggests.¹³⁹ However, Eliezer – unlike Ibn Ezra – interprets the entirety of 2:6-9 as predicting events that Josippon recounts from the Hasmonean dynasty. Hence, it seems that Eliezer was independently motivated to interpret “greater” in a manner that corresponds to the Hasmonean narratives in Josippon.
2. **Hag. 2:19** – Ibn Ezra (in the standard commentary) and Eliezer both interpret the phrase העוד הנרע במגורה as a rhetorical question, “Is the seed still in the granary,” to which the answer is, “No!” They are rejecting the declarative reading of the verse, “The seed is still in the granary,” which was shared by Ibn Janah, Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Ibn Ezra’s (earlier) oral commentary.
3. **Zech. 7:1** – Both exegetes consider Bethel to be the name of a person, whereas Jonathan, Rashi, and Joseph Kara interpret it as a location.
4. **Zech. 14:5** – Both exegetes maintain that the pronoun “you” refers to Jerusalem in the verse: “The Lord my God, with all the holy beings, will come to you” (עִמָּךְ).
5. **Mal. 1:10** – Both exegetes interpret the phrase וְלֹא תֹאֲרִי as, “Do not kindle fire,” explaining that the verb derives from the word אור (fire), and comparing it to the synonymous Hebrew root בער (to kindle). However, although Joseph Kara does not employ the root בער as a synonym, he does interpret the verb’s meaning in the same

¹³⁹ In my supercommentary, I raise the possibility that this interpretation is a later gloss to Ibn Ezra. For purposes of this discussion, however, I am assuming that because this interpretation does appear in all manuscripts, it was an early enough addition (if it is indeed a gloss) that it could have entered texts of his commentary during Eliezer’s lifetime.

manner,¹⁴⁰ as does Rashi elsewhere.¹⁴¹ It is doubtful that the choice of the same synonym suffices to prove that Eliezer adopted this comment from Ibn Ezra.

6. **Mal. 1:11** – Ibn Ezra and Eliezer offer a similar defense of God’s seemingly false assertion: “My name is honored among the nations, and everywhere incense and pure oblation are offered to My name.” They both explain that although Gentile nations do not actually offer Him incense and oblations, they *would do so* had He command them to. Rashi and Joseph Kara resolve the difficulty in God’s statement in other ways (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).
7. **Mal. 2:2** – Both exegetes address the seemingly superfluous repetition of the same verb twice (וְאִירוּ אֶת בְּרִכּוֹתֵיכֶם וְגַם אִירוּתֵיהֶן) by arguing that the first verb is future tense while the second is past tense – “*I will send a curse and turn your blessings into curses. Indeed, I have turned them into curses.*” Jonathan, Rashi, and Joseph Kara treat both verbs as future tense, so Eliezer might have been influenced by Ibn Ezra. On the other hand, Eliezer might have reached his interpretation independently by observing that both verbs are in suffix form (which more commonly indicates past tense), and only the first verb is preceded by a prefix ו that could flip it to future tense.

It therefore seems that no smoking gun exists to prove that Eliezer of Beaugency had access to Ibn Ezra’s commentaries. However, enough parallels do exist that one cannot rule out the possibility that Eliezer had some familiarity with them. Perhaps the strongest case for influence is Mal. 1:11 (no. 6), since their shared interpretation of it is not attested in earlier Spanish or French exegesis and is not obvious even to someone seeking the plain sense of the

¹⁴⁰ Kara simply adds the word “fire” (אש) in his paraphrase of the verse, thereby conveying that the verb תִּאִירוּ means “to kindle fire.”

¹⁴¹ Rashi cites our verse in his commentary to Isa. 27:11, in order to explain the meaning of קִאִירוֹת in that verse.

text. Yet it is difficult to build a case on such a small number of examples. Perhaps, as Poznanski himself suggests (CXXXVII), Eliezer heard oral reports of Ibn Ezra's interpretations to certain individual verses. The advantage of that suggestion, rather than claiming that Eliezer saw a complete text of Ibn Ezra's commentaries, is that most parallels between Eliezer and Ibn Ezra exhibit parallel *content* but lack any meaningful *linguistic parallels*.

One final comment is in order. Whatever one concludes about Eliezer's access to Ibn Ezra or lack thereof, it is clear that the quantity of parallels is relatively small when weighed against the overall length of their respective commentaries or when weighed against the quantity of parallels between Ibn Ezra and other later exegetes, such as Radak, Tanhum, and Abarbanel. As will be discussed below, those exegetes treated Ibn Ezra's commentary as required reading when they studied Minor Prophets. Even when they disagree with Ibn Ezra or choose not to mention him by name, one finds them quoting his interpretations anonymously or – at a minimum – formulating their own comments in a manner that responds to his. None of this can be said of Eliezer of Beaugency. Ibn Ezra's commentary – if Eliezer did see it – was at most an interesting work from which he drew a small number of ideas. Ibn Ezra did not lead Eliezer to focus on issues of interest to the Andalusian *peshat* tradition, such as philology. Despite the fact that Ibn Ezra wrote his commentary to Minor Prophets in Northern France, it did not exert meaningful influence on the next great French *peshat* commentary, whether due to lack of availability or to a lack of interest on the part of Eliezer. In the words of Simon ("Transplanting the Wisdom of Spain" 183-184):

[French *peshat* exegesis] was not influenced, however, by the commentaries and other works of Ibn Ezra, written in its midst and for its benefit, despite the

fact that the Spanish scholar was known and esteemed by the Tosafists... Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor and Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency, who followed the exegetic method of Rabbi Samuel ben Meir, fail to mention Ibn Ezra at all, and ignore his exegetic method and Spanish approach to grammar... The long commentaries on Genesis and Exodus or the commentary on the Minor Prophets... were written in the Norman capital of Rouen, yet they too are entirely absent from the commentaries of Joseph Bekhor Shor and Rabbi Eliezer. Rather, Ibn Ezra's exegetic opus remained a foreign transplant in the soil of Edom.

Radak

Unlike Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak's familiarity with Ibn Ezra's commentary is indisputable. Therefore, my goal is not to examine whether Ibn Ezra influenced Radak but rather to gauge the extent of this influence in the context of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Radak's commentary to these three books cites Ibn Ezra eleven times by name, although two of the citations come from other writings of Ibn Ezra (nos. 5 and 9):

1. **Hag. 1:11** – Radak cites and endorses Ibn Ezra's explanation of the phrase "I called for a drought... upon all the fruits of labor."
2. **Zech. 7:14** – Radak cites Ibn Ezra's interpretation of, "I will disperse them among all those nations which they had not known, and the land will be left behind them desolate"
3. **Zech. 8:6** – Radak presents Ibn Ezra's entire discussion of whether the phrase **גַּם בְּעֵינַי** **פְּלִא** is interrogative ("Shall it also be wondrous in My eyes") or – as Ibn Ezra himself maintains – declarative ("It shall also be wondrous in My eyes").

4. **Zech. 9:8** – Radak cites Ibn Ezra’s claim that the pronoun “my” in the phrase, “I have now seen with *my* own eyes,” refers to the prophet and not to God.
5. **Zech. 9:10** – In his discussion of the phrase “from sea to sea,” Radak cites Ibn Ezra as interpreting the two seas as the Red Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Ibn Ezra does not interpret Zech. 9:10 in such a manner, because he does not interpret it as messianic.¹⁴² Rather, Radak is citing Ibn Ezra’s commentary to a parallel verse in Psalms (72:8), “Let him rule from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth,” which Ibn Ezra acknowledges might be messianic.
6. **Zech. 11:17** – Radak cites Ibn Ezra’s view that the “eye” is a metaphor for wisdom and counsel in the phrase “a sword upon his arm and upon his right eye.” Radak stresses that despite his support for Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of that specific phrase, he rejects Ibn Ezra’s understanding of the historical context of this vision.
7. **Zech. 12:1** – Radak cites Ibn Ezra’s assertion that man is a microcosm of the universe, explaining why the prophet juxtaposed his descriptions of God as creator of the universe and creator of mankind: “Who stretched out the skies and made firm the earth and created man’s breath within him.”
8. **Zech. 13:7** – Radak cites Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of this prophecy as describing the period of the Messiah son of Joseph.
9. **Zech. 14:8** – Radak cites Ibn Ezra’s explanation of the significance of the “fresh waters” flowing specifically in the winter and summer seasons. In this case, Radak is citing comments that appear in *The Sabbath Epistle* (Goodman 7 and 9*) rather than Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Zechariah.

¹⁴² See my supercommentary *ad loc.* and my earlier discussion of Eliezer of Beaugency’s interpretation of Zech. 9:10 (p. 80 above).

10. **Zech. 14:9** – Radak cites Ibn Ezra’s claim that in the Messianic Era, the Tetragrammaton will be pronounced as it is written.

11. **Mal. 3:16** – Radak cites Ibn Ezra’s distinction between “those who revere the Lord” – whom Ibn Ezra identifies as “righteous individuals” – and “those who esteem His name,” whom Ibn Ezra describes as “men with wise hearts, individuals who know the secret of the glorious and awesome name.”

However, Ibn Ezra’s influence on Radak clearly extends beyond these eleven explicit citations. Indeed, throughout Radak’s biblical commentaries, he not only cites Ibn Ezra by name¹⁴³ but also presents many of Ibn Ezra’s interpretations without attribution,¹⁴⁴ in addition to absorbing some of his exegetical methods.¹⁴⁵ Several observations offer some perspective on how this level of influence compares to Radak’s other sources:

- In his commentaries to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, Radak cites Jonathan 138 times, “our Sages” (=Talmud and Midrash) 33 times, and his father (Joseph Kimḥi) 14 times. He also cites Maimonides (4 times) and Rashi (2 times), albeit less than he cites Ibn Ezra. Hence, to the extent that sheer quantity of citations reflects the significance that one attaches to a source, Ibn Ezra would rank fourth, far behind Jonathan and the Talmud and slightly behind Radak’s own father.

¹⁴³ For example, Lipshitz (ע' עיונים בלשונות הראב"ע) 9-36 compiled a list of explicit citations of Ibn Ezra in Radak’s writings. Melammed (מפרשי המקרא 741-743) notes that in addition to cases of Radak adopting Ibn Ezra’s exact interpretation, Radak relates to Ibn Ezra’s comments in a variety of ways, such as providing additional proofs for Ibn Ezra’s views, contrasting Ibn Ezra’s view to other exegetes (whether or not he agrees with Ibn Ezra), and even questioning Ibn Ezra’s version of the Masoretic text.

¹⁴⁴ Bromberg (הרד"ק כפרשן) compiled a list of over fifty cases in Psalms alone where Radak appears to share Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of a verse despite not citing Ibn Ezra by name.

¹⁴⁵ See, for example, Mordechai Cohen (*Three Approaches*) regarding terminology and methodology that Radak learned from Ibn Ezra with respect to the interpretation of metaphor.

- Presumably, however, quantity should not be the only metric for assessing influence. For example, while the above data places Ibn Ezra ahead of Maimonides and Rashi, one must consider that Maimonides did not write a commentary on these books, so those four citations come from a small number of passages in which Maimonides' writings discuss verses or concepts of relevance to our material. As for Rashi, much of his commentary comes from earlier rabbinic literature that Radak cites from its original sources.
- When assessing influence, one ideally wants to consider not just the quantity of citations but also whether the later exegete agrees or disagrees with the cited interpretations. However, this task proves challenging in the case of Radak, because he routinely cites multiple views without endorsing or rejecting them. Of the eleven cases above, the first one is the only case in which Radak clearly agrees with Ibn Ezra's personal view.
- Moreover, because Radak addresses both narrower issues of syntax and philology and larger thematic and theological issues, he can adopt Ibn Ezra's understanding of one word or phrase in a verse while simultaneously rejecting Ibn Ezra's assessment of how the phrase fits the broader context.

The most striking example of this is Zech. 9:10 (no. 5 above), where Radak cites Ibn Ezra's interpretation of the phrase "from sea to sea" in Psalms 72:8 in order to interpret the same phrase in Zechariah. But Ibn Ezra himself does not interpret the phrase in Zechariah that way. Such cases pose a challenge for assessing influence: On the one hand, Radak's use of Ibn Ezra's Psalms commentary seemingly points to Radak's reliance on Ibn Ezra. On the other hand, Radak is demonstrating

independence from Ibn Ezra by utilizing Ibn Ezra's Psalms commentary in order to undermine Ibn Ezra's own reading of Zech. 9.

- Additionally, Radak clearly adopts interpretations from Ibn Ezra even when not citing him by name, but quantifying this type of influence is even more challenging. These interpretations can be easily identified as Ibn Ezra's influence in cases where Radak employs the same phraseology and proof-texts as Ibn Ezra,¹⁴⁶ or when he cites an unusual interpretation that does not appear in other sources known to Radak.¹⁴⁷ It is much harder to characterize a comment as influenced by Ibn Ezra when an interpretation is shared by him and other exegetes known to Radak, especially Rashi. If Radak read an interpretation in both of their commentaries, it is often impossible to determine whether Radak was influenced specifically by the fact that Ibn Ezra endorsed it. Nevertheless, one occasionally sees Ibn Ezra's particular influence in these cases, when Radak employs phraseology or proof-texts that are unique to Ibn Ezra as opposed to Rashi or other exegetes.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ For example, Radak is bothered by the apparent redundancy in Hag. 2:14 – “So is this people (הָעָם), and so is this nation (הַגּוֹי).” He suggests that either the phrase indeed contains an otherwise superfluous stylistic repetition (הענין כפול במלות שונות) or “the people” (הָעָם) refers specifically to the priests. He undoubtedly learned the second possibility from Ibn Ezra, since it does not appear in earlier rabbinic sources (cf. my supercommentary for a similar interpretation from Yefet).

¹⁴⁷ For example, Radak is surely being influenced by Ibn Ezra when he explains that “the wailing at Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddon” (Zech. 12:11) refers to an event that was known to Zechariah's contemporaries but is no longer known to us. Rashi and earlier rabbinic exegetes interpreted this phrase as alluding to the deaths of Ahab and Josiah, so the parallel content makes it clear that Radak drew upon Ibn Ezra's commentary despite the fact that Radak does not cite even an anonymous source.

¹⁴⁸ For example, both Rashi and Ibn Ezra explain that the “man” of Zech. 1:8 was an angel. But only Ibn Ezra cites Dan. 9:21 (“the man Gabriel”) as a proof-text, and only Ibn Ezra asserts that all of God's actions in the world are done via angels. Hence, one can identify those elements as Ibn Ezra's influence despite the fact that other elements of Radak's exegesis of Zech. 1:8 conflict with Ibn Ezra (e.g., Radak's openness to a symbolic meaning for the horse's red color).

In another example, Ibn Ezra and Rashi agree that in the phrase אֶל הַיּוֹצֵר אֶדְרָה הַיְקָרָה (Zech. 11:13), both הַיּוֹצֵר and הַיְקָרָה allude to the Temple. Radak's comment that “the exegetes” (הַמְפָרְשִׁים) explained הַיּוֹצֵר as a variant of הַאֲצוּרָה (“the treasury”) refers to Rashi and some of Ibn Ezra's Andalusian predecessors (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*) but specifically excludes Ibn Ezra, who rejects their view. However, Radak adds that the preposition אֶל (“to”) serves “twice” (עוֹמֵד בְּמִקּוֹם שְׁנַיִם) – as if the verse read “to הַיּוֹצֵר [to] הַיְקָרָה.” Radak

In order to illustrate some of these challenges, consider the phenomenon of composite (מורכבת) verbs – verbs that appear to combine elements of two known vowel patterns or two roots. Radak observes three composite words in Zechariah – וְהִנִּיקָהּ (5:11), וְאֶסְעָרָם (7:14), and וְהוֹשִׁבוּתֵימָם (10:6). In two of these cases (5:11 and 10:6), Ibn Ezra also identifies the irregular word as composite; in the case of 7:14, Radak cites Ibn Ezra’s own understanding of וְאֶסְעָרָם as another possible interpretation of the word. Hence, Ibn Ezra could be viewed as heavily influencing Radak’s approach to these words. On the other hand, these words were all discussed by earlier grammarians, at least some of whom shared Ibn Ezra’s understanding of וְהִנִּיקָהּ and וְהוֹשִׁבוּתֵימָם (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). So when Radak labels those two words as composite and then cites multiple interpretations of וְאֶסְעָרָם, one could argue that he was influenced by Andalusian philological exegesis in general, not by Ibn Ezra in particular.

Moreover, as a matter of general methodology, Radak maintains that the text employs composite verb in order to convey both senses at once (e.g., active and passive). By contrast, Ibn Ezra and his Andalusian predecessors suffice with observing the linguistic phenomenon but do not argue that these words convey multiple meanings. So as much as the composite verbs prove Radak’s dependence on earlier philologists for identifying the phenomenon, they also demonstrate Radak’s independence by being the first exegete to insist that one explain how both components of the verb contribute to the meaning of the verse.

In conclusion, it appears from the above data that Radak attributed such great importance to rabbinic literature that he chose to cite it whenever it addresses the passage under discussion, regardless of whether he also offers an alternative *peshat* interpretation of

clearly learned this final point from Ibn Ezra’s comment that אֵל “serves for another” (תשרת בעבור אחרת), a common exegetical method of Ibn Ezra.

his own.¹⁴⁹ For this reason, he routinely concludes his analysis of a difficult passage with Jonathan's translation of it; Radak sees Jonathan as representing the early rabbinic tradition even when his translation does not comport with the text's plain sense (cf. Grunhaus 53-54, 62, and 175 n. 36). By contrast, Radak does not automatically cite Ibn Ezra – by name or anonymously – unless he thinks Ibn Ezra's interpretation is at least one possible interpretation of the text's plain sense (*peshat*). He adopts interpretations of Ibn Ezra in a broad range of areas (lexicography, etymology, syntax, theology¹⁵⁰), yet he completely ignores Ibn Ezra's interpretations when he deems them incorrect.¹⁵¹ It thus seems that Radak did not consider Ibn Ezra to be a source of religious authority in the way that Radak viewed earlier rabbinic literature. But he did consider Ibn Ezra – as a representative of the Geonic-Andalusian tradition – to be a valuable resource for reaching the correct philological-contextual and philosophical understanding of the text. Radak thus cites Ibn Ezra as long as Ibn Ezra's commentary furthered that goal in his eyes.

Tanḥum ha-Yerushalmi

As was the case with Radak, Ibn Ezra unquestionably influenced Tanḥum. Tanḥum occasionally cites Ibn Ezra by name,¹⁵² but Tanḥum was clearly influenced by him in a far

¹⁴⁹ Regarding the balance between Radak's independence as a *peshat* exegete and his acceptance of the Sages' religious authority, see the recent studies of Y. Berger (“*Peshat* and the Authority of *Hazal* in the Commentaries of Radak”) and Grunhaus. Their studies analyze the categories of exegesis in which Radak viewed the Sages' interpretations as authoritative, such as “cases involving potential *kabbalot* and issues of theological or halakhic consequence” (Berger 59). In our context, I am not arguing that Radak considered Jonathan's translations or other rabbinic interpretations to be binding but merely that his reverence toward the Sages drove him to routinely cite Jonathan just as he committed himself to citing homiletical rabbinic exegesis for the benefit of “those who love *derash*” (Radak's introduction to Joshua).

¹⁵⁰ See, for example, Zech. 12:1 (no. 7 above), as well as his citation of the Book of Creation regarding the symbolism of the number seven (Zech. 4:2), which was likely inspired by Ibn Ezra's commentary to that verse.

¹⁵¹ For example, in Hag. 1:1, Ibn Ezra maintains that Zerubbabel was Shealtiel's nephew, while Radak insists that he was Shealtiel's grandson. Radak never mentions that anyone viewed Shealtiel as Zerubbabel's uncle.

¹⁵² For example, commenting on Mic. 1:11, Tanḥum contrasts the views of Ibn Janaḥ and Ibn Ezra when discussing the difficult phrase *וְהָיָה מִכָּה עֲמֻדָתוֹ* (NJPS: “It will withdraw its support from you”). Perhaps due to the length of his analysis of their dispute, Tanḥum cites both Ibn Janaḥ and Ibn Ezra by name in that comment.

larger number of cases¹⁵³ and has even been referred to as “the Ibn Ezra of the East.”¹⁵⁴ At issue is whether Ibn Ezra deserves to be considered one of the greatest influences on Tanḥum, alongside two figures whom he revered: Ibn Janah and Maimonides.¹⁵⁵

In summarizing the similarities and differences between Ibn Ezra and Tanḥum, Tal writes that Tanḥum shares many of Ibn Ezra’s general characteristics – his intellectual capabilities, his brief writing style, his dedication to the plain sense of the text, his scientific-rationalistic attitude, and his mastery of Hebrew and Arabic (עיון מחודש, דרכי פרשנותו, 197-198, 18-19). On the other hand, when one examines the details of each exegete’s methodology more closely, Tal argues that Tanḥum’s philological approach is closer to Ibn Janah’s than Ibn Ezra’s. For example, Tal demonstrates that Tanḥum was far more willing than Ibn Ezra to interpret difficult words on the basis of Ibn Janah’s methods of *taqdir* (textual restoration),¹⁵⁶ metathesis, word replacement, *iddad* (words with 2 opposite meanings), transitive *nif’al* verbs, and interrupted construct forms. Tal concludes that the primary grammatical influences on Tanḥum were Ibn Janah and Ibn Balaam – in that order – with Ibn Ezra being a far less significant influence on him. Tal further observes that based on the tone

Tanḥum’s commentary to Minor Prophets also cites Ibn Ezra by name in Jon. 2:6 and 4:8. For additional examples from Tanḥum’s commentaries to other books of the Bible, see Poznanski (“Tanhoum Yerouschalmi” 134).

¹⁵³ Shy (פירוש תנחום בן יוסף הירושלמי) observes that at times, Tanḥum will cite an anonymous view (using the Judeo-Arabic word קיל) that corresponds to Ibn Ezra’s view. In addition, Tanḥum cites many earlier Andalusian exegetes and grammarians whom Ibn Ezra also cites. Since we do not know how available their original texts were to Tanḥum, Shy surmises that he might have used Ibn Ezra as the source for some of their material.

¹⁵⁴ For discussion of this appellation, see Poznanski (“Tanhoum Yerouschalmi” 135) and Tal (דרכי פרשנותו, 197).

¹⁵⁵ Shy (*ibid.* 19) translates a surviving fragment of Tanḥum’s introduction to Prophets (אלכליא) that refers to Maimonides and Ibn Janah as his two greatest sources of inspiration (in theology and philology, respectively). For further discussion of אלכליא, see Shy (“AlKulliyat”).

¹⁵⁶ As explained by Cohen (*Opening the Gates of Interpretation* 58-59), the Arabic term *taqdir* is an interpretive technique in which the exegetes “reconstructs” or “restores” a difficult verse by suggesting a more natural reading instead of the actual text. This new reading is not intended as an emendation of the biblical text but rather as a way to “decode” Scripture by reading the text *as if* it contained the replacement words or phrases. For lengthier discussion of this exegetical method, see Shy (“*Taqdir* and Its Counterparts in Mediaeval Judaeo-Arabic”) and Cohen (*ibid.* 58-61 and 399-400).

of each exegete's writings, Tanḥum's temperament appears to have been more restrained than Ibn Ezra's, because Tanḥum is far more respectful than Ibn Ezra when rejecting other interpretations. Even when the target of Tanḥum's criticism is a Karaite, he refrains from the harsh language for which Ibn Ezra is known.

Because Tanḥum rarely names his sources, it is difficult to obtain absolute data regarding the number of times that he is basing himself on a particular exegete. Nevertheless, a survey of his commentaries to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi leads to the following conclusions about his relationship with Ibn Ezra:

- When casually reading through Tanḥum's commentary, one gets the impression that Ibn Ezra was his most influential source. One can hardly read a verse of Tanḥum's commentary without him somehow engaging Ibn Ezra's commentary. Aside from cases in which Tanḥum clearly endorses or rejects Ibn Ezra's view (see below), he routinely cites Ibn Ezra's interpretations (anonymously) as one possible interpretation, without expressing a preference for any specific opinion. He also frequently adopts proof-texts or brief comments from Ibn Ezra without citing any dissenting views. As Shy observes, Tanḥum believed that each writer summarizes the material that he has before him from his predecessors and "continues to write from the point where his predecessor stopped" ("AlKulliyat" 538). By seeing himself as the next link in the chain of *peshat* exegesis in Muslims lands, it was only natural for Ibn Ezra's commentary to be Tanḥum's most significant source in terms of sheer volume of material. Although Tanḥum describes Ibn Janah and Maimonides as his primary sources of philology and philosophy, respectively (Shy, "AlKulliyat" 537), neither of them composed a verse-by-verse commentary on the Bible. Among

Tanḥum's sources, Radak was the one other verse-by-verse commentator who belonged to this *peshat* tradition, but his commentary also contains much midrashic material. Thus, it is not surprising that Tanḥum cites and appropriates much of Ibn Ezra's commentary.

It is virtually impossible to quantify the influence discussed in the previous paragraph: It depends on first tracing unsourced comments to Ibn Ezra specifically and then further assessing whether these comments merit being described as “influence” on Tanḥum. Consider the following problems:

1. Although Tanḥum proposes some completely original interpretations, much of his commentary resembles an anthology of earlier exegesis. Accordingly, Tanḥum routinely cites two or three interpretations to the same phrase – one of which comes from Ibn Ezra – without commenting on them or expressing a preference for any one of them. In such cases, did Ibn Ezra truly “influence” Tanḥum, or is Tanḥum simply compiling all the views that were available to him from earlier *peshat* exegesis?
2. In other cases, where Tanḥum seemingly presents his own view, a comparison to Ibn Ezra indicates that Tanḥum is essentially adopting Ibn Ezra's comment but modifying it slightly by citing a different proof-text¹⁵⁷ or by deviating from a specific detail of a longer comment.¹⁵⁸ In such cases, one could point

¹⁵⁷ For example, commenting on Zech. 5:8 both exegetes explain that pressing the leaden weight into the mouth serves as a metaphor for vanquishing evil. However, Ibn Ezra cites Ps. 107:42 as a proof-text (“The mouth of all wrongdoers is stopped”), while Tanḥum cites Job 5:16: “The mouth of wrongdoing is stopped.” It is difficult to know whether Tanḥum had a fundamental reason for preferring the latter verse.

¹⁵⁸ For example, according to many exegetes – including Ibn Ezra (Hag. 1:1) – Jehozadak and Ezra were brothers, so Joshua was Ezra's nephew. Ibn Ezra thus questions why Joshua received the high priesthood, rather than his uncle, Ezra. He suggests that because Jehozadak served in the First Temple (according to Ibn Ezra), his son was chosen for the high priesthood ahead of Ezra. Tanḥum adopts the same explanation, but

to the bulk of Tanḥum's comment as evidence of his reliance upon Ibn Ezra, or one could view Tanḥum's minor deviations as evidence of his independence from Ibn Ezra.

3. If Tanḥum adopts a view that Ibn Ezra cites from predecessors, such as Yefet or Ibn Chiquitilia, should this be viewed as Ibn Ezra's influence, since Tanḥum might have never known these interpretations if not for Ibn Ezra (cf. note 153 above)? What if Tanḥum is adopting a view that Ibn Ezra cites but rejects himself?¹⁵⁹
 4. If Radak and Tanḥum both adopt one of Ibn Ezra's interpretations, should it be viewed as Ibn Ezra's direct influence on Tanḥum, or must one consider the possibility that Radak's endorsement factored into Tanḥum's decision to adopt that interpretation?
- While Ibn Ezra's commentary might provide a larger quantity of material than other sources cited by Tanḥum, that fact does not undermine Tanḥum's own assertion that Ibn Janaḥ held a loftier status than Ibn Ezra in his eyes. When Ibn Ezra disagrees with Ibn Janaḥ, Tanḥum sides with the latter far more often than the former, as the following examples demonstrate:

Tanḥum adds that Ezra did become the high priest after Joshua's death, while Ibn Ezra implies that Ezra never became high priest.

¹⁵⁹ For example, in Zech. 8:6, Ibn Ezra cites Judah Halevi as interpreting God's exclamation as a question: "Shall it also be wondrous in My eyes?" Ibn Ezra himself interprets the verse as declarative (but allegorical): "It shall also be wondrous in My eyes." Tanḥum cites both views anonymously, but his source was certainly Ibn Ezra's commentary, since he cites the same proof-texts as Ibn Ezra for both interpretations. Tanḥum himself agrees with Halevi that the phrase is a rhetorical question. One could therefore argue that Tanḥum's comments on this verse are the result of Ibn Ezra's influence – since his entire discussion of the issue was taken from Ibn Ezra's commentary. On the other hand, Tanḥum ultimately disagrees with Ibn Ezra regarding the correct interpretation of the verse. (By contrast, Radak and Abarbanel also cite the same two readings of that phrase, but they both appear to prefer Ibn Ezra's own reading. Presumably, in this case, Ibn Ezra's influence on them must be considered greater than his influence on Tanḥum despite the fact that Tanḥum's entire comment to this verse comes from Ibn Ezra.)

1. In 3 cases where Ibn Ezra rejects Ibn Janah's exegetical substitutions of a problematic word with one that better fits the context, Tanḥum supports Ibn Janah's substitution:¹⁶⁰ Zech. 3:3 (replacing לְבַשׁ with לְוִבֵשׁ), Zech. 3:5 (replacing וְאָמַר with וַיֹּאמֶר), and Mal. 2:15 (replacing אֶל-תִּבְגְּדוּ with אֶל-יִבְגְּדוּ). One could add Zech. 11:13 to this list (replacing הַיּוֹצֵר with הָאוֹצֵר), but Ibn Ezra's rejection of the replacement with הָאוֹצֵר appears in his grammatical writings rather than his commentary to Zechariah.¹⁶¹
2. In at least 2 additional cases, Tanḥum prefers Ibn Janah's explanations of grammatical irregularities to Ibn Ezra's: the apparent gender disagreement between שָׂכַר and אֵינְנָה (Zech. 8:10) and the syntax of ה' לְמַלְכֵךְ (Zech. 14:16).¹⁶²
3. In at least 4 cases, Tanḥum prefers Ibn Janah's lexical interpretations to those of Ibn Ezra: the meaning of עַד in Hag. 2:19 ("also" versus "until"),¹⁶³ the meaning of גְּלֵה in Zech. 4:2 (a "basin" as opposed to a "stream"), the meaning of the root נָקָה in Zech. 5:3 ("punishment" as opposed to "exoneration"), and the meaning of צַעֲרִים in Zech. 13:7 ("prominent ones" as opposed to "tormenters").¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ I explain the rationale behind each substitution in my supercommentary to the relevant verse.

¹⁶¹ ההגנה, Oshri 93; cf. my supercommentary to Zech. 11:13.

¹⁶² In this case, Tanḥum cites both views but appears to indicate a preference for Ibn Janah's by presenting it without any attribution while introducing Ibn Ezra's with the word קִיל ("It has been said...").

¹⁶³ Ibn Janah does not address the meaning of עַד specifically in Hag. 2:19, but a comparison of Ibn Janah's analysis of עַד (השרשים 354) to Tanḥum's comments here and to Jon. 4:2 indicates that Tanḥum based his interpretation of עַד as "also" on Ibn Janah by citing Jon. 4:2 and Job 1:16-18 as his proof-texts. It is clear from Ibn Ezra's commentary to Job 1:16-18 that he rejects Ibn Janah's interpretation of עַד in that verse, too.

¹⁶⁴ In this case, Tanḥum does not explicitly reject Ibn Ezra's interpretation, but he praises Ibn Janah's interpretation as "the best" (אֶהְסֵן). As I discuss in my supercommentary to the oral commentary, Ibn Ezra's interpretation of צַעֲרִים is somewhat unclear in the standard commentary. However, the proof-text that Tanḥum cites for the interpretation of צַעֲרִים as "tormenters" matches the standard commentary's proof-text, so it clear that Tanḥum's source is Ibn Ezra.

4. At the same time, Tanḥum does not blindly follow Ibn Janah. In a small number of cases, he prefers Ibn Ezra's interpretations to those of Ibn Janah, such as Hag. 2:19¹⁶⁵ and Mal. 1:13 (regarding the meaning of וְהִפְחַתְתֶּם).
- Although Tal has shown that Tanḥum is less willing than Ibn Ezra to view irregular words as composite (מורכב),¹⁶⁶ one must not overstate Tanḥum's aversion to composite words. Tanḥum does accept the composite nature of both words in Zechariah that Ibn Ezra labels as composite: וְהִגִּיתָה (5:11) and וְהוֹשִׁבוּתֵימ (10:6), and both exegetes cite צִמְתוּהֲנִי (Ps. 88:17) as a proof-text for וְהִגִּיתָה. On the other hand, Tanḥum likely omits Ibn Ezra's other proofs (יִשְׁבֶּתָּ and מְקַנְנֶתָּ in Jer. 22:23) because he is skeptical of the view that they are composite rather than merely irregular (see Tal, דרכי פרשנותו 57-58).
 - When comparing Ibn Ezra's influence on Tanḥum to his influence on Radak, it seems Tanḥum was receptive to interpretations that Radak deemed controversial. In the following four cases, Tanḥum adopts interpretations of Ibn Ezra that Radak ignores, presumably because they made Radak uncomfortable:
 1. Tanḥum – like Ibn Ezra – cites Ibn Chiquitilia's claim that Haggai's promise of a “greater” Second Temple (Hag. 2:9) went unfulfilled because it was contingent upon the Jews' obedience to the prophets' exhortations. Tanḥum similarly appears far more willing than Radak to endorse Ibn Ezra's view that the vision beginning in Zech. 2:14 was intended for the Second Temple and not for the Messianic Era.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Tanḥum accepts Ibn Ezra's position that the prefix הַ of הַעוֹד is interrogative.

¹⁶⁶ דרכי פרשנותו 54-60; cf. Tal, עיון מחודש, 13-14.

¹⁶⁷ This latter example is not as clear cut as the earlier example. Ibn Ezra writes that the vision in Zech. 2:14-17 was “conditional, if Israel had assembled from all of the nations. But, in fact, they did not do so.” Radak writes

2. Tanḥum adopts Ibn Ezra's fundamental approach to Hag. 2:10-14 as a parable, rather than the widespread rabbinic view (shared by Radak) that it is a discussion about legal minutiae.¹⁶⁸
 3. Tanḥum appears to adopt Ibn Ezra's approach to the vision of Joshua in "filthy garments" (Zech. 3:2-3). He shares Ibn Ezra's interpretation of garments' symbolism, as well as Ibn Ezra's claim that the word עון connotes "punishment" rather than the widespread rabbinic view that the עון was the "sin" of Joshua's grandsons' intermarriage.¹⁶⁹
 4. Tanḥum appears to be the only medieval exegete besides Ibn Ezra to not explicitly associate Zechariah's vision in Zech. 6:1-8 with the four kingdoms of Daniel's visions.
- Overall, the limited chapters of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi do not provide a meaningful sample size of disagreements between Ibn Ezra and Radak in which Tanḥum unambiguously sides with one of them. One can find individual examples in which Tanḥum sides with Ibn Ezra against Radak,¹⁷⁰ as well as the reverse.¹⁷¹ In

that it "is possible" (יתכן) to interpret this passage as messianic, but he acknowledges shortly thereafter that the subsequent vision in Ch. 3 was intended for the Second Temple. Tanḥum cites both possibilities, but he refers to the messianic reading as "interpreting figuratively" (יתאול). It thus seems that although Radak does not wholeheartedly endorse the messianic reading, he avoids mentioning the possibility of the prophecy being conditional because he was theologically uncomfortable with a prophecy going unfulfilled. Tanḥum, too, does not explicitly mention that the prophecy is conditional, but he clearly believes that the plain sense of the text is that the prophecy was intended for Zechariah's own time.

¹⁶⁸ Tanḥum also agrees with Ibn Ezra's interpretations of many of the details of this parable.

¹⁶⁹ Tanḥum does also cite the latter interpretation of עון, but he labels it *derash* (employing the Hebrew term in his commentary's original Arabic), indicating that he does not consider it to be the text's plain sense.

¹⁷⁰ For example, Ibn Ezra and Radak (Hag. 1:1) debate the nature of Zerubbabel and Shealtiel's relationship (see note 151 above). Tanḥum adopts Ibn Ezra's view that Zerubbabel was Shealtiel's nephew and ignores Radak's view that he was Shealtiel's grandson.

¹⁷¹ For example, when discussing the writing on the flying scroll (Zech. 5:3), Ibn Ezra cites two views and endorses the second view:

And the meaning of **on the one side like it is: [Everyone] who has stolen has gone unpunished** was written **on the one side**, while **[everyone] who has sworn has gone**

- several of the cases where Tanḥum sides with Radak, their view was already suggested by earlier exegetes (e.g., Rashi).¹⁷² However, it is questionable whether the support of those earlier exegetes swayed Tanḥum in favor of Radak, since one can also find examples where Tanḥum sides with Ibn Ezra against Radak and earlier exegetes.¹⁷³ In several cases, there is no meaningful disagreement between Ibn Ezra and Radak, but some difference in nuance exists. Tanḥum frequently parallels Ibn Ezra in these situations, perhaps reflecting a closer affinity to him.¹⁷⁴
- Finally, Tanḥum’s commentary is not purely an anthology of earlier exegesis. In addition to the many cases where he sides with one exegete against another, he does sometimes offer his own view and reject the views of all his predecessors.¹⁷⁵ Hence, even those whom he most revered did not prevent him from subjecting their view to critical analysis, nor did they stifle his own creativity.

unpunished was on the second side. Alternatively, **both sides** [read]: **Everyone who has stolen and everyone who has sworn has gone unpunished, and that is correct.**

While Ibn Ezra prefers the second possibility, that each side of the scroll contained the full text, Radak interprets the verse in accordance with the first possibility that Ibn Ezra suggested but did not ultimately accept. Tanḥum cites both possibilities but rejects Ibn Ezra’s interpretation, because “the verse is distant from this” interpretation (ואללפט' בעיד ען הד'א).

¹⁷² For example, Tanḥum agrees with Rashi and Radak that Josiah was one of the men “who have come from Babylon” (Zech. 6:10).

¹⁷³ For example, Zech. 10:2 asserts: “For the teraphim spoke delusion, the augurs predicted falsely; and dreamers speak lies and console with illusions.” Rashi and Radak interpret this verse as referring to the false prophets who misled Israel by telling them that God would not punish or exile them. Ibn Ezra and Tanḥum maintain that Zechariah is referring to the prophets of the Gentile enemy, who wrongly predicted that they would vanquish Israel.

¹⁷⁴ For example:

1. **Hag. 2:6** – In the phrase, “It is small” (מַעַט הִיא), all three exegetes assume that the referent of “it” must be an implied feminine noun. Ibn Ezra and Tanḥum suggest the word פליאה (“a wonder”) as the implied noun, while Radak suggests the word טובה (“a good deed”).
2. **Mal. 2:3** – In the phrase, “It shall take you away to him,” all three exegetes agree that the verse is missing an implied noun, which is the referent of “it.” Ibn Ezra and Tanḥum add the noun האויב (“the enemy”), while Radak adds the noun העון (“sin”).

¹⁷⁵ For example, he rejects the explanations of both Ibn Janah and Ibn Ezra for the etymology of גַּעוֹר (Zech. 2:17) and suggests his own explanation (see my supercommentary *ad loc.*). In another example, he summarizes all of the previous interpretations of מַצְלוֹת (Zech. 14:20) but ultimately rejects all of their views and instead claims that the מַצְלוֹת were a type of military equipment that protected the horses’ heads in battle.

In sum, much of Tanḥum's commentary is compilatory in nature. Consequently, while Ibn Ezra's commentary constitutes a major portion of the material that Tanḥum incorporates into his commentary, quantifying the precise extent of Ibn Ezra's influence on Tanḥum is exceedingly challenging. Tanḥum undoubtedly considered Ibn Ezra to be an indispensable repository of *peshat* interpretations. But in cases where Ibn Ezra and other *peshat* exegetes disagree, Tanḥum normally grants primacy to the views of Ibn Janaḥ over Ibn Ezra. Regarding disagreements between Ibn Ezra and Radak, Tanḥum might favor Ibn Ezra more often, but a comprehensive study of a larger body of material would be required before one could reach any definitive conclusion. Moreover, Tanḥum was sufficiently independent that one can find cases in which he prefers Ibn Ezra's view to Ibn Janaḥ's, Radak's to Ibn Ezra's, or even where he offers an interpretation that contradicts all of his predecessors.

Chapter V: The Oral Commentary

As discussed above (p. 2) Ibn Ezra's exegesis to Minor Prophets can also be found in a second, shorter commentary, in addition to Ibn Ezra's widely-circulated "standard" commentary. I will be referring to the shorter commentary as the "oral commentary," following the electronic version of the HaKeter edition, in which it is called "Oral Commentary Handed Over to a Student" (פירוש בעל פה שנמסר לתלמיד). In the printed HaKeter edition and in Simon's edition of Hosea, Joel, and Amos, this commentary is referred to as the שיטה אחרת ("alternative approach"), and the electronic edition of this commentary at AlHatorah.org titles it אבן עזרא פירוש שני (Ibn Ezra, Second Commentary; <http://mg.alhatorah.org/Editions>). Of these possibilities, I have adopted "oral commentary" to highlight the fact that Ibn Ezra did not write the commentary himself. I have chosen not to capitalize "oral commentary" or "standard commentary," since neither is a formal title but rather a description. The complete oral commentary to Minor Prophets has only been printed once,¹⁷⁶ and my supercommentary is the first to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

When, labeling this commentary "oral," one must define the roles that Ibn Ezra and his student, respectively, played in the commentary's composition. Two theoretical models could characterize the relationship between teacher and student in this type of commentary:

¹⁷⁶ Simon published the oral commentary to Hosea, Joel, and Amos with a critical apparatus and supercommentary. The HaKeter edition printed the oral commentary to all of Minor Prophets for the first time but did not include a critical apparatus or supercommentary.

1. The teacher dictated the commentary directly to the student.¹⁷⁷ The student's role could be limited to transcription, or perhaps include some editorial work, such as adding short glosses for clarity. In either situation the commentary only differs from the teacher's own written commentaries to the extent that the student was guilty of human error (e.g., incorrect transcription or misinterpretation of what his teacher said). One could publish a work of this type with the teacher credited as the lead author and then subsequently note that a student participated in the process of transcription and/or editing.¹⁷⁸
2. The student studied a subject with his teacher and then wrote a commentary on that subject based on his teacher's lessons. Depending on a myriad of factors, this could lead to one of two conclusions:
 - a. Assuming the student understood the lessons properly and summarized them shortly thereafter, we would expect the content to closely parallel the teacher's own work, while the language and literary style would parallel the student's other writings.
 - b. In other cases – in extreme contrast to model no. 1 – the final product should be viewed as the student's own composition (albeit inspired by, or adapted

¹⁷⁷ Simon (שני פירושי ראב"ע) 269 suggest that Nathaniel b. Eli's Arabic commentary to Ecclesiastes fits this model, since Ibn Ezra's son, Isaac, implies that he recorded it directly "from [Nathaniel's] mouth" (שירייה, Schmelzer 45) in the same manner that Baruch b. Neriah describes his relationship to Jeremiah: "He himself recited all those words to me, and I would write them down in the scroll in ink" (Jer. 36:18; cf. Schmelzer, *ibid.* 131).

¹⁷⁸ Indeed, while the phenomenon of close students participating in the redaction of medieval commentaries may be best known among French exegetes (especially Rashi), Ibn Ezra's writings were not immune to it. In the colophon following the standard commentary to Malachi, Ibn Ezra's student acknowledges:

I, Joseph son of R. Jacob of Moudeville, copied it from the author's handwritten manuscript. I also added some explanation to his language, as he explained to me at the time of its composition.

Although Joseph claims to have marked his glosses, these markings were lost over time, so the standard commentary – which is primarily Ibn Ezra's own writing – now contains several glosses. In one case that is discussed in my supercommentary (Hag. 1:6), it appears that a gloss from Joseph of Moudeville (or a subsequent scribe) misunderstood the intent of Ibn Ezra's comment.

from, his teacher's lessons). For example, if a long time elapsed before the student committed the lessons to writing, then his own ideas might have colored his memories of the lessons. Moreover, depending on the student's own abilities, even a student who promptly commits his teacher's lessons to writing might misunderstand or misrepresent his teacher's thoughts. When printing a medieval commentary of this type, it would be appropriate to label it "Student of _____" if the student's name is unknown,¹⁷⁹ rather than publishing it as the teacher's commentary.

It appears that the oral commentary fundamentally conforms to model 2.a. The terminology and style of the commentary differ greatly from Ibn Ezra's own commentaries (see below), so the oral commentary certainly does not fit the first model. On the other hand, the overwhelming majority of its interpretations are consistent with the standard commentary, such that – with some notable exceptions to be discussed below – it faithfully represents Ibn Ezra's teachings. Hence, a label such as "Ibn Ezra's short/second commentary" would wrongly imply that it is Ibn Ezra's own commentary, but a label such as "Student of Ibn Ezra" would also be misleading.

According to the colophon (printed in Simon, שני פירושי ראב"ע, 269), the oral commentary's author describes it as "transmitted from the mouth" of (הועתק מפי) Ibn Ezra. While הועתק in Modern Hebrew would mean "copied" and thus imply that Ibn Ezra dictated

¹⁷⁹ Talmud scholars are familiar with the medieval Talmud commentaries known as "Student of Ramban" or "Student of Rashba." The HaKeter edition has similarly published a commentary to the end of Minor Prophets (Habakkuk through Malachi) under the title "Student of Rabbi Isaiah of Trani" (abbreviated in my supercommentary as "Student of Trani").

the commentary verbatim (like model 1 above), the word is more equivocal in Medieval Hebrew and could connote a form of transmission consistent with 2.a above, too.¹⁸⁰

In addition to the colophon's clear statement that Ibn Ezra did not write this commentary himself, several features distinguish it from Ibn Ezra's own writings:

1. Its terminology differs from the standard commentary. For example, it introduces proof-texts with the word דמיון (“similar”) instead of עד (literally, “witness” but connoting proof), and it uses פירוש instead of טעם when introducing its explanation of a word's meaning.
2. The oral commentary frequently cites multiple views anonymously, with the phrase יש מפרשים (“some explain”), without explaining which view the author prefers.¹⁸¹ The phenomenon of citing multiple views without expressing a preference is not unheard of in the standard commentary,¹⁸² but the standard commentary is less consistent with its terminology (sometimes using יש מפרשים and sometimes using יש אומרים). More importantly, in the standard commentary, it is more common for Ibn Ezra to cite and reject a predecessor's view in favor of his own (or another predecessor's) view than to cite two views without taking sides.¹⁸³
3. As Simon has noted (ראב"ע - הפירוש הקצר לתורה), the oral commentary is significantly shorter than Ibn Ezra's own commentary (see chart below). Its brevity is twofold:

¹⁸⁰ See examples of the verb העתיק cited in Ben-Yehuda (מלון הלשון העברית) (4792).

¹⁸¹ Zech. 2:16, 2:17, 14:15, 14:16, and 14:21. In Zech. 3:1 and 5:1, the oral commentary similarly cites multiple anonymous views, but he does express a preference for one of them. Ironically, in the case of 3:1 (regarding the identity of Joshua's “adversary”), the oral commentary endorses the view that the standard commentary rejects.

¹⁸² See Zech. 9:11 and Mal. 2:5.

¹⁸³ For example, Zech. 3:3 (regarding the meaning of עון), 3:4 (regarding the referent of “him”), 5:1 (regarding the meaning of עִפָּה), and 9:9 (regarding the identity of the “king”); Mal. 1:1 (regarding Malachi's identity and historical background).

- a. It skips entire units of the biblical text, while the standard commentary seems to only skip verses that Ibn Ezra considers straightforward. In some cases, the oral commentary ignores passages to which the standard commentary devotes much attention.¹⁸⁴
- b. For the verses that it does address, the comments are brief, frequently rewriting the verse with a mix of its own words and the author's paraphrase, such that the paraphrase elucidates the meaning of a difficult phrase in the original verse. In certain cases, this writing style may have led the editors of the HaKeter edition to mistake interpretive paraphrases for variant readings of the biblical text.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ For example, the oral commentary skips Hag. 2:8-11 even though the standard commentary discusses 2:9 at great length due to the seeming inaccuracy of the prediction that the Second Temple would be “greater” than the First Temple. The oral commentary similarly skips the first seven verses of Zech. 2, completely ignoring the vision of the four horns and the craftsmen.

¹⁸⁵ In five cases that I observed, the HaKeter edition prints a word in bold, as if it is part of the lemma that Ibn Ezra is citing from the verse, and then adds a parenthetical remark contrasting that word with the standard Masoretic text. The implication of these parenthetical remarks is that the word in the oral commentary is a variant reading of the biblical text rather than a paraphrase:

1. **Zech. 3:7** – The oral commentary cites the verse as, “If you walk in My paths and keep My charge, *and if* (ואם) you will rule My House *and if* (ואם) you will guard My courts.” The verse itself reads “and also” (וגם) in both places where the oral commentary reads ואם. The HaKeter edition prints the first ואם in bold, as if it is a variant reading of the biblical text. More likely, the oral commentary was consciously paraphrasing the verse in order to highlight that the subsequent phrase is part of the protasis (cf. my supercommentary).
2. **Zech. 12:10** – The oral commentary replaces the word אָלַי (“unto Me”) with אֵלָיו (“unto Him”). In this case, Kennicott cites dozens of Masoretic witnesses with the variant reading אֵלָיו, so the oral commentary's interpretation might indeed be based on that variant. But given the exegetical difficulty with the reading of אָלַי (cf. my supercommentary), it is also possible that the oral commentary paraphrases it as אֵלָיו as a way of identifying the suffix's referent.
3. **Zech. 13:8** – In the phrase “shall perish and shall die,” the oral commentary adds a conjunctive ו that is absent from standard editions of the Masoretic text (יִכָּרְתוּ וַיָּגוּעוּ instead of יִכָּרְתוּ וַיָּגוּעוּ). The HaKeter edition prints the conjunctive ו in bold as if it is part of the lemma and then adds that it is missing in Masoretic Bibles. Indeed, the extra ו is attested in some witnesses of the Masoretic text (cf. Kennicott), so it could be that the author of the oral commentary saw that reading in a Masoretic Bible. But it is also entirely possible that the oral commentary added the ו for clarity.
4. **Mal. 2:3** – The oral commentary writes, “And he shall carry you to Me” (אֵלַי), instead of the Masoretic text: “And he/it shall carry you to him/it” (אֵלָיו). It is resolving an exegetical difficulty with the third-person pronoun, as my supercommentary explains.
5. **Mal. 2:15** – The oral commentary employs a second-person verb, “So be careful of your life-breath, and *do not deal treacherously* (אל תבגוד) with the wife of your youth.” Standard Masoretic Bibles read אל תבגוד, with a third-person verb (KJV: “let none deal treacherously”). In this case, both the oral commentary and the Masoretic text have some witnesses that present a different reading, but I argue in

Regarding the respective lengths of the two commentaries, consider this data:

| HEBREW WORDS PER COMMENTARY¹⁸⁶ | | |
|--|-----------------|---------------------|
| | Oral Commentary | Standard Commentary |
| Haggai | 352 | 1,618 |
| Zechariah | 3,517 | 7,726 |
| Malachi | 1,122 | 1,953 |
| Total | 4,991 | 11,297 |

Disagreements between the Oral and Written Commentaries

In order to further study the relationship between the oral and standard commentaries, it is instructive to examine cases in which they disagree. After listing these cases, I attempt to determine whether they reflect changes in Ibn Ezra's thought or differences between the nature of the two commentaries.

I have identified approximately 30 cases in which the two commentaries differ in their interpretation of passages in Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The identification of these differences or contradictions is not an exact science: While some cases entail blatant contradictions, others are more nuanced and could potentially be interpreted in a manner that would bridge the gap between them. I have sorted these cases in a manner that calls attention to the earlier sources that seem to be guiding the oral commentary.

the supercommentary that it is plausible, if not likely, that the oral commentary is following earlier Andalusian grammarians. They argued that although the Masoretic text reads אֵל יִבְגֵד, it should be interpreted through the method of exegetical substitution *as if* it read אֵל תִּבְגֵד.

¹⁸⁶ For these purposes, I counted all words in the body of my Hebrew critical edition. The numbers for both commentaries are lower if one removes all chapter and section titles, and the numbers could also vary slightly from one edition to another due to textual variants. Nevertheless, even if one treats these numbers as estimates, they clearly demonstrate the extent to which the oral commentary is shorter.

When the Oral Commentary Follows Early Rabbinic Sources

1. **Zech. 3:1-4** – The oral commentary accepts the widespread rabbinic view that Joshua’s “filthy garments” and “sin” (עון) represent his descendants’ intermarriages. The standard commentary argues that Joshua could not be held responsible for his grandsons’ future sins. His garments instead symbolize exile, and עון means his “punishment” rather than “sin.”
2. **Zech. 6** – The oral commentary interprets the vision of the four chariots based on Daniel’s visions of the four kingdoms (as many exegetes interpret it), while the standard commentary interprets it as a critique of Jews who remained in Babylonia.
3. **Zech. 7:2** – The oral commentary assumes that Bethel is the name of a city, while the standard commentary claims that Bethel was the name of a person. The oral commentary’s view is shared by Jonathan (as well as Rashi and Joseph Kara).
4. **Zech. 9:4** – The oral commentary interprets יורשנה as “He will expel her” (יגרשנה), while the standard commentary interprets it as “He will cause [Israel] to inherit her.” The oral commentary’s interpretation conforms more closely to Jonathan’s translation (מתריך לה).
5. **Zech. 9:12** – The oral commentary interprets the word משנה as “double,” in the sense of God repaying them a double reward. That interpretation parallels Jonathan, who describes how the people will receive twice the amount of good that God had promised them (דעל חד תרין בטבון דאמרית לכון). The standard commentary interprets משנה as “second,” meaning that God will send a “second announcer” (מגיד משנה) with more good tidings.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁷ The standard commentary’s interpretation bears some similarity to Rashi and Joseph Kara. Both Rashi and Joseph Kara interpret משנה as “second,” but they differ from each other and from Ibn Ezra regarding the syntax

6. **Zech. 11:1-3** – The oral commentary interprets Zech. 11:1-3 as predicting the destruction of the Second Temple (see p. 114 below). This interpretation might be rooted in a rabbinic tradition that interprets “Lebanon” as an allusion to the Temple in several verses, including Zech. 11:1. The standard commentary interprets Zech. 11:1-3 as envisioning the end of the Hasmonean dynasty.
7. **Zech. 12:11** – Following Jonathan and other rabbinic sources, the oral commentary interprets “the wailing at Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddon” as an allusion to the deaths of Ahab and Josiah, while the standard commentary writes that “it is the manner of *derash* for [**Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddon**] to be an allusion to Ahab and Josiah.” The standard commentary instead argues that these proper nouns allude to prominent families who were known in Zechariah’s time.
8. **Mal. 2:15** – The oral commentary interprets the phrase הַיְהוָה אֵלֵינוּ as, “Did not *the One* create [us]” (with “one” alluding to God), while the standard commentary interprets it as, “And not one [Jew] has behaved [properly].” A midrashic reading interprets “one” as referring to God and thus might have inspired the oral commentary’s interpretation (*Sifra* to Lev. 18:2), although the context of the midrashic interpretation is quite different.¹⁸⁸

of the verse (see p. 62 above). Due to the differences between them, one cannot assume that Ibn Ezra necessarily developed his new interpretation based on the French exegetes’ influence, although such a possibility cannot be ruled out.

¹⁸⁸ The passage in *Sifra* imagines a debate between Moses and the Israelites - which repeats itself in Malachi’s time – about the merits of religious prohibitions against illicit sexual relations. In order to render this imagined dialogue comprehensible, it cites the verses from Malachi out of order and also claims that the speaker changes in the middle of Mal. 2:15. Neither commentary of Ibn Ezra is compatible with those assumptions.

When the Oral Commentary Follows Earlier *Peshat* Exegetes

In the following cases, the standard commentary presents an original interpretation, while the oral commentary appears to agree with earlier *peshat* exegesis – especially the views of Ibn Janah. (Detailed analysis and references for each example appear in the supercommentary *ad loc.*)

9. **Hag. 1:9** – As discussed above (p. 63), the oral commentary interprets the verbs of this verse as future tense, as a warning to the people about the future: If they do not obey Haggai’s directives, “Know that you will expect **much and get little**, and even that little, when you bring it **home, I will blow (נָ פָקַחְתִּי) on it.**” That interpretation is consistent with the future-tense verbs in Yefet’s Arabic translation: “You will bring” (ותדכ'ליון), and, “I will blow” (ואנפך'). According to the standard commentary, however, the verbs should be interpreted as past tense, describing how their current, dire economic situation is a consequence of their failure to rebuild the Temple – “You looked for **much**, and **when you brought** it into your homes, **I would blow (נָ פָקַחְתִּי) on it...** Why was it like this? Because of **My House which lies in ruins.**” This interpretation resembles Joseph Kara’s, but with significant enough variations that Ibn Ezra likely developed it himself (see p. 63 above).
10. **Hag. 2:19** – The oral commentary interprets the verse as declarative: “**The seed is still (הַעוֹד) in the storehouse** and has not been planted.” The standard commentary interprets the same phrase as a rhetorical question: “The ה [of הַעוֹד] is interrogative... The seed was planted in the ground.” Hence, it would translate the phrase as: “Is the seed still in the storehouse?” The oral commentary’s declarative interpretation was proposed by Ibn Janah.

11. **Zech. 5:3** – The oral commentary appears (based on its proof-text) to interpret נקה as connoting punishment (“shall be swept away”), while the standard commentary interprets נקה as connoting exoneration (“has gone unpunished”). The oral commentary’s interpretation corresponds to the view of Ibn Janah (and possibly Saadiah), while the standard commentary adopts the view of Ibn Saruk.
12. **Zech. 8:6** – The oral commentary interprets the phrase גם בעיני יפלא as a question: “*Shall it* be wondrous in My eyes?” In the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra attributes this interpretation to Judah Halevi but adds that Halevi’s interpretation “is not necessary,” since the phrase can be interpreted as declarative – “*It shall* be wondrous in My eyes” – without contradicting reason.
13. **Zech. 12:6** – Regarding the phrase “like a כּיור of fire,” a cryptic comment in the oral commentary seems to interpret כּיור as a firebrand or firepan, while the standard commentary interprets כּיור as a stove. Ibn Janah interprets it as a firebrand (קבס in Judeo-Arabic, אור in Judah Ibn Tibbon’s translation), so the oral commentary might be based on his view.
14. **Zech. 14:16** – Ibn Janah interprets the word לְמֶלֶךְ as an absolute noun, so the phrase לְמֶלֶךְ הַ צְבָאוֹת is rendered “to the King, Lord of Hosts.” The standard commentary interprets the phrase as a construct chain referring to the human Messiah – “the [chosen] king *of* the Lord of Hosts” – as does Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Psalms (2:6). The oral commentary cites both views without expressing a preference for one over the other.

15. **Mal. 2:15** – Both Ibn Janah and the oral commentary substitute the second-person verb תבגד for the third-person verb יבגד, while the standard commentary seeks a third-person subject for יבגד. This example will be discussed in greater detail below.

Other Discrepancies between the Commentaries

In some cases, the two commentaries disagree – or at least differ regarding some nuance – but there is no obvious source for the oral commentary’s view among Ibn Ezra’s predecessors:

16. **Zech. 1:8** – The oral commentary assumes that angels were mounted on all the horses, while the standard commentary stipulates that only the initial red horse with a “mounted man” had a rider.
17. **Zech. 2:16** – Regarding the ambiguous phrase וַיִּנְחַל ה' אֶת יְהוּדָה חֶלְקוֹ, both commentaries seem to cite interdependent disputes regarding the valency of וַיִּנְחַל and the antecedent of the possessive suffix of חֶלְקוֹ. However, as my supercommentary discusses, the two commentaries differ regarding their presentation of one of the views. The standard commentary cites two interpretations of the phrase that are both widely attested among Ibn Ezra’s predecessors. The passage in the oral commentary contains textual issues that make its exact meaning unclear. It is possible that the oral commentary is presenting the same two views, but its author simply misunderstood one of the views that Ibn Ezra taught him. Otherwise, the oral commentary is presenting a view that is not found elsewhere in known medieval exegetical texts.
18. **Zech. 5:5-11 and Zech. 11:4-17** – According to the oral commentary, the vision of the ephah (5:5-11) was directed against the Babylonian Empire, while the standard commentary interprets the vision as chastising Babylonian Jews who chose to remain

there and not return to Jerusalem. This fundamental difference leads to differences regarding the symbolism of specific elements of the vision, such as the two winged women. Regarding the vision of the shepherd and the two staffs (11:4-17), the oral commentary interprets it in light of the destruction of the two First-Temple kingdoms, with the two staffs representing Israel and Judah. The standard commentary interprets this vision as foretelling Second-Temple events, with the staffs symbolizing Zerubbabel and Nehemiah.

I have grouped these two discrepancies together because they seemingly hinge upon the same methodological issue: Ibn Ezra's introduction to the standard commentary insists that Zechariah's visions predict the future rather than reflecting upon the past. In order to illustrate his position, he attacks French rabbis who interpreted the visions "as referring to events that had already occurred by this prophet's time, like Judah being exiled to Babylon due to 'the ephah.'" He further attacks these unnamed French rabbis for claiming that the "two staffs" represent Israel and Judah. The oral commentary thus seems to contradict the principle that Zechariah's visions are predictive when interpreting the two prophecies that the standard commentary used to illustrate this principle.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁹ One might counter that Ibn Ezra's underlying objection to the French exegetes was that their interpretations render Zechariah's vision irrelevant to Zechariah's generation. Unlike the exile of Jerusalem to Babylonia, the fall of Babylonia to Persia occurred much closer to Zechariah's time (nineteen years before the vision, according to Ibn Ezra's calculations). Hence, if the vision of the ephah depicts the fall of Babylonia, it might have felt relevant to Zechariah's audience, whose older members would have remembered that event. Nevertheless, a simple reading of Ibn Ezra's introduction leads to the conclusion that he considered these visions to be predictive, which is incompatible with the oral commentary's interpretation of the ephah.

As for the vision of the two staffs, the standard commentary's introduction specifically criticizes French rabbis for writing that "they are Israel and Judah." In truth, when the oral commentary presents its argument for interpreting the two staffs as Israel and Judah, it is somewhat sensitive to Ibn Ezra's belief that these visions are predictive, "What Zechariah saw [applied] to the past *and to the future*. [God] showed him that this happened to Israel in the past *and it would befall them thus in the future*" (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Nevertheless, in light of the standard commentary's insistence that these visions referred to "the future

19. **Zech. 4:7** – The oral commentary implies that “the top stone” is the top stone of the Temple structure, while the standard commentary indicates that it is the stone from Zechariah’s earlier vision (cf. Ibn Ezra to Zech. 3:9) and the plumb line of 4:10. The latter view is partially shared by Rashi and Joseph Kara (see p. 61 above).
20. **Zech. 6:15** – The oral commentary implies that the “men from far away” who will assist with the Temple’s reconstruction are Gentiles, while the standard commentary stipulates (like several other exegetes) that they are Israelite exiles.
21. **Zech. 10:11** – According to the oral commentary, when Zechariah prophesies, “[A wind of] affliction shall pass over the sea and shall stir up waves in the sea; and all the deeps of the Nile shall dry up,” he intends “the sea” and “the Nile” as metaphors for the kings of Assyria and Egypt.¹⁹⁰ These metaphors correspond to the continuation of the verse: “Down shall come the pride of Assyria, and the scepter of Egypt shall pass away.” The standard commentary, however, argues that the sea and the Nile River will literally dry up in order to facilitate the return of Jewish exiles on foot.
22. **Zech. 12:10** – In the problematic phrase וְהָבִיטוּ אֵלַי אֶת אֲשֶׁר-דָּקְרוּ (literally, “And they shall look unto Me whom they have pierced”), the oral commentary understands that people will look אֵלַי – unto *him* (=Messiah son of Joseph). The standard commentary maintains that they will “look unto Me” (=God) in order to see how God reacts to the death of the pierced Messiah son of Joseph.

during the prophet’s time” and its explicit rejection of the symbolism of the two staffs as the two kingdoms, the standard and oral commentary’s respective interpretations of these visions seem to be irreconcilable.

¹⁹⁰ The claim that this verse is a metaphor can be traced as far back as Jonathan, but the specific metaphor suggested by the oral commentary does not appear in earlier rabbinic commentaries. One wonders whether the oral commentary’s interpretation might have its roots in Ibn Chiquitilia’s lost commentary. He tended to interpret prophecies metaphorically when that enabled him to claim that they were already fulfilled and thus are not messianic (see Simon, “Ibn Ezra between Medievalism and Modernism” 260, and my discussion below, p. 123ff.).

23. **Zech. 14:3** – The standard commentary adopts the widespread rabbinic interpretation of the “day of battle” as an allusion to the splitting of the Red Sea, but the oral commentary interprets it as alluding to Joshua’s conquest of Canaan.

24. **Mal. 2:3** – In the phrase, “And he/it shall take you away to him/it” (וְנִשָּׂא אֶתְכֶם אֵלָיו), the oral commentary maintains that God is the antecedent of both pronouns (see note 185 above). The standard commentary claims that the pronouns refer to an unnamed enemy.

In the aforementioned cases, it is difficult to know if the oral commentary’s interpretation was original to Ibn Ezra or perhaps derived from a source that has not survived. In addition to the above examples, there are several additional cases in which the two commentaries might contradict each other, but one or both commentaries are sufficiently cryptic that one could potentially read them as consistent with one another.¹⁹¹

In light of the above data, one could seemingly explain the contradictions between the two commentaries in one of the following ways:

1. Ibn Ezra changed his mind about these issues over the course of the 11-12 years that elapsed after he taught the author of the oral commentary until he wrote his own commentary.
2. In the vast majority of cases, Ibn Ezra did not change his mind. At the time of the oral commentary’s compilation, Ibn Ezra’s personal views were similar to what he

¹⁹¹ For example, Zech. 7:14 (regarding the tense of וְאֶקְעָרֶם), 9:1 (multiple ambiguities of syntax), 9:2 (regarding the antecedent of בָּהּ), 14:4 (regarding the direction in which the Mount of Olives will split), 14:6 (regarding the meaning of קַפְאוֹן), and 14:13 (regarding the contextual meaning of וְעֵלְתָהּ); and Mal. 3:14 (regarding the meaning of קִדְרָנִית). Each case is discussed in my supercommentary.

would eventually write in the standard commentary, but the oral commentary nevertheless deviates from his personal views for one of these reasons:¹⁹²

- a. The oral commentary does not always faithfully represent Ibn Ezra's lessons. In some cases, the student who compiled the oral commentary either misunderstood his teacher or consciously edited the material. When Ibn Ezra presented hypothetical possibilities or views of his predecessors, the student either mistook these views for Ibn Ezra's personal opinions or decided to attribute more weight to these views than his teacher did.
- b. The student faithfully recorded Ibn Ezra's lessons, but Ibn Ezra taught these lessons in a different way than he wrote his commentaries.

Logically, the first possibility probably explains some examples but is unlikely to explain all of them. As a lifelong learner, Ibn Ezra undoubtedly rethought issues over time, and one can find other examples of his later writings interpreting a verse differently than his earlier writings.¹⁹³ However, by the time he reached Italy, he was already a middle-aged adult whose opinions would have largely been formed. It therefore seems unlikely that all of these contradictions can be explained by Ibn Ezra changing his mind before writing the standard commentary.

¹⁹² Cf. the comments of Uriel Simon (ראב"ע - הפירוש הקצר לתורה), attempting to explain the tendency of both the oral commentary to Minor Prophets and the fragmentary oral commentary to Genesis to skip entire passages (my own translation):

It is possible that in the oral commentaries, the instructor-exegete adapted himself to the interests of the student who was sitting in front of him, just as it is possible that the student-recorder skipped that which did not interest him.

¹⁹³ For example, as Harvey has shown (הדיבר הראשון 205-209), Ibn Ezra repeatedly revised his view regarding whether the opening verse of the Decalogue ("I am the Lord your God...") should be considered an "utterance" and/or a "commandment" (cf. both commentaries to Exod. 20:2; Deut. 5:6; and יסוד מורא, Cohen and Simon 147).

In order to further challenge the first possibility, one would ideally like to find cases in which Ibn Ezra's own early writings address the points of disagreement between the oral and standard commentaries to Minor Prophets. To the extent that those early writings agree with the standard commentary, they would undermine the possibility that Ibn Ezra only developed certain opinions later in life.

In the aforementioned example of the word יִבְגֵּד in Mal. 2:15 (no. 15 above; cf. note 185), Ibn Ezra addresses the same issue in his commentary to Ruth (4:4) and in his defense of Saadia from Dunash (ההגנה, Oshri 94). In both works, he cites earlier grammarians (Ibn Janaḥ and Dunash, respectively) who claimed that the third-person verb יִבְגֵּד should be interpreted as if it were a second-person verb, תִּבְגֵּד. In both works, Ibn Ezra firmly rejects their view as “impossible” (Ruth 4:4) or “a major error” (ההגנה *ibid.*),¹⁹⁴ and he instead adopts the same interpretation that he would later write in the standard commentary to Malachi: The subject of יִבְגֵּד is the word רִוּחְכֶּם (“your spirit”) from earlier in the verse.¹⁹⁵ According to Sela and Freudenthal (20, 28-30), Ibn Ezra composed both works in Italy (probably in Lucca) during the same three-year period in which the oral commentary was written (1142-1145). It therefore seems likely that Ibn Ezra interpreted יִבְגֵּד consistently throughout his writing career, since two of his Italian works are in complete agreement with the standard commentary from over a decade later in Rouen. Hence, one must question why the oral commentary follows Dunash and Ibn Janaḥ's view. Presumably, Ibn Ezra taught their view to his student. It is possible that Ibn Ezra explained that he completely rejects the view, but the student misunderstood or willfully ignored the latter point. Alternatively, when

¹⁹⁴ His harsh language is due to his rejection of the underlying methodology of “substituting” one word for another. For an analysis of that methodology and Ibn Ezra's rejection of it, see Perez, חילוף מלה בזולתה.

¹⁹⁵ For further explanation of this interpretation, see my supercommentary *ad loc.*

teaching a student for whom Andalusian *peshat* exegesis was new, Ibn Ezra made an effort to explain the methodology of “substitution” that was prevalent among his predecessors (see note 194) and, despite his own distaste for this method, he did not convey to the student the extent to which he disapproved of it. Hence, the student was being faithful to Ibn Ezra’s lesson, which differed from Ibn Ezra’s personal view.

In a second example, the phrase “a path for the thunderstorms” (לְהַזִּיז קָלוֹת) appears twice in Job (28:26 and 38:25). Commenting on both occurrences, Ibn Ezra cites the word קָזְזִיזִים from Zech. 10:1 as evidence for the meaning of לְהַזִּיז, which he interprets (in Job 38:25) as “strong sounds” (קולות תקיפים). That comment clearly indicates that in his view קָזְזִיזִים means “thunder” rather than “lightning.” The standard commentary to Zech. 10:1 cites the phrase קָזְזִיזִים קָלוֹת from Job as a proof-text to explain Zechariah’s word קָזְזִיזִים. Presumably the standard commentary still maintains that קָזְזִיזִים in Zech. 10:1 means “thunder.”¹⁹⁶ However, the oral commentary employs a foreign word, פּוֹלִי, to interpret קָזְזִיזִים, which likely intends the Latin word for lightning (*fulmen* or *fulgur*). Thus, one finds that Ibn Ezra’s own commentaries to Job and Zechariah share a consistent interpretation of קָזְזִיזִים, despite being written over a decade apart.¹⁹⁷ Yet the oral commentary offers a slightly different interpretation. One could imagine how the line between lightning and thunder was blurred in an oral lesson that focused on other aspects of the chapter and provided a one-word definition of קָזְזִיזִים in a language that was not Ibn Ezra’s native tongue.

¹⁹⁶ The standard commentary’s interpretation cannot be proven conclusively, however, because it does not comment on the meaning of קָזְזִיזִים beyond offering a proof-text from Job. Consequently, if Ibn Ezra had changed his mind regarding the meaning of the word in Job, then he could maintain that the word קָזְזִיזִים means “lightning” in both Job and Zechariah.

¹⁹⁷ Ibn Ezra completed his commentary to Job in Rome no later than 1142 (Sela and Freudenthal 25).

Ibn Ezra's commentaries to Mal. 1:11 offer an additional way to assess the difference between his writing and his oral lessons. Like most exegetes, Ibn Ezra is bothered by the seemingly false depiction of (presumably pagan) Gentiles as faithful worshipers of the Lord: "Everywhere incense and pure oblation are offered to My name; for My name is honored among the nations." The oral commentary explains: "**My name is honored among the nations** everywhere *as if* they perform incense and offering **to My name.**" The standard commentary explains the verse as hypothetical – "*Had I commanded, they would have offered.*" One might argue that these two interpretations are fundamentally similar (interpreting the verse as hypothetical), but an apparent gloss to the standard commentary (presumably from Joseph of Moudeville) highlights the subtle difference between them:

Later, the rabbi and sage told me a very sound interpretation of this verse... that throughout the inhabited world, **from where the sun rises to where it sets, My name is great among the nations** and honored, so throughout the world this matter – that they honor and exalt **My name** – is deemed in My eyes *as if everywhere* they were bringing to Me – **to My name** – every sanctified and **offered** item that befits My honor, **and pure oblation.**

This gloss emphasizes that the Gentiles' respect for God is expressed not by what they *would* theoretically offer Him but by the fact that they *do* "honor and exalt" His name, unlike the Jews who treat Him with disdain. While the nature of this honor – as presented in the oral commentary and the gloss – is quite vague, it is likely based on the Talmud's comment (citing this verse) that even pagan Gentiles acknowledge that there is a supreme "God of gods" (אלהא דאלהא; bMen. 110a). While it may not be clear why Ibn Ezra offered a slightly different interpretation in his written commentary, it is noteworthy that both the

student who wrote the oral commentary in Italy and the student who copied the standard commentary over a decade later in Rouen recall hearing the very same interpretation from Ibn Ezra. Indeed, the latter student believed that this interpretation was sufficiently different from the written commentary that he felt compelled to add it in a lengthy gloss. Whatever the reason, Ibn Ezra clearly explained the verse differently in oral lessons than in his written commentary, and this difference held true for lessons that were over a decade apart.

It thus seems probable that many of the discrepancies between the oral and standard commentaries can be traced to the unique nature of the oral commentary, either due to the student's shortcomings (2.a above) or the manner in which Ibn Ezra taught him (2.b). While it is not possible to definitively prove one of those options more correct than the other, the latter option seems quite plausible. When Ibn Ezra came to Italy, he recognized the need to introduce the Jews of Christian Europe to the contextual-philological approach of his native Andalusia's *peshat* exegesis. During his stay in Rome – his first stop in Italy – he translated Judah Ḥayyuj's grammatical works at some point between 1140 and 1142, before proceeding to compose his own grammatical writings (cf. Sela and Freudenthal 24). One could imagine that throughout his travels, Ibn Ezra deemed it necessary to introduce the Jews of Christian lands to the world of *peshat* interpretation, including methods and interpretations that deviated from his personal views. As an educator, he might not have always promoted his own views as firmly as he presents them in writing, depending on what he felt a particular student could grasp and appreciate.

Chapter VI: Historical and Eschatological Prophecy

Scholars have observed that many prophecies which were understood as messianic in earlier rabbinic literature are reinterpreted by Ibn Ezra as applying to the prophet's own time or shortly thereafter. Most famously, Ibn Ezra is the earliest known Jewish exegete to question whether the historical prophet Isaiah actually wrote the latter chapters of the book that bears his name.¹⁹⁸ Ibn Ezra's tendency to interpret prophecies in light of past events can be traced to Ibn Chiquitilia, who postulated several arguments in order to avoid messianic interpretations while still upholding the prophecies' truth:¹⁹⁹

1. The prophecy was conditional. Hence, if the prophecy has not been fulfilled, that does not prove that the prophecy is messianic. Rather, the prophecy applied to an earlier time but went unfulfilled because the condition was not met.
2. The prophecy contains figurative language. Hence, if the literal words of the prophecy have not been fulfilled, that does not prove that the prophecy is messianic. Rather, the words *were* fulfilled in their figurative sense, which was the prophet's intention.

¹⁹⁸ For discussion of this phenomenon, see Friedlander (*Essays* 67-69) and Simon ("Ibn Ezra between Medievalism and Modernism").

¹⁹⁹ These methods are discussed by Simon (*ibid.* 260-261); cf. Tal (דרכי פרשנותו 184).

3. At times, Ibn Chiquitilia conjectured that events that are not described in any source must have occurred nonetheless. Thus, a prophecy *was* fulfilled even though we have no evidence of its fulfillment.²⁰⁰

Ibn Chiquitilia's approach generated controversy in its own time and drew harsh ideological criticism from Judah Ibn Balaam.²⁰¹ As Simon has demonstrated, Ibn Ezra was open to the historical exegesis of Ibn Chiquitilia, but he was more reluctant to implement it ("Ibn Ezra between Medievalism and Modernism" 261-262). Ibn Ezra adhered to several of Saadiah's views that tempered his openness to Ibn Chiquitilia's methods: Like Saadiah (*Beliefs and Opinions* 8:7-8, Rosenblatt 312-319), Ibn Ezra maintained that prophecies accompanied by an oath must be fulfilled unconditionally (e.g., Gen. 15:7, Num. 23:21, Isa. 62:8). Furthermore, Ibn Ezra emphasizes that verses may not be interpreted allegorically unless their literal meaning conflicts with reason (both introductions to Genesis), another view that can be traced to Saadiah (Zucker, על תרגום רס"ג 231). Finally, Saadiah hesitated to interpret prophecies whose context seemed eschatological as having already been fulfilled.²⁰² We shall attempt to demonstrate that Ibn Ezra also shared Saadiah's reluctance in this regard.

²⁰⁰ For example, Ibn Chiquitilia (cited by Ibn Ezra, Joel 3:1 and 4:1) rejects the widespread view among both Karaites and other Rabbanites that Joel 3 and 4 are messianic prophecies and instead posits that these prophecies were fulfilled in the days of Jehoshaphat. In order to reconcile his historical interpretation with Joel's prophecy that "at that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations" for judgment (4:1-2), Ibn Chiquitilia conjectures that some people who had been taken captive under Jehoshaphat's predecessors were able to return to Jerusalem in Jehoshaphat's time. In fact, there is no biblical evidence whatsoever of enemies imposing a large-scale exile or captivity in the days of Jehoshaphat's predecessors (cf. Simon's supercommentary *ad loc.*).

²⁰¹ See, for example, Ibn Balaam's comments to Mal. 3:24 (partially translated into Hebrew by Tal, דרכי פרשנותו 184 n. 51).

²⁰² See Levin (פרקי פרקים ממלחמות רס"ג) and Schlossberg (הזיקה בין החזרה בתשובה לבין הגאולה במשנת רס"ג) regarding the intended targets of Saadiah's polemical agenda against those who claimed that eschatological prophecies had already been fulfilled and/or were contingent upon national repentance.

Let us turn to examples from our material in which Ibn Ezra considers whether a prophecy is messianic or was already fulfilled. It is important to bear in mind that as medieval rabbis, neither Ibn Chiquitilia nor Ibn Ezra denied the predictive power of prophecy.²⁰³ When they interpret a prophecy as having been fulfilled during the Second Temple Period, they are still assuming that the prophet foretold events that took place some years after his own time. Their historical exegesis thus differs from modern biblical scholarship, since modern scholars assume that prophecies that seemingly predict future events with detailed precision were not actually written down until *after* the events already transpired (cf. Simon, *ibid.* 260-261).²⁰⁴

Conditional Prophecy

Ibn Ezra viewed Zech. 6:15 as evidence that some prophecies go unfulfilled because they were contingent upon the people's behavior. That verse concludes a prophecy with the condition: "if only you will obey the Lord your God!"²⁰⁵ Ibn Ezra invokes the notion of conditional prophecy in his interpretations of multiple additional prophecies.

²⁰³ In addition to his lengthier study referenced above, Simon reiterated this point in a recent encyclopedia entry ("Ibn Ezra, Abraham ben Meir" *Encyclopedia of the Bible Online*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter. 2016. Retrieved 28 Jul. 2017, from https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:2484/view/EBR/MainLemma_1894):

It must be emphasized that Ibn Ezra's criteria for determining the date of composition of a text are exegetical and literary. The question that bothers him is whether it is plausible that Moses and Isaiah wrote such things, and not (as scholars ask today) whether such passages had meaning for their own contemporaries. Thus, it is not the mention of the name of Cyrus the king of Persia in 8th-century Jerusalem that leads him to be the first in the history of biblical interpretation to post-date the prophecies in the second part of the book of Isaiah and to suggest a unified reading of the prophecies of the Servant of the Lord. His reasons are purely exegetical: the description of the prophet as present in the Babylonian exile when his consolations are realized; the Babylonian milieu of the present-tense description of the imminent redemption (on Isa. 55:6); and the exegetical advantage of reading "the servant of the Lord" prophecies as referring to the prophet himself (on Isa. 53:12).

²⁰⁴ For lengthier discussion of the ways in which certain medieval exegetes utilized their historical awareness to interpret Scripture, see Simon (אזן מלין תבחן) 309-351).

²⁰⁵ Although Ibn Ezra does not comment upon this phrase in his commentary to Zech. *ad loc.*, he cites it twice (Joel 4:17, Hag. 2:9) to demonstrate this principle.

1. **Hag. 2:9** – Haggai’s promise that the Second Temple would be “greater” (גָּדוֹל) than the First Temple seemingly went unfulfilled. Ibn Ezra cites two ways in which the Second Temple was greater – the number of years that it stood and its grandeur after Herod’s renovations – but adds that Ibn Chiquitilia considered this prophecy to be contingent upon a standard of righteous behavior that the people never met.
2. **Zech. 2:14** – Ibn Ezra interprets God’s proclamation, “I will dwell in your midst,” as contingent upon Babylonian Jewry returning in large numbers to rebuild the Temple. According to Ibn Ezra, the prophecy went unfulfilled because, “In fact, they did not do so.”²⁰⁶
3. **Zech. 8:3** – Addressing the phrase, “I have returned to Zion, and I will dwell in Jerusalem,” Ibn Ezra reiterates his earlier comment that certain prophecies are conditional, presumably referring to the similar verse, “I will dwell in your midst” (Zech. 2:14).

Undocumented Fulfillment

As mentioned above, one method by which Ibn Chiquitilia rendered prophecies relevant to the prophet’s historical period was to argue that the prophecy apparently was fulfilled through historical occurrences for which no other evidence exists. At times, Ibn Ezra, too, resorts to this method.²⁰⁷ Commenting on Haggai’s prophecy, “I will overturn the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the might of the kingdoms of the nations” (2:22), Ibn Ezra argues that the prophecy was fulfilled later in the same historical period during which Haggai delivered it:

²⁰⁶ Ibn Ezra articulates this same understanding of Zech. 2:14 in both commentaries to Cant. 5:4-5.

²⁰⁷ See, for example, Lifschitz’s analysis of Ibn Ezra’s comments to Isa. 43:16-17 (הגישה הפרשנית של ראב"ע ור"י (אברבנאל 133-134).

Many wars were [still] in the future in the prophet's days, when he prophesied that they would happen. And we know that it happened so, although we have not found books by the ancient ones in order to know about the wars that happened in the days of this Persian Darius or in the days of Artaxerxes who reigned after him.

However, Ibn Ezra was aware of the limitation of our ability to know what events transpired during the Second Temple Period and how they relate to prophecies. In his introduction to Zechariah, Ibn Ezra issues a cautionary statement about Zechariah's visions:

Those "visions of the night" that "the angel who talked with [Zechariah]" explained (1:9) are intelligible, but those that [the angel] did not explain are closed off and hidden [even] from the eyes of enlightened people. If we would find an ancient book that recounted what new wars transpired in those days, we would be groping like blind men, saying: "Perhaps the prophecy was [referring] to this." But now, we have nothing upon which to lean.

This awareness compelled him – on the one hand – to be open to interpretations like those of Ibn Chiquitilia, since a prophecy could plausibly allude to events that are not mentioned in the Bible. On the other hand, in the absence of proper documentation of such events, Ibn Ezra could not easily dismiss the possibility that a prophecy was indeed eschatological. At times, this leads Ibn Ezra to present both an eschatological interpretation

and Ibn Chiquitilia's historical interpretation as possible, without explicitly endorsing one over the other.²⁰⁸

Unlike Ibn Chiquitilia, Ibn Ezra appears less willing to definitively assert that undocumented past events occurred in a precise way. In the aforementioned examples, Ibn Ezra merely states that we do not know everything that occurred in the past. Nevertheless, Ibn Ezra, too, resorts on occasion to asserting a specific historical fact in order to demonstrate the historical fulfilment of a prophecy. In several places in Zechariah, Ibn Ezra insists that descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes returned from their Assyrian exile.²⁰⁹ While the biblical evidence for his assertion is limited,²¹⁰ this historical fact is critical in order to justify his claims that prophecies that mention "Ephraim" (symbolizing the ten northern tribes) have already been fulfilled.

Applications to Haggai and Zechariah

If one looks at Ibn Ezra's interpretations of visions in our material, we find that he is willing to interpret prophecies as historical or eschatological, so the context and content of each specific prophecy guide his judgment.

Ibn Ezra interprets the entirety of Haggai as addressing Zerubbabel's generation, rebuking them for the present and prophesying about the near-term future. His view is hardly controversial, considering that Haggai repeatedly addresses Zerubbabel and Joshua by name, but it nevertheless stands in contrast to attempts by some exegetes to assert that unfulfilled

²⁰⁸ In addition to the aforementioned case of Joel 3-4 (note 200 above), Ibn Ezra similarly cites a debate regarding whether Mic. 4:11-14 is an eschatological vision or – as Ibn Chiquitilia claims – a prophecy predicting the rise of Zerubbabel.

²⁰⁹ Ibn Ezra makes this claim four times in Zechariah (8:7, 9:1, 9:10, and 10:6).

²¹⁰ Ibn Ezra bases his claim on Ezra 6:22 (see p. 129 below).

aspects of Haggai's prophecy were intended all along for the Third Temple.²¹¹ In Zechariah, Ibn Ezra interprets some visions as pertaining to the Second Temple and others as eschatological:

1. **Zech. 1-8** – All eight chapters pertain to Zechariah's own generation. At times, Ibn Ezra cites those who interpreted some of these prophecies as messianic (e.g., the "branch" in 3:8 and 6:12), but the context of these visions made it clear to him that they were meant for Zechariah's own generation. These chapters repeatedly mention Zerubbabel and Joshua by name, and even many of the more cryptic visions address issues from Zechariah's time, such as the reconstruction of Jerusalem (1:12-17, 2:1-9, 8:1-13).²¹²
2. **Zech. 9:1-8** – Modern scholarship views Zech. 9 as the beginning of a separate unit, but Ibn Ezra insists that the first eight verses naturally follow the previous prophecy and were fulfilled in Zechariah's own time. Unlike Zech. 1-8, this passage does not contain obvious connections to Zechariah's time, such as the names of his contemporaries, or references to Babylonia or Jerusalem. Nevertheless, Ibn Ezra attempts to explain its relevance to Zechariah's generation:

This prophecy, too, is connected to the Second Temple. The meaning of **for all men's eyes will turn to the Lord** is that many people of **Damascus** will return to serving the Lord and to obeying the bidding

²¹¹ For example, Yefet claims that the Temple that would be "greater" than the First Temple (2:9) is the Third Temple. Some midrashic sources interpret God's promise to "overturn the thrones of kingdoms" (Hag. 2:2) as messianic (see my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Long after Ibn Ezra, Abarbanel argued that Haggai's closing vision was meant to inform Zerubbabel that the Second Temple would be destroyed but eventually Zerubbabel's descendant (=the Messiah) would redeem Israel.

²¹² Three visions – the flying scroll, the ephah, and the four chariots (5:1-6:8) – do not obviously address the Second Temple, and indeed the oral and standard commentaries differ regarding the interpretation of these passages. Nevertheless, neither commentary interprets any of these visions as messianic.

(cf. I Sam. 22:14) of Israelites who were in Jerusalem – namely, Jews and Benjaminites and those who returned from Assyria – as is written in Ezra (6:22): “For the Lord had given them cause for joy by inclining the heart of the Assyrian king [toward them].”

3. **Zech. 9-14** (starting in 9:9) look to the future. They divide as follows:
 - a. **Zech. 9:9-10:12** predicts the Hasmoneans’ victory. In both commentaries, Ibn Ezra sharply criticizes Ibn Chiquitilia’s attempts to apply 9:9 (and, presumably, the rest of the passage) to Nehemiah, while also arguing against those who interpret these prophecies as messianic. In addition to specific criticisms of Ibn Chiquitilia, his strongest argument in favor of his Hasmonean interpretation and against all other views is 9:13 – “I will arouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece.” He reasons that Greece was not a meaningful empire in Nehemiah’s time, nor did the Greek Empire exist in Ibn Ezra’s time to be vanquished by the Messiah.
 - b. **Zech. 11:1-3** transitions from the Hasmoneans’ glory to their downfall: “This is the beginning of a passage that laments the Hasmoneans, for their kingdom shall perish” (11:1).²¹³
 - c. **Zech. 11:4-17** is the one passage that deviates from chronological order.²¹⁴ Commenting on v. 4, Ibn Ezra writes, “Now it begins a new passage, to recount how Israel will be *after* the rise of the Hasmoneans.” However, in his view, the rest of the chapter is essentially a flashback. The image of the

²¹³ The oral commentary interprets this passage differently, as depicting the *Second Temple’s* destruction.

²¹⁴ I am basing this paragraph on the standard commentary. The oral commentary claims that the rest of Ch. 11 describes the destruction of the two First-Temple kingdoms, which would constitute a flashback not only to before the Hasmoneans but to before Zechariah’s own time.

shepherd who tends the sheep of slaughter hints “that the Lord will tend them for now, *before* the time of the Hasmoneans’ rise arrives.” The two staffs represent Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, and the deaths of the three shepherds might represent the end of prophecy following the deaths of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. It thus seems that in Ibn Ezra’s view, the text inserted a flashback to earlier events so that the reader would understand the rise of the Greek Empire, which (according to Ibn Ezra’s historiography)²¹⁵ would eventually destroy the Second Temple and exile the Jews until the messianic redemption.

- d. **Zech. 12** contains the story of the Messiah son of Joseph, who dies in the battles leading up to the final redemption. In order to justify this prophecy’s juxtaposition to the previous chapter – whose events predate it by many centuries – Ibn Ezra argues that 11:17 already looks forward to the destruction of the Greek Empire:

The exile will last a long time and remain until this empire – the empire of evil – until its end arrives – **a sword upon his arm and upon his right eye!**

Thus, despite the fact that 12:1 contains a headline for a new prophecy (“a pronouncement: The word of the Lord concerning Israel”), Ibn Ezra seeks to downplay the abruptness of Zechariah’s shift to eschatology.

- e. **Zech. 13** continues Zechariah’s eschatological visions, with the violence that begins in v. 7 (“O sword! Rouse yourself against My shepherd”) describing

²¹⁵ Ibn Ezra considers the Roman Empire to be a continuation of the Greek Empire: “Now begins the Greek Empire, which has continued until today, as I explained in the Book of Daniel (2:39), because Greece exiled Jerusalem, not Edom” (Ibn Ezra, Zech. 11:15; cf. Lifschitz, הגישה הפרשנית של ראב"ע ור"י אברבנאל, *אברבנאל*, 11:15).

“the many wars that will occur throughout the land when the Messiah son of Joseph dies” (standard commentary *ad loc.*).

- f. **Zech. 14** describes the final redemption.

In the closing words of his commentary to Zechariah, Ibn Ezra reiterates his position regarding the closing chapters:

All of these passages at the end of this book are for the future. As for the one who said that they already passed (i.e., Ibn Chiquitilia), let him show us the fresh water flowing out of Jerusalem in the summer and winter!

Thus, Ibn Ezra considers Zechariah’s visions to represent an overview of the periods of redemption and exile starting with the prophet’s own time: the return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Second Temple, the subsequent achievement of sovereignty by the Hasmoneans, the rise of the Greek Empire (albeit before the Hasmoneans), exile, and – much later – apocalyptic war and redemption.

It therefore seems that as he considered whether to interpret a passage as historical or messianic, Ibn Ezra was guided primarily by exegetical considerations. He was keenly aware of his inability to explain every detail of certain visions, due to our ignorance of the details of ancient events, so he latched on to those details that he could confidently connect to past events. To him, the image of the impoverished Jewish leader (9:9) conquering Greece was compelling proof that Zechariah prophesied about the Hasmonean victory. His harsh criticism of those who identify that leader with Nehemiah or the Messiah focuses on the

exegetical flaws of each view. Similarly, he bases his insistence on the eschatological reading of Zech. 12-14 on the fact that these visions have not been fulfilled, along with his aversion to unnecessarily interpreting verses allegorically when neither their context nor reason demands that they be read allegorically.

While exegetical considerations may have been Ibn Ezra's overarching concern, it is still possible that an anti-Christian polemical agenda played a secondary role in shaping his interpretations of certain prophecies with Christological interpretations that he would have known.²¹⁶ In principle, one may not assume that a comment is polemical simply because it offers an alternative to Christological exegesis.²¹⁷ If such an assumption were legitimate, then any Jewish exegete who comments on any verse that featured prominently in Jewish-Christian polemics would be characterized as a polemicist through the mere act of interpreting the verse in a non-Christological manner. Rather, the argument that an exegete was guided by polemical considerations is most convincing when an exegete departs from his standard approach, such as the exegete writing at greater length about a theologically-loaded verse, his incorporating uncharacteristically harsh rhetoric against those who interpret the verse differently, or – perhaps most significantly – his interpreting the verse in ways that do not conform to his stated methodology²¹⁸ but do serve a polemical agenda.²¹⁹

²¹⁶ Regarding anti-Christian polemics in Ibn Ezra's exegesis, see Simon's brief comments (ראב"ע בין המפרש) (39 לקוראין) and Orfali's lengthier study (ראב"ע והפולמוס היהודי-נוצרי).

²¹⁷ Cf. Lasker (56 n. 4), citing David Berger.

²¹⁸ By the phrase "interpreting the verse in ways that do not conform to his stated methodology," I am not arguing that exegesis may only be labeled as polemical if the exegete himself did not believe it. Certainly, polemical argumentation could lead an exegete to adopt positions that he does not believe to be true but hopes will nevertheless serve his agenda (cf. Maimonides' commentary to mR.H. 2:7, where Maimonides levels such an accusation against Saadiah). But an exegete who deviates from his standard methodology when interpreting a theologically-sensitive passage might sincerely believe his non-standard interpretation to be true, reasoning that the consequence of interpreting the verse according to his standard methodology would be a theologically untenable interpretation.

One example from Zechariah serves to illustrate the need for identifying deviations from the exegete's standard approach before attributing his comments to a polemical agenda. When Zechariah prophesies, "I have released your prisoners from the dry pit, for the sake of the blood of your covenant" (9:11), Ibn Ezra presents two interpretations of this blood:

[I have released your prisoners] for the sake of "**the blood** of the covenant that the Lord made with" those who left Egypt (cf. Exod. 24:8). But some say that **[I have released your prisoners]** for the sake of the commandment of circumcision.

Orfali (ראב"ע והפולמוס היהודי-נוצרי) (196) cites the second interpretation as an example of Ibn Ezra polemicizing against Christianity, because the Synoptic Gospels identify the wine at the Last Supper with Jesus' "blood of the new covenant" (Matt. 26:28, Mark 14:24, Luke 22:20; cf. 1 Cor. 11:25 and Heb. 13:20).²²⁰ But before linking Ibn Ezra's comment to a polemical agenda, one must first determine whether it deviates in any way from his exegetical methodology. His first interpretation – which he seemingly prefers, since he does not attribute it to others – is based on the one other occurrence of the construct "blood of the covenant" (דַם הַבְרִית) in the Bible. Even the second interpretation (which appears in *Mekhilta*

²¹⁹ For example, Lubich (יעקב ועשו 75-101) contrasts the approaches of Rashi and Ibn Ezra to the characters of Esau and Jacob. He notes Rashi's overt antipathy toward Esau and argues that Rashi was driven by polemical considerations (based on the typology in which Esau/Edom symbolizes Christianity). In order to substantiate this claim, Lubich observes that Rashi – who routinely bases his interpretations on a range of rabbinic texts – specifically cites rabbinic teachings that vilify Esau and glorify Jacob while ignoring rabbinic teachings that offer any positive comments about Esau, as well as ignoring comments that criticize Jacob. Hence, Rashi's selective use of rabbinic literature in this context betrays his polemical agenda. By contrast, Lubich argues that when discussing Esau, Ibn Ezra's comments conform to his stated *peshat* methodology and thus do not appear to be driven by polemics. While some might question his assessment of Ibn Ezra's portrayal of Esau as non-polemical (cf. Orfali, ראב"ע והפולמוס היהודי-נוצרי, 199-201), it seems appropriate to adopt Lubich's fundamental methodology of not attributing an exegete's comments to polemical considerations until one first examines whether they conform to his standard exegetical approach.

²²⁰ The Synoptic Gospels do not explicitly link the "new covenant" to Zech. 9:11, although three verses later in their narrative, Jesus does cite a verse from later in Zechariah (13:7): "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

to Exod. 12:6) seems plausible, since a covenant accompanies God's command to Abraham to circumcise his male descendants (Gen. 17:1-14). It is not impossible that the reluctance of Ibn Ezra or other medieval exegetes to interpret "your blood of the covenant" as the blood of the Paschal sacrifice – despite such a view appearing in *Mekhilta (ibid.)* – stemmed from concern that any association between this "covenant" and Passover would lend credibility to the narrative of the Last Supper. But the interpretations which Ibn Ezra does present are wholly compatible with his exegetical methodology, and he does not add any direct or indirect anti-Christian rhetoric that might betray a polemical agenda. Hence, although his commentary does provide Jewish readers with alternatives to the Christological interpretation of 9:11, there is scant evidence that polemics were the driving force behind his comments to that verse.²²¹

On the other hand, two cases in Ibn Ezra's exegesis of Zech. 9-12 potentially meet the aforementioned criteria for being labeled as polemical:

- His interpretation of Zech. 11 deviates from chronological order and seems to rely on farfetched conjecture for the symbolism of the two staffs, the three shepherds, and the thirty shekels.
- Similarly, he appears to be inserting something with no basis in the text when he turns the Messiah son of Joseph into the protagonist of Zech. 12.

²²¹ For an example of possible polemical exegesis of this same verse, consider Joseph Kara's interpretation: **גם את בדם בריתך - שנשפך דמם על ששמרו בריתי, שלא רצו לסור מאחרי** ("You, too... for the sake of the blood of your covenant, that their blood was spilled because they guarded My covenant, that they did not want to turn away from Me"). Kara ignores earlier rabbinic exegesis, as well as Rashi's commentary, and instead interprets "the blood of your covenant" as an allusion to Jewish martyrdom, whose relevance to the Crusades in his own time is obvious.

One thus wonders: Is it merely a coincidence that both of these passages feature prominently in the New Testament (the former in Matt. 26:15 and 27:3-10, the latter in John 19:34-37 and Rev. 1:7), or did Ibn Ezra feel compelled to offer definitive interpretations to these passages lest his Jewish readership think that he lacked a proper response to the Christological interpretation?²²²

Regarding Zech. 11, Ibn Ezra acknowledges the limits of his understanding of this vision.²²³ He is unsure whether the “three shepherds” represent three Second-Temple prophets (Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi) or three senior priests, whether the “thirty shekels” represent thirty Babylonian Jewish returnees to Jerusalem or thirty priests, and whether “their shepherds” represent Gentile kings or God.²²⁴ This uncertainty contrasts sharply with the interpretation of Ibn Ezra’s younger contemporary, Abraham Ibn Daud, who interprets Zech. 11:4-17 as an accurate, detailed account of the Hasmonean dynasty (Vehlow 348-357). Ibn Daud – whose anti-Christian and anti-Karaite polemical motivations are evident – confidently applies each verse to one detail of Second-Temple history, thereby supplying Jews with a coherent alternative to the Christological and Karaite

²²² In the case of Zech. 11:4-17, an anti-Karaite polemical motivation could also be possible, since the Karaites interpreted that vision as foretelling the Karaite-Rabbanite split. See, for example, Yefet’s commentary *ad loc.* (printed in De Vreugd, “Yefet ben ‘Eli’s Commentary” 289-292).

²²³ In this paragraph, I am focusing on the standard commentary’s interpretation of Zech. 11. The oral commentary applies the vision to the destruction of the First-Temple kingdoms of Judah and Israel. In theory, the claim that Zech. 11:4-17 addresses the First-Temple kingdoms (which is partially shared by Rashi and Joseph Kara) could serve a polemical purpose: Interpreting the vision as a reflection upon past events could counter Christological readings by arguing that this vision teaches nothing about the future. However, the oral commentary adds that the vision was also predictive: “What Zechariah saw [applied] to the past and to the future. [God] showed him that this happened to Israel in the past and it would befall them thus in the future” (11:4). Moreover, the fact that Ibn Ezra was familiar with the First-Temple interpretation of this vision but explicitly rejected it in his own commentary indicates that he was guided by exegetical rather than polemical considerations. Indeed, not only does Ibn Ezra reject the First-Temple interpretation in the standard commentary, but he goes so far as to cite it in his introduction to Zechariah as an example of methodologically-flawed exegesis.

²²⁴ In this last case, although Ibn Ezra cites two possible interpretations, he expresses a clear preference for interpreting “their shepherds” as God.

interpretations.²²⁵ But Ibn Ezra wavers regarding the details of the vision's meaning while also firmly rejecting attempts by French exegetes to interpret Zech. 11 as being fulfilled before Zechariah's time (see note 223 above). Hence, rather than playing the role of polemicist, it seems Ibn Ezra endeavored to best fit Zech. 11:4-17 into his understanding of the surrounding chapters while genuinely struggling with the symbolism of several images that the prophet never fully explains. Ultimately, Ibn Ezra shared his uncertainty with his readers, which hardly seems like the best way to win a polemical argument.

As for Zech. 12, Ibn Ezra's use of the Messiah son of Joseph could potentially be seen as polemical – definitively identifying the “pierced” victim as someone other than Jesus. The fact that the Bible never explicitly mentions the Messiah son of Joseph (as Radak to 12:10 observes) could strengthen the argument that Ibn Ezra introduced this character for polemical reasons. Otherwise, Ibn Ezra's default position would be to label his identification with the “pierced” individual as *derash*.

However, it is questionable whether even this interpretation was driven by polemical considerations. Despite the glaring absence of the Messiah son of Joseph from the Bible, Ibn Ezra likely considered this figure's existence to be an authoritative Jewish tradition. Ibn Ezra no doubt saw that this figure is mentioned in the Talmud, other rabbinic literature, and the writings of Saadiah Gaon and Hayya Gaon.²²⁶ These texts consistently associate this figure with Zech. 12:10. Indeed, Ibn Ezra mentions the Messiah son of Joseph in his comments to several other biblical verses (Mal. 3:1, Ps. 80:18, Cant. 7:6). One cannot dismiss the possibility that Ibn Ezra might have incorporated the Messiah son of Joseph into his

²²⁵ Regarding the details of Ibn Daud's interpretation and his polemical agendas, see G. Cohen (*The Book of Tradition* xxv-xxvii) and Vehlou's supercommentary (348-357).

²²⁶ See references in my supercommentary to Zech. 12:1.

commentaries for the polemical purpose of eliminating any possible references to messianic figures from outside the Jewish tradition. But it seems that his primary reason for incorporating the Messiah son of Joseph into his interpretation of Zech. 12 was his fealty to beliefs that he deemed central to the Jewish belief system. That commitment led him to accept the presence of Messiah son of Joseph in Zech. 12 as reasonable *peshat* exegesis, even if this interpretation does not strike modern readers as compelling.

Applications to Malachi

Chapters 1-2 of Malachi clearly address the issues of Malachi's own generation. Not only does Ibn Ezra ignore any possibility of them being eschatological, but he points to the correlation between Malachi's exhortations and other biblical descriptions of early Second-Temple society in order to prove that Malachi lived during that period (1:1). It was equally obvious to Ibn Ezra that the end of Chapter 3 was eschatological, since it closes with the return of Elijah before the "awesome, fearful day of the Lord." Regarding the rest of Mal. 3, Ibn Ezra argues for an interesting division into three units:

1. **Mal. 3:1-6** is eschatological.²²⁷ The promised arrival of God's "messenger" (3:1) – whom Ibn Ezra identifies with the Messiah son of Joseph – provided a compelling basis for interpreting this passage as messianic.
2. **Mal. 3:7-12** addresses Malachi's "own time" according to Ibn Ezra, because Malachi's generation was guilty of defrauding God of tithes (the focus of that prophecy).
3. **Mal. 3:13-24** is eschatological, culminating with the return of Elijah.

²²⁷ Ibn Ezra considered 2:17 to be a part of this prophecy since it is part of the same unit according to the Masoretic divisions.

This division appears to derive from exegetical considerations. The people's complaints in vv. 14-15 parallel their criticism of divine justice in 2:17 and thus return to the messianic focus of the start of Ch. 3. Not surprisingly, Tanḥum wholeheartedly adopts the same division into three units, with the first and third being eschatological and the middle unit addressing Malachi's own generation.²²⁸

Conclusion

Like Ibn Chiquitilia, Ibn Ezra is willing to interpret prophecies as historical rather than eschatological even when earlier sages and exegetes had interpreted the prophecies as eschatological. In order to support these interpretations without rendering these prophecies as false, Ibn Ezra argues that several early Second-Temple prophecies were contingent upon a large-scale return to Zion. Thus, when the people did not return in large numbers from Babylonia, God was not bound to fulfill these prophecies. Ibn Ezra further shares Ibn Chiquitilia's openness to the possibility that prophecies might have been fulfilled through events that are not mentioned in the limited number of sources that have survived from that period.

However, Ibn Ezra is more cautious than Ibn Chiquitilia, generally preferring to acknowledge our ignorance of the details of ancient history rather than definitively asserting that undocumented events transpired in a precise way. Moreover, Ibn Ezra assesses each prophecy on its own merits. Consequently he does interpret prophecies as eschatological when he believes that the plain sense of their text necessitates this conclusion. In doing so,

²²⁸ Regarding Tanḥum's aversion to Ibn Chiquitilia's historical approach to prophecy, see Tal (דרכי פרשנותו) 184-190).

he rejects Ibn Chiquitilia's attempts to allegorize eschatological passages so that they may be interpreted historically.

Ibn Ezra's exegetical methodology leads him to confidently interpret all of Haggai, Zech. 1-8, and Mal. 1-2 as intended for the prophets' own times, while forcing him to interpret Mal. 3 as alternating between eschatological and contemporary prophecies. In the latter part of Zechariah, Ibn Ezra interprets the visions such that they predict events in largely chronological order (save for Ch. 11), foretelling a narrative of Jewish history that progresses from the Hasmonean victories through the Greco-Roman exile, ultimately leading to the final redemption.

Chapter VII: Neo-Babylonian and Persian Chronology

Ibn Ezra's chronology of Neo-Babylonian and Persian rulers differs from both the conventional chronology accepted by modern historians and the chronology of *Seder Olam Rabbah* that is adopted by many rabbinic sources. Although Ibn Ezra primarily discusses this chronology in his two commentaries to Daniel, I am nevertheless analyzing his chronology in this introduction due to the oral commentary's lengthy chronological excursus to Zech. 9:9-10, as well as the relevance of this chronology to several other passages in his commentaries to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. In addition to contrasting Ibn Ezra's chronology with those of his predecessors and of modern scholarship, this chapter argues that Ibn Ezra's chronology is a natural result of applying his exegetical methodology to the biblical evidence while ignoring extra-biblical evidence to which Ibn Ezra lacked access.

Chronology According to Modern Scholarship

On the basis of many extra-biblical sources, such as Greek historians and archaeological excavations, modern scholarship has established the dates below for the period from the end of the First Temple until the ultimate decline of the Persian Empire.²²⁹

²²⁹ Many of these dates differ by one year in other reference works. My dates for the Babylonian kings come from "Chaldeans" (*Encyclopedia of the Bible Online*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter. 2012. Retrieved 31 Jul. 2017, from https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:2484/view/EBR/MainLemma_4336), and my dates for the Persian kings come from Elias J. Bickerman and Walter Joseph Fischel, "Persia" (*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, edited by Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik, 2nd ed., vol. 15, Macmillan Reference USA, 2007, pp. 782-792. *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, http://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:2062/ps/i.do?p=GVRL&sw=w&u=nysl_me_yeshival&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CCX2587515625&asid=b3c3769d717f0bd0d421d5f811238780. Accessed 31 July 2017).

Babylonian Kings

Nebuchadnezzar II - 604-562 BCE

Evil-Merodach (Amel-Marduk) - 562-560 BCE

Neriglissar - 559-556 BCE

Labashi-Marduk (Labosoarchad) - 556 BCE

Nabonidus- 556-539 BCE

Belshazzar²³⁰ - 539 BCE

Persian Kings

Cyrus the Great - 559-530 BCE

Cambyses II - 530-522 BCE

Darius I - 522-486 BCE

Xerxes I (Ahasuerus) - 486-465 BCE

Artaxerxes I - 465-424 BCE

Xerxes II - 424-423 BCE

Darius II - 423-404 BCE

Artaxerxes II – ca. 404-359 BCE

²³⁰ I am including Belshazzar on this list due to his importance as a character in Daniel, where he is presented as the king. In fact, “co-regent” or “crown prince” might be a more appropriate title for him, since he did not reign after Nabonidus’ death. For a brief summary of the contrast between the historical Belshazzar and his depiction in Daniel, see Matthias Henze (“Belshazzar” *Encyclopedia of the Bible Online*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter. 2011. Retrieved 31 Jul. 2017, from https://yulib002.mc.yu.edu:2484/view/EBR/MainLemma_6845).

Artaxerxes III – ca. 359-338 BCE

Arses - 338-336 BCE

Darius III - 336-330 BCE

Key Dates²³¹

597 BCE - Nebuchadnezzar captures Jehoiachin

587 BCE - Nebuchadnezzar captures Zedekiah, First Temple destroyed

539 BCE – Cyrus allows Jews to return to Jerusalem

520-516 BCE – Construction of Second Temple

444 BCE – Nehemiah arrives in Judea

Biblical Sources

Before examining rabbinic and medieval alternatives to the above chronology, one must observe that any ancient or medieval exegete who sought to establish the chronology of this era lacked many of the sources available to modern scholars and thus could not possibly be expected to adopt the above chronology. They instead constructed their chronologies almost exclusively based on biblical verses, filling in gaps with a combination of creative exegesis, conjecture, and some extra-biblical traditions. Biblical dates aided these exegetes in two main ways:

²³¹ These dates are based on the regnal years provided in the Bible; I am not addressing whether the regnal years for certain of these events (especially Nehemiah's arrival in Jerusalem) are accurate.

1. **Minimum Length of Reign:** The last date within a particular king's reign demonstrates that he ruled for *at least* that many years. For example, Haman cast his lot in year 12 of Ahasuerus (Est. 3:7), which is the final event in Esther to be dated to a specific regnal year. Accordingly, Ahasuerus reigned for a minimum of twelve years. But the events of the remaining seven chapters of Esther would indicate that he likely ruled for at least another year or two, and his reign could have lasted significantly longer.
2. **Synchronizing Multiple Dates:** In some cases, comparing the dates of multiple events allowed exegetes to determine the precise length of a king's reign. For example, a combination of the dates in II Kings 24:12 and Jer. 52 leads to the conclusion that Nebuchadnezzar reigned for exactly 45 years, including 19 years before the First Temple's destruction and 26 years after its destruction.²³²

By combining all dates from the Babylonian and Persian periods, one can establish the following tentative conclusions, which serve as the foundation for the calculations of ancient and medieval exegetes:

Babylonian Kings

Nebuchadnezzar II – 45 years²³³

Evil-Merodach – at least 1 year²³⁴

²³² According to those sources, Nebuchadnezzar captured Jehoiachin and exiled the upper class of Jerusalem during years 7 and 8 of his reign. He then destroyed the Temple during year 19. Evil-Merodach began to reign 37 years after Jehoiachin's capture, which would thus be 45 years after the start of Nebuchadnezzar's reign and 26 years after the Temple's destruction.

²³³ See note 232.

²³⁴ Evil Merodach appears in just one verse (II Kings 25:27=Jer. 52:31), which is dated to his first year.

Belshazzar – at least 3 years²³⁵

Median Kings

Darius (the Mede) b. Ahasuerus – 1 year²³⁶

Persian Kings

Cyrus – at least 3 years²³⁷

Darius – at least 6 years²³⁸

Ahasuerus (Xerxes) – at least 12 years²³⁹

Artaxerxes – at least 32 years²⁴⁰

Hence, any chronology based solely on the Bible necessarily excludes Neriglissar, Labashi-Marduk, Nabonidus, Cambyses,²⁴¹ and all Persian kings who reigned subsequent to Artaxerxes I, since the Bible never mentions any of these kings.²⁴² On the other hand, modern scholarship has found no definitive evidence for the existence of Darius the Mede – who is mentioned exclusively in the Book of Daniel – so most scholars regard him as a

²³⁵ The latest Biblical date from his reign is Dan. 8:1, which mentions Belshazzar's third year. (Also see note 230 above.)

²³⁶ Darius the Mede is only mentioned in Daniel, and all events from his reign are dated to his first year (Dan. 9:1-2, 11:1). See note 243 below.

²³⁷ Dan. 10:1 dates one of Daniel's visions to the third year of Cyrus.

²³⁸ The last event dated to Darius is the completion of the Second Temple in his sixth year (Ezra 6:15).

²³⁹ Est. 3:7 dates Haman's lot to Ahasuerus' twelfth year.

²⁴⁰ Nehemiah twice mentions year 32 of Artaxerxes (5:14, 13:6).

²⁴¹ Cambyses is mentioned in Josippon (Flusser 48), so medieval exegetes had some awareness of the possible existence of such a king. (See, for example, Rashi to Dan. 11:2, where the word במבישה is clearly a corruption of כמבישה, a Hebrew spelling of Cambyses.) Nevertheless, medieval exegetes usually omitted Cambyses from their chronologies, presumably due to his absence from both the Bible and early rabbinic literature (cf. note 246 below).

²⁴² In truth, it appears likely that Darius II is also mentioned in the Bible, as "Darius the Persian" in Neh. 12:22. However, ancient and medieval exegetes knew of no other evidence for the existence of Darius II and thus assumed that "Darius the Persian" in that verse was Darius I. Indeed, Yefet and Ibn Ezra frequently refer to Darius I as "Darius the Persian" in order to distinguish him from Darius the Mede.

Although Yefet and several subsequent exegetes maintain that there were two kings named Artaxerxes (see note 253 below), they knew nothing of Artaxerxes II of the conventional chronology. Rather, they invented another Artaxerxes *before* Artaxerxes I in order to resolve an exegetical difficulty discussed below.

fictional character, either completely invented by the author of Daniel or perhaps adapted by the author from a different historical figure.²⁴³ But medieval exegetes, who presumed the historicity of Daniel, had to account for the short reign of Darius the Mede.

As exegetes attempted to establish the chronology of these events, they were guided by four additional considerations:

1. Jeremiah repeatedly predicts that the Babylonian exile will last for seventy years (25:11-12, 29:10). Later books indicate that these seventy years expired in the first year of Darius the Mede (Dan. 9:1-2) or the first year of Cyrus (Ezra 1:1, II Chron. 36:20-22). Because the exile took place in multiple stages, it is not entirely clear when to begin the count of seventy years. Nevertheless, if Nebuchadnezzar reigned for 45 years and Belshazzar for 3, then one could conclude that Evil-Merodach reigned for a minimum of 21-22 years in order to reach seventy years of Babylonian rule by the time of Darius the Mede or Cyrus.
2. Daniel's cryptic vision, "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city" (9:24), was widely believed to allude to a period of 490 years (=70 times 7) that would culminate with the Second Temple's destruction. Assuming that the "decree" began with the First Temple's destruction, the first "week" was the 70 years of exile between the Temples. Accordingly, the remaining 420 years had to constitute the entire duration of the Second Temple. Since Jews in the rabbinic period employed chronological systems that dated from the Seleucid era (known in

²⁴³ For a recent summary, see Seong-Eun Jeong ("Darius the Mede." *Encyclopedia of the Bible Online* (2012). Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter. Retrieved 15 Aug. 2016, from http://www.degruyter.com/view/EBR/MainLemma_443).

- Hebrew as *minyān shtarot*) or from the Second Temple’s destruction,²⁴⁴ they knew that the Second Temple stood for approximately 380 years after the start of Seleucid rule. Hence they concluded that the Persian Empire could not have lasted for more than 40 years after the Second Temple’s construction (420-380).
3. A simple reading of Dan. 11:2 indicates that there would be a total of four Persian kings.²⁴⁵ This verse thus strengthened the assumption there were no Persian kings other than the four mentioned in the Bible.
 4. While Cyrus was the first Persian king to appear in the Bible, the order of the subsequent kings is not clear, since the four of them are only mentioned in the same passage once (Ezra 4:5-7).

⁵They bribed ministers in order to thwart their plans *all the years of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia.* ⁶*And in the reign of Ahasuerus*, at the start of his reign, they drew up an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. ⁷*And in the time of Artaxerxes*, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their colleagues wrote to King Artaxerxes of Persia.

This passage could be understood to support the order endorsed by modern scholarship – Cyrus, Darius, Ahasuerus, Artaxerxes – since that is the order in which the kings’ names appear. However, the phrase “all the years of King Cyrus of Persia *and until the reign of King Darius of Persia*” (4:5) might also imply that the

²⁴⁴ For an overview of these dating systems, see Sar-Shalom (מניין השנים 112-115).

²⁴⁵ “Persia will have three more kings, and the fourth will be wealthier than them all; by the power he obtains through his wealth, he will stir everyone up against the kingdom of Greece.” As discussed below, the rabbinic chronology claims that Persia had a mere 3 kings (by combining Darius and Artaxerxes), so it counts Darius the *Mede* as a *Persian* ruler for purposes of the prediction in this verse.

Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes reigned *between* Cyrus and Darius.²⁴⁶ The subsequent description of “an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem” under Ahasuerus (4:6) and the exchange of letters with Artaxerxes (4:7ff.) could then be interpreted as taking place *before* Darius permitted the Temple’s construction to be completed. Such an interpretation could be reinforced by 4:24 – “At that time, work on the House of God in Jerusalem stopped and remained in abeyance until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia.” If “that time” refers to the immediate aftermath of Artaxerxes’ letter in the previous verse, then 4:24 would indicate that Darius reigned after Artaxerxes.

Another verse that lends itself to different interpretations regarding the sequence of the kings is Ezra 6:14. It mentions that the Jews “brought the building to completion... by the order of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes, king (מֶלֶךְ) of Persia.” The end of the verse uses the singular מֶלֶךְ when one would expect the plural מַלְכִים (kings). It can be therefore interpreted as “Cyrus and Darius and King Artaxerxes of Persia” (NJPS), so that the singular noun is a title for Artaxerxes alone.²⁴⁷ Indeed, the fact that each king’s name is preceded by a conjunctive ו strengthens the argument that each name refers to a distinct king, and that the three of them reigned in that order. On the other hand, a rabbinic reading of the verse derives from the singular noun that multiple names refer to the same king (bR.H. 3b), thus opening the door for rabbinic teachings that compress the narratives of multiple person kings into the reign of one king with multiple names.

²⁴⁶ The inference that the phrase “and until the reign of King Darius” alludes to the existence of another king between Cyrus and Darius is indeed consistent with the accepted Persian chronology, since Cambyses did reign between them.

²⁴⁷ Ibn Ezra adopts this approach, arguing that the Darius of this verse was Darius the Mede and thus could not be called “king of Persia” (see note 260 below).

The Rabbinic Chronology

In light of the above considerations, *Seder Olam Rabbah* and the Talmud (bMeg. 11b) established the following chronology:

- Nebuchadnezzar – 45 years (including 26 after the First Temple’s destruction)
- Evil-Merodach – 23 years
- Belshazzar – 3 years
- Darius the Mede – 1 year
- Cyrus – 3 “partial years” (שליש שנים מקוטעות; see below)
- Ahasuerus – 14 years
- Darius the Persian/Artaxerxes – ca. 35-36 years²⁴⁸

According to *Seder Olam*’s calculations, there were two units of seventy years.

1. Seventy years elapsed from the time Nebuchadnezzar first conquered Judah (in the days of Jehoiakim; cf. Dan. 1:1 and Rashi *ad loc.*) until Cyrus granted the Jews permission to return to Jerusalem.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁸ These sources do not explicitly state the length of Artaxerxes’ reign, so I derived the number 35 or 36 from their statement that the Persian Empire lasted 34 years from the Second Temple’s construction (which began in the second year of Darius, whom they equate with Artaxerxes). It is not entirely clear why these sources attribute 35 or 36 years to Artaxerxes when the biblical text never mentions any event after his 32nd year (note 240 above). For a discussion of the possible motivations for this assertion, see First (*Jewish History in Conflict* 125-132) and Milikowsky (סדר עולם II:466-475).

²⁴⁹ Milikowsky (סדר עולם II:499) observes that *Seder Olam* (Ch. 28) appears to count the seventy-year “term of Jerusalem’s desolation” (Dan. 9:2) from the Temple’s destruction until its reconstruction under Darius (the Persian), despite the fact that this chapter is dated to the first year of Darius the Mede (Dan. 9:1), which is 18 years before the Second Temple’s reconstruction began (according to *Seder Olam*’s calculations). Nevertheless, Milikowsky disputes the assumption that *Seder Olam* agrees with a view in the Talmud (bMeg. 12a) that Daniel miscalculated.

2. Seventy years elapsed between the destruction of the First Temple and the start of the Second Temple's construction in Darius' second year: 52 years of Babylonian kings, 3 of Cyrus, 14 of Ahasuerus, and 2 of Darius. Adding the lone year of Darius the Mede would bring the total to 71, so these sources explain that Cyrus reigned "partial years" (שנים מקוטעות), meaning that Cyrus' first year and the year of Darius the Mede were the same year.

The most novel part of this rabbinic chronology is the merging of Darius and Artaxerxes into one king. The author of *Seder Olam* undoubtedly observed that – with the exception of the aforementioned verses in Ezra 4 – all the events of Artaxerxes' reign (Ezra 7-Neh. 13) appear *after* the events of Darius' reign. Moreover, these events begin with Ezra's trip to Israel in Artaxerxes' *seventh* year, which is written immediately after the Second Temple's completion in Darius' *sixth* year (Ezra 6:16). Hence, the author of *Seder Olam* concluded that the events of Ezra 5-7 appear in their correct chronological order:

- **Ezra 4** – In an exchange of letters during the beginning of his reign, a king Artaxerxes orders the Jews to halt construction in Jerusalem. *Seder Olam* might identify this Artaxerxes with Darius, in which case these letters were exchanged at the start of the reign of Darius/Artaxerxes. Alternatively, *Seder Olam* identifies this Artaxerxes with Cyrus.²⁵⁰ According to either understanding, the letters in Ezra 4 pre-date the events of the next three chapters.

²⁵⁰ Pseudo-Rashi (Ezra 4:7) assumes – based on the Talmud (bR.H. 3b) – that the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4 should be identified with Cyrus. This one king authorized the return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple but then retracted it in a subsequent letter. However, Pseudo-Rashi implies that the author of *Seder Olam* identified the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4 with Darius, just as he identifies the Artaxerxes of Ezra and Nehemiah as Darius. Mitchell

- **Ezra 5-6** – In an exchange of letters during the second year of Darius/Artaxerxes, he permits the Temple's construction, leading to its completion in his sixth year.
- **Ezra 7** – In Darius/Artaxerxes' seventh year, Ezra travels to Jerusalem, where he is later joined by Nehemiah in Darius/Artaxerxes' twentieth year (Neh. 2:1, 5:14).

Seder Olam's chronology was widely adopted by medieval rabbinic scholars, at times with slight variations.²⁵¹

Yefet b. Eli's Chronology

The Karaite exegete Yefet b. Eli addresses the chronology of the Babylonian exile and Persian Period in several places.²⁵² As a Karaite, Yefet did not consider himself bound by rabbinic traditions and thus suggests an alternative to the aforementioned rabbinic chronology. Like several other Karaites, he does not accept that Darius and Artaxerxes were the same person, so he resolves the same exegetical difficulty with Ezra 4-7 by positing the existence of an additional king named Artaxerxes who reigned between Ahasuerus and Darius.²⁵³ Since this king is otherwise unknown, Yefet assumes that he reigned for a mere

First (personal communication) believes that the author of *Seder Olam* in fact held the view that Pseudo-Rashi attributes to the Talmud, identifying the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4 with Cyrus.

²⁵¹ See, for example, Abraham Ibn Daud's chronological work, *Sefer Ha-Qabbalah* (G. Cohen 13-15). Ibn Daud assumes the same number of kings and the same sequence as *Seder Olam* but slightly lengthens Ahasuerus' reign and slightly shortens Artaxerxes' reign.

²⁵² See his commentaries to Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:12; Dan. 1:1, 2:1, and 11:1-3; and Est. 1:1.

²⁵³ Several medieval Karaites posited the existence of a king Artaxerxes who briefly reigned between Ahasuerus and Darius (Salmon b. Yeruham, cited in Wechsler's supercommentary to Yefet, Est. 1:1 n. 40; the eleventh-century Karaite fragment published by Mann, *Texts and Studies* II:102; and Jacob b. Reuben, Dan. 11:2). This view is also shared by Zerahiah b. Isaac Halevi Gerondi (הקטן בR.H. 1a), a prominent 12th-century rabbinic figure. Ibn Ezra (Dan. 11:2) attributes this view to Ibn Chiquitilia. However, given Ibn Ezra's tendency to misattribute sources, one wonders if he indeed learned this view from Ibn Chiquitilia, or if perhaps Ibn Ezra read this view in Yefet's writings but misremembered its source as Ibn Chiquitilia.

one year and thus labels him Artaxerxes “the Lesser” (אלצגיר).²⁵⁴ Yefet’s complete chronology is thus:

- Babylonians – 51 years of exile,²⁵⁵ starting in year 18 of Nebuchadnezzar.²⁵⁶
- Darius the Mede – 1 year
- Cyrus – 3 years
- Ahasuerus – 13 years
- Artaxerxes I (the Lesser) – 1 year
- Darius – 6 years²⁵⁷

²⁵⁴ The Judeo-Arabic word אלצגיר should not be confused with the cognate Hebrew word הצעיר (“the younger”), since this Artaxerxes preceded the Artaxerxes of Ezra and Nehemiah’s time. The translation of אלצגיר as “the Lesser” follows Wechsler’s translation of Yefet (Est. 1:1) and corresponds to the Hebrew description of this king as הקטן by Jacob b. Reuben (Dan. 11:2) and an eleventh-century Genizah fragment of a Karaite commentary (Mann, *ibid.*).

²⁵⁵ In the context of Daniel’s vision of “seven weeks” (9:25), Yefet considers the exile to include 47 years of Babylonian rule – rather than 51 – in order to have the correct number of years to correspond to Daniel’s vision. Commenting on Dan. 9:25, he bases the number 47 on the argument that some Jews remained in Jerusalem for several years after the Temple’s destruction (trans. D. S. Margoliouth):

He tells him then that from the time of the destruction of the Holy Place and the captivity of the nation to the building of the Second Temple, is seven weeks, i.e. forty-nine years. Now the people did not cease dwelling in the city till the twenty-third year of Nebuchadnezzar; they are called (Ezek. xxxiii. 24) ‘inhabitants of waste places,’ and were taken captive by Nebuzaradan (Jer. lii. 30). Now if twenty-three years be taken away from the sum total of the seventy years of Babylon, there remain forty-seven years plus one year for Darius and one year for Cyrus. This makes a total of forty-nine years; to which the seven weeks refer.

²⁵⁶ In Dan. 2:1, Yefet explains that Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was in the 32nd year of his reign, which was the 14th year of the exile (trans. Margoliouth 6):

For Nebuchadnezzar took the Holy City and burnt the Temple in the seventeenth year of his reign; and if Nebuchadnezzar saw the dream in the thirty-second year of his reign, there must have passed since the destruction of the Temple thirteen years, and the appearance of the dream will have taken place in the fourteenth year [after its destruction].

Without explaining the breakdown of the reigns of individual Babylonian kings, Yefet explains the overall length of Babylonian dominion in Zech. 1:12 (trans. Kees De Vreugd):

The beginning of these seventy years is from the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. 52). If you count these remaining fifty-one years of the seventy years (which are marked out) for Babel, as God had ordained that he would reign seventy years (he and his son and his son’s son), there remain nineteen years for the reign of the Persians until this year. And this is the account of them: One year for Darius the Mede, three for Cyrus, thirteen for Ahasuerus, one year for Artaxerxes the younger and one year which passed from the reign of this Darius the Persian. So the total sum of this is seventy years.

- Artaxerxes II – 33 years

In order to uphold Daniel’s prediction of *four* Persian kings, Yefet (Dan. 11:2) argues that Daniel intended four kings *after* Cyrus.

Ibn Ezra’s Chronology

Like Yefet, Ibn Ezra discusses Babylonian and Persian chronology in multiple works.²⁵⁸ He observes that the equation of Darius with Artaxerxes in *Seder Olam Rabbah* potentially requires one to further conflate Zerubbabel with Nehemiah as the governor of Judea during the reign of this one king (cf. bSan. 38a, Rashi to Zech. 3:8). In truth, Ibn Ezra argues that *Seder Olam Rabbah* represents an interpretation of *derash*, while “any intelligent person” (כל איש דעת) recognizes that Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes were three separate kings according to the plain sense of Scripture.²⁵⁹

On the other hand, Ibn Ezra disapproves of the insertion of an additional king named Artaxerxes between Ahasuerus and Darius. In Ibn Ezra’s view, Dan. 11:2 clearly indicates that there would be four Persian kings (namely, Cyrus, Ahasuerus, Darius, and Artaxerxes).

²⁵⁷ Yefet writes that the Persian kings reigned for 55 years (Dan. 8:20), but he also writes elsewhere that they reigned 57 years (Dan. 9:24). The latter number appears to include Darius the Mede. The years that Yefet provides for other Persian kings add up to 50. Since the last date for Darius in the Bible is year 6, Yefet presumably believes that Darius died that year. His comment in Dan. 8:20 that the Persian kings ruled for 55 years must further assume an overlap between two reigns. By contrast, the total of 57 years including Darius the Mede could mean that the Persian Darius ruled for 6 years without assuming any overlap between kings.

²⁵⁸ For lengthy discussions of this chronology, see the oral commentary to Zech. 9:9; both commentaries to Dan. 9:2; Dan. 11:2; and שפה ברורה, Lippmann 8, Wilensky 291-292, Gonzalez and Sáenz-Badillos 6*. For briefer comments, see Zech. 11:15, the short commentary to Exod. 2:10, both commentaries to Est. 1:1, and the second commentary to Est. 2:6 and 4:5.

²⁵⁹ שפה ברורה, *ibid.*

Ibn Ezra might have also objected to Yefet's view due to the lack of any evidence for the existence of this "Artaxerxes the Lesser" anywhere else in the Bible.²⁶⁰

Ibn Ezra thus develops a creative exegetical solution to the problem of Artaxerxes' appearance in Ch. 4 of Ezra: identifying the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4 with Ahasuerus.²⁶¹ Ibn Ezra (Dan. 11:2, Est. 1:1) suggests that the name Artaxerxes is Aramaic, whereas the names Ahasuerus and Darius are Persian. Hence, Ahasuerus was known in Aramaic as Artaxerxes, and the narrative of Ezra-Nehemiah flows in chronological order:

- **Ezra 4:6** – The text states in a general manner: "In the reign of Ahasuerus, at the start of his reign, they drew up an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem."
- **Ezra 4:7ff.** – The text elaborates on the previous verse by providing the text of the exchange of letters between the Jews' adversaries and Artaxerxes (=Ahasuerus), who ultimately ordered the Jews to halt construction in Jerusalem.
- **Ezra 5-6** – In a subsequent exchange of letters, Darius (=Ahasuerus/Artaxerxes' son and successor) permitted this construction during his second year.

²⁶⁰ Cyrus, Darius, Ahasuerus, and the Artaxerxes of Nehemiah repeatedly appear in the biblical books of the Persian Period. Cyrus appears in Daniel, Deutero-Isaiah, and the closing verses of Chronicles, Ahasuerus appears in Esther, Darius (the Persian) appears in Haggai and Zechariah, and Artaxerxes appears throughout Nehemiah. Darius the Mede primarily appears in Daniel, but Ibn Ezra claims that the Darius of Ezra 6:14 is Darius the Mede (שפה ברורה *ibid.*).

²⁶¹ Ibn Ezra appears to be the first known exegete to utilize this explanation in order to construct a sequence of Cyrus, Ahasuerus/Artaxerxes, Darius, and Artaxerxes. Milikowsky (סדר עולם II:466 n. 107) raises the possibility that the author of the so-called שאלות עתיקות (Genizah fragments that raise a collection of difficulties with Biblical passages) might represent an earlier source for this understanding of the Persian kings' order. However, although the relevant passage in שאלות עתיקות (Rosenthal 50) does indicate that there were four Persian kings, it is too terse to determine how its author understood their sequence or how he addressed the presence of Artaxerxes in Ezra 4:7 (cf. Rosenthal 87-88). Moreover, even if the author of the שאלות עתיקות did identify the four kings as Cyrus, Ahasuerus/Artaxerxes, Darius, and Artaxerxes, it is impossible to determine the details of his chronology – such as how long he believed that each king reigned – or the exegetical methods he used to reach his conclusions. For discussion of the authorship of שאלות עתיקות, see E. Fleischer (לצביון השאלות העתיקות) and Simon (אזן מלין תבחן 301-308). As Simon rightly observes (*ibid.* 306), Ibn Ezra's repeated discussions of the Persian chronology are responding to textual difficulties in the Bible and the rabbinic chronology which he deemed untenable; they are not responding to the passage in שאלות עתיקות.

- **Ezra 7** – In the seventh year of a different Artaxerxes (=Darius’ *successor*), Ezra traveled to Jerusalem.
- **Neh. 2:1** – Nehemiah joined Ezra in Jerusalem in the twentieth year of this latter Artaxerxes.

According to Ibn Ezra, the complete chronology of Babylonian and Persian kings is thus:

- Nebuchadnezzar before the Temple’s destruction – 19 years²⁶²
- Babylonian Kings after the Temple’s Destruction – 51 years
- Cyrus – 3 years (cf. Dan. 10:1, overlaps with the only year of Darius the Mede)²⁶³
- Ahasuerus (known in Aramaic as Artaxerxes) – ca. 14 years²⁶⁴
- Darius “the Persian” – ca. 12 years²⁶⁵

²⁶² According to Ibn Ezra’s calculations, Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah in year 3 or 4 of Jehoiakim (cf. Jer. 25:1 and Dan. 1:1). Jehoiakim died after reigning for 11 years, and Nebuchadnezzar exiled his son Jehoiachin and “the craftsmen and smiths” (II Kings 24:14) three months later (*ibid.* 24:8), which was 8 years after Nebuchadnezzar first conquered Judah (*ibid.* 24:12). Eleven years later, Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the First Temple (II Kings 25:2, Jer. 39:2 and 52:5), so he controlled Judah for a total of 19 years before destroying the Temple (II Kings 25:8, Jer. 52:12).

Regarding the question of whether Nebuchadnezzar’s initial conquest of Judah occurred in year 3 or 4 of Jehoiakim, both Ibn Ezra’s commentaries to Dan. 1:1 assert that a discrepancy of 1 year is trivial, observing that the religious law that a boy must be circumcised “on the eighth day” (Lev. 12:3) is an estimate that could be inaccurate by several hours (cf. note 265). Ralbag (Dan. 1:1) shares Ibn Ezra’s fundamental approach to the discrepancy between the dates in Jer. 25:1 and Dan. 1:1, whereas Rashi (Dan. 1:1) reinterprets the date in Dan. 1:1 so that it does not contradict Jer. 25:1.

²⁶³ Cf. the oral commentary’s excursus to Zech. 9:9-10.

²⁶⁴ Elsewhere, Ibn Ezra indicates that Ahasuerus reigned for “more than thirteen years” without specifying that the reign was exactly fourteen years (see note 265).

²⁶⁵ The precise number twelve comes from Ibn Ezra to Dan. 9:24-25, where he attributes it to an unknown extra-biblical document that he calls ספר מלכי פרס (“the book of Persian kings”). In Dan. 9:24-25, Gabriel informs Daniel that the construction of Jerusalem will take “seven weeks,” representing 49 years. Ibn Ezra maintains that those years are calculated from Cyrus’ first year (when Daniel received this vision) through Nehemiah’s arrival in Jerusalem in Artaxerxes’ twentieth year (3+14+12+20). However, his second (shorter) commentary to Dan. 9:25 notes that year 6 is the last year of Darius’ reign to appear explicitly in the Bible. Hence, the sum

- Artaxerxes (known in Persian as Darius) – at least 32 years (cf. Neh. 13:6)

According to Ibn Ezra’s calculations (cf. his commentary to Dan. 9:2) both the period of Babylonian dominion before the First Temple’s destruction and the period of Persian dominion before the Second Temple’s construction lasted 19 years.²⁶⁶ Hence, when either unit is added to the 51 years of Babylonian dominion after the First Temple’s destruction, the total will be 70 years. So Zechariah was correct to argue in year 2 of Darius that God “placed [Jerusalem] under a curse seventy years ago” (1:12) – referring to 70 years from the Temple’s destruction to the start of the Temple’s reconstruction (cf. Zech. 7:4) – while Daniel (9:2) is also correct that Jeremiah’s 70 years (counted from Nebuchadnezzar’s arrival in Judah) expired in year 1 of Darius the Mede (cf. II Chron. 36:21-22).

This chronology reflects several features of Ibn Ezra’s exegetical methodology:

1. **Conflation of Characters** – Ibn Ezra sees no fundamental problem with biblical characters having multiple names,²⁶⁷ but he does object to equating characters when textual evidence and/or reason indicate that they were distinct individuals. Therefore, his objection to the rabbinic sources that equate Darius with Artaxerxes derives from the fact that Darius and Artaxerxes seem to have lived in different generations: The

total of years from Daniel’s vision to Nehemiah’s arrival in Jerusalem could have been less than 49. In both commentaries to Daniel, Ibn Ezra downplays the significance of such a discrepancy, arguing that a slightly smaller number of years could still be considered “seven weeks” with the seventh week being incomplete, similar to the practice of circumcising an “eight-day old” child on the eighth day of his life, when he might only be seven days and several hours old (cf. Gen. 17:12, Ibn Ezra to Lev. 12:3). Indeed, Ibn Ezra apparently did not have absolute faith in the dates of this unknown Persian chronicle, since he writes in שפה ברורה that Ahasuerus and Darius reigned for “more than thirteen years” and “more than ten years,” respectively, without offering a precise length for either king’s reign (Wilensky 291, González and Saenz-Badillos 6*; cf. the text of Lippmann 8b, which contains the untenable reading of “more than 22 years” for Darius’ reign).

²⁶⁶ For this purpose, Ibn Ezra considers the Second Temple to be rebuilt in year 2 of Darius the Persian even though the construction, which began that year, lasted for four years until year 6 of Darius.

²⁶⁷ I discuss his view that many biblical characters have multiple names below, in a separate chapter about significance minimalism and maximalism (pp. 168-171).

former lived when a Judean governor named Zerubbabel built the Temple, while the latter lived when the Temple's existence is taken for granted and a governor named Nehemiah built the city of Jerusalem.²⁶⁸

By contrast, he is comfortable not only in claiming that Ahasuerus had a second name, but also in equating Zerubbabel with Sheshbazzar.²⁶⁹ In both of these cases, the text attributes similar roles to two characters: Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar were both Judean governors who led waves of returnees from Babylonia to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple, and Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes were both Persian kings during whose reign the Jews' enemies complained to the king about Jewish construction. Moreover, in both cases, the second character is a presumably prominent figure about whom the reader is told very little. The scant background information provided for both Sheshbazzar and the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4:7 might have further fueled Ibn Ezra's suspicion that each should be identified with a better-known figure.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ For this reason, Ibn Ezra's remarks in שפה ברורה appear to link the widespread rabbinic view that Darius and Artaxerxes are one and the same with the less widespread view that identifies Nehemiah with Zerubbabel. In Ibn Ezra's mind, the only plausible way to equate the two Persian kings is to also equate the Judean governors who served under them. As to why Ibn Ezra could not equate Zerubbabel with Nehemiah, he presents textual arguments against such an equation:

I have already cited absolute proof that Nehemiah is not Zerubbabel, because Nehemiah immigrated with [Zerubbabel] (cf. Ezra 2:2). And since the Scripture states "in the time of Zerubbabel and in the time of Nehemiah" (Neh. 12:47), it is impossible for them to be one [person] (short commentary to Exod. 2:10).

Ibn Ezra's belief that the Nehemiah of Ezra 2:2 is the future governor of Judea is shared by Ralbag. Their identification of the Nehemiah in Ezra 2:2 with the future governor assumes a compressed Persian Period relative to the chronology accepted by modern scholars. According to modern scholarship, it is virtually impossible for the same individual to have been a prominent figure in Zerubbabel's entourage and to have still been alive in the 32nd year of Artaxerxes when the governor Nehemiah left Jerusalem to visit the king (Neh. 13:6). However, based on the various rabbinic and medieval chronologies that assume shorter reigns for all Persian kings mentioned in the Bible, Nehemiah could have been a prominent young leader in his 20's or 30's with Zerubbabel's group and then served as governor himself in his 70's or 80's.

²⁶⁹ Ibn Ezra equates Zerubbabel with Sheshbazzar in several places (Hag. 2:22, oral commentary to Zech. 4:9, Dan. 6:29, and short commentary to Dan. 9:1). I discuss his view in my supercommentary to the oral commentary to Zech. 4:9. His opinion was subsequently adopted by Moses Kimḥi and Ralbag to Ezra 1:8.

²⁷⁰ In the case of Sheshbazzar, it is especially striking that Sheshbazzar is presented as the leader of Judean exiles in Ezra 1:8-11, and then Zerubbabel is leading the returnees to Jerusalem in Ezra 2:2 without any hint of a leadership change or meaningful passage of time.

Hence, Ibn Ezra does not object to conflating Biblical personalities, but he demands that any such conflation be based on textual evidence.

2. **Language** – Ibn Ezra’s linguistic sensitivity might have contributed toward his willingness to identify the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4:7 with Ahasuerus. Ibn Ezra repeatedly cites examples of Jewish characters who had a Hebrew name and an Aramaic name, such as Daniel (=Belteshazzar; Dan.1:7), and – in Ibn Ezra’s opinion – Zerubbabel (=Sheshbazzar).²⁷¹ Hence, although Ibn Ezra disapproved of what he deemed to be baseless assertions that Persian kings X and Y were one and the same, he could more easily accept the possibility of the same king having a Persian name and an Aramaic name. Hence, he confidently asserts: “This Ahasuerus is called Artaxerxes in the language of the Chaldeans, and there are proofs of this” (כי זה אהשורוש יקרא בלשון כשדים ארתחששתא, ויש ראיות על זה; second commentary to Est. 1:1).

While he does not elaborate on these proofs, he might have been influenced by the fact that the narrative switches from Hebrew to Aramaic beginning in Ezra 4:7b (until 6:19). Indeed, it is instructive to examine another passage of his biblical commentaries, where he reiterates his view regarding Ahasuerus: “This name is in the Persian language; in the Chaldean language, he is Artaxerxes” (וזה השם הוא לשון פרסים, ובלשון כשדים הוא ארתחשסתא; Dan. 11:2). Later in that passage, Ibn Ezra further observes that starting in 4:7, the text of Ezra “explains the ‘accusation’ [of Ezra 4:6] and the letter in the language of Targum” (פרש ה"שטנה" והאגרת בלשון תרגום). Ibn Ezra’s second claim, that the Aramaic letter of 4:7bff represents the original Aramaic text of the “accusation” of 4:6, clearly depends upon his first claim that Artaxerxes is

²⁷¹ See his short commentary to Dan. 9, his second commentary to Est. 1:1, and the oral commentary to Zech. 4:9.

Ahasuerus' Aramaic name: The "accusation" from Ahasuerus' reign cannot be the letter from Artaxerxes' reign unless the two kings are one and the same. Hence, Ibn Ezra was clearly aware that the language of the narrative switches to "the language of Targum" (=Aramaic) in 4:7b, and he utilizes that fact to identify the content of the otherwise unknown "accusation" of 4:6. Perhaps his short commentary to Est. 1:1 also had that same fact in mind as one of his unnamed "proofs": Perhaps the fact that the text first employs the name Artaxerxes in 4:7a, immediately prior to presenting the text of the Aramaic letter in 4:7bff, helped convince him that Artaxerxes was the Aramaic name of the character who was called Ahasuerus in the earlier Hebrew verses.

3. **Extra-Biblical Evidence** – Ibn Ezra believes that information from extra-biblical historical sources can assist with interpreting the Bible correctly. His introduction to Zechariah laments the lack of extra-biblical sources to shed light on Zechariah's enigmatic prophecies. At the same time, Ibn Ezra is wary of the reliability of extra-biblical sources. His short commentary to Exodus (2:22) famously dismisses legends of Moses in Ethiopia, cautioning against relying upon "any book that was not written by prophets or by our Sages, based on the oral tradition" (מפי הקבלה). Additionally, he was aware that even when one possesses information from extra-biblical sources, one can still err in applying that information to a particular prophecy. His introduction to Zechariah cautions that even "if we would find an ancient book that recounted what... transpired in those days, we would be groping like blind men (cf. Isa. 59:10), saying: 'Perhaps the prophecy was [referring] to this.'"

This same mindset appears to guide Ibn Ezra's attitude toward an extra-biblical account of Persian history to which he had access. In several places, he cites "the book of Persian kings" (ספר מלכי פרס) as a source of historical facts, such as the lengths of Ahasuerus' and Darius' reigns (Dan. 9:24, 11:2) and the claim that Cyrus was the son-in-law of Darius the Mede (Dan. 6:1, short commentary to Dan. 8:3).²⁷² While Ibn Ezra seems receptive to this information, he does not consider its source authoritative. Hence, at the same time that his calculations of the 70 years of exile and the 49 years ("seven weeks") of Dan. 9:24 assume the accuracy of this Persian source, Ibn Ezra repeatedly emphasizes that Daniel's numbers might be estimates, such that a slight inaccuracy in the length of these reigns would not undermine the prophecies' veracity.

4. **Round Numbers** – This openness to the Bible using round numbers as an estimate, rather than a precise sum, is another common feature of Ibn Ezra's exegesis. For example, Ibn Ezra interprets the "ten" times that the Israelites disobeyed God in the wilderness (Num. 14:22; cf. mAvot. 8:4) as meaning that they tested Him often but not necessarily ten times.²⁷³ In the context of Second-Temple chronology, Ibn Ezra observes that Zechariah addresses people who had been fasting "these seventy years" (7:5), when, in fact, the prophecy is dated 72 years after the First Temple's destruction (according to Ibn Ezra's calculations).

²⁷² For other citations of extra-biblical Persian sources by Ibn Ezra, see Isa. 2:2, Dan. 7:14, Est. 1:14, and Exod. 19:23 (citing Saadiah).

²⁷³ Ibn Ezra may have reached his view because one cannot easily find exactly ten incidents of the Israelites' disobedience in the Pentateuch. However, Ibn Ezra does acknowledge elsewhere (Ps. 78:32) that the verse might have intended precisely ten incidents, in which case it was alluding to incidents that are not recorded in Scripture.

5. **Aggadic Teachings** – Just as Ibn Ezra was receptive to information from an extra-biblical Persian chronicle but did not automatically accept it as authoritative, he maintained a similar ambivalence toward midrashic literature. He formulated his aforementioned admonition against blindly accepting information from questionable sources carefully. By endorsing the writings of “our Sages, *based on the oral tradition*” (p. 159 above), he limits the binding nature of rabbinic teachings to cases in which these teachings represent an authentic oral tradition. Consequently, he did not view the overwhelming majority of midrashic literature as binding.²⁷⁴ Nevertheless, Ibn Ezra was willing to accept interpretations that appear in rabbinic literature if they met his criteria for *peshat* exegesis.²⁷⁵

Regarding Persian chronology, we find Ibn Ezra critically analyzing the rabbinic chronology, rejecting most of it, but accepting the view of R. Judah b. Simeon that Darius the Persian was “Esther’s son, pure from his mother but impure from his father” (Lev. R. 13:5, Esth. R. 8:3). Ibn Ezra presumably accepts this one detail, because it strikes him as reasonable that Ahasuerus’ successor would be the son of him and his queen. In Dan. 9:1, Ibn Ezra presents Darius as Esther’s son without citing a source, as if it is a universally accepted fact. Elsewhere, he attributes this view to the Sages (Hag. 1:1, Dan. 6:1) but in no way disputes it.

²⁷⁴ For Ibn Ezra’s approach toward aggadic interpretations of Scripture, see his introductions to both commentaries to Gen. 1:1 (analyzed by Elboim, *דברי חכמים* 75-94, and Lancaster 162-171).

²⁷⁵ For example, Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Jonah (1:1-2) interprets Jonah’s attempt to flee from God as an attempt to escape from prophecy. It further explains Jonah’s motivation as nationalistic (not wanting to assist a potential enemy of Israel). Both the claim that Jonah sought to evade prophecy (believing that there is no prophecy outside of Israel) and the claim that Jonah acted out of concern for Israel’s well-being are rooted in earlier rabbinic texts but lack compelling textual support in Scripture. Nevertheless, Ibn Ezra maintains that they have some textual and logical basis and therefore endorses them as the plain sense of the text.

Conclusion

Ibn Ezra's chronology of the Persian Period differs significantly from the chronology that has been established by modern scholarship. However, it shows a remarkable level of independence on the part of Ibn Ezra, as his own analysis of the biblical data led him to reject both the accepted rabbinic chronology and a prevalent Karaite chronology. His own chronology is the result of an impressive attempt to reexamine biblical data, cautiously glean information from extra-biblical sources, and ultimately produce a chronology that can be applied consistently across all biblical texts from the Persian Period. If one begins with the data set to which Ibn Ezra had access, then Ibn Ezra's chronology is a reasonable interpretation of Scripture according to Ibn Ezra's theological assumptions and stated exegetical methodology.

Chapter VIII: Ibn Ezra and Significance Minimalism

This chapter examines one methodological aspect of Abraham Ibn Ezra's exegesis that I believe merits special attention: To what extent does Ibn Ezra squeeze meaning out of every nuance and peculiarity of the text? Midrashic literature is filled with exegesis that derives both laws and homiletical lessons from even the most minor nuances of the text, based on the doctrine that James Kugel has termed "omnificance."²⁷⁶ *Peshat* exegetes shy away from reading information into these nuances that seems detached from the verses' context. However, that does not necessarily mean that they ignore these nuances. Aversion to the doctrine of omnificance could lead a *peshat* exegete to argue that there is no significance to repetition, superfluous letters, or grammatical anomalies. However, a *peshat* exegete could also maintain that at least some of these peculiarities *are* meaningful but must be interpreted in ways that conform to the text's plain sense.

For purposes of this study, I refer to approaches that derive meaning from textual nuances as "significance maximalism" and approaches that reject the squeezing of meaning out of every nuance as "significance minimalism."²⁷⁷ Although I have endeavored to limit

²⁷⁶ "The basic assumption underlying all of rabbinic exegesis that the slightest details of the biblical text have a meaning that is both comprehensible and significant... Every detail is put there to teach something new and important, and it is capable of being discovered by careful analysis" (Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry* 103-104); "Nothing in Scripture is said in vain or for rhetorical flourish: every detail is important, everything is intended to impart some teaching" (Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible* 17). Kugel offers a more comprehensive presentation of the conceptual underpinnings of rabbinic exegesis in *Traditions of the Bible* (14-19) and *How to Read the Bible* (14-16).

²⁷⁷ These terms come from Steiner ("Saadia vs. Rashi" 215 n. 3 and *A Biblical Translation in the Making* 34-36, 43).

this analytic introduction to matters of particular relevance to Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the issue of significance minimalism and maximalism arises in any commentary to any biblical passage. As such, this chapter cannot confine itself to Ibn Ezra's commentaries to those three books. I have nevertheless chosen to address this issue because, while preparing my supercommentary, I observed several comments of Ibn Ezra that did not conform to his reputation as a significance minimalist.

Introduction

One can hardly read a page of Talmud without encountering the exegesis of significance maximalists: either homiletical lessons or minutia of rabbinic law that the Talmud derives from a superfluous letter, redundant word, or defective spelling in the biblical text. One might expect that – by contrast – a *peshat* exegete such as Ibn Ezra would necessarily be a significance minimalist, since a *peshat* exegete's commitment to the plain sense of the text would not allow him to read meaning into the Bible on the flimsy basis of a minor textual irregularity. Indeed, one might view the derivation of meaning from every textual feature as a hallmark of Midrash, which medieval *peshat* exegetes sought to avoid when they asserted their independence from earlier rabbinic interpretations that they labeled as *derash*.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁸ As an interesting compromise approach regarding the omnisignificance principle, see Yitzhak Berger's study of Radak (עמדתו של רד"ק). Berger identifies several textual issues that serve as litmus tests for whether to categorize Radak as a minimalist or maximalist:

- Superfluous phrases, such as the closing phrase of Gen. 25:19, "This is the story of Isaac, son of Abraham. Abraham begot Isaac" (cf. I Chron. 1:34).
- The repetition of characters' names, such as "Abraham, Abraham" (Gen. 22:11), "Jacob, Jacob" (Gen. 46:2), and "Samuel, Samuel" (I Sam. 3:10).
- Didactic interpretations that Radak offers for seemingly trivial details (e.g., how Rebecca mounted the camel).

However, as I alluded in this chapter's opening paragraphs, such an assumption would be overly simplistic. Even without a religious conviction that every textual feature of a sacred text *must* be significant, any interpreter of any text can reasonably adopt a methodology of significance maximalism regarding those textual nuances that strike the interpreter as significant. Moreover, some interpreters might tend to view a broader range of nuances and anomalies as meaningful than other interpreters do. Assessing the extent to which an exegete is inclined toward significance minimalism or maximalism can thus shed light on his conception of the biblical authors' literary style and the text's "plain sense." Demonstrating that not all *peshat* exegetes deal with this issue in the same manner can further enable us to appreciate the range of exegetical approaches that fall within the broad category of medieval *peshat*.

In the case of Ibn Ezra, standard characterizations of his exegesis paint a picture of Ibn Ezra as a significance minimalist due to his criticism of those who read too much into minor textual variations.²⁷⁹ Scholars point to Ibn Ezra's most vehement and best-known passage addressing this issue, his long commentary to Exod. 20, which opens with a lengthy excursus in which he downplays the differences between the Ten Commandments in Exod. 20 and in Deut. 5:

Berger argues that Radak views the Pentateuch differently than the rest of the Bible and thus deems it necessary to find meaning in extraneous phrases in the Pentateuch while not being concerned about similarly extraneous phrases in the rest of the Bible. For example, Radak's commentary to the Sodom narrative in Gen. 18 is far more detailed and verbose than the parallel narrative of the concubine in Judg. 19, such that Radak will explain a phrase in Genesis yet feel no need to comment on a nearly identical phrase in Judges. I have not found evidence for a similar distinction between the Pentateuch and the rest of the Bible in Ibn Ezra's writings.

²⁷⁹ For example, Amos Hakham (פירושי הראב"ע) 130 counts Ibn Ezra's significance minimalism (in the context of narratives that are retold with slight variations) as one of nine key features of Ibn Ezra's *peshat* exegesis. The *Encyclopaedia Judaica*'s entry on Ibn Ezra (Simon and Jospe) similarly cites Ibn Ezra's comments to Exod. 20 in order to characterize his exegesis.

אמר אברה בַּהַמְחַבֵּר: משפט אנשי לשון הקדש, שפעם יבארו דבורם באר היטב, ופעם יאמרו הצרך במלות קצרות, שיוכל השומע להבין טעמם. ודע, כי המלות כגופות, והטעמים כנשמות; והגוף לנשמה הוא כמו כלי. על כן משפט החכמים בכל לשון, שישמרו הטעמים, ואינם חוששים משנוי המלות, אחר שהם שוות בטעמים.

Abraham the author declares: It is the manner of those [who write in] Hebrew to sometimes explain their thoughts very clearly, while at other times they say what they must in as few words as is necessary for the listener to understand their meaning. Know that words are like bodies and meanings are like souls; the body is like a vessel for the soul. Hence, it is the custom of all wise men in every language to preserve the meaning, yet they do not have concern for changing the words, as long as [the different words] share the same meaning.

By comparing words to the text's corporeal body and their meaning to its soul, Ibn Ezra offers a strong fundamental argument for focusing on a text's essential meaning while downplaying the significance of its precise formulation.²⁸⁰

Some scholars have also highlighted another area in which Ibn Ezra appears to be a significance minimalist: repetitions such as those to which modern scholarship refers as "synonymous parallelism." Ibn Ezra frequently opts to not derive additional meaning from these repetitions. His failure to seek meaning from them has been cited as proof that he does

²⁸⁰ Ibn Ezra reiterates this fundamental approach in several places, such as his long commentary to Exod. 11:5 (arguing that "the first-born of the slave girl who is behind the millstones" is essentially synonymous with "the first-born of the captive who was in the dungeon" in Exod. 12:29) and Exod. 32:9 (downplaying slight discrepancies between the Golden Calf narratives in Exodus and Deuteronomy). In his commentary to Isa. 36:1, Ibn Ezra introduces the narrative of Hezekiah and Rabshakeh by downplaying variants between Isa. 36-37 and the virtually identical narrative in II Kings 18-19.

not consider the biblical text omnisignificant in the midrashic sense, as well as indicating that he is inclined toward significance minimalism in his *peshat* interpretations.²⁸¹

This depiction of Ibn Ezra as a significance minimalist, however, downplays many cases in which his interpretations exhibit maximalistic tendencies. Indeed, the 14th-century exegete and philosopher Joseph Ibn Caspi – who is perhaps the staunchest significance minimalist among medieval commentators – criticizes Ibn Ezra for reading too much into Scripture’s word variations:

Joseph declares: Again and again, I repeatedly show [through] convincing arguments that the aim of the Torah in varying [its choice of] words is not always to make distinctions, as Ibn Ezra thinks.²⁸²

It is therefore necessary to identify a broad range of exegetical issues that can serve as litmus tests for significance minimalism and maximalism and examine which exegetical methods Ibn Ezra employs to address these issues.²⁸³ For purposes of this study, I have

²⁸¹ Kugel lists Ibn Ezra among those major medieval exegetes who often did not derive additional meaning from synonymous parallelism (*The Idea of Biblical Poetry* 174-176). Kugel further credits Ibn Ezra with correctly identifying this writing style as a feature of rhetoric (דַּרְךְ צְהוּת) rather than poetry. Also see Elman (“The Rebirth”), who discusses legal exegesis, resumptive repetition, and parallelism. While focusing on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Elman makes a passing reference to “Ibn Ezra’s avowed anti-omnisignificant statements” (216) and cites Ibn Ezra’s aforementioned comments regarding the Ten Commandments as evidence.

²⁸² Ibn Caspi to Exod. 3:7 (trans. Richard Steiner, “Meaninglessness, Meaningfulness, and Super-Meaningfulness” 444). The narrow context of Ibn Caspi’s comment is God’s opening words at the burning bush: “I have surely seen the affliction of My people... and have heard their cry.” Deriving meaning from each phrase, Ibn Ezra’s long commentary *ad loc.* explains that God saw the injustices that the Hebrews suffered in private, while He heard the cries that were audible to everyone. Ibn Caspi rejects this maximalistic interpretation.

Regarding the characterization of Ibn Caspi as a steadfast significance minimalist, see Steiner (*ibid.* 444-446, esp. n. 63).

²⁸³ Kogut’s overview of how traditional exegetes interpret seemingly extraneous words and letters identifies potential test cases, since it examines 129 verses with some form of repetition (יחסה של הפרשנות היהודית). Kogut observes that, broadly speaking, exegetes attempt to find meaning for seemingly superfluous words and letters, but they appear more willing to accept a meaningless letter than to accept a meaningless word. However, Kogut’s conclusion is of limited value, because he writes about traditional exegetes as a collective unit and

selected several areas of exegesis in which one can identify the difference between minimalist and maximalist approaches. Their presentation begins with categories in which Ibn Ezra appears to be a minimalist, proceeds to areas in which he appears to be a maximalist, and concludes with one category in which his exegesis appears to be inconsistent.

Areas Where Ibn Ezra Appears to be a Minimalist:

1. **Names' Meanings and Etymologies:** Several exegetical challenges arise when dealing with the interpretation of biblical names:
 - a. Many biblical characters appear to have multiple names, or at least multiple spellings for the same name. A significance minimalist would argue that the large number of these cases indicates that the Bible attaches little significance to a character's multiple names or spellings, while a significance maximalist would seek meaning in each alternate name or spelling.²⁸⁴
 - b. When a parent explains his/her child's name, the name's etymology frequently does not fit the explanation perfectly. A maximalist would seek to explain this discrepancy, while a minimalist would downplay its significance.²⁸⁵

makes no attempt to identify the unique aspects of any particular exegete's approach. For this study I seek to understand Ibn Ezra's approach in a way that distinguishes him from exegetes who were ardent maximalists or ardent minimalists.

²⁸⁴ For example, Jacob's name is normally spelled יַעֲקֹב, but the plene spelling יַעֲקֹב appears five times in the Bible. By contrast, Elijah's name – which is normally spelled אֵלִיָּהוּ – is written five times with the defective spelling אֵלִיָּה. Rashi explains that Jacob held the ך of Elijah's name as collateral to ensure that Elijah would redeem his descendants (Lev. 26:42, based on מדרש חסרות ויתירות, Marmorstein 45). A *peshat*-oriented significance maximalist might seek a simpler reason for the missing or superfluous ך, while a significance minimalist would not attribute any significance to the variant spelling of either name.

²⁸⁵ For example, Noah's father employs the root נחם (to console) in explaining his son's name: "This same shall comfort us (יְנַחֵםנוּ) in our work and in the toil of our hands" (Gen. 5:29). But from an etymological perspective,

- c. In yet other cases, the Bible does not offer a reason for a character's name, but the name's etymology suggests a meaning. For example, Nimrod's name derives from the root מרד (to rebel), which could imply that he was rebellious. A maximalist would attempt to draw conclusions about Nimrod's character from his name, while a minimalist would dismiss it.²⁸⁶

Ibn Ezra adopts the minimalistic approach to all of these issues. Commenting on Exod. 18:3, Ibn Ezra enumerates biblical characters whose names fall into category 1.a or 1.b above (Gershom, Cain, Noah, Hushim, Jabez, and Micaiah). He expresses his minimalistic attitude toward the etymological roots of names through a programmatic statement: דע כי אנשי לשון הקדש שומרים הפעלים במתכנתם בכל הבינינים ואינם חוששין לשמר שמות בני אדם [writers] preserve verbs in their proper structures in all verbal patterns, but they are not concerned about preserving people's names").²⁸⁷ The sweeping nature of Ibn Ezra's comment implies a principled stance as a significance minimalist, as does his decision to lump names like Noah together with Hushim – despite the fact that they involve seemingly unrelated problems.²⁸⁸

the name Noah derives from the hollow root נוח (to rest). Ibn Ezra expresses the minimalistic view of Noah's name in both his commentaries to Gen. 5:29 (although cf. his remarks about Noah's name his long commentary to Gen. 11:1). By contrast, Rashi (*ad loc.*) forces the explanation of Noah's name to share the name's etymology, arguing that Noah brought not only comfort but also rest (מנוחה).

²⁸⁶ See Talmud (bEr. 53a) for the connection between Nimrod's rebellious character and his name's etymology. Ibn Ezra (Gen. 10:8) dismisses any connection between Nimrod's name and his character.

²⁸⁷ For a second, similar programmatic statement by Ibn Ezra, see שפה ברורה (Lippmann 3b-4b, Wilensky 287-288, González and Sáenz-Badillos 3*). For other cases in which Ibn Ezra minimizes the significance of a name's etymology or its variant spellings, see his comments to Exod. 2:10 and 6:25, Num. 16:12, Est. 1:10 (first commentary), 1:1 and 9:7-19 (second commentary). In most of these examples, his comments are intended to reject midrashic teachings that ascribe meaning to the names that he is discussing.

²⁸⁸ Regarding Noah's name, see n. 285 above. In the case of Hushim, the issue is that the first two consonants of his name are transposed (Shuham) in Num. 26:42.

Moreover, while Ibn Ezra and midrashic literature share the willingness to argue that one biblical character has multiple names, he opposes midrashic attempts to read deeper meaning into these variant names,²⁸⁹ preferring instead to offer practical reasons for the second name or no reason at all. To illustrate this distinction with examples from our material, Ibn Ezra's attempts to equate Zerubbabel with Sheshbazzar (oral commentary to Zech. 4:9) and Ahasuerus with Artaxerxes (oral commentary to Zech. 9:9-10) are based on the claim that each character had an Aramaic name in addition to his primary name in Hebrew or Persian (see pp. 156-158 above). When he equates Helem with Heldai and Hen with Josiah (Zech. 6:10), he simply lists other characters who also had multiple names, without any attempt to explain why these characters had two names or to attribute meaning to any name. On the other hand, Ibn Ezra (Mal. 1:1) rejects attempts to identify Malachi with Ezra, presumably because he saw no textual evidence for merging them into one character.

As a result of this difference in when they identify one character with another, Ibn Ezra's openness to a character having multiple names became a tool for significance minimalism – by downplaying variations in names of characters who appear to be the same. Midrashic literature, by contrast, employs the same method as a tool for significance maximalism (predicated on the doctrine of omnisignificance) – where characters who were

²⁸⁹ For example, Ibn Ezra rejects the claim that Daniel was also named Hathach because he was “cut down” (נחתך) from his greatness (second commentary to Est. 4:5; cf. discussion in Walfish 325 n. 7 and Davidovitz, יחס 231-232). Ibn Ezra argues that the linguistic connection between Hathach and נחתך is flimsy, since it assumes that ח can replace ה in the Hebrew spelling of הנתך. He similarly rejects any connection between Harbona and the Hebrew word חרב (sword) on the grounds that Harbona's name was Persian rather than Hebrew (first commentary to Est. 1:8).

seemingly unrelated to one another are transformed into the same individual with multiple names.²⁹⁰

2. **Gender Disagreement and Inconsistency** – It is not uncommon for a Biblical Hebrew verb or adjective to disagree with the gender of its noun. In some cases, gender disagreements occur so frequently with the same noun might question whether that noun can even be considered to have a gender. A maximalist would deal with these cases by offering an exegetical reason for the adjective's or verb's gender in a particular verse²⁹¹ or by seeking an alternative subject with which they do agree.²⁹² A minimalist would dismiss the need to offer any explanation by arguing that the preponderance of irregular cases proves that the Bible is not strict about gender agreement.

Ibn Ezra's approach indicates significance minimalism. He claims that Biblical Hebrew does not hesitate to use masculine plural verbs with feminine plural subjects.²⁹³ Regarding singular nouns, he frequently addresses cases of gender disagreement by commenting that the

²⁹⁰ See Walfish 342-343.

²⁹¹ The Talmud (bKid. 2b) observes that the words דרך (way) and תורה (teaching) can be the subjects of both masculine and feminine verbs. Following the midrashic doctrine of omnisignificance, the Talmud proceeds to suggest reasons for the verb's gender in specific contexts (e.g., using a masculine verb when discussing warfare, because men fight wars).

²⁹² For example, Gen. 30:39 (וַיִּקְרָמוּ הַצֹּאֵן... וַתֵּלְדֶן הַצֹּאֵן); “The flocks mated... the flocks brought forth”) uses the masculine-plural וַיִּקְרָמוּ when describing how sheep engaged in sexual reproduction, but the subsequent verb for giving birth (וַתֵּלְדֶן) is feminine. Radak (*ad loc.*) claims that male and female sheep together are the subject of וַיִּקְרָמוּ even though the subject of וַתֵּלְדֶן is exclusively the female sheep. Radak was apparently unwilling to accept that the female sheep would be the subject of a masculine-plural verb. By contrast, Ibn Ezra assumes that both actions were done exclusively by female sheep, so he thus observes that Biblical Hebrew plural verbs sometimes disagree with the subject's gender (כי משפט הלשון להפריש בין זכרים לנקבות בלשון יחיד, רק בלשון רבים לא (יחוש). Unlike Radak, he makes no attempt to include male sheep in the subject of וַיִּקְרָמוּ, because he sees no problem with the gender disagreement.

²⁹³ See his comments to Gen. 30:39 (n. 292 above), Isa. 49:11, and Eccles. 12:4 (although he questions whether Eccles. 12:4 has any actual gender disagreement).

noun in question can take adjectives or verbs of both genders,²⁹⁴ and he dismisses an attempt by Ibn Chiquitilia to limit the cases in which the rules of gender agreement can be violated.²⁹⁵

3. **Stylistic Repetition in Poetry and Rhetoric (טעם כפול)** - Many biblical verses contain phrases that seem redundant, such as the poetic phenomenon that modern Bible scholars refer to as synonymous parallelism. As mentioned above, scholars sometimes point to cases of parallelism as a litmus test for an exegete's attitude toward significance maximalism. Ibn Ezra frequently dismisses the existence of any new meaning in a redundant phrase, instead describing the redundancy as טעם כפול (literally, "doubled meaning") – a stylistic repetition of the same essential content. Ibn Ezra employs this method in many cases of poetry or elevated prose.²⁹⁶ His use of the phrase טעם כפול – or slight variants of it – several hundred times²⁹⁷ would appear to be consistent with his fundamental belief that a text's words are like a corporeal body that merely serves to hold the soul. Since a redundant or synonymous

²⁹⁴ For examples of nominals that can function as both masculine and feminine according to Ibn Ezra, see his commentaries to Gen. 2:15 (גן), Gen. 7:11 (תהום), Gen. 9:12 (אות), Gen. 32:9 (מחנה, בית, and מקום), short commentary to Exod. 15:6 (ימין), Lev. 6:20 (בגד), Num. 11:14 (את), Deut. 32:14 (ישראל; but cf. Isa. 41:15), Isa. 14:9 (שואל), Isa. 26:3 (שלוש, according to one view), Isa. 33:9 (ארץ), Micah 6:9 (מטה), Zech. 8:10 (שכר), Ps. 102:8 (צפור), Lam. 1:3 (יהודה, ישראל, מצרים), Lam. 1:4 (דרך), Lam. 4:4 (לחם) Ibn Ezra also notes some cases of nouns that are primarily one gender, with one exception, but he offers no exegetical reason for the exception: Eccles. 7:22 (פעם) and 10:15 (עמל and כבוד). Indeed, he appears to view nouns that are attested once in the other gender as fundamentally the same as nouns that are attested many times in both genders. His commentaries to Exod. 34:19 and Cant. 1:3, equate מקנה and שמן (which are masculine except in those verses), respectively, with words that are attested multiple times in both genders.

²⁹⁵ See Ibn Ezra to Isa. 33:9. However, Ibn Ezra implies that he accepts Ibn Chiquitilia's restriction in his commentary to Gen. 13:10, which was written slightly earlier than his Isaiah commentary (Sela and Freudenthal 18).

²⁹⁶ For example of elevated prose, see his comments to Num. 12:6 – כפול – רבו - אדם רבו - בחלום, אדם רבו - במראות הלילה. במראות הלילה. בחלום, אדם רבו - כפול – בטעם בדרך הנבואות ("In a vision" - In the visions of the night. 'I do speak with him in a dream' repeats [the same] meaning, as is the style of prophecies"); cf. Strickman & Silver (Exod. 282 n. 83).

²⁹⁷ A search for the words טעם and כפול juxtaposed to one another (in either order) produces over 600 results from Ibn Ezra's commentaries in the HaKeter edition's electronic database. The actual number of verses that he interprets this way is somewhat smaller, since he can use that phrase more than once for the same instance of repetition and also uses the phrase when explaining why a certain verse should *not* be viewed interpreted as stylistic repetition. Nevertheless, the massive number of instances in which Ibn Ezra employs some variation of the phrase טעם כפול clearly demonstrates the frequency with which he interprets seeming redundancies as mere stylistic repetition.

phrase introduces no new meaning, and thus adds nothing to the Bible's "soul," the phrase must be there for purely stylistic or rhetorical purposes.

Areas Where Ibn Ezra Appears to be a Maximalist:

Unlike his aforementioned minimalistic approach to the etymology of names, Ibn Ezra is a significance maximalist regarding the order in which names appear. Ibn Ezra does not treat the text as omniscient, so – as the examples below indicate – his explanations for the ordering of names do not attempt to teach didactic lessons. Rather, they merely offer some rationale for why Scripture lists characters in a particular order. The same principle holds true for the other categories in which Ibn Ezra is a significance maximalist. His maximalistic interpretations do not present the type of didactic lessons that one finds in Midrash. Nevertheless, the fact that he offers any explanation for these phenomena stands in contrast to the aforementioned areas in which he implies that seeking any meaning would be a worthless pursuit.

1. **Ordering of Names** - When the Bible mentions more than one person together, Ibn Ezra assumes that it does not place their names in a random order. He thus goes out of his way to suggest reasons for the order of names. For example:
 - a. Exod. 1:3 lists Benjamin before several of his older brothers because their mothers – Bilhah and Zilpah – had a lower status than Rachel.
 - b. Exod. 6:26-27 opens with Aaron's name preceding Moses' (הוא אהרן ומשה) but concludes by reversing the names' order (הוא משה ואהרן). Ibn Ezra explains

that Aaron was older and thus deserves to be mentioned first at the end of the genealogy list in Exod. 6. But Moses was the greater leader, so he deserves to be mentioned first as the text shifts its focus to their mission to Pharaoh.

- c. Gen. 35:29 records that “Esau and Jacob” – in age order – buried their father Isaac, but Gen. 25:9 describes “Isaac and Ishmael” – with the younger brother first – burying Abraham, because Ishmael’s mother had a lower status than Isaac’s (Ibn Ezra to Gen. 35:29).
- d. When mentioning the two virtuous spies, Moses mentions Joshua before Caleb, due to Joshua’s eminence as a leader, but God mentions Caleb before Joshua because Caleb took the initiative to speak out first against the other spies.²⁹⁸
- e. The census in Num. 1 counts Ephraim before Manasseh, while the census in Num. 26 counts Manasseh first, because the Bible places the larger tribe first in each census (Ibn Ezra to Num. 26:12).
- f. When the townspeople bless Boaz that Ruth should be like “Rachel and Leah” (Ruth 4:11), they mention Rachel first because she was Jacob’s favorite wife.
- g. Ibn Ezra might have been influenced by name order when commenting that Num. 12:1 states that “Miriam and Aaron” spoke negatively about Moses, with Miriam – who is mentioned first – taking the lead.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁸ See Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Num. 14:5, 14:30, 14:38, 26:65, and 32:12; and Hag. 2:2.

²⁹⁹ In this last case, it is unclear if the names’ ordering is the key reason for Ibn Ezra to view Miriam as the leader. He might be basing his interpretation on the feminine singular form of *נִתְדַבֵּר*, as I discuss below (p. 181).

2. **Synonymous Phrases in Prose** - Earlier, I cited Ibn Ezra's use of the phrase טעם כפול (stylistic repetition) as an example of minimalism (p. 172). However, a closer look at Ibn Ezra's writings reveals that he limits his application of טעם כפול in a way that leads him to many maximalistic interpretations. In his long commentary to Exod. 14:19,³⁰⁰ Ibn Ezra asserts that “the angel of God” and “the pillar of cloud” that moved to the back of the Israelites' camp were two separate entities. He rejects a view that the angel and the pillar were one and the same, explaining:

ואם המלאך הוא העמוד, למה אמר פעם אחרת: ויסע עמוד הענן מפניהם? ואם השיב לומר:
 הטעם כפול - אין משפט לשון הקדש לכפול, רק הנבואות והתוכחות; רק המספר 'כן היה
 המעשה', אין ראוי לכפול

If the angel is the pillar, why did [the text] say a second time, “And the pillar of cloud shifted from in front of them”? Lest one should reply by claiming that this “meaning is double” (i.e. it is a case of stylistic repetition, טעם כפול), *it is not the manner of Hebrew* to repeat except in prophecy or reproof. But it is not appropriate for one who recounts, “The event happened as follows,” to repeat [his words].

This argument – that stylistic repetition is a rhetorical method used by prophets and preachers but not by narrators of prose – prompts Ibn Ezra to seek additional meaning in many verses in which a phrase appears to repeat the same point twice:

³⁰⁰ (“The angel of God, who had been going ahead of the Israelite army, now moved and followed behind them; and the pillar of cloud shifted from in front of them and took up a place behind them” -NJPS).

- a. In Gen. 12:13, Abraham asks Sarah to claim that she is his sister, למען ייטב לי (‘‘that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may remain alive thanks to you’). Ibn Ezra explains that ייטב לי refers to monetary benefits. He is presumably seeking to distinguish ייטב לי from נחיתה נפשי בגללך (‘‘that it may go well with me because of you, and that I may remain alive thanks to you’). Ibn Ezra explains that ייטב לי refers to monetary benefits. He is presumably seeking to distinguish ייטב לי from נחיתה נפשי בגללך, which refers to Abraham’s physical survival.
- b. In Gen. 13:13 (‘‘Now the men of Sodom were wicked [רעים] and sinners [חטאים] against the Lord exceedingly’’), Ibn Ezra explains that the men of Sodom were ‘‘wicked’’ in their *interpersonal behavior* and ‘‘sinners’’ toward *God*.
- c. In Gen. 24:4, Abraham sends his servant מולדתי ואל ארצי (‘‘to my country, and to my birthplace’’) to find Isaac a wife. Ibn Ezra explains that ארצי refers to Haran, while מולדתי refers to Ur of the Chaldeans.
- d. In Gen. 25:8 (Abraham expired [ניגוע] and died [נימת]), Ibn Ezra explains that the root גוע refers to a particular type of death and therefore is not superfluous when used alongside מות, the standard root for death.
- e. In Gen. 27:29, Isaac blesses Jacob גביר לאחיו וישתחוו לך בני אמך (‘‘Be master over your brothers, and let your mother’s sons bow to you’’). Ibn Ezra claims that ‘‘your brothers’’ refers to ‘‘the sons of concubines,’’³⁰¹ while ‘‘your mother’s sons’’ refers to Esau and his descendants.
- f. In Deut. 17:3, The Bible describes someone who worshipped foreign gods or celestial bodies - ויעבד אלהים אחרים וישתחו להם ולשמש או לירח או לכל צבא השמים

³⁰¹ Presumably, Ibn Ezra means the children of *Abraham’s* concubines, who are actually Jacob’s uncles and cousins. Otherwise, he would be assuming that Isaac had concubines who are never mentioned in the Bible. This case thus demonstrates the extent to which Ibn Ezra is willing to go in order to avoid meaningless repetition. He prefers to interpret ‘‘brothers’’ as ‘‘relatives’’ rather than interpreting it as literal brothers, lest the word be synonymous with ‘‘mother’s sons.’’

(“to the worship of other gods and bowing down to them, to the sun or the moon or any of the heavenly host”). Ibn Ezra feels compelled to explain that “other gods” are *man-made* idols, in order to distinguish that phrase from the celestial bodies in the second half of the verse.

- g. In Deut. 20:3, Ibn Ezra claims that each of the roughly synonymous verbs for fear in the phrase *אל תיראו נאל תקפזו נאל תערצו* (“Do not be in fear, or in panic, or in dread of them”) refers to a different action.
- h. **Synonymous Positive and Negative Formulations** – Often, the Bible will state “X and not Y” when X and Y have opposite meanings. A minimalist would argue that “not Y” means the same thing as X by itself, and the repetition is merely stylistic or emphatic.³⁰² A maximalist would try to explain that “not Y” adds some scenario that was not covered by stating X. In many such cases, Ibn Ezra behaves like a maximalist:
- i. Gen. 24:16 describes Rebecca as “a virgin whom no man had known” (בתולה ואיש לא ידעה). Ibn Ezra interprets the seemingly superfluous phrase “whom no man had known” as teaching that Rebecca had not even engaged in sexual behaviors that could leave her virginity intact.
 - ii. Gen. 40:23 states that the butler “did not remember Joseph, and he forgot him” (ולא זכר שר המשקים את יוסף וישכחהו). Ibn Ezra (*ad loc.* and Eccles. 9:15) suggests that “did not remember” means failing to mention Joseph verbally, while “forgot” means forgetting Joseph from his mind.

³⁰² Ibn Caspi articulates the minimalistic approach in his commentary to Gen. 24:16.

- iii. Num. 4:19 states that the family of Kehath “will live and will not die” (וְחַיִּי וְלֹא יָמָתוּ) by obeying certain guidelines. Ibn Ezra suggests that “will live” is a positive statement that they will be *rewarded* for following the guidelines, while “will not die” warns that they will be punished for deviating from these guidelines. According to Ibn Ezra, the text needs both positive and negative formulations, lest one think that they would be neither punished nor rewarded.
- iv. Gen. 11:30 states that Sarai was “a barren woman who had no children” (עֲקָרָה אֵין לָהּ וְלֹד). Ibn Ezra’s long commentary deliberates about whether the repetition of “who had no children” adds meaning or not. Initially, he suggests that the Bible is adding that not only was Sarai barren, but she had also passed the age of bearing children. However, he does also offer the possibility that the phrase adds no new meaning.
- v. Exod. 21:11 states that under certain conditions a female Hebrew maidservant attains freedom “for nothing, without money” (חִנָּם אֵין (כֶּסֶף)). Ibn Ezra believes that this freedom is attained when the young woman reaches physical maturity. The closing phrase אֵין כֶּסֶף seems to be redundant. In his short commentary, he explains that אֵין כֶּסֶף adds that the master will not receive any ransom money even if the young woman matures unusually early.³⁰³

³⁰³ However, Ibn Ezra apparently changed his mind and later switched to a minimalistic reading of the verse. In his long commentary, after citing Saadiah’s view that אֵין כֶּסֶף teaches that the master cannot recuperate medical expenses that he spent on his maidservant, Ibn Ezra argues that the words אֵין כֶּסֶף do not add meaning.

3. **Meaningless Conjunctive ו** – Several of Ibn Ezra’s predecessors and contemporaries debated whether a prefix ו can lack meaning.³⁰⁴ Let us consider two examples of particular importance to clarifying Ibn Ezra’s approach:

- a. One ו that generated much discussion appears in Gen. 36:24 – וְאֵלֶּה בְּנֵי צִבְעוֹן וְאִיָּה וְאַנָּה (“The sons of Zibeon were these: ו-Aiah and Anah”). The ו before the name Aiah is surprising, since one would not normally place a conjunctive ו before the first item of a list. Minimalists explained that the ו was superfluous,³⁰⁵ while maximalists sought some reason why the ו was necessary.³⁰⁶
- b. II Sam. 13:20 describes Tamar’s agony: וְתָשָׁב תָּמָר וְשִׁמְמָה בֵּית אֲבִישָׁלוֹם אַחִיהָ (“Tamar remained ו-forlorn in her brother Absalom’s house”). Minimalists argue that the ו before “forlorn” was superfluous, while maximalists argue that the ו indicates an implied word: “Tamar remained [sad] and forlorn.”³⁰⁷

In his commentary to Gen. 36:24, Ibn Ezra writes that the ו before Aiah’s name is equivalent to the Arabic prefix *fa* (ف). In general, Ibn Ezra invokes the comparison of a

³⁰⁴ For a thorough analysis of this debate and its broader ramifications for understanding the exegetes’ attitudes toward significance maximalism and the omnisignificance principle, see Steiner’s study of the possibly extraneous ו in Dan. 2:12 (“Meaninglessness, Meaningfulness, and Super-Meaningfulness”).

³⁰⁵ See Dunash Ibn Labrat’s critique of Ibn Saruk (תשובות דונש, Philipowski 10) and Rashi to Gen. *ad loc.*

³⁰⁶ Rashbam (*ad loc.*) and Ibn Saruk (cited in Philipowski, 76 מהברת מנחם and 67 תשובות תלמידי מנחם) insist that the character’s name must be Veiaiah, while Joseph Kimhi (cited by Radak *ad loc.*) reportedly suggests that the ו represents an unnamed son of Zibeon. Ibn Saruk’s, Rashbam’s and Joseph Kimhi’s formulations reject the notion of a meaningless conjunctive ו as a matter of principle, rather than a local concern for how to translate the word וְאִיָּה. Indeed, Ibn Saruk and Rashbam make their case despite the parallel verse in I Chron. 1:40 (וְבְנֵי צִבְעוֹן אִיָּה וְאַנָּה), which is a verbatim copy of the verse in Genesis except for lacking the ו before Aiah. By presenting the name as Aiah, it appears to preclude the possibility that the character’s name is Veiaiah (as Ibn Ezra to Gen. *ad loc.* observes).

³⁰⁷ For the minimalistic view, see Dunash ibn Labrat (*ibid.*). For the maximalists’ view, see Joseph Kara (II Sam. *ad loc.*) and Joseph Kimhi (6 הגלוי, cited by Radak, II Sam. *ad loc.*). For further discussion of their views, see Steiner (*ibid.* 440).

Hebrew ו to an Arabic *fa* in a myriad of circumstances in which the ו serves to express the narrative's continuity but expresses no meaning beyond that.³⁰⁸ Hence, he would seem to fundamentally agree with the minimalistic view by arguing that the ו adds no meaning to the verse. However, in his subsequent grammatical writings, he shifts away from this minimalistic approach. In יסוד דקדוק (Aloni 102), Ibn Ezra accepts that the ו in Gen. 36:24 is meaningless but suggests that the ו in II Sam. 13:20 indicates an implied word. In צחות (Lippmann 71b, Valle Rodríguez 185)³⁰⁹ and in שפה ברורה, he goes even further. In addition to adopting the maximalists' interpretation of the ו in II Sam. 13:20, he initially offers limited support (in צחות) and ultimately endorses (in שפה ברורה) the view of some maximalists (above n. 306) that the name in Gen. 36:24 was Veiaiah, with the ו not being a prefix.³¹⁰ While the precise dates of composition are not known for some of these writings, שפה ברורה was clearly the last of these works, and it appears that he wrote them in the above order: יסוד דקדוק, then צחות, and finally שפה ברורה (cf. Sela and Freudenthal 28-33). Hence, each time that Ibn Ezra discussed the seemingly meaningless ו in Gen. 36:24 and/or II Sam. 13:20, his view moved slightly further from significance minimalism to significance maximalism.

4. Subject/Verb Disagreement in Number – In Biblical Hebrew, a compound subject is often preceded by a singular verb, even though a plural verb would seem more

³⁰⁸ For further discussion of Ibn Ezra's intent in comparing a conjunctive ו to Arabic *fa*, see Krinsky (מחוקקי יהודה, Gen. 1:2 and 36:24), Bacher (ראב"ע המדקדק 118-119), and my supercommentary to Zech. 3:7. For the full range of possible functions of the prefix *fa* in Classical Arabic, see Lane (2321-2322).

³⁰⁹ The text of צחות in the body of Valle Rodríguez's edition writes "forlorn" as שוממה – without the prefix ו. That reading is obviously inferior to the variant reading of ושוממה that Valle Rodríguez cites in the critical apparatus, since the entire purpose of the passage in צחות is to explain the prefix ו.

³¹⁰ Ironically, in order to support the maximalists' view that there was a character named Veiaiah in Gen. 36:24, Ibn Ezra relies upon a different methodological principle of significance minimalism – the belief that biblical characters routinely have multiple names or variants of the same name (p. 168 above). When Ibn Ezra's commentary to Gen. 36:24 claimed that the ו before Aiah's name was meaningless, he pointed to I Chron. 1:40 as evidence, because the same character is named Aiah there, without an initial ו (cf. note 306 above). In defending his later view that the character in Gen. 36:24 was indeed named Veiaiah, he argues in שפה ברורה that the absence of the ו before the name Aiah in Chron. 1:40 proves nothing about Gen. 36:24, because variation and multiplicity of names are so common that the same person could have easily been called Veiaiah and Aiah.

correct. A maximalist would seek to explain why the verb is not plural, usually by arguing that the first element of the compound subject is the primary subject.³¹¹ A minimalist would argue that the frequency of these singular verbs and compounds subjects precludes one from reading anything into any specific case.³¹² In several examples, Ibn Ezra attributes significance to the singular verb form:

- a. Ibn Ezra claims that the singular verb in the phrase *וַיּוֹשֶׁב אֶת מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת אַהֲרֹן אֶל פַּרְעֹה* (literally, “Moses and Aaron was brought back to Pharaoh”; Exod. 10:8) indicates that Moses was the primary leader.³¹³
- b. Ibn Ezra implies that the feminine singular verb in the phrase *וַתְּדַבֵּר מִרְיָם נֹאֲהָרִין בְּמֹשֶׁה* (“Miriam and Aaron spoke [fem. sing.] against Moses”; Num. 12:1) teaches that Miriam took the lead in slandering Moses.³¹⁴
- c. In both commentaries to Esth. 9:29, Ibn Ezra argues that Esther was the primary author of the written proclamation that is presented by the phrase *וַתִּכְתֹּב אֶסְתֵּר*

³¹¹ For example, commenting on the verse, “Shem and Japheth took (וַיִּקַּח) a cloth” (Gen. 9:23), Rashi concludes from the singular verb *וַיִּקַּח* that Shem took the lead in covering their father’s nakedness.

³¹² Radak (Gen. 9:23 and 24:55) cites examples of the phenomenon without attributing any significance to it. Joseph Ibn Caspi to Num. 12:1 appears to dismiss any significance to the singular verb *וַתְּדַבֵּר* that describes Miriam and Aaron’s behavior (but cf. his commentary to Est. 9:29).

³¹³ Long commentary *ad loc.* - במל' יב, א) היא - ולפי דעתי אמר ויִּוֹשֶׁב בעבור כי משה היה העיקר; וככה "וַתְּדַבֵּר מִרְיָם וְאַהֲרֹן" ("And in my opinion, it said: 'He was returned,' because Moshe was the main [figure]; so, too: 'Miriam and Aaron spoke [fem. sing.]"). Representing the minimalistic approach, Joseph Ibn Caspi (*ad loc.*) questions why any exegete would take notice of the singular form of *וַיּוֹשֶׁב* given how many other verses employ singular verbs with Moses and Aaron as a compound subject.

³¹⁴ Long commentary *ad loc.* - היא דברה; גם אהרן הסכים או החריש; על כן נענשה ("Miriam spoke - She spoke; Aaron also agreed or was silent. Therefore, she was punished"). In this comment, Ibn Ezra does not explicitly cite the singular form of *וַתְּדַבֵּר* as his proof of Miriam’s lead role, so one might argue that he deduced Miriam’s lead role from other evidence: the fact that her name appears before Aaron’s. However, Ibn Ezra’s aforementioned comment to Exod. 10:8 (comparing the singular verb in the phrase *וַיּוֹשֶׁב אֶת מֹשֶׁה וְאֶת אַהֲרֹן* to *וַתְּדַבֵּר מִרְיָם נֹאֲהָרִין*) proves that he deduced Miriam’s lead role from the singular feminine verb. According to the HaKeter edition text of Ibn Ezra’s text (which I used for my citation), Ibn Ezra was also influenced by the fact that only Miriam is punished later in the biblical narrative (נענשה, feminine singular). However, many editions of Ibn Ezra read *על כן נענשו* (plural) or *על כן נענש* (masculine singular), in which case Ibn Ezra would be claiming that Aaron was punished for his role as an accomplice, rather than citing Miriam’s punishment as evidence of her lead role. Some witnesses of Ibn Ezra’s text (cited in the online edition of http://mg.alhatorah.org/Dual/Ibn_Ezra/Bemidbar/12.1 n. א, accessed 28 July 2017) read *נעשה שותף* (“He [=Aaron] became a partner/accomplice”), which would indicate that Ibn Ezra viewed Miriam as the instigator while Aaron was criticized as an accomplice because he silently consented to her behavior.

הַמֶּלֶכָה בֵּת אֲבִיחַיִל וּמֶרְדֵּכַי הַיְהוּדִי (“Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote [fem. sing.]”).³¹⁵

- d. While it does not have a compound subject, Num. 13:22 also appears to demonstrate a maximalist attitude toward number disagreement between subject and verb. The phrase וַיַּעֲלוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד הַקְּבָרוֹן opens with a plural verb and an implied third-person plural subject (the twelve spies), but וַיָּבֵא is a third-person singular verb (literally, “*They* went up into the Negeb, and *he* came to Hebron”). A minimalist would assume that the verb וַיָּבֵא has the same plural subject as וַיַּעֲלוּ (see Ibn Caspi *ad loc.*). A maximalist would seek a singular subject for וַיָּבֵא, such as the Talmud’s claim that Caleb alone visited Hebron (bSot. 34b). Ibn Ezra cites the Talmud’s interpretation without offering an alternative, implying that he, too, believes that Caleb visited Hebron alone.³¹⁶

In assessing these categories in which Ibn Ezra exhibits maximalistic tendencies, one might reasonably downplay the importance of the first category, the ordering of names. Although Ibn Ezra feels compelled to offer some rationale for the names’ order in each verse, his explanations rarely add any additional meaning to the story. Nobody disputes the fact that Rachel was Jacob’s favorite wife, or that Moses was the primary leader despite being younger than Aaron. Ibn Ezra’s application of these facts to the order of names may satisfy

³¹⁵ However, neither of his commentaries explicitly mentions the singular form of the verb וַתִּכְתֹּב as his proof of her lead role, so he might have reached his view based on other factors (such as mentioning her name first, or the reference in Esth. 9:32 to מֵאֲמַר אֶסְתֵּר, “Esther’s ordinance”).

³¹⁶ Ibn Ezra’s comments to Deut. 1:36 further demonstrate that he shared the Talmud’s view that Caleb visited Hebron alone.

his belief that the biblical style does not list names indiscriminately. But a minimalist would dispute little beyond his assumption that names must appear in a deliberate order.³¹⁷

Ibn Ezra's shift toward viewing the "meaningless ׀" as meaningful is somewhat more impactful, inasmuch as it leads him to change a character's name (Aiah/Veiah) and to add an adjective to the description of Tamar's suffering. Nevertheless, this maximalistic approach has little impact beyond each narrow word or phrase.

Regarding the other categories, however, Ibn Ezra's assumptions about biblical style can lead him to interpretations that have larger ramifications for interpreting the narrative under discussion. Consider his suggestions that Abraham sought to profit monetarily by presenting Sarah as his sister, that Isaac blessed Jacob with dominion over his *extended* family, and that Esther had a greater role than Mordechai in the final events of Est. 9. Each of those interpretations derives from Ibn Ezra's assumptions about biblical style. Even without accepting the doctrine of omnisignificance, Ibn Ezra's significance maximalism nonetheless influences how he understands the behaviors of biblical protagonists. A significance minimalist might dismiss his evidence for all three claims, which could lead to a different perspective on Abraham's behavior, Jacob's destiny, or Esther's independence from Mordechai.

Areas Where Ibn Ezra is Inconsistent

In some areas, Ibn Ezra does appear to be a consistent minimalist or maximalist. Given that he does not subscribe to the doctrine of omnisignificance, it is not necessarily

³¹⁷ See, however, examples below (p. Error! Bookmark not defined.) from Ibn Ezra's predecessors, where the ways in which they interpret the ordering of names might be more impactful.

surprising to reveal this inconsistency. If one does not believe that every nuance of Scripture *must* be meaningful, then it is possible to only ascribe meaning to a certain type of nuance in cases where one finds a satisfying explanation for the nuance.

1. **Apposition** - All *peshat* exegetes must acknowledge the phenomenon of apposition, even though it means that certain words or phrases will seem extraneous.³¹⁸ The phenomenon frequently occurs when the biblical text writes both a pronoun and its referent next to one another. For example, Jer. 27:8 contains the phrase אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲבֹדוּ אֹתוֹ אֶת נְבוּכַדְנֶאֶצַּר מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל (“that does not serve him—King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon”). The word אֹתוֹ (him) appears to contribute nothing to the meaning, since it refers to the adjacent King Nebuchadnezzar.³¹⁹ Even a staunch maximalist would be hard-pressed to find any additional meaning in the repetition of the pronoun alongside the proper name, so many medieval exegetes cite this verse as proof that apposition of this type must exist.³²⁰ Ibn Ezra often cites Exod. 2:6 (וַתִּרְאֶהוּ אֶת הַיֶּלֶד); “She saw him—the child”) as a similar case of apposition,³²¹ although a maximalistic view in the Talmud renders the verse as “she saw Him with the child”; it interprets the word אֶת as “with” and the direct object pronominal suffix in וַתִּרְאֶהוּ as referring to God’s presence that was “with” the baby (bSot. 12b).

However, the extent of Ibn Ezra’s minimalism regarding apposition is not entirely clear. After all, any reasonable *peshat* exegete must acknowledge the

³¹⁸ At most, a maximalist could perhaps argue that the “meaningless” repetition adds emphasis (see, for example, Moses Kimhi’s commentary to Prov. 16:30).

³¹⁹ Indeed, Yefet’s translation of this verse ignores the word אֹתוֹ and renders the phrase אֲשֶׁר לֹא יַעֲבֹדוּ אֹתוֹ אֶת נְבוּכַדְנֶאֶצַּר מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל into Judeo-Arabic as בבל יטעו נבוכדנצר מלך בבל (Wendkos 108), without adding an object suffix to יטעו for “him.”

³²⁰ Ibn Ezra to Gen. 25:6, Radak and Isaiah of Trani to Jer. 9:14, Ramban to Exod. 29:9 and 35:5.

³²¹ Ibn Ezra cites it as a proof-text in his commentaries to Gen. 2:17-19, Exod. 29:9 (long commentary) and 35:5 (short commentary), Ps. 83:12, and Dan. 11:11 (both commentaries).

existence of some cases of apposition. Therefore, one can only label a *peshat* as a significance minimalist or maximalist on the basis of verses where the exegete could have reasonably suggested additional meaning for the superfluous pronoun. In the following three examples, Ibn Ezra had a choice of interpreting a word either as meaningful or as meaningless apposition.

- a. In Gen. 25:6, Abraham sends the sons of his concubines away from Isaac, קְדָמָה אֶל אֶרֶץ קְדָם. Ibn Ezra cites an interpretation of this phrase as “eastward to the land of Kedem (=a son of Ishmael).” However, he himself interprets אֶל אֶרֶץ קְדָם as meaningless apposition: “eastward, to the land of the east.” Thus, Ibn Ezra interprets this phrase as a case of meaningless apposition despite his familiarity with an alternative way to interpret קְדָם.
- b. In his standard commentary to Gen. 2:17 (וּמֵעֵץ הַדַּעַת טוֹב וְרָע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ; “As for the tree of knowledge of good and bad, you must not eat of it”), Ibn Ezra wavers regarding whether the word מִמֶּנּוּ (“from/of it”) adds no meaning, or is included to stress that the prohibition to eat from the Tree of Knowledge was severe enough to even prohibit the consumption of even a small amount “from it.”
- c. Lev. 7:8 entitles a priest to the hide of ‘*olah*’ burnt offerings whose rites he performs – וְהִכֵּהוּ הַמִּקְרִיב אֶת עוֹר הָעֹלָה אֲשֶׁר הִקְרִיב לִפְנֵי יְהוָה – (“So, too, the priest who offers a man’s burnt offering shall keep the skin of the burnt offering *that he – the priest –* offered.”). Ibn Ezra suggests that the repetition in the phrase לִפְנֵי יְהוָה emphasizes that the hide goes to *that specific* priest who performs the sacrifice’s rites, not to *any* priest.

In sum, it appears that Ibn Ezra accepts many examples of apposition, yet it is questionable whether he can be considered a significance minimalist in this area, since he does find additional meaning in some phrases that could easily be interpreted as meaningless apposition.

Ibn Ezra's Predecessors

This study has demonstrated that in principle Ibn Ezra does not believe the biblical text to be omniscient, yet he nevertheless interprets several textual anomalies in the manner of a significance maximalist. In order to understand his criteria for when to adopt maximalistic interpretations, it is instructive to briefly examine the exegetical methodology of predecessors whom Ibn Ezra admired as *peshat* exegetes. While a thorough analysis of his predecessors' hermeneutics is beyond the scope of this chapter, I provide a small number of examples to demonstrate that parallels to Ibn Ezra's maximalistic interpretations can be found in the exegesis of the two greatest Jewish exegetes of the tenth century – Saadiah Gaon and the Karaite Yefet b. Eli – both of whom are cited frequently by Ibn Ezra.³²² Accordingly, the manner in which Ibn Ezra navigates the balance between minimalism and maximalism has its roots in earlier *peshat* exegesis of Islamic lands.

Steiner documents how Ibn Ezra adopted several methods from Saadiah to explain seemingly unnecessary repetition (*A Biblical Translation in the Making* 32-44). Most of these methods do not attribute any meaning to the repetition,³²³ so the fundamental notion

³²² See notes 62 and 72 above.

³²³ Steiner lists five methods:

1. **Subordination** – Ibn Ezra sometimes interprets a sentence as a subordinate clause because it appears to repeat information that has already been stated. Steiner provides the example of Num. 8:18, where Ibn Ezra comments (trans. Steiner): “As for the meaning of ‘I took the Levites’ after having already said ‘I took them for myself’ (Num. 8:16), that is the way of Scripture—it is attached to the verse after it: ‘And *when* I took the Levites for myself, I gave them to Aaron and his sons.’”

that the text can repeat phrases for stylistic purposes – and consequently is not omnisignificant – was ingrained in Ibn Ezra from his familiarity with Saadiah’s exegesis. Yet both Saadiah and Yefet nevertheless sought meaning in some of the same phenomena as Ibn Ezra.

As discussed above (p. 173ff.), the two most striking areas in which Ibn Ezra appears to be a significance maximalist are synonymous phrases in prose narrative (which he refuses to dismiss as stylistic repetition) and the ordering of names (which he consistently views as meaningful). Regarding the former phenomenon, Ibn Ezra’s aforementioned discussion of the maidservant who obtains her freedom “for nothing, without money” (p. 178) cites a different maximalistic interpretation that he cites from Saadiah but rejects (note 303 above).

Similarly, Wechsler (*Yefet... on the Book of Esther* 71) observes that both Saadiah and Yefet are concerned about the repetition in Est. 7:6, where Esther decries Haman as אִשִּׁי בַּצָּר וְאֹיִב (“an adversary and an enemy”). Rather than accepting “an adversary and an enemy” as meaningless, stylistic repetition, Saadiah and Yefet both suggest that Esther is characterizing Haman as doubly hostile – “an adversary” (צָר) to Esther personally “and an enemy” (אֹיִב) to her people.³²⁴ Ibn Ezra’s second commentary to Esther resolves the same redundancy by arguing that Esther portrayed Haman as “an adversary” in public “and an

-
2. **Eloquence** – Ibn Ezra often claims that repetition is a form of eloquence (צְהוּת) - “a kind of embellishment used in elegant style” (40).
 3. **Interruption** – Ibn Ezra sometimes explains the repetition of an action as resulting from too many words intervening after the first mention of the action (אֲרִכּוּ הַדְּבָרִים), such as the repetition of Moses bringing Aaron and his children close in Lev. 8:13 after ostensibly doing the same action in 8:6.
 4. **“Time after time”** – Ibn Ezra explains some repetitions – especially in cases of staircase parallelism (e.g., Gen. 49:22, Exod. 15:6) – as indicating that an action was done repeatedly (פַּעַם אַחֵר פַּעַם).
 5. **Emphasis** – Ibn Ezra explains many repetitions as providing emphasis (e.g., Deut. 32:2).

Of these methods, the first three appear to be truly minimalistic, for they tell us nothing about the content of the narrative. The latter two, by contrast, do add some meaning by telling us that a behavior took place repeatedly or warranted emphasis.

³²⁴ Saadiah offer additional possibilities for the dual nature of Haman’s hostility.

enemy” in private. While Ibn Ezra rejects the particular meaning that Saadiah and Yefet find in each synonym, they likely shaped his belief that he must find *some* unique meaning for each synonym.

Haggai’s reply to the priests (2:14) includes another case in which Yefet clearly influenced Ibn Ezra to interpret a synonymous phrase like a significance maximalist. As I discuss in my supercommentary *ad loc.*, both Yefet and Ibn Ezra were bothered by the redundancy in Haggai’s statement: “So is this people (עַמִּי), and so is this nation (גּוֹי) before Me, declares the Lord” (2:14). They both explain that one of the synonyms alludes to the priests specifically (to whom Haggai was speaking in the immediate context), rather than the entire nation. Yet they disagree regarding which synonym refers to the priests.³²⁵ Their inability to agree about whether עַמִּי or גּוֹי refers to the priests stems from the fact that there is no lexical basis for associating either noun exclusively with priests. Nevertheless, both Yefet and Ibn Ezra feel compelled to interpret one of these words against its literal meaning, since they do not accept that narrative prose can engage in meaningless repetition.

Wechsler’s comparison between Yefet’s and Ibn Ezra’s commentaries to Esther (*ibid.* 76-77) calls attention to additional cases in which Ibn Ezra distinguishes between synonyms in the exact same manner as Yefet, such as their shared view that Est. 2:17 intends two distinct groups of women, “The king loved Esther more than *all the other women*, and she won his grace and favor more than *all the virgins*.” Both Yefet and Ibn Ezra explain that “the other women” were Ahasuerus’ original wives, whereas “the virgins” were the women whom Ahasuerus’ servants had recently assembled (along with Esther).

³²⁵ According to Yefet, גּוֹי alludes to the priests, while Ibn Ezra maintains that עַמִּי alludes to them. For the text of Yefet to this verse, I used MS British Museum 2401.

The affinity between Ibn Ezra and his predecessors can also be seen in Ibn Ezra's decision to seek meaning in the ordering of names. When God promises in Lev. 26:42, "I remember My covenant with Jacob; I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and also My covenant with Abraham," Ibn Ezra turns to Saadiah to explain why the patriarchs appear in reverse order of their ages: *ויאמר הגאון כי טעם להזכיר יעקב בתחלה בעבור היות שנותיו כולם בברית* ("The Gaon [=Saadiah] said that the reason for mentioning Jacob first is that all his years were [bound] by the covenant").³²⁶

Yefet, too, concerns himself with the ordering of names. When Daniel (9:7) laments the shame that is "to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel" (*לְאִישׁ יְהוּדָה וְלִישְׁבֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם וְלְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל*), Yefet explains (trans. D. S. Margoliouth 45):

To the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; in this verse the whole nation is spoken of collectively: so he mentions first the kingdom of Judah (the more honourable), and then the kingdom of Israel: according to the custom of the Bible in several books, which is to name Judah before Israel: perhaps, however, it is put first here because the shame of Judah is greater than that of Israel.

Similarly, when Zechariah sees four horns that tossed "Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem" (Zech. 2:1-2), Yefet proposes three possible ways to explain why those three places are mentioned in that order, ultimately concluding (trans. Kees De Vreugd):

³²⁶ In that particular verse, the order is especially puzzling, because there is a clear default order that one would expect: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Therefore, many exegetes seek reasons for the patriarchs to appear in reverse age order (e.g., Rashi, Joseph Bekhor Shor, Hizquni), even if they do not typically focus on the order of names with the same frequency that Ibn Ezra does.

Or it may be that (the prophet) mentioned Judah and Jerusalem and put Israel in the midst, since some of the ten tribes were carried away before Judah and some of them together with Judah, as it is known that there remained a great multitude of the ten tribes and were joined to Judah. And this is most likely.

While Ibn Ezra does not specifically address the order of Judah, Jerusalem, and Israel in either verse, the myriad of cases presented above (p. 173ff.) clearly indicate that both he and Yefet share a profound concern for understanding why names appear in a particular order.

Interestingly, another of Ibn Ezra's important predecessors in the field of *peshat* exegesis – Jonah Ibn Janaḥ – does not appear to share these maximalistic tendencies. As discussed above (pp. 26-26, 30 and note 194) Ibn Janaḥ does not hesitate to utilize the decidedly minimalistic exegetical tool of “substitution,” which Ibn Ezra opposes. Moreover, Ibn Janaḥ devotes the 26th chapter of ספר הרקמה to listing many forms of repetition that are purely stylistic and do not convey meaning (Wilensky 293-304). One does not find Ibn Janaḥ offering maximalistic interpretations for the ordering of names or for synonymous phrases in narrative prose. As discussed above (pp. 30-31), Ibn Janaḥ heavily influenced Ibn Ezra's philological exegesis, yet Ibn Ezra did not hesitate to strongly reject those aspects of Ibn Janaḥ's exegesis with which he disagreed. When it comes to those certain textual nuances, it is thus not surprising that Ibn Ezra charted a different path than Ibn Janaḥ's extreme minimalism. As Steiner observes, “Preliminary research suggests that Ibn Janah and Ibn Kaspi also belong in this category [i.e., significance minimalists], and that, in at least some respects, they were more radical than Ibn Ezra” (“Meaninglessness, Meaningfulness, and Super-Meaningfulness” 446). Although ample precedent existed within the Geonic-Andalusian tradition for Ibn Ezra's maximalistic approaches to certain phenomena, he was

making a conscious decision to adopt them, preferring the methodology of Saadiah and Yefet in these cases over Ibn Janah.

Conclusion

The above study reveals the complex nature of Ibn Ezra's relationship with the omnisignificance principle and significance maximalism. He certainly does not view Scripture as omnisignificant, and he further treats many of the text's nuances and peculiarities as insignificant. On the other hand, he ascribes meaning to several phenomena that an extreme significance minimalist would dismiss as meaningless. If one categorizes all exegetes in a binary manner – such that anyone who allows for any form of repetition or superfluous language is a significance minimalist – then Ibn Ezra would undoubtedly be a significance minimalist. As his introduction to the Ten Commandments makes clear, he fundamentally believes that the language of the Bible adheres to norms of human language and thus contains many stylistic features and idiosyncrasies that lack any deeper meaning. However, such a binary categorization fails to do justice to the substantive differences among exegetes who reject the omnisignificance principle. Even while trying to interpret the text based on the norms of human language, interpreters reasonably disagree regarding the significance of many textual features. Evidence demonstrates that Ibn Ezra did indeed ascribe meaning to many phenomena that an extreme minimalist, such as Joseph Ibn Caspi, would ultimately dismiss as meaningless.

Rather than assigning Ibn Ezra a definitive label as a significance minimalist or significance maximalist, it seems he is best understood through his repeated appeals to the “manner of language” (דרך/משפט הלשון) or variants of that phrase. For the most part, Ibn Ezra

invokes his belief that the text must conform to the norms of language in order to advocate for significance minimalism. He thus opposes interpretations that rely on minor grammatical irregularities, stylistic repetition, *gematria*,³²⁷ or any phenomenon that is not used to convey meaning in normal human language. However, his insistence that the text must conform to the norms of human language also leads Ibn Ezra to significance maximalism when confronted by phenomena that – in his view – are used to convey meaning in human language.

As a matter of theology, Ibn Ezra thus does not endorse the omnisignificance principle. He sees no religious imperative to derive meaning from phenomena that he would deem insignificant in any other text. However, his fundamental belief that the biblical text is not truly omnisignificant is tempered by his insistence that the text be interpreted in a reasonable manner. Hence, in some cases where Ibn Caspi would later take significance minimalism to an extreme, Ibn Ezra deems the minimalistic approach to be unreasonable – even if it is theologically acceptable – so he interprets the text in a similar manner to significance maximalists. While his approach was no doubt shaped by his own worldview, he was likely influenced by predecessors – such as Saadiah and Yefet – whose hermeneutical systems contained aspects of significance maximalism, despite their commitment to *peshat* and their acceptance of significance minimalism as theologically valid. The fact that *peshat* exegetes such as Saadiah and Yefet derived meaning from the same phenomena as Ibn Ezra might contribute toward explaining why Ibn Ezra believed it to be “the manner of Hebrew” to convey meaning through those phenomena.

³²⁷ Regarding Ibn Ezra’s attitude toward the use of *gematria* as an exegetical tool, see his comments to Gen. 14:14, Exod. 1:7 (short commentary), Zech. 3:8, Est. 3:11 (second commentary), and Dan. 11:31; and Mondschein, לגימטריה, 137-161.

Chapter IX: The Critical Text

Scholars have already called attention to the need for critical editions of Ibn Ezra's writings that include supercommentaries.³²⁸ Although the need for critical editions – to correct textual errors that have crept into earlier printed editions – is not unique to Ibn Ezra's writings, his writings have a particular need for an accompanying supercommentary for several reasons:

1. Ibn Ezra's writings were heavily influenced by earlier Jewish writers in the Muslim world. Since they often wrote in Arabic, and many of their works were lost over time, the authors of earlier supercommentaries to Ibn Ezra were not familiar with many of these sources, some which are now available.
2. By writing the ideas of an Arabic-language exegetical tradition in Hebrew, Ibn Ezra often coined new terms and thus used language that renders his ideas unintelligible to contemporary readers.³²⁹
3. Ibn Ezra's use of many fields of knowledge made it difficult for later interpreters to understand him.
4. Ibn Ezra's writing style can be deliberately enigmatic and esoteric.

³²⁸ Simon (עני פירושי ראב"ע), Prijs (אברהם אבן עזרא לבראשית), Introduction 3-4).

³²⁹ See, for example, Shy ("Abraham Ibn Ezra's Hebrew Commentary to the Bible and Medieval Judaeo-Arabic Commentaries and Grammars" in Diaz Esteban 309-316) regarding Arabic influence on the Hebrew language of Ibn Ezra's exegesis, and Sela ("Abraham ibn Ezra's Special Strategy") and Rodríguez Arribas ("The Terminology of Historical Astrology") regarding Hebrew scientific terms that Ibn Ezra invented.

5. In the specific case of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, there is a particular need for a critical edition due to the existence of the oral commentary. This commentary has only been printed once,³³⁰ and it has no supercommentaries.

Earlier Scholarship

Simon (פירושי ראב"ע) (11-13 שני פירושי ראב"ע) established rules for producing a critical text of Ibn Ezra, which were endorsed by Ahrend (פירושי אבן עזרא לתרי עשר במהדורת אוריאל סימון):

1. **Base Text** - The first dilemma that arises when producing a critical edition is to decide whether the body should be a diplomatic text (based exclusively on the best witness) or an eclectic text (based on the most compelling reading in each case that the witnesses disagree).³³¹ Simon based his text of Hosea, Joel, and Amos on what he demonstrated to be the best manuscript for each of the standard commentary (MS London-Montefiore 34)³³² and the oral commentary (MS Paris Bibliotheque Nationale heb. 217).³³³ However, rather than producing a truly diplomatic edition –

³³⁰ The HaKeter edition printed the oral commentary to Minor Prophets for the first time. While its text has been edited based on careful examination of all manuscripts, it lacks any critical apparatus or supercommentary.

³³¹ For an argument in favor of eclectic editions of medieval Hebrew grammatical works, see Sáenz-Badillos (עקרונות לההדורת חיבורים). Despite his arguments in favor of eclectic texts (which would presumably apply to medieval Hebrew Bible commentaries no less than to Hebrew grammatical works), publishers of Ibn Ezra's commentaries have generally opted to publish texts that are closer to being diplomatic.

³³² In adopting this manuscript as his base text, Simon rejects the decision of Abe Lipshitz to use the Second Rabbinic Bible (Venice 1524) as his base text for editions of Ibn Ezra's standard commentary to Hosea ("The Commentary") and Joel (פירושי ראב"ע על יואל). Lipshitz does not fully describe his methodology for producing a critical text, besides stating that he consulted six manuscripts, so we do not know how and when he chose to adopt a different witness' reading. Simon provides more detailed descriptions of the manuscripts, and he also includes another manuscript - St. Petersburg 134 - that Lipshitz did not use, presumably because it was unavailable before the fall of the Iron Curtain.

³³³ Simon's introduction to Ibn Ezra to Hosea, Joel, and Amos argues that it is not possible to create a "tree" for the evolution of these manuscripts. However, he claims that a comparison of them enabled him to establish that MS London-Montefiore 34 is the best manuscript of the standard commentary, followed in quality by MS London-British Library 237 and the Second Rabbinic Bible (Venice 1524). My research indicates that Parma 2549 (which does not include the books that Simon published) closely rivals London-Montefiore 34 in quality. Regarding the oral commentary, Simon established that Paris National Library 217 was the best manuscript, Paris National Library 162 was a valuable alternative text, and Parma De Rossi 470 was copied from Paris National Library 217. I have encountered some supporting evidence for his argument that Parma De Rossi 470

which replicates the chosen manuscript in *all* cases – Simon instead chose to emend the text in cases where he deemed the primary manuscript to contain a glaring error. Simon marked all deviations from the primary manuscript with an asterisk, so that readers can clearly see that these words did not appear in the primary manuscript.³³⁴ Throughout this chapter, I refer to this type of critical text as “largely diplomatic.”

The approach of producing a fundamentally diplomatic edition that nevertheless corrects obvious errors has also been used for recent editions of Ibn Ezra’s other commentaries. Weiser produced a largely diplomatic edition of Ibn Ezra’s commentary to the Pentateuch, although he drew sharp criticism from Simon ([על] אשר וייזר) for selecting inferior textual witnesses³³⁵ and a poor base text.³³⁶ Other largely diplomatic texts of Ibn Ezra include Prijs’ edition of Ibn Ezra to Gen. 1,³³⁷ Goodman’s edition of Ibn Ezra to Job,³³⁸ and Gómez-Aranda’s editions of Ibn Ezra to Job and Esther.³³⁹

was copied from Paris 217 (discussed below, p. 204). However, my other textual witnesses for the oral commentary are different than Simon’s, since MS Paris National Library 162 does not include the books of Minor Prophets that I am studying, while I am using three manuscripts that do not include Hosea, Joel, or Amos and thus were not relevant to Simon’s work.

³³⁴ By contrast, Gómez-Aranda drew some criticism for failing to employ any symbol to indicate when the body of his text of Ibn Ezra to Job deviates from his base manuscript (Goldstein, *פירושי אבן עזרא הספרדי*). Goldstein also criticizes Gómez-Aranda because the manner in which he added punctuation and highlighted lemmas shows that at times he misunderstood Ibn Ezra. Goldstein observes that Gómez-Aranda’s Spanish translation also reflects certain misinterpretations of Ibn Ezra’s words, with the most glaring case being Gómez-Aranda’s incorrect claim that Ibn Ezra sought to emend the Masoretic Text in two places (Job 34:18 and 40:2).

³³⁵ According to Simon, the *כתבי יד* (“manuscripts,” plural) that Weiser used were in fact *one* manuscript - Paris 176 - which is a fairly good manuscript but should not have been the sole manuscript. It seems that the *דפוסים ראשונים* (“first editions”) that he used were several nineteenth-century printed editions that are based on the Second Rabbinic Bible (Venice 1524) but contain many additional errors. Hence, these printed editions have little value for establishing a more correct text of Ibn Ezra.

³³⁶ Weiser’s primary text was the commentary as it appears in Krinsky (*מחוקקי יהודה*). Simon argues that if Weiser insisted on using a printed edition, then the Second Rabbinic Bible would have been better. Moreover, Simon observes that Weiser’s decision to keep his text relatively diplomatic became a drawback due to the poor choice of a base text. In many cases, Weiser successfully utilized MS Paris 176 to identify a glaring error in his base text, yet he left the error in the text’s body and relegated the correct reading to a footnote.

³³⁷ Simon ([על] אשר וייזר) criticizes Prijs for using an early printed text as his base text, rather than choosing the best manuscript. For Prijs’ response to Simon, see his introduction to *אבן עזרא לבראשית*.

2. **Apparatus for Variants** - Simon avoided too cumbersome of a textual apparatus by ignoring variants that he deemed insignificant, such as variations in plene and defective spellings.³⁴⁰ Technically, this means that his edition does not account for all variants in the manuscripts that he used, but it helps the reader notice those variants that have actual scholarly value.
3. **Lemmas** - Simon bolded citations of the Bible in his edition. Bar Ilan University's HaKeter edition follows the same policy. Ahrend fundamentally approves of this policy, but he cautions that sometimes it is unclear whether Ibn Ezra intended to actually cite the biblical text.³⁴¹ Although Ibn Ezra did not always write in the format of a clearly defined lemma followed by explanation, and despite the fact that manuscripts therefore do not always mark lemmas as biblical quotes, these scholars

³³⁸ Simon's criticism of Prijs for adopting an early printed text would presumably apply to Goodman's edition of Ibn Ezra to Job, too. Despite the availability of several manuscripts, Goodman used the 1547 Venice Rabbinic Bible as the base text for his edition of Ibn Ezra's commentary to Job. He reasons that the Venice Rabbinic Bible is the text upon which later Rabbinic Bibles base themselves, and the 1547 edition corrects errors from the 1524 Venice edition (9 ספר איוב עם פירושי אבן עזרא). Goodman consulted 12 manuscripts, and he writes that he did emend the text when he felt that compelling proof exists that the 1547 Venice Rabbinic Bible contains an error. Thus, his text is not completely diplomatic.

³³⁹ See Niessen and Goldstein for reviews of Gómez Aranda's editions. In a separate study, Gómez Aranda ("Critical Editions") offers additional details about his methodology for preparing his edition of Ibn Ezra to Job. He stresses the importance of checking which phrases are used repeatedly in a particular manuscript. He also discusses the importance of examining passages with significant variants (such as a homeoteleuton) in order to identify which later manuscripts seem to have been copied from which earlier ones. Using these methods for his earlier edition of Ibn Ezra to Ecclesiastes, Gómez Aranda writes that he reduced the number of manuscripts that he needed for his apparatus to 18 from 35 extant manuscripts.

³⁴⁰ Simon is not the only scholar to omit such variants from a critical edition of Ibn Ezra. Prijs' edition of Ibn Ezra to Gen. 1 also did not cite all possible variants in his critical apparatus. Simon's review of the edition (עלן [אשר ויירר]) applauds Prijs' decision, but he criticizes Prijs for failing to articulate what criteria he used for determining which variants to include and which to omit.

³⁴¹ Indeed, Ahrend criticizes Simon for being too quick to bold lemmas in Ibn Ezra's commentary. Ahrend cautions that Ibn Ezra did not write in the format of a lemma followed by comments. Consequently, doubts can sometimes arise regarding whether specific words were intended as a lemma, and bolding these words might mislead the reader into thinking that Ibn Ezra intended to cite the biblical text when this is not the case. Ahrend provides an example from Ibn Ezra's comments to Hos. 7:6 (כי קרבו כתנור לבם בארְבָּם כֹּל הַלַּיְלָה יִשָּׁן אִפְהֵם בְּקֶר הוּא) : "בַּעַר כְּאֵשׁ לְהִבָּהּ"; "For they approach their ambush with their hearts like an oven: through the night their baker has slept; in the morning, it flares up like a blazing fire"). Ibn Ezra uses the words כֹּל הַלַּיְלָה ("all night") twice in his commentary. It is unclear whether he intends to cite the Bible both times or just once, and that difference could change his comments' meaning. Ahrend concludes that whenever any doubt exists regarding whether Ibn Ezra intended to cite a biblical verse, it would be best not to bold the words in question.

maintain that bolding biblical quotations is an essential part of making the commentary intelligible to the modern reader.

My Edition

In light of this scholarship regarding the production of critical texts of Ibn Ezra, I have followed these guidelines in my critical edition:

1. **Base Text** – This critical text is what I have termed a “largely diplomatic” text. It uses the manuscripts that Simon has shown to be the best manuscript for each of the standard commentary (MS London-Montefiore 34) and the oral commentary (MS Paris Bibliotheque Nationale heb. 217)³⁴² and presents that text according to the following principles:
 - a. **Obvious Errors** – I am referring to my critical edition as “largely diplomatic” because – following Simon’s practice in his edition of Ibn Ezra to Minor Prophets – my critical edition emends obvious errors in the body.³⁴³ I have put square brackets around all deviations from the primary manuscript, so readers can clearly see which words did not appear in the primary manuscript. In all such deviations, the apparatus’ notes state what the base manuscript read and then conclude with the remark ...פ"פ, which specifies which manuscripts contain the corrected reading that appears in brackets. If a subsequent scribe corrected the obvious error in the base manuscript, then I

³⁴² Simon assessed the manuscripts’ quality by counting how many obvious errors appeared in each manuscript, and he concluded that the manuscript with the fewest obvious errors is the best manuscript.

³⁴³ In order to avoid excessive subjectivity regarding these emendations, I only emended the body in cases of missing phrases whose absence in the primary manuscript can be explained as a homeoteleuton, or when an apparent error in the primary manuscript is graphically similar to the word that is presumed to be correct while differing from it in meaning.

did not put square brackets, but I did nevertheless note the erroneous reading in the apparatus.³⁴⁴

- b. **Glosses** – There is no question that Ibn Ezra’s standard commentary to Minor Prophets contains glosses, as the colophon states, “I, Joseph son of R. Jacob of Moudeville... also added some explanation to his language, as he explained to me at the time of its composition.” Indeed, several passages clearly seem to be glosses, based on their content.³⁴⁵ The HaKeter edition prints these apparent glosses in smaller typeface. However, due to the fact that the extant manuscripts neither omit these presumed glosses nor mark them in any way as glosses, my edition presents them in the same typeface as the rest of the commentary. However, if I suspect that a passage is a gloss, I address this suspicion in the English supercommentary.
- c. **Illegible Words** – Portions of the last two pages of MS London-Montefiore 34 are damaged, so several words in Mal. 3 cannot be deciphered clearly. Given the small number of words that this problem affects, I chose to nevertheless use MS London-Montefiore 34 as the base text. I use a gray, outline typeface for all words that are illegible in MS London-Montefiore 34. This reconstructed text follows MS Parma 2549 and MS British Library 24896, whose readings closely resemble MS London-Montefiore 34 throughout the commentary (see p. 206 below). The small number of these words and the

³⁴⁴ For example, the standard commentary to Zech. 7:5 discusses the obligation to fast on certain days (לצום). The base manuscript reads לצוד (to hunt) instead of לצום – an obvious error, since the words are graphically similar, but לצוד makes no sense in that context. However, one can discern a dot over the word לצוד, and the word לצום is written in the margin in a different handwriting. Since the base manuscript corrects the error, my edition does not put square brackets around the word לצום, but the apparatus cites the variant and then notes that it was corrected in the same manuscript:)²מ' ע' תוקן ע' ג'.

³⁴⁵ The most striking examples are Hag. 1:6 (“And this is his interpretation from his mouth”) and Mal. 1:11 (“The rabbi and sage told me a very sound interpretation of this verse”).

ability to estimate how many characters could fit into the illegible spaces of MS London-Montefiore 34 led to my decision to use it as my base manuscript despite the obvious drawback that it contains some illegible words.

2. **Apparatus for Variants** – Like Simon and Prijs, I have ignored insignificant variants, in order to avoid too cumbersome of a textual apparatus. These variants include variations in plene and defective spellings,³⁴⁶ variations in the masculine plural suffix (ם- or ן-), and variations in abbreviations (e.g., י' vs. עשר for “ten”), including variations in divine names (e.g., השם vs. י"י, or 'הק' vs. הקב"ה).³⁴⁷ However, I have included variants that might be mere variations in plene and defective spelling if the defective spelling could reasonably be vocalized in a manner that would offer a different meaning.³⁴⁸
3. **Uncertain Readings** – If a particular reading is unclear, it is followed by a question mark in parenthesis.³⁴⁹ If I believe that the uncertain reading is one of two words, then the more likely reading appears followed by the alternative reading in parenthesis.³⁵⁰ If I am confident of the reading in several manuscripts but unsure

³⁴⁶ I did include the variant spellings of Herod's name (Hag. 2:9), since they affect pronunciation.

³⁴⁷ For example, in the oral commentary, MS Leipzig 41 consistently refers to God as 'הק' (short for הקדוש), while MS Paris 217 and MS Parma 2722 consistently use הקב"ה (short for the wordier phrase הקדוש ברוך הוא). MS Escorial G-II-16 uses both of these, as well as יי' (an abbreviation for the Tetragrammaton), without any consistent pattern. The oral commentary to Zechariah refers to God thirteen times by this title, so recording every such variant in the apparatus would create the impression of thirteen points of dispute between witnesses. Nevertheless, this variation might be significant for a study of the style of the oral commentary's author.

³⁴⁸ For example, I include the variant of דבק vs. דבוק (standard commentary to Hag. 2:10), since I believe that דבק should be vocalized דְּבַק and not דְּבֻק:

³⁴⁹ For example, the standard commentary to Hag. 1:1 contains the words כן ירש בנו. MS Vatican 75 (symbol ך) is clearly missing the word כן but also has an illegible word ending in ך in place of the word בנו. The apparatus thus reads כן ירש בנו ו ירש בנו ך)?

³⁵⁰ For example, in phrase כן כתוב (standard commentary to Hag. 1:1), MS Leningrad 134 (symbol ך) is missing the word כן and then appears to read כתר instead of the standard reading of כתוב. However, the reading of כתר is uncertain, and could be read as כתי. Therefore, the apparatus reads: כן כתוב ך כתי)?

about a specific manuscript, then the question mark appears next to the letter for that specific manuscript.³⁵¹

4. **Scribal Emendations** – If a manuscript contains two readings – an original reading and a marginal comment or emendation of its own text, the latter reading will appear in my apparatus with a superscript number 2 following the manuscript’s symbol.³⁵²

However, if it appears that a scribe was correcting his own obvious error, and no other witness supports that original reading, then I do not include the erroneous reading in the apparatus.³⁵³

5. **Masoretic Variants** – Ibn Ezra’s citations of biblical verses frequently deviate from the Masoretic text in minor ways, especially regarding plene and defective spelling. As a general rule, I decided not to note these deviations in the apparatus, because they are so common and so inconsistent between manuscripts that I doubt Ibn Ezra or subsequent scribes attempted to match the Masoretic text’s precise spelling.³⁵⁴

³⁵¹ For example, the standard commentary to Hag. 2:12 contains the word 'קרוב' (short for the masculine plural (קרובים). Several manuscripts clearly omit the apostrophe and thus read קרוב, but this reading is not entirely clear in MS Leningrad 134. Therefore, the apparatus reads קרוב (ר' אבדולג)?

³⁵² For example, MS Parma 2549 to Hag. 2:14 reads מביאים, with a prefix ה inserted above the word. The apparatus presents these two readings as פ' מביאים ה. The fact that two other manuscripts also lack a prefix ה supports the possibility that the scribe indeed intended to write מביאים originally, and his (or a later scribe’s) later emendation represents an alternative reading.

³⁵³ For example, MS Montefiore Library 34 to Hag. 1:6 reads אכולים. All other witnesses read אוכלים, which is clearly the correct reading. However, the word אכולים in Mont. 34 is vocalized אוכלים ('okhlim). Evidently, scribe accidentally wrote אכולים (because the word אכול appears immediately before) and then recognized his mistake. In order to correct the word, he added vocalization that would indicate the form אוכלים (Simon, “Marginal Notes”). Accordingly, אכולים does not appear in the apparatus as a variant, since the scribe clearly emended his own error.

³⁵⁴ In this regard, I am not accepting the policy of the HaKeter edition. Whenever Ibn Ezra’s citations contain a defective spelling instead of the Masoretic text’s plene spelling, the HaKeter edition includes a parenthetical comment that calls the reader’s attention to the fact that Ibn Ezra’s spelling differs from the Masoretic text. For example, the Masoretic text of Zech. 12 repeatedly uses the plene spelling of David’s name (דָּוִד), while both commentaries use the defective spelling (דוד). The HaKeter edition consistently remarks בנכסחננו: דויד to inform the reader that “our text” of the Bible has the plene spelling. Because the HaKeter edition does not comment when Ibn Ezra uses a plene spelling instead of the Masoretic text’s defective spelling, it implies that Ibn Ezra’s use of a plene spelling is insignificant but his uses of a defective spelling in place of a Masoretic defective spellings are somehow deliberate or meaningful. I did not find evidence to support such a distinction. It seems

However, in cases of meaningful variation, where some witnesses match the Masoretic text and others do not, I added the Hebrew abbreviation כנה"מ (“like the Masoretic text”) next to the relevant variant. That information can be relevant for understanding the reason for the variant (e.g., a scribe emending the commentary’s text in order to conform to the Masoretic text). Moreover, in cases where Ibn Ezra appears to misquote the Bible or to deviate in a meaningful way from standard editions of the Masoretic text, I address the issue in the English supercommentary.

6. **Lemmas and Biblical Citations** – I have bolded phrases from the text of Minor Prophets that Ibn Ezra cites in the context of interpreting them, despite the fact that Ibn Ezra did not usually write in the format of a lemma followed by interpretation. However, I exercised caution by not bolding words that Ibn Ezra did not necessarily intend as a biblical citation. When Ibn Ezra cites a verse from elsewhere in the Bible, it appears in quotation marks followed by its source in parenthesis. If Ibn Ezra’s citation differs from the exact words of the verse, then the source will be preceded by the Hebrew word השווה (cf.). In identifying the sources of these citations, I benefited tremendously from the HaKeter edition, which provides references for all verses that Ibn Ezra cites. However, a small number of their citations contained errors,³⁵⁵ and there were also occasions in which I disagreed with their identification of Ibn Ezra’s source.³⁵⁶

that Ibn Ezra and his commentary’s later copyists made no effort to correlate their plene and defective spellings to the Masoretic text.

³⁵⁵ For example, when the standard commentary to Zech. 8:19 discusses the breach of Jerusalem’s walls by Babylonia, the HaKeter edition cites I Kings 25:3-4, when the correct source is clearly II Kings 25:3-4.

³⁵⁶ For example, the HaKeter edition cites Lev. 11:44 as the source of the words וְלֹא תִטְמָאוּ in the standard commentary to Hag. 2:12, but I believe the correct citation is one verse earlier (Lev. 11:43). This difference affects the word’s vocalization, since the vocalization in Lev. 11:44 is וְלֹא תִטְמָאוּ (in *pi’el*), while the vocalization in 11:43 is וְלֹא תִטְמָאוּ (in *hitpa’el*).

7. **Punctuation** – I have added modern punctuation to Ibn Ezra’s text. Here, too, I benefited greatly from the HaKeter edition’s punctuation, but I did occasionally disagree with its decisions.³⁵⁷
8. **Vocalization** – I occasionally added a vowel to the body of the text for clarity. Those vowels are not original to Ibn Ezra. However, if a variant appears in the apparatus with vocalization, then that vocalization appears in the manuscript.
9. **Editorial Comments** – I attempted to minimize my own comments in the apparatus of variants, so lengthy discussions of textual issues appear in my English supercommentary instead. However, certain brief comments were able to succinctly explain the underlying reason of a variant. Therefore, I did add brief parenthetical comments such as השמטת הדומות (omission of homeoteleuton), or המשך הפסוק (the continuation of a verse cited by Ibn Ezra). These comments appear in parenthesis and are also italicized in order to clarify that they are not part of the manuscript’s text. Similarly, if a word or phrase is completely missing from a manuscript, I noted this by writing the Hebrew word חסר (missing) in italics.

³⁵⁷ For example, the oral commentary to Zech. 6:6 contains the phrase המרכבה אשר בה הסוסים השחורים והמרכבה אשר בה הסוסים הלבנים יוצאים אל ארץ צפון. In this phrase, הסוסים הלבנים (the white horses), could be interpreted as the subject of the adjacent participle יוצאים. However, from the context of that passage in Zechariah, it is evident that the subject is the black horses (see standard commentary *ad. loc.*). I therefore added a period, which is lacking in the HaKeter edition to indicate that the word יוצאים begins a new lemma and is thus unrelated to the white horses: המרכבה אשר בה הסוסים השחורים והמרכבה אשר בה הסוסים הלבנים יוצאים אל ארץ צפון.

Chapter X: The Manuscripts and Their Abbreviations

Oral Commentary

- א - Escorial - Biblioteca de San Lorenzo de El Escorial G-II-16
- א - Paris - Bibliotheque Nationale heb. 217
- ל - Leipzig - Universitaetsbibliothek B.H. oct. 41
- מ - Modena - Archivio di Stato 692 (fragments of Malachi³⁵⁸)
- נ - Parma - Biblioteca Palatina Cod. Parm. 2722 (= Parma De Rossi 470)

Standard Commentary

- א - Oxford - Bodleian Library MS Mich. Add. 33 (=Neubauer 301)
- ב - London - British Library Add. 24896 (=4/237)
- ג - Vatican - Biblioteca Apostolica ebr. 75 F
- ד - Leeuwarden 21 (until Mal. 2:8)
- ה - London - Montefiore Library 34
- ו - Leningrad/St. Petersburg - Russian National Library Evr. I 34
- ז - Parma 2549 (=Parma De Rossi 393; missing from Zech. 12:4 to Mal. 2:3)
- ח - Rome - Biblioteca Angelica Or. 80

³⁵⁸ The manuscript is complete until 1:13, and then only a few phrases are legible until the middle of 3:16, after which the manuscript is complete until the end of Malachi.

Oral Commentary

Among the manuscripts of the oral commentary, I observed several instances in which MS Parma 2722 appeared to have been copied from MS Paris 217,³⁵⁹ confirming Simon's aforementioned claim to that effect (note 333 above):

1. Both manuscripts omit words due to homeoteleuton in Zech. 2:17, 11:1, 12:3, and have the same minor errors.³⁶⁰ In cases where the two manuscripts disagree, MS Parma 2722 seems to have the erroneous reading.³⁶¹
2. In Zech. 10:11, the word כִּי is missing in MS Parma 2722. While the omission could be explained as a scribe simply skipping a short word that does not affect the text's overall meaning, it happens to be that this word כִּי appears at the top of the folio in MS Paris 217, which might have made it easier for the scribe to accidentally skip it while turning the page.
3. In Zech. 14:5, both manuscripts contain an unintelligible phrase (במצרים אוי להם אם לא) (כי תהיה עליהם המגפה) that is absent from the other two witnesses. The phrase may have been mistakenly moved from comments to 14:19 (see my critical apparatus *ad loc.*).
4. Perhaps the clearest evidence that MS Paris 217 was the source of MS Parma 2722 comes from Zech. 4:14, where MS Parma 2722 writes ויהשוע, spelling Joshua's name in a highly unusual way. In order to understand this spelling, one must look at MS Paris 217, where the scribe originally wrote וישוע. Realizing that the name should

³⁵⁹ Despite my conclusion that MS Parma 2722 is not an independent textual witness, I have left its variants in the critical apparatus so that readers can see the evidence for themselves.

³⁶⁰ For example, Hag. 2:12 (היקדש instead of הקדש), Mal. 1:2 (כי בזה instead of בזה כי), 1:12 (והתבונה instead of והתנובה), and 3:21 (ותרסמו instead of ותרסו).

³⁶¹ For example, in Zech. 10:4, MS Parma's reading of להרחיב (to expand) is clearly inferior to MS Paris' reading of להחריב (to destroy), which fits the context (the First Temple's destruction) in addition to being supported by all other witnesses.

have been spelled differently,³⁶² the scribe of MS Paris 217 then inserted a ה between the י and ש, rendering the word ויִשׁוּעַ. This spelling could be vocalized ויִהְיוּשׁוּעַ in order to sound identical to the standard spelling of Joshua's name (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ). It was thus the simplest way for the scribe to emend his original error despite the fact that he surely would not have spelled the name as יְהוֹשׁוּעַ if not for the fact that he was correcting an earlier error. The scribe of MS Parma 2722 apparently copied this word blindly from MS Paris 217 and inserted the ה into the body of the text, thus creating the irregular spelling of ויִהְיוּשׁוּעַ.

Two other manuscripts of the oral commentary – MS Leipzig 41 and MS Escorial G-II-16 – likely share a common ancestor, as they share many minor variants (e.g., הַם instead of הַמָּה in Mal. 1:4) and errors (e.g., מִירוּשָׁלַם instead of מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל in Mal. 1:1).³⁶³ They also share an omission by homeoteleuton in Zech. 5:3. However, neither manuscript can be the other's ancestor, since MS Leipzig 41 has a homeoteleuton in Mal. 1:4 that is not missing in MS Escorial G-II-16, while the latter has a unique homeoteleuton in Zech. 9:10 and another one in Mal. 3:11.

In choosing the base manuscript for the oral commentary, MS Modena 692 was too incomplete to be considered, and MS Parma 2722 could not be considered in light of the conclusion that it is a copy of MS Paris 217. MS Leipzig 41 and MS Escorial G-II-16 share many grammatical errors (e.g., confusing masculine and feminine grammatical forms), which

³⁶² Joshua's name is frequently spelled יִשׁוּעַ in Ezra and Nehemiah (e.g., Ezra 3:2), so that spelling need not be viewed as an error. However, because the spelling יִשׁוּעַ is never used in Zechariah, the name was likely spelled as יְהוֹשֻׁעַ in the manuscript from which the scribe was copying.

³⁶³ This error likely arose from a misunderstanding of a contraction in the original text, such as the contraction מִיִּשׂ that appears in MS Modena 692.

might indicate that the scribe of their shared ancestor was not especially learned. Moreover, both manuscripts only include the second half of Minor Prophets,³⁶⁴ which means that they could not be used in the future for completing a critical text of Ibn Ezra to Minor Prophets with one base manuscript.³⁶⁵ Since MS Paris 217 is available for all of Minor Prophets and contains a relatively small number of obvious errors,³⁶⁶ I used it for the base text of the oral commentary.³⁶⁷

Standard Commentary

The manuscripts of the standard commentary divide into three families, based on major omissions by homeoteleuton and other variants that are unique to a specific family:

1. MS Parma 259, MS Montefiore 34, and MS British Library 24896
2. MS Oxford 33, MS Vatican 75, and MS Rome 80
3. MS Leningrad I 34 and MS Leeuwarden 21

Without question, the manuscripts in family 1 contain fewer glaring errors than the other families, so one of its members should be used as the base text.³⁶⁸ No one of these three

³⁶⁴ MS Escorial G-II-16 begins with Habakkuk, and MS Leipzig 41 begins in the middle of Nahum.

³⁶⁵ While this last consideration is arguably less important than the quality of the manuscripts' readings, there is value in using the same base manuscript (assuming it is of high quality) so as to not unnecessarily create stylistic variants of the type discussed above (p. 199).

³⁶⁶ When assessing variant readings that appear to be incorrect, the determination of which errors are egregious or obvious is not an exact science. Using the criteria that I established for when to emend the base text (note 343 above), MS Paris 217 contains 15 errors that I deemed sufficiently obvious to emend them in the body of my critical text, which amounts to less than one error per chapter in the 19 chapters of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Moreover, in one of these cases (the spelling of Joshua's name in Zech. 4:14), the scribe attempted to emend his own error (see p. 204 above).

³⁶⁷ This manuscript was used as the base text of Simon's edition of the oral commentary to Hosea, Joel, and Amos.

³⁶⁸ Simon made this determination on the basis of the number of obvious errors to the books that he published (Hosea, Joel, and Amos). I attempted to replicate his results with Haggai and produced these results, which unequivocally demonstrate the higher quality of the manuscripts in family 1:

manuscripts could have been a parent of either of the other two, due to the following evidence:

- MS British Library 24896 omits several sizeable phrases that appear in the other two manuscripts (in Hag. 2:12; Zech. 4:11, 4:14, 8:2, and 11:3) and thus cannot have been either one's parent.
- MS Montefiore 34 omits phrases in Zech. 8:19 and 12:1 that appear in both other manuscripts and thus cannot have been their parent.
- MS Parma 259 omits the word בשומרון (Zech. 1:8), which appears in all other manuscripts as an example of a proper noun. It is highly improbable that the scribe of either MS Montefiore 34 or MS British Library 24896 would have added a sample proper noun on his own that coincidentally matched the example given by all manuscripts from the other families. Rather, the presence of בשומרון as a sample proper noun in MS Montefiore 34 and MS British Library 24896 indicates that they were not copied from the one manuscript that omits it.

| MS | Family | Obvious Errors in Haggai |
|--------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| British Library | 1 | 18 |
| Montefiore | 1 | 20 |
| Parma | 1 | 17 |
| Oxford | 2 | 32 |
| Rome | 2 | 36 |
| Vatican | 2 | 28 |
| Leeuwarden | 3 | 27 |
| Leningrad | 3 | 55 |
| Second Rabbinic Bible (Venice) | Eclectic | 14 |

I did not consider using the Second Rabbinic Bible as a base text, because it is an eclectic text itself. Hence, its reduced number of obvious errors is the result of editorial decisions rather than careful transmission of the original text. I included its variants in the apparatus in order to inform the readers of its editorial decisions, to aid readers who are accustomed to studying Ibn Ezra's text from rabbinic Bibles, and to call attention to differences between my edition and most available printed editions of Ibn Ezra's commentary (which are based on the Second Rabbinic Bible).

Because MS Parma 259 is missing several pages in Zechariah and Malachi, it was not a candidate to serve as my base text. In deciding between MS Montefiore 34 and MS British Library 24896, I observed that the latter contains an unusually large number of readings that are contradicted by all other witnesses, including those in its own family.³⁶⁹ Consequently, I have chosen MS Montefiore 34 to serve as the base text for my edition.

³⁶⁹ Over the course of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, MS British Library 24896 contains 141 such unique readings. By contrast MS Montefiore 34 has 68 unique readings. MS Parma 259 has 38 unique readings but is incomplete. It should be noted that these numbers do not include variants that were deemed too insignificant to include in the critical apparatus (see p. 199 above). Admittedly, due to cases of a word or letter being difficult to read in a particular witness, any of these numbers could be slightly imprecise. Nevertheless, even as approximations, they paint a valuable picture of the each manuscript's level of conformity to the readings of the other manuscripts in its family.

It is interesting to note that of the 141 unique readings in MS British Library 24896, 61 of them are shared by the Second Rabbinic Bible, despite not appearing in any other surviving manuscripts. That fact makes it likely that MS British Library 24896 or a descendant of it was used by the editor of the Second Rabbinic Bible.

Chapter XI: Methodology of the Supercommentary

Unlike his commentaries to the Pentateuch, very few supercommentaries exist for Ibn Ezra's commentaries to Prophets.³⁷⁰ Those rabbinic scholars who did write supercommentaries faced challenging limitations, which stemmed from Ibn Ezra's Andalusian background. By writing the ideas of an Arabic-language exegetical tradition in Hebrew, Ibn Ezra often coined new Hebrew terms and thus used language that rendered his ideas unintelligible to later readers.³⁷¹ Many of Ibn Ezra's sources were written in Judeo-Arabic, which means that they frequently did not survive and were inaccessible to most rabbinic scholars even if they did survive. Moreover, the emphasis that Ibn Ezra's exegetical methodology placed on grammar and reason forced rabbinic super-commentators to wade into disciplines that were less familiar to them than the traditional rabbinic material in most medieval Jewish commentaries from the Christian world.

Previous super-commentators also lacked a proper critical edition of Ibn Ezra's writings. Consequently, one finds that the few extant supercommentaries on Ibn Ezra to Prophets devote an inordinate amount of their comments to suggesting textual emendations. By producing my supercommentary in tandem with a critical edition, I have been able to write it with a high degree of confidence in the textual accuracy of Ibn Ezra's commentary. This has afforded me the luxury of being able to focus primarily on elucidating Ibn Ezra's

³⁷⁰ For overviews of supercommentaries to Ibn Ezra's Pentateuchal commentaries, see Ben-Menahem (ענייני אבן עזרא 149-181), Simon ("Interpreting the Interpreter: Supercommentaries on Ibn Ezra's Commentaries" in Twersky and Harris 86-128), and Visi (75-99). For a comprehensive list of supercommentaries, see Simon (און מלין תבחן 468-476).

³⁷¹ See note 329 above.

words and comparing them with his predecessors and successors, while only occasionally addressing textual problems that remain even after examining the manuscripts.

In the supercommentary, I sought to adhere to the following guidelines, in order to balance the tension between thoroughness and excessive digressions. In particular, I wanted my comments serve as a supercommentary on Ibn Ezra and not as an independent commentary on Minor Prophets.

1. **Scope of the Supercommentary** – I limited myself to sources that broadly relate to Ibn Ezra's comments on a particular verse. That included the following categories of sources:

- a. **Earlier sources** for his interpretations, as well as earlier sources that disagree with him but that he might have known. I included in this category rabbinic or Karaite sources that he might not have known firsthand, since their interpretations could have reached Ibn Ezra indirectly through oral reports or lost works.³⁷²
- b. **Later medieval sources** that concur with him and might have used him as a source. In addition to Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, and Tanḥum – the three later exegetes whose relationships with Ibn Ezra have been discussed in detail earlier in this introduction – the supercommentary frequently compares Ibn Ezra's interpretations with those of Joseph Ibn Caspi and Isaac Abarbanel.

³⁷² My supercommentary therefore cites from al-Qumisi despite my belief that Ibn Ezra never saw his commentary, since his ideas could have theoretically reached Ibn Ezra orally or through later Karaite texts. Similarly, references to earlier midrashic works are not intended to imply that Ibn Ezra necessarily read the entire corpus of midrashic literature, but midrashic interpretations could have easily reached him orally even if he did not read a particular late midrashic text. As I discussed above, he was familiar with some French exegesis regardless of whether he saw Rashi's or Joseph Kara's commentary in written form, so I cite their interpretations, as well.

Both of them clearly read Ibn Ezra's standard commentary and were heavily influenced by it even when they do not cite Ibn Ezra by name. On occasion, however, the supercommentary goes several verses without mentioning Abarbanel. These omissions are because Abarbanel's insistence on the messianic nature of certain prophecies caused him not to engage meaningfully with Ibn Ezra's non-messianic interpretations of those prophecies. Whenever possible, I also sought to cite other medieval exegetes who are known to have been influenced by Ibn Ezra – most notably, Ramban (Nahmanides) and Ralbag (Gersonides) – if a comment from their commentaries to other biblical books addresses the same point as Ibn Ezra's comment to Minor Prophets. At times, I deemed it valuable to cite other exegetes for purposes of comparison, such as the anonymous student of Isaiah of Trani, but they were not studied systematically.

- c. **Rabbinic supercommentaries on Ibn Ezra** – I consulted the three known 19th-century rabbinic supercommentaries on Ibn Ezra to Minor Prophets: *הדר עזר* by Yitzhak Schrem, *אור לנתיבה* by Chaim Zev Kaputa, and *בני רשף* by Yonah Filvarg. Of the three, Schrem was by far the most useful.³⁷³ In addition, I consulted *מבשר עזרא* by Meshullam Roth, a 20th-century rabbinic authority, which was ignored by Lifschitz and Simon in their editions of Ibn Ezra to earlier parts of Minor Prophets.³⁷⁴ Although they were not

³⁷³ Filvarg devotes much of his energy to textual errors that have already been corrected in the HaKeter edition and in my critical edition. I did not have the opportunity to examine one 18th-century rabbinic supercommentary on Ibn Ezra to Minor Prophets – *בית העזר* by Benjamin Spinoza – which remains unpublished.

³⁷⁴ They likely ignored Roth's work since it contains very few comments to Minor Prophets. For the books that I studied, Roth offers one comment to Haggai, three comments to Zechariah, and none to Malachi. I

tremendously helpful, for the reasons discussed above (p. 209), they occasionally helped to elucidate a difficult phrase or to identify a comment that warranted further scrutiny.

- d. **Modern Scholarship** – By design, my supercommentary limits its use of modern scholarship to studies of Jewish exegesis and does not examine the perspectives of modern Bible scholarship on issues that Ibn Ezra raises. Thus, when analyzing an irregular grammatical form, I cite modern scholarly works that discuss Ibn Ezra's linguistic system but do not cite modern advances in the fields of philology and comparative Semitics that might support interpretations that no medieval exegete could have considered. I similarly ignore the entire discipline of lower criticism except for the small number of cases in which Ibn Ezra's comment might imply a different reading than standard Masoretic texts.³⁷⁵ Although it is tempting to include all possible information about each verse, the purpose of a supercommentary is to treat the commentary as a primary text and to relate to the Bible as background information for this primary text.

2. **Oral Commentary** – In cases where the two commentaries share the same interpretation, my lengthier analysis normally appears in the supercommentary to the standard commentary. In certain cases where they appear to agree, I nevertheless placed my lengthier analysis in the oral commentary's supercommentary, because that particular interpretation was presented more clearly or thoroughly in the oral commentary.

nevertheless found his work useful, as his encyclopedic knowledge of rabbinic literature assisted with finding other rabbinic sources that were relevant to Ibn Ezra's exegesis.

³⁷⁵ I discuss this phenomenon earlier in the introduction.

3. **Introduction** – In order to minimize digressions in the supercommentary, I moved lengthy discussions of several larger issues from the supercommentary to the introduction.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁶ For criticism of the inclusion of excessive digressions in a supercommentary, see Yosefa Rahman's review of Simon's edition of Ibn Ezra to Hosea, Joel, and Amos ([על] אוריאל סימון [ואחרים]). She argues that Simon should have divided his supercommentary into two sections - one for presenting Ibn Ezra's comments in straightforward modern language and another for analysis and interpretation of Ibn Ezra. Rahman laments that a reader can find himself in the middle of Simon's analysis of a larger issue before the reader has fully grasped how Ibn Ezra interprets the verse in question. For example, Simon's supercommentary to Hos. 11:8 contains a lengthy analysis of the phrase דברה תורה כלשון בני אדם ("The Torah speaks in human language") in the Talmud and in the writings of medieval peshat exegetes. While I did not divide my commentary into two separate sections, as Rahman recommends, I endeavored to first explain the meaning of Ibn Ezra's words, before proceeding to analysis and comparison to other exegetes.

Chapter XII: Methodology of the Translation

I have adhered to the following guidelines in my translations:

- I have **bolded** all citations of the verse that Ibn Ezra is discussing. Citations of verses from elsewhere in the Bible appear in quotation marks.
- The default translation that I have used for biblical quotations is the NJPS translation, which balances scholarly accuracy with readability. However, I also consulted several other translations (primarily KJV, JPS 1917, and NASV), and I have adopted their translations or written my own translation in the following cases:
 - If Ibn Ezra’s comments indicate that he would disagree with the NJPS translation
 - If Ibn Ezra partially cites a verse and that fragment reads smoothly in another translation but is unintelligible on its own in the NJPS translation
 - If Ibn Ezra cites a parallel verse to demonstrate the meaning of a difficult word, but NJPS does not use the same English word in both verses
 - If the lemma warrants an extremely literal translation in order to call attention to a linguistic difficulty.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁷ In such cases, I translated the lemma literally even if Ibn Ezra’s ultimate interpretation agrees with NJPS, because I felt it was important to present the difficulty through the awkward, literal translation in order to highlight the problem that Ibn Ezra addresses. For example, in Hag. 2:12, I translated *שֶׁשׁ קִדָּשׁ* as “holy flesh” rather than the NJPS translation of “sacrificial flesh.” It is obvious from context that the flesh in question came from a sacrificial animal, such that Ibn Ezra would agree with the NJPS translation. However, Ibn Ezra’s commentary to that verse contains a lengthy analysis of the meaning of the root *שֶׁשׁ קִדָּשׁ*, in which he distinguishes between its literal and euphemistic uses and cites proof-texts from other contexts. Therefore, despite the literary

- When citing the Bible, Ibn Ezra often cites a partial verse but assumes knowledge of the entire verse. In some instances, he cites the opening phrase of a verse but then omits the subsequent words that are the primary focus of his discussion. I therefore expanded many of his citations by adding more of the verse in square brackets for the sake of clarity.
- At times, I added words to Ibn Ezra's own language because his Hebrew does not read smoothly in English. The most common reason for these additions is Ibn Ezra's frequent use of pronouns, which sometimes necessitated the insertion of an antecedent. In other cases, I needed to supply a verb for a sentence that lacks any Hebrew verb. I have placed all of my additions inside square brackets.
- Ibn Ezra occasionally interprets contiguous verses as one unit and thus returns to an earlier verse even after he has proceeded to explain words one or two verses later. In such situations, I number each comment based on the verse that it is interpreting, even if that means that the numbers occasionally appear to be out of order.³⁷⁸
- Regarding transliteration, I followed the Brill transliteration guidelines (http://www.brill.com/sites/default/files/0011_hebrew_transliteration_simple_0.pdf) except for using "ei" for all forms of *tzeirei* and not writing *ḥataf* vowels in superscript.
- Despite these transliteration guidelines, names (including acronyms) that have a widely accepted English spelling were written according to that spelling and not

awkwardness of "holy flesh," I nonetheless preferred this literal translation in order to use one consistent translation ("holy") for all proof-texts containing the root שקד throughout the passage.

³⁷⁸ Both commentaries contain examples of this phenomenon in the first half of Zech. 3, where Ibn Ezra cites the verses slightly out of order.

according to the rules of transliteration (e.g., Zerubbabel, Ibn Saruk, Radak, and Joseph Kara; not Zerubavel, Ibn Saruq, Radaq, and Yoseif Qara).

- The Hebrew word תורה can be used in a narrow sense as referring to the Pentateuch but also as a more general term for religious law or other religious teachings. It appears to me that Ibn Ezra sometimes intends in the same instance for this word to connote both the Pentateuch and the laws that emerge from it. Hence, I have simply written “Torah” in English characters in order to preserve the original Hebrew word’s complete semantic range.
- All references to exegetes refer to their commentaries to the verse under discussion unless stated otherwise. For books on which Ibn Ezra wrote multiple commentaries, all citations are to the commentary that appears in standard rabbinic Bibles,³⁷⁹ unless specified otherwise.

³⁷⁹ For example, citations of Ibn Ezra to Genesis refer to the short commentary, while citations of Ibn Ezra to Exodus refer to the long commentary.

Abbreviations

b = Babylonian Talmud (followed by abbreviated name of tractate)

BDB = Brown, Francis with S. R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906 (reprinted 1955).

BHS = *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. A. Alt, O. Eissfeldt, P. Kahle, R. Kittel (eds.)
Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1967.

BHQ = *Biblia Hebraica Quinta: The Twelve Minor Prophets*. Anthony Gelston (ed.)
Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2010.

Cant. R. = *Canticles Rabbah*

Ecc. R. = *Ecclesiastes Rabbah*

Esth. R. = *Esther Rabbah*

Gen. R. = *Genesis Rabbah*

GKK = Gesenius, Wilhelm. *Gesenius' Hebrew grammar as edited and enl. by E. Kautzsch*.
Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946.

Guide = Maimonides' *Guide to the Perplexed*

HaKeter = Cohen, Menachem. *מקראות גדולות הכתר*. Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University Press,
2016. <http://mgketer.org>

JPS 1917 = *The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1917. Accessed electronically at <http://www.mechonmamre.org/p/pt/pt0.htm>

KJV = King James Version. Accessed electronically at <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/>

Lev. R. = *Leviticus Rabbah*

m = Mishnah (followed by abbreviated name of tractate)

Mid. Tan. = *Midrash Tanhuma*

Mid. Tannaim = *Midrash Tannaim* to Deuteronomy

Mid. Tehil. = *Midrash Tehillim*

NASV = New American Standard Version. Accessed electronically at <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/>

NJPS - *Tanakh: a New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1985. Accessed electronically at <http://www.taggedtanakh.org/>

Num. R. = *Numbers Rabbah*

Pesiqta De-R. K. = *Pesiqta De-R. Kahana*

Pesiq. R. = *Pesiqta Rabbati*

Sed. Ol. R. = *Seder Olam Rabbah*

Student of Trani = Commentary of an anonymous student of Isaiah of Trani to Minor

Prophets (included in Cohen, מקראות גדולות הכתר)

t = Tosefta (followed by abbreviated name of tractate)

y = Jerusalem (Palestinian) Talmud (followed by abbreviated name of tractate)

Ibn Ezra to Haggai – Standard Commentary

Chapter 1

(1) In the [second] year [of King Darius] – This refers to Darius the Persian,¹ about whom our early sages said that he is the son of Queen Esther.²

[In the sixth month, in the first day of the month] - R. Moses [Ibn Chiquitilia] said that in all cases, **בַּחֹדֶשׁ** (in the month) refers to the start of the month. But if that is correct, then why is it written **in the first day of the month**?³

Zerubbabel is the son of Refaiah,⁴ brother of **Shealtiel**, from the sons of Jeconiah.⁵ But because [Zerubbabel]’s uncle Shealtiel raised him, [the text] refers to Zerubbabel by his

¹ **Darius the Persian** – The expression “Darius the Persian” comes from Neh. 12:22, but Ibn Ezra uses it to distinguish him from Darius the Mede who appears in Dan. 6, 9:1, and 11:11. I discuss Ibn Ezra’s complete chronology of the Persian kings in the introduction.

² **Our early sages said that he is the son of Queen Esther** – R. Judah b. Simon describes Darius as “Esther’s son, pure from his mother but impure from his father” (Lev. R. 13:5, Esth. R. 8:3). The claim that Darius was Ahasuerus’ son was standard in rabbinic sources (see my discussion of Persian chronology the introduction), but most rabbinic sources do not identify Darius’ mother. Although attributing this view to “our early sages” could imply that Ibn Ezra personally disagrees with them, his comments to Dan. 9:1-2 clearly indicate that he indeed considers Darius to be Esther’s son, who reigned between Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes. Indeed, many medieval exegetes consider Darius to be the son of Ahasuerus and Esther (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Ibn Caspi, Abarbanel). Tanḥum follows Ibn Ezra’s formulation here, citing an opinion that Darius was Esther’s son without expressly endorsing or rejecting it.

³ **R. Moses... then why is it written in the first day of the month** – Ibn Chiquitilia believes that the word **בַּחֹדֶשׁ** *always* refers to the first day of the month, as opposed to **בְּיָמֵי** meaning “month” and thus allowing for a date anytime within the month unless a verse specifies which day of the month. Ibn Ezra argues that our verse disproves Ibn Chiquitilia, because “the first day of the **בַּחֹדֶשׁ**” only makes sense if **בַּחֹדֶשׁ** means “month.” Ibn Ezra elaborates on the two possible meanings of **בַּחֹדֶשׁ** in Zech. 8:19, where he appears to endorse the same interpretation that he cites but rejects here; see my supercommentary *ad loc.*

⁴ **Refaiah** – Ibn Ezra is referring to I Chron. 3:19, but the Masoretic text of that verse spells the name of Zerubbabel’s father as Pedaiah (see Filvarg 12b). Ibn Ezra also cites the name of Zerubbabel’s father as Refaiah in Exod. 2:10. Perhaps he misremembered the name because the name Refaiah does appear two verses

name – as his “son” – like, “And he became her son” (Exod. 2:10);⁶ similarly, “And these are the sons of Michal, daughter of Saul,”⁷ because she had no children,⁸ but rather she raised them.⁹

later in I Chron. (3:21). For other cases in which Ibn Ezra cites a verse more than once, with the same error, see Simon’s supercommentary to Hos. 14:10. Kennicott does cite one manuscript that has the name “Peraiah” instead of Pedaiah in I Chron. 3:18-19. If Ibn Ezra saw such a text, it is even easier to understand how he would have confused that name with Refaiah, since the Hebrew words פריה and פריה share the same four consonants, with either one becoming the other through metathesis. (I am indebted to Dr. Sid Z. Leiman for that observation.)

⁵ **Refaiah, brother of Shealtiel, from the sons of Jeconiah** – Ibn Ezra is basing this comment on I Chron. 3:17-19, which he interprets to mean that Shealtiel and Refaiah (=Pedaiah; see note 4 above) were both sons of Jeconiah, which would make Shealtiel the biological uncle of Zerubbabel. Moses Kimḥi (Ezra 3:2) and Tanḥum share Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of I Chron. 3:17-19, but Yefet and Radak (Hag. 1:1, I Chron. *ad loc.*, II King 8:26, and Ezek. 21:32) interpret that passage to mean that Shealtiel was Pedaiah’s *father* and thus was Zerubbabel’s biological grandfather (cf. Jacob b. Reuben, ספר העשר, Hag. 1:1). Many subsequent exegetes adopt Radak’s view (Ibn Caspi; Ralbag, I Chron. *ad loc.*; Abarbanel), which some of them support by citing several other verses that refer to a grandchild as the grandfather’s “son” or “daughter.” Ibn Ezra, by contrast, is forced to posit that Zerubbabel was raised by his uncle, despite any explicit evidence of this, and to then demonstrate that adoptive parents can be referred to as “father” or “mother.” Abarbanel presents the possibility that Shealtiel raised Zerubbabel – which he presumably borrowed from Ibn Ezra – but Abarbanel nevertheless maintains that Shealtiel was Zerubbabel’s grandfather.

⁶ **And he became her son** – This verse refers to Moses’ adoption by Pharaoh’s daughter, proving that the Bible will use the word “son” for an adopted child.

⁷ **And these are the sons of Michal, daughter of Saul** – Ibn Ezra is paraphrasing II Sam. 21:8, where the Masoretic text reads, וְנָתַתְּ חַמֶּשֶׁת בְּנֵי מִיכַל בַּת שְׂאוּל (“and the five sons of Michal the daughter of Saul”). He employs the same paraphrase in Exod. 2:10 (see above, note 4, regarding verses that Ibn Ezra cites from memory with errors). Kennicott cites a small number of Masoretic witnesses that replace Michal’s name with that of her sister, Merab (a reading that is also attested in non-Masoretic Bibles), but Ibn Ezra and the exegetes whom he criticizes (note 9 below) all assume that the biblical text has Michal’s name.

⁸ **Because she had no children** – II Sam 6:23 states: “To her dying day Michal daughter of Saul had no children.” Ibn Ezra understands that Michal *never* had children, and Abarbanel (*ad loc.*) shares his view. However, Rashi and Radak (*ad loc.*) claim that Michal had no *additional* children after that incident, but she had already given birth beforehand. Ibn Ezra’s interpretation – that Michal was childless – is attested in earlier rabbinic literature (tSot. 8:18-20, Lieberman 223-224; see Lieberman, תוספתא כפשוטה *ad loc.*, regarding parallel passages elsewhere in rabbinic literature).

⁹ **But rather she raised them** – The Bible never states that Michal’s “sons” in II Sam. 21:8 were adopted children, but it does state that they were born “to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite,” whom the Bible identifies elsewhere as the husband of Michal’s older sister, Merab (I Sam. 18:19). So the fact that they were born to Michal’s brother-in-law would indicate that Michal was their biological aunt, rather than their mother. Ibn Ezra thus concludes that Michal’s nephews are called “sons” because she raised them. This interpretation of II Sam. 21:8 appears in both Talmuds (yKidd. 4:1, bSanh. 19b) and Jonathan, and it is adopted by Saadiah (Ratshabi, מפירושי רס”ג 137, commenting on II Sam. 2:10) and most medieval exegetes, including those who believe that Michal also had biological children (see note 8 above). Accepting this interpretation enabled Ibn Ezra to reject Ibn Janah’s suggestion to exegetically “substitute” the name “Merab” for Michal’s name (הרקמה, Wilensky 309), in accordance with Ibn Ezra’s fundamental opposition to the exegetical method of “substitution” (see Perez, חילוף מלה בזולתה).

Ibn Ezra’s aforementioned assertion that Michal had no biological children could further strengthen the case for viewing her “sons” in II Sam. 21:8 as nephews whom she raised. For additional cases where Ibn Ezra

And **Jehozadak**, father of **Joshua**, was the **high priest** in the First Temple when it was burned, for so it is written.¹⁰ Therefore, his son inherited his elevated status when Israel returned from the Babylonian exile. Therefore, Ezra, his uncle,¹¹ did not serve in the high priesthood in the days of Joshua, nor in the days of his son and grandson, as is written in the book of Ezra.¹²

claims that the Bible presents an adoptive parent or extended family member as a parent, see Gen. 36:2-14, 46:7; Exod. 2:10; and Ruth 4:17.

¹⁰ **Jehozadak... was the high priest in the First Temple... for so it is written** – The Bible never explicitly states that Jehozadak served in the First Temple. Ibn Ezra presumably interprets the statement that “Jehozadak went into exile when the Lord exiled Judah and Jerusalem by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar” (I Chron. 5:41) as implying that Jehozadak was the high priest at that time, since it concludes a genealogical list that includes several high priests. Tanḥum supports the claim that Jehozadak served in the First Temple by equating him with Zadok in Ezek. 44:15 (cf. Radak, Ezek. 40:46). However, some exegetes deny that Jehozadak served as high priest, presumably because II Kings 25:18 (=Jer. 52:24) implies that Seraiah was the final high priest (Pseudo-Rashi, I Chron. 5:41; Isaiah of Trani, Jer. 52:24; cf. *Tosafot*, bYom. 9a, s.v. ולא שמשו).

¹¹ **Ezra, his uncle** – The Bible never directly writes that Ezra was Joshua’s uncle. However, Ezra 7:1 implies that Ezra’s father, Seraiah b. Azariah, was the same priest as Jehozadak’s father, Seraiah (cf. I Chron. 5:27-41). Therefore, Ezra was assumed to be Joshua’s uncle by Ibn Ezra and many other exegetes to Haggai (Radak, Ibn Caspi, Tanḥum) and elsewhere (Pseudo-Rashi, I Chron. 24:2; Isaiah of Trani, Jer. 52:24). Simeon b. Tzemaḥ Duran viewed the textual evidence as so compelling that in his view, it is מפורש בכתובים כי עזרא דודו של יהושע היה (“explicit in Scripture that Ezra was Joshua’s uncle”; מגן אבות to mAb. 1:2). The claim Ezra’s brother served in the First Temple is untenable according to the accepted chronology among modern scholars that I present in the introduction, since Ezra’s arrival in Artaxerxes’ seventh year would have taken place approximately 130 years after the First Temple’s destruction. However, according to the standard rabbinic chronology, Ezra’s journey to Jerusalem would have taken place a mere 75 years after the First Temple’s destruction, and even according to Ibn Ezra’s own chronological estimates, Ezra would have arrived 85-90 years after the First Temple’s destruction. Hence, adherents of either of those chronologies could accept the possibility that Ezra was a young man or child when the First Temple was destroyed, his older brother was the high priest at that time, and he subsequently returned to Jerusalem as an elderly man.

¹² **Did not serve in the high priesthood... as is written in the book of Ezra** – The Bible never explicitly states that Ezra never served as high priest. However, the genealogy list in Neh. 12 indicates that Joshua’s son, Joiakim, and grandson, Eliashib, both served as high priests, whereas the Bible never describes Ezra as the official high priest. Ibn Ezra assumes that Ezra was worthy of serving as high priest – either due to his lofty status as a religious figure (cf. Cant. R. 5:1) or because an uncle should take priority over his nephew – so he explains that Jehozadak’s service in the First Temple justified passing over Ezra in favor of Jehozadak’s son, Joshua (cf. Cant. R. 5:1: “Joshua son of Jehozadak was a high priest, son of a high priest”). Abarbanel adopts Ibn Ezra’s explanation, but other exegetes suggest that Joshua became high priest, rather than Ezra, because Jehozadak was Ezra’s *older* brother (Pseudo-Rashi, I Chron. 24:2) or because Ezra remained in Babylonia when Joshua returned to Jerusalem (Isaiah of Trani, Jer. 52:24; cf. Cant. R. 5:1). Tanḥum accepts Ibn Ezra’s explanation for why Joshua became high priest before Ezra but claims that Ezra did indeed become high priest after Joshua’s death. The notion that Ezra eventually became a high priest might be supported in rabbinic literature by the Mishnah’s statement that Ezra performed the rituals associated with a red heifer (mPar. 3:5). Indeed, some medieval rabbis viewed that passage in the Mishnah as evidence that Ezra served as high priest (Isaiah of Trani, תוספות רי"ד, bYom. 9a s.v. וגם), while others contend that Ezra never served as high priest despite his involvement in the red heifer rituals (Simeon Duran, מגן אבות to mAb. 1:2) I’m indebted to Dr. Sid Z. Leiman bringing the relevance of the red heifer to my attention.

(2) Thus... [It is not time for the coming of the time] is in the same manner as, “As for me, whither shall I go?” (Gen. 37:30).¹³

(3) Came... to say (לְאמַר) in this case [means] “to say” to this nation, which is not the case in the Pentateuch, because, “The Lord spoke to Moses, saying” (לְאמַר), means that He spoke to Moses, saying the matter to him;¹⁴ hence, it is written subsequently, “Speak to the Israelite people thus.”¹⁵

(4) Is it a time to build and to dwell in סְפוּנִים (paneled) houses is like “paneled (וְסֻפּוֹן) with cedar” (I Kings 7:7, Jer. 22:14).¹⁶

(5) Now... [Consider] your ways in worldly needs.¹⁷

¹³ **In the same manner as, “As for me, whither shall I go?”** - Ibn Ezra is commenting on the repetition of the word “time” (זֶמַן) by Haggai. He considers this a stylistic repetition, with no bearing on the verse’s meaning (cf. Rashi and Joseph Kara), since Gen. 37:30 similarly repeats the first-person pronoun אֲנִי, without any significance to its repetition (Schrem 40b). Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Gen. 41:10 similarly uses Gen. 37:30 as a proof-text to demonstrate that the repetition of the pronoun “me” (אֲנִי) in Gen. 41:10 is merely stylistic.

¹⁴ **“To say” to this nation... saying the matter to him** – Ibn Ezra is reacting to the claim that whenever the Bible writes, “The Lord spoke to Moses לְאמַר,” the word לְאמַר means “to say” the prophecy to others. Such an interpretation is implied by the Talmud (bYom. 4b, regarding Lev. 1:1, but cf. Rashi *ad loc.*), and Radak (הַשְׂרָשִׁים 41; Jos. 1:1, Zech. 1:1) appears to accept it. By contrast, Rashbam (Lev. 1:1) appears to agree with Ibn Ezra.

Ibn Ezra does not explain why he believes that this verse’s לְאמַר differs from most cases. Perhaps the fact that this verse begins a new prophecy – directed toward the nation – following a prophecy that is specifically addressed to the governor and high priest prompts Ibn Ezra to seek a hint that Haggai is now being instructed to speak to the entire nation (cf. Radak). Since Haggai – unlike Moses (see note 15 below) – is not told, “Speak to the Israelite people thus,” Ibn Ezra views the word לְאמַר as fulfilling that purpose. For other cases where Ibn Ezra thinks that לְאמַר might mean “to say [to Israel],” see Exod. 31:12 and Zech. 1:1.

¹⁵ **Speak to the Israelite people thus** – This sequence of verses appears several times in the Pentateuch, in Leviticus and Numbers. Ibn Ezra does not intend to cite a specific verse but rather to assert that the repeated use of such a phrase at the start of Moses’ prophecies demonstrates that the preceding word לְאמַר cannot mean “to say [to Israel].” Ramban (Exod. 6:10) incorporates this point into a longer critique of the claim that לְאמַר means “to say [to]” someone.

¹⁶ **Like “paneled with cedar”** – Ibn Ezra cites this verse to demonstrate the correct meaning of the Hebrew root סָפַן. Rashi, Radak, and Abarbanel cite the same proof-text, and Jonathan and Eliezer of Beaugency also indicate that סְפוּנִים in our verse means that the homes were paneled with cedar wood. In Deut. 33:21, Ibn Ezra cites our verse in order to prove the correct meaning of the root סָפַן. Ibn Saruk (מַחְבֵּרַת מִנְחָם, Philipowski 158, Sáenz-Badillos 270*) also indicates that סָפַן shares the same meaning in our verse, Deut. 33:21, and Jer. 22:14.

¹⁷ **Your ways in worldly needs** – Ibn Ezra is stressing that the prophet is calling the people’s attention to their economic failure, as opposed religious shortcomings. Rashi, Radak, and Abarbanel interpret “your ways” in the

(6) You have sowed... and brought little grain into the home.

Eat (אָכּוּל) – You eat.¹⁸

[Without] **getting your fill (לְשַׂקֶּה)** is like **without being satisfied**, in the same manner as: “You shall not be satisfied” (Lev. 26:26), because there can be a time when people eat a lot but they are not satisfied. Similarly, [people sometimes] **drink** a lot, but there is no fullness; but not that one would violate norms to become inebriated.¹⁹

Know that the word **warm** is difficult, for it is written “My heart was hot” (Ps. 39:4), which is the true [meaning, but] “it is warm (וְחָם) for them” (Ecc. 4:11) must mean that the air²⁰ is warm,²¹ and similarly, **but no one gets warm (לְחָוֵם)**.²² And **חָוֵם (warm)** is in the pattern of קוֹר²³ for geminate verbs.

same manner. Their interpretation is based on the subsequent verse, which details people’s economic woes before Haggai reissues his call to examine “your ways” in v. 8 (cf. Yefet).

¹⁸ **You eat** – Ibn Ezra is providing a tense and subject, because the Hebrew word אָכּוּל is an infinitive.

¹⁹ **Without getting your fill... drink a lot, but there is no fullness; but not that one would violate norms to become inebriated** – Haggai uses the Hebrew root שָׁכַר, which normally refers to inebriation. Ibn Ezra explains that in this context, Haggai is using this root for drinking to the point of fullness, rather than to the point of inebriation. Ibn Ezra proves this by drawing a parallel between drinking “without getting your fill” and the beginning of the verse, which states that they will eat “without being satisfied.” Radak appears to paraphrase Ibn Ezra’s interpretation.

²⁰ **Air** – Simon (“Marginal Notes”) suggests that perhaps the Hebrew word אוויר would be better translated here as “atmosphere.”

²¹ **“It is warm for them” must mean that the air is warm** – Ecc. 4:11 is normally translated as “they have heat” (KJV) or “they have warmth” (JPS 1917), but the Hebrew וְחָם לָהֶם could be read as transitive: “It warms them.” Ibn Ezra rejects the latter possibility by asserting that the verb must be intransitive: “[The air] is warm for them.”

²² **And similarly, but no one gets warm** – According to Ibn Ezra, the phrase, “You clothe yourselves but no one gets warm,” should not be interpreted with “warm” as a transitive verb, that the clothing does not warm anyone.

²³ **קוֹר** – The reading of קוֹר follows most manuscripts and the HaKeter edition, but the base manuscript and the other witnesses in its family read סוּר (turn). I believe קוֹר to be the superior reading, since Ibn Ezra is seeking a noun that resembles the noun pattern of the word חָוֵם. The reading of קוֹר better parallels חָוֵם, since they are nouns with identical vowel patterns, both come from geminate roots (קָרַר and חָמַם, respectively), and both are abstract nouns of temperature (warmth and cold). The word סוּר is more common than קוֹר, so one can easily understand how copyists deliberately or subconsciously wrote it in place of קוֹר.

And this is his interpretation from his mouth²⁴ – נָחַם (“gets warm”) is from the root חָמַם,²⁵ and the *pataḥ* proves that, because all geminate verbs receive a *pataḥ* when the doubled letter is missing, like, “that since the money has been finished” (תָּמַם; Gen. 47:18), which is from תָּמַם. We cannot say that [“warm”] is²⁶ like, “Then [the Lord your God] will return (וְשָׁב) your captivity” (Deut. 30:3); for וְשָׁב has a *qamatz*, while חָם has a *pataḥ*.²⁷

צִרְרוֹר (**Purse**) is like “the bag (צִרְרוֹר) of money” (Prov. 7:20),²⁸ and if it **has holes**, then one cannot find anything in it.²⁹

(7) Thus... consider [your ways] after you do what I am commanding you:³⁰ (8) “Go up!”³¹

²⁴ **And this is his interpretation from his mouth** – This sentence implies that the subsequent explanation is a gloss (Kaputa 155; Filvarg 12b; Melammed, מפרשי המקרא 536). Friedlander (*Essays* 166-167) argues that this gloss misinterprets Ibn Ezra’s comments by confusing geminate and hollow roots and therefore misunderstanding the basis for comparing חָמַם and שׁוּב (cf. note 26 below).

²⁵ **חָמַם is from the root חָמַם** – See Ḥayyuj (שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק) Wated and Sivan 336) and Ibn Janah (הרקמה 261), who cite our verse in their discussions of geminate forms.

²⁶ **We cannot say that [“warm”] is** – Several witnesses insert a line here that reads: “like ‘return’ (שָׁב), which sometimes is an intransitive verb – that something itself returns – but sometimes is transitive.” I have omitted this line because it is missing in the base manuscript and the other witnesses in its family, and the line’s precise wording varies greatly between those witnesses that do contain it. One could make a case for this phrase being part of the original commentary (or at least the original gloss that began with the words, “And this is his interpretation from his mouth”), because it begins with the word “like” (כְּמוֹ), which is also the next word in the commentary. So this line could have been omitted from some witnesses as a homeoteleuton. However, it seems that this line is a later gloss, because it alters the meaning of the previous sentence, which asserts that one cannot compare the verbs חָם and שָׁב (see below, note 27). Without this added phrase, the basis for comparing these verbs was their vowel patterns. Perhaps a student or a later scribe thought that the comparison between חָם and שָׁב was part of the previous paragraph, in which Ibn Ezra asserted that חָם cannot be transitive. This student/scribe therefore elaborated, explaining that “we cannot say that [חָם] is like שָׁב,” because שָׁב “sometimes is an intransitive verb... but sometimes is transitive.” Indeed, Ibn Ezra does cite Deut. 30:3 elsewhere to prove that שָׁב can be transitive (Zech. 3:9, Ex. 1:7), so the student/scribe might have assumed that this proof-text serves the same purpose here. However, this additional gloss renders the end of our passage incomprehensible, since the difference in vowels between שָׁב and חָם does not explain why only one of them can be transitive.

²⁷ **For וְשָׁב has a qamatz, while חָם has a pataḥ** – This comment appears to explain why חָם cannot be derived from a hollow root (חָוַם), even though the seemingly similar verb שָׁב is derived from the hollow root חָוַם. Hollow roots require a *qamatz* as the vowel in their third-person singular perfect verb, whereas the vowel in חָם is a *pataḥ* (Filvarg 12b).

²⁸ **Like “the bag (צִרְרוֹר) of money”** – Tanḥum cites the same proof-text for the meaning of צִרְרוֹר.

²⁹ **Then one cannot find anything in it** – Due to the lack of vocalization in the Hebrew phrase לֹא יִמָּצָא בּוֹ מְאוֹמָה, this phrase could also mean, “Nothing can be found (יִמָּצָא) in it.” Either way, Ibn Ezra is explaining how a purse with holes symbolizes the people’s economic woes (cf. the oral commentary to Zech. 8:10).

(9) You have been looking for (פְּנִיתֶם) – Until now, you looked (פְּנִיתֶם) for **much**,³² and **when you brought** it into your homes, **I would blow on it** – on that **little**, so it has no prosperity.

And now, know **because of what?** Meaning, why was it like this? Because of **My House which lies in ruins, while you all hurry** – each one of you goes³³ – while nobody pays attention to the destruction of My house to rebuild it.

(10) That is why – The sense of **עֲלֵיכֶם (above you)** is because of **the skies**,³⁴ in the same manner as “the skies above your head shall be [copper and the earth under you iron]” (Deut.

³⁰ **Thus... consider... after you do what I am commanding you** – Schrem (41a) suggests that Ibn Ezra is responding to Haggai’s verbatim repetition of the phrase, “Consider your ways,” in v. 5 and v. 7. Ibn Ezra is explaining that Haggai first instructed the people to consider their situation until now, and he is now instructing them to consider their future behavior. Dr. Sid Z. Leiman (personal communication) suggests an alternative way to interpret this phrase. Leiman observes that Ibn Ezra might also be bothered by the sequence of the verses. Verse 8 seems to be out of place, because vv. 9-11 continue the theme of past reflections from vv. 5-6 regarding everything that the people must take to heart. Based on that context, v. 7 also seemingly instructs people to take their past travails to heart, yet v. 8 commands the people to act in the future by rebuilding the Temple. Hence, Ibn Ezra emphasizes that “*after* you do what I am commanding you” – namely, to take to heart the reality described in v. 6 and vv. 9-11 – *then* “go up” to gather timber and rebuild the Temple (=v. 8).

³¹ **Go up** – According to my translation, the opening words from v. 8 (“Go up”) should be read as the conclusion of Ibn Ezra’s comment to v. 7. After the prophet instructed them to “consider your ways” (which could also be translated as taking “your ways to heart”), he now instructs them to implement the concrete actions in v. 8 – “Go up to the hills and get timber, and rebuild the House.”

However, due to the lack of punctuation in manuscripts, this closing phrase could also be read as the beginning of the next lemma – “Go up... You have been looking for...” Indeed, two manuscripts are missing the word פְּנִיתֶם (“You have been looking for”), which would indicate that their scribes believed “go up” to be the lemma for the next comment (with the additional text implied by the lemma, since the actual comment addresses פְּנִיתֶם). If “go up” begins the next lemma, then Ibn Ezra would not be stating what Haggai commanded them to do.

³² **You have been looking for... you looked for much** – The verse’s Hebrew word פְּנִיתֶם is an infinitive and thus lacks tense, so Ibn Ezra replaces it with a masculine-plural perfect verb (פְּנִיתֶם). The oral commentary appears to interpret v. 9 as describing the future, rather than Ibn Ezra’s claim here that it describes the past (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

³³ **Goes** – Ibn Ezra intends this word in the sense of going to one’s own home (as v. 9 describes).

³⁴ **The sense of עֲלֵיכֶם is because of the skies** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the ambiguity of the Hebrew word עֲלֵיכֶם, which literally means “above you” but could also be interpreted as “because of you.” Jonathan and Rashi render it: “Because of your [sins],” but Ibn Ezra argues that it means literally “above you,” as is evidenced by the fact that it is followed by a description of “the skies” behavior. Ibn Ezra thus renders the verse, “The skies *above you* (עֲלֵיכֶם) have withheld moisture,” rather than, “*Because of you* (עֲלֵיכֶם), the skies have withheld moisture.”

28:23);³⁵ or **above you** alone, not above [other] inhabitants of the land, did they **withhold moisture**.³⁶

(11) And I called for הָרֵב (a drought)³⁷ is [an example of] elegant style: [הָרֵב is] in the same manner as “because of My House which lies in ruins” (הָרֵב; 1:9).³⁸

And the meaning of **וַאֲקִרָא (I called)** is “I decreed” (וַאֲגִזֹּר)³⁹ **upon the land** until it will be like copper,⁴⁰ and **upon the hills** [i.e.,] the bounty of the hills, like “with the best from the

³⁵ In the same manner as “the skies above your head shall be [copper and the earth under you iron]” – In context, this proof-text’s metaphor is a warning that if the Israelites sin, their punishment will be that rain and dew will cease. Ibn Ezra equates that warning with Haggai’s comment that in his time: As a punishment for Haggai’s generation, the skies are indeed withholding rain and the earth is withholding its produce. Regarding the metaphoric use of the skies and earth in these two verses, cf. Saadiah to Isa. 1:2 (Ratzhabi, ישעייה תפסיר 255).

³⁶ **Or above you alone... did they withhold moisture** – According to this second interpretation, the word עָלֶיְכֶם is emphasizing its pronominal suffix – the heavens withheld moisture “above you” but not above anyone else. Abarbanel adopts this latter interpretation, as does Radak (except that Radak blends it with a citation of Lev. 26:19, which resembles Ibn Ezra’s citation of Deut. 28:23 in his first interpretation).

³⁷ **A drought (הָרֵב)** – The word הָרֵב can be translated as “drought” or as “destruction.” I have translated הָרֵב as “drought” in this verse despite the fact that the word הָרֵב appears to mean “destruction” in Zeph. 2:14, where Ibn Ezra *ad loc.* implies that הָרֵב has the same meaning in both Zephaniah and Haggai. I have nevertheless translated הָרֵב as “a drought” based on the context of v. 10 (“the skies... have withheld moisture”) and Ibn Ezra’s subsequent remarks to this verse, which employ biblical drought imagery (see note 40). In order to support Ibn Ezra’s claim in Zeph. 2:14 that הָרֵב means the same thing in both verses, one might suggest that Ibn Ezra interprets הָרֵב, as “drought” in Zephaniah, too (cf. Schrem 40a). However, the oral commentary to Zephaniah indicates that Ibn Ezra understood Zeph. 2:14 as depicting “destruction” rather than drought. Alternatively, Ibn Ezra’s comments to Zeph. 2:14, which compare it to our verse, might intend that both verses describe desolation that resulted from divine wrath, albeit with different lexical meanings for the word הָרֵב in each case (“destruction” in Zephaniah and “drought” in Haggai). Otherwise, one would have to conclude that Ibn Ezra changed his mind between writing his comments to verses that are only two chapters apart from each other.

Ibn Ezra’s predecessors were aware of both possible meanings of the word הָרֵב. Jonathan uses the root יבש or the root שרב when הָרֵב refers to dryness, depending on whether it refers to the abstract concept of dryness (Jud. 6:37-40) or a weather condition (Isa. 4:6, 25:4-5; Jer. 36:30, 50:38). By contrast, Jonathan uses the root הרב when הָרֵב refers to destruction (Isa. 61:4, Jer. 49:13, Ezek. 29:10, Zeph. 2:14). Ibn Balaam (Abramson, שלשה ספרים 43) and Ibn Saruk (מהברת מנחם, Philipowski 93-94, Sáenz-Badillos *187) provide examples of verses with each meaning of הָרֵב, but neither of them discusses our verse. In our verse, Jonathan translates הָרֵב as הורבא (destruction; but cf. the variant יבשא that Sperber cites from one witness). Most medieval exegetes before and after Ibn Ezra assume that הָרֵב refers to dryness and drought (al-Qumisi, Yefet, Radak, Tanḥum, and Abarbanel; but cf. Student of Trani).

³⁸ **Elegant style: [הָרֵב is] in the same manner as... הָרֵב** – Ibn Ezra is observing the wordplay in the Bible’s use of הָרֵב in v. 9 and הָרֵב here, despite the fact that the two words differ in meaning (cf. Schrem 41a). Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Gen. 3:1 notes several examples of this “style of elegance” (Gen. 2:25-3:1, Jud. 10:4 and 15:16) and labels them all as the “elegance” (צחות) of language. In some of those cases, there is no apparent deeper meaning behind the wordplay – beyond literary elegance – although Abarbanel implies that the wordplay in our verse (which he, too, labels “elegant style”) might serve to attribute the drought to the people’s abandonment of the ruined temple (cf. Yefet).

ancient mountains, and the bounty of hills immemorial” (Deut. 33:15).⁴¹ **And upon all the labor of the hands**– those who irrigate with well water will not succeed and will labor in vain;⁴² they will do so to no avail.⁴³

(12) Gave heed to the summons [of the Lord] that they were obligated to build the Temple even if [Haggai] did not prophesy thus; **and to the words of [the prophet Haggai]** – And furthermore, to the words of [the prophet Haggai].⁴⁴

(13) The Lord’s מַלְאָךְ (messenger)... spoke [means] the Lord’s agent (שליח)⁴⁵ fulfilling the Lord’s mission (במלאכות) [means] in the Lord’s agency (בשליחות).⁴⁶ The word מַלְאָךְ has a four-letter root,⁴⁷ or the מ is a prefix,⁴⁸ or [מַלְאָךְ] is derived from מלאכה (work).⁴⁹

³⁹ **And the meaning of וַיִּקְרָא is “I decreed”** – Joseph Kara and Radak share this interpretation of וַיִּקְרָא in this verse. For another potential case of the root קרא having the same meaning, see Joel 3:5, where Ibn Ezra and Joseph Kara interpret the participle קרא as “decrees,” while others interpret it as “appoints” or “prepares” (Jonathan, Rashi; cf. Radak).

⁴⁰ **Like copper** – This image is borrowed from Lev. 26:19 and alludes to a lack of rain (Ibn Ezra, Deut. 4:26).

⁴¹ **With the best from the ancient mountains, and the bounty of hills immemorial** – Radak cites the same verse to prove that mountains are capable of growing healthy produce under normal circumstances.

⁴² **Will labor in vain** – This phrase is derived from Isa. 65:23.

⁴³ **Those who irrigate with well water... will do so to no avail** – Due to the lack of punctuation in Hebrew manuscripts, this sentence could also be translated as, “They will not succeed and will labor in vain; those who irrigate with well water will do so to no avail.” (The HaKeter edition’s punctuation implies this latter translation). I prefer my translation, because Ibn Ezra’s sole purpose in adding this comment is to explain how a severe drought, which clearly harms the other items that are mentioned in the verse, can also impact “labor of the hands.” Ibn Ezra is interpreting that phrase as referring to those who draw water from wells, because they might think that the lack of rain would not hurt their fields as severely. The verse is thus asserting that even those who irrigate their fields from well water (rather than rainwater) “will do so to no avail.” Moreover, Radak cites Ibn Ezra’s comment and adds the word “for” (כי), which would support my translation: “Those who irrigate with well water will not succeed and will labor in vain, *for* (כי) they will do so to no avail” (cf. Schrem 41a). One wonders whether Radak deliberately added the word כי in order to clarify Ibn Ezra’s comment, or if perhaps his text of Ibn Ezra contained the word כי (which does not appear in any extant witnesses.)

Radak agrees with Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of “the labor of the hands” and explains that irrigation will fail because the dry atmosphere will dry out whatever people attempt to water. By contrast, Joseph Kara claims that “the labor of the hands” refers to commerce.

⁴⁴ **To the summons [of the Lord] that they were obligated to build the Temple... and furthermore, to the words of [the prophet Haggai]** – Ibn Ezra is distinguishing between the two things to which the people gave heed. According to Ibn Ezra, “the summons of the Lord” is not synonymous with “the words of the prophet Haggai,” because “the summons of the Lord” refers to a divine imperative that existed irrespective of the prophet’s words. This interpretation fits Ibn Ezra’s belief (discussed in my introduction) that prose narratives do not repeat phrases that are roughly synonymous with one another.

(14) **ויָעָר (roused)** – It should have said וַיָּעָר,⁵⁰ like וַיִּקָּם (“He set up”; Exod. 40:18) and וַיָּשָׁב (“He brought back”; Gen. 14:16), but the vowel became a *pataḥ* due to the *ע*.⁵¹

פָּחַת (the governor) is like, “Just offer it to your governor” (לְפָחַתְךָ; Mal. 1:8),⁵² and similarly, “to be governor” (פָּחַת; Neh. 5:14);⁵³ but in Persian, the governor is called הַתְּרִשְׁתָּא.⁵⁴

(15) **On the twenty-[fourth] day** is connected to “they came and set to work” (v. 14)⁵⁵ even though there is a break between them.⁵⁶

⁴⁵ **Agent (שליח)** – Ibn Ezra offers the Hebrew synonym שליח to explain the verse’s word מְלַאֵךְ. Both words could be translated into English as “messenger.” Ibn Ezra might deem it necessary to add a Hebrew synonym, because the Hebrew word מְלַאֵךְ frequently refers to an angel. So Ibn Ezra is stressing that this verse’s מְלַאֵךְ is a human messenger of God. Ibn Ezra similarly uses the Hebrew synonym שליח to explain the word מְלַאֵךְ in Mal. 2:7. Most exegetes do not deem it necessary to comment on the word מְלַאֵךְ (cf. al-Qumisi), while Radak and Tanḥum follow Ibn Ezra and offer שליח as a synonym for מְלַאֵךְ.

⁴⁶ **In the Lord’s agency (בשליחות)** – Ibn Ezra is offering the more common Hebrew word שליחות (“agency”) as a synonym for the verse’s word, מְלַאֵכּוֹת, which is a *hapax legomenon*. Jonathan uses the word שליחות in his Aramaic translation, and this interpretation of מְלַאֵכּוֹת is shared by Ibn Saruk (מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 117, Sáenz-Badillos 241*) and a broad range of exegetes (Yefet, Ibn Balaam, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beugency, Radak, Tanḥum).

⁴⁷ **A four-letter root** – Regarding four-letter roots in Ibn Ezra’s grammatical system, see Charlap (76-80).

⁴⁸ **The מ is a prefix** – Literally, “the מ is extraneous.” According to this view – which is the view of Ibn Janah (השרשים 237) – the root of מְלַאֵךְ is לֵאכּ. Radak (השרשים 349-350) writes that he is listing the word מְלַאֵךְ under לֵאכּ in accordance with Ibn Janah’s view, but Radak adds that other grammarians maintain that מְלַאֵךְ derives from a quadrilateral root.

⁴⁹ **Or [מְלַאֵךְ] is derived from מלאכה** – Some manuscripts read “and” instead of “or.” Such a reading could imply that the common derivation of the words מְלַאֵךְ and מלאכה is somehow connected to the claim that מְלַאֵךְ derives from the three-letter root לֵאכּ. However, the reading “and” could still intend to begin a separate statement that מְלַאֵךְ and מלאכה share a common root, regardless of whether the root is מלאך or לֵאכּ. The base manuscript’s reading of “or” undoubtedly indicates that the connection between מְלַאֵךְ and מלאכה does not depend on them both having a three-letter root לֵאכּ. Indeed, elsewhere (Ps. 73:28), Ibn Ezra links the words מְלַאֵךְ and מלאכה while also asserting that they have a four-letter root. The oral commentary to Gen. 32:4 also links מְלַאֵךְ and מלאכה to one another and to the Arabic root لَعَكَ implying that the מ is not merely a prefix. Ibn Janah believes that both words derive from the three-letter root לֵאכּ (see note 48).

⁵⁰ **ויָעָר** – The word וַיָּעָר appears with the *ע* vocalized in MS Roma-Anglica 80 (ויָעָר).

⁵¹ **It should have said וַיָּעָר ... but the vowel became a pataḥ due to the ע** – The normal vowel pattern for hollow roots in *hif’il* has a *segol* as the final vowel in the *vav*-consecutive form (Kaputa 155, Filvarg 13a). Ibn Ezra cites two words that illustrate this pattern, and then explains that the guttural letter *ע* is responsible for the final vowel becoming a *pataḥ* in וַיָּעָר. Ibn Janah (הרקמה 206) cites our verse as an example of this shift to a *pataḥ*, which occurs in hollow roots that begin with ה or ע, as well as hollow roots that end in ה, ע, or ר (both of which apply to וַיָּעָר).

⁵² **פָּחַת – like, “Just offer it to your governor”** – Ibn Ezra proves from Mal. 1:8 that the word פָּחַת refers to the governor. Tanḥum cites the same proof-text in his commentary to 1:1, where the word פָּחַת first appears.

⁵³ **And similarly, “to be governor”** – The Hebrew word פָּחַת is a variant of our verse’s פָּחַת; indeed, the continuation of Neh. 5:14 does use the word פָּחַת (פָּחַת), which is the absolute form of פָּחַת (cf. Ibn Janah, הרקמה 237 and 280; Joseph Kimḥi, הגלוי 138).

⁵⁴ **הַתְּרִשְׁתָּא** – This title is used in several places in Ezra-Nehemiah (e.g. Ezra 2:63). Ibn Ezra explains the existence of two words for governor by arguing that one is Hebrew while the other is Persian.

Chapter 2

(1) **In the seventh** means “in the seventh month.”

(2) **Speak [to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak]** – [We] always bestow honor upon royalty above priesthood and prophecy,⁵⁷ like Joshua appearing before Caleb. However, in the Lord’s own words, it is the opposite – Caleb before Joshua.⁵⁸ Although Joshua was older than Caleb,⁵⁹ the Lord put

⁵⁵ **On the twenty-[fourth] day is connected to “they came and set to work”** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the difficulty presented by the juxtaposition of dates in two adjacent verses: “the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month” in 1:15 and “the twenty-first day of the seventh [month]” in 2:1. According to Ibn Ezra, the first date relates to the previous verse, in which people came to rebuild the Temple, while the latter date is the date of the prophecy that opens Chapter 2. Several other exegetes also explain the first date as referring to the labor described in the previous verse (Rashi, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Tanḥum, Abarbanel). Al-Qumisi, however, claims that God appeared to Haggai twice, such that both dates refer to prophecies that Haggai received.

⁵⁶ **Even though there is a break between them** – Verse 15 begins a new Masoretic paragraph, which runs into the next chapter. Hence, Ibn Ezra is acknowledging the weakness in his claim that v. 15’s date refers to the construction in v. 14, since v. 15 actually opens a new Masoretic paragraph that continues into Chapter 2. The paragraph break should have come *after* v. 15 according to Ibn Ezra’s interpretation. Radak, Tanḥum, and Abarbanel acknowledge the same weakness in this interpretation, yet they, too, adopt it nonetheless.

⁵⁷ **[We] always bestow honor upon royalty above priesthood and prophecy** – Ibn Ezra is noting that Zerubbabel’s name appears before Joshua’s, and he is attributing this to a general tendency of the Bible to always put the king or quasi-king’s name first. This assertion reflects the significance that Ibn Ezra consistently attributes to the order of names in biblical verses (as discussed in detail in my analytic introduction).

⁵⁸ **However, in the Lord’s own words... Caleb before Joshua** – Joshua and Caleb appear together in several verses as the two spies who did not slander the land of Canaan. Those verses that mention Joshua’s name first support Ibn Ezra’s claim that Joshua – who became a quasi-king – should be mentioned first (Num. 14:16,38). However, some verses mention Caleb first (Num. 14:30, 32:12), so Ibn Ezra’s commentary to all of the aforementioned verses distinguishes between the biblical narrator – who puts Joshua first – and God’s own first-person words, in which God rewards Caleb’s behavior in Num. 13:30 by mentioning him first (cf. Num. 26:65, where Ibn Ezra adds that the narrator puts Caleb first, because the narrative is describing the fulfillment of God’s words). In a later addition to his own commentary, Ramban (Num. 14:24) appears to accept Ibn Ezra’s distinction between when Joshua appears first and when Caleb appears first (Simon, “Marginal Notes”).

⁵⁹ **Although Joshua was older than Caleb** – The Bible never explicitly states whether Joshua or Caleb was older, but Ibn Ezra reaches this conclusion through a combination of biblical and rabbinic sources. According to the Bible, Caleb was 40 when Moses sent him as a spy (Jos. 14:7). It does not state Joshua’s age at that time, but Ibn Ezra calculates it based on the fact that Joshua died at age 110 (Jos. 24:29). Although the Bible does not specify for how many years Joshua led the nation (cf. Rashi and Joseph Kara, Jud. 11:26: “There is no Scripture from which to derive this”), the rabbinic chronological text *Seder Olam Rabbah* (Ch. 12, Milikowski I:256) believes that he led the nation for 28 years – seven of conquest, seven of dividing the land, and an additional fourteen years after the land was divided. Subtracting 28 from 110 would mean that Joshua was 82 when he succeeded Moses, so he was 43 when he joined Caleb as a spy 39 years earlier (cf. Pseudo-Rashi, I Chron. 22:5). However, when Ibn Ezra cites the rabbinic chronology, he omits the final fourteen years and assumes that Joshua only led the people for seven years of conquest and seven years of dividing the land, making Joshua 57 or 58 when Caleb was 40 (Exod. 33:11). Ibn Ezra’s chronology is shared by Maimonides (*Guide* 2:32) and is cited without disagreement by Ramban (Exod. 33:11). They might have omitted the second 14 years because

[Caleb] first when He speaks about him, due to “Caleb hushed” (Num. 13:30), but not “Joshua hushed.”⁶⁰ It is written: “After Saul and after Samuel” (I Sam. 11:7), “David and Samuel... established them” (I Chron. 9:22).⁶¹ Similarly, **Zerubbabel** comes before **Joshua**, for he is from the descendants of Jehoiachin.⁶²

(3) Who is there [left] among you – you, the elders⁶³ – [who saw this House in its former splendor?]

(4) Yet now... and do connects to the next verse, namely, **(5) the word [that I covenanted with you]**, meaning, to observe and do the Torah’s words.⁶⁴

the Talmud’s discussion of the chronology of Joshua and Judges does not mention them (bZeb. 118b). For further discussion of *Seder Olam Rabbah*’s chronology of Joshua’s leadership, as well as an overview of other Jewish sources that either endorse or reject it, see Ratner’s and Milikowski’s supercommentaries to Sed. Ol. R. (Milikowski II:209-211).

The claim that Joshua was older than Caleb seems superfluous, since it implies that the narrator puts Joshua before Caleb due to Joshua’s age rather than his status as a quasi-king. Ibn Ezra might have been ambivalent about whether Joshua indeed had the status of a king for this purpose, since Ibn Ezra himself observes that the priest Elazar appears before Joshua when they are listed together (Num. 34:17).

⁶⁰ **“Caleb hushed” but not “Joshua hushed”** – In Num. 13:30, Caleb hushed the people and tried to convince them to pay no heed to the other spies’ report. The Bible does not mention Joshua making a similar effort, so Caleb earned the right to be named before Joshua in God’s own words.

⁶¹ **It is written: “After Saul and after Samuel,” “David and Samuel... established them”** – In both verses, the king’s name appears before Samuel, the prophet, supporting Ibn Ezra’s view that the king’s should be mentioned first.

⁶² **From the descendants of Jehoiachin** – See I Chron. 3:17-19 and Ibn Ezra to 1:1 above. Ibn Ezra points out Zerubbabel’s genealogy in order to stress that despite not being a king himself, Zerubbabel’s status as a governor of royal descent prompted Haggai to put his name before Joshua’s.

⁶³ **You, the elders** – Haggai is addressing those members of the community who were old enough to remember the First Temple, which was destroyed over sixty-five years earlier. Hence, Ibn Ezra notes that they are elderly by the time of this prophecy. Yefet, Joseph Kara, Radak, and Abarbanel make the same observation.

⁶⁴ **“And do” connects to the next verse, namely, “the word”... to observe and do the Torah’s words** – Ibn Ezra is addressing a syntactical difficulty: in Hebrew, v. 5 opens with the direct object marker ׀, but it is unclear what “the word” is the direct object of. Ibn Ezra suggests that it is the object of “do” in the previous verse, as part of a main clause that spans 2 verses and contains a parenthetical remark in the middle: “And do (for I am with you—says the Lord of Hosts) the word that I covenanted with you.” Radak and Tanḥum adopt Ibn Ezra’s understanding of the verse’s syntax (although Tanḥum debates whether “the word” refers to the Torah’s commandments in general or to the specific imperative to construct the Temple). However, other exegetes understand the verse’s syntax differently. Al-Qumisi renders v. 5: “[As for] the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, My spirit is still in your midst.” In his paraphrase of the verse, al-Qumisi omits the conjunctive ׀ in the Hebrew phrase “and My spirit” (׀וּרוּחִי), and he adds the word כִּי at the beginning of the verse, in order enable v. 5 to be one complete sentence on its own. Eliezer of Beaugency understands the syntax of vv. 4b-5 in yet a third way: “And do, for I am with you – says the Lord of Hosts – through (׀) the word that I covenanted with you.” Eliezer likely believes that the word ׀ serves as a

And My spirit – My prophecy.⁶⁵

(6) For... yet once I will perform a wonder (פליאה),⁶⁶ **it is small** in my eyes to perform it, or it will happen in a **small** amount of days.⁶⁷

And the meaning of **shake** is allegorical; or it literally means that thunder and earthquakes will be heard, and every man on **the dry land** or aboard **the sea's** boats will tremble, **(7)** and they will bring offerings to My house.⁶⁸

(8) [Gold is] Mine – It is mine everywhere, and I will perform a wonder by putting in everyone's heart to bring **gold** to My house.⁶⁹

preposition rather than the direct object marker in this sentence. Abarbanel appears to have accepted Ibn Ezra's claim that "the word" is a direct object of "do" from the previous verse, but he differs from Ibn Ezra by claiming that there is a second, implied direct object of "do" in the previous verse: "And do [the construction], for I am with you – says the Lord of Hosts – [and also do] the word that I covenanted with you, so My spirit will still be in your midst."

Regarding the phenomenon of sentences that continue through the Masoretic division of verses, see Saadiah's list of ten such verses, including our verse (Zucker, על תרגום רס"ג 250), and Ibn Ezra's criticism of several of Saadiah's examples (*Moznayim*, Jiménez Patón 13*-15*, Goodman 18-21; צהות, Lippmann 73b-74a, Valle Rodríguez 192-193, Goodman 233-234; ההגנה, Oshri 104).

⁶⁵ **My prophecy** – The interpretation of "My spirit" in this verse as prophecy originates with Jonathan and is shared by Jacob b. Reuben, Rashi, and Radak. Tanḥum cites this interpretation, but he also suggests that "My spirit" could refer to divine providence.

⁶⁶ **Yet once I will perform a wonder (פליאה)** – Ibn Ezra might have selected a feminine noun (פליאה), so that it would agree with the number "one" and pronoun "it," both of which are feminine in the verse (Schrem 41a). Tanḥum, too, employs the noun פליאה, while Radak employs the feminine noun טובה (act of grace), presumably for the same purpose.

⁶⁷ **It is small in my eyes to perform it, or it will happen in a small amount of days** – Radak adopts Ibn Ezra's first interpretation of "small"; Tanḥum also appears to favor the first interpretation, but he presents both possibilities.

⁶⁸ **Shake is allegorical; or it literally means... and they will bring offerings to My house** – Ibn Ezra debates whether God's promise to "shake the heavens and the earth" is a metaphor for upheaval or alludes to an actual earthquake. The Northern French exegetes adopt the former approach, interpreting the verse as alluding to the conquests of Alexander the Great (Joseph Kara) and/or other events involving the Greeks and Hasmoneans (see Rashi, Kara, and Eliezer of Beaugency). Maimonides (*Guide* 2:29) also interprets the verse as an allegory for the Persian Empire's destruction. Radak and Abarbanel note that *Josippon* records an earthquake in Herod's time (Flusser, ספר יוסיפון, vol. 1, 208-209), which could explain the view that Haggai is prophesying about a literal earthquake.

⁶⁹ **And I will perform a wonder, by putting in everyone's heart to bring gold to My house** – Ibn Ezra is alluding to the previous verse: "I will shake all the nations. And the precious things of all the nations shall come, and I will fill this House with glory, said the Lord of Hosts." Radak makes a similar comment regarding our verse.

(9) **Greater**⁷⁰ – Yefet said that the **First Temple** stood for 410 years, while the **Second Temple** stood for 420 years.⁷¹ And it was so in the days of Herod,⁷² as is written in the book

⁷⁰ **Greater** – In this paragraph, Ibn Ezra is grappling with the problem that the Second Temple was in fact less grand than the First Temple (see 2:3 and Ezra 3:12), yet Haggai is prophesying that it will be the “greater” temple.

⁷¹ **Yefet said... while the Second Temple stood for 420 years** – According to this suggestion, Haggai’s prophecy that the Second Temple would be “greater” than the First Temple was indeed fulfilled in the sense that the Second Temple stood for more years. However, Ibn Ezra’s attribution of this view to Yefet is surprising, since Yefet does not discuss this issue here, while this interpretation appears in both Talmuds (yMeg. 1:12 and, less explicitly, in bB.B. 3b). Reifmann (עיונים במשנת הראב"ע p. 89) cites this passage as an example of rabbinic teachings with which Ibn Ezra lacked familiarity. (Regarding the claim that Ibn Ezra was insufficiently versed in rabbinic literature, see Lockshin, “Tradition or Context,” and sources cited by Lehrer, ראב"ע בעיני גדולי (הדורות). In truth, this case is not the best illustration of Ibn Ezra’s alleged ignorance, since he clearly *was* familiar with the Talmud’s interpretation of this verse, but he simply cited it from a Karaite (Yefet) rather than from the Talmud. The most likely reason for such an inaccuracy would be that Ibn Ezra cited this view from memory and forgot its source (cf. Simon’s supercommentary, Hos. 4:3; Polliack and Schlossberg, פירוש יפת, 95-96).

The claim that the Second Temple stood for 420 years is cited by several exegetes (Joseph Kara to 1:8, Rashi, Radak) as one of the Talmud’s two explanations for how the Second Temple was “greater.” However, the calculation of 420 years depends on several midrashic assumptions regarding the chronology of the Persian Period. Ibn Ezra does not accept all of those assumptions, so First (188-190) calculates, based Ibn Ezra’s interpretations of various biblical passages from the Persian Period, that he believed that the Second Temple stood for 471 years.

⁷² **And it was so in the days of Herod** – This appears to be a second explanation of how Haggai’s prophecy that the Second Temple would be “greater” was indeed fulfilled (Schrem 41a). According to this view (adopted by Eliezer of Beaugency), the Second Temple initially was inferior (see Ezra 3:12), but Herod’s later renovations made it grander than the First Temple. Radak, cites both this interpretation and the previous one, and he equates them with the Talmud’s two explanations for how the Second Temple was “greater” (bB.B. 3b) – that the Second Temple stood for more years than the First Temple or that it was physically taller.

Ibn Ezra’s formulation, “And it was so,” is somewhat peculiar, as it implies that this sentence about Herod’s renovations corroborates the previous statement that the Second Temple stood for longer than the First Temple, when in truth it represents an alternative explanation. Filvarg (13a) suggests that the text is corrupt and should be emended to a sentence that would begin: “But some say...” followed by the new interpretation. Alternatively, perhaps this sentence was a later addition to the text, which should have been placed immediately after the lemma (“**Greater** – and it was so in the days of Herod”) but instead was erroneously inserted after Yefet’s view. If this sentence is indeed a gloss, it was added early enough to appear in all extant witnesses (as do other apparent glosses, such as the one in 1:6). If the sentence is not a gloss, then Ibn Ezra presumably intended: “And [also,] it was [indeed greater] in the days of Herod” as a complementary view to Yefet’s view: Not only did the Second Temple last longer (Yefet’s view), but eventually it also became a larger, grander structure. Radak presents the two interpretations in a complementary manner, perhaps reflecting his understanding of Ibn Ezra.

of Joseph b. Gorion.⁷³ But R. Moses [Ibn Chiquitilia] said that this was conditional: if they were righteous,⁷⁴ as Zechariah (6:15) said, “If only you will obey the Lord your God!”⁷⁵

(10) On the twenty-[fourth day of the ninth month] R. Jeshuah⁷⁶ said that **ninth** is from the start of Darius’ reign. But he spoke incorrectly, for it is written in Zechariah’s prophecy, “of the ninth month, Kislev” (Zech. 7:1), so the count is from Nisan.⁷⁷ Similarly, “the month of Ziv” (I Kings 6:1) is Iyyar, because “the second month” is not connected to “of Solomon’s reign”;⁷⁸ rather, “of Solomon’s reign” is connected to “in the fourth year.” Indeed, it is not the custom of Israel to count months [to a reign], but only years. So [the verse] is thus: “in

⁷³ **The book of Joseph b. Gorion** – Ibn Ezra is citing *Josippon* (Flusser, ספר יוסיפון, vol. 1, 226-235) to document Herod’s beautification of the Second Temple. Medieval exegetes regarded *Josippon* as the actual work of Josephus and referred to him as Joseph b. Gorion; see Flusser (הנוסח המקורי 10-27) regarding this phenomenon.

⁷⁴ **But R. Moses [Ibn Chiquitilia] said that this was conditional: if they were righteous** – Ibn Ezra cites a third explanation of Haggai’s promise of a “greater” temple (see note 70). Ibn Chiquitilia believes that, in fact, the Second Temple was *not* greater than the First Temple. However, Haggai prophesied that it would be greater, because it *would have been* greater had the nation behaved righteously. This interpretation is consistent with Ibn Chiquitilia’s general tendency to interpret prophecies as applying to their immediate historical context rather than the distant future (e.g. citations of him by Ibn Ezra to Obad. 1:17, Mic. 4:11, and Zech. 9:9). As I discuss in my analytic introduction, Simon has observed that Ibn Ezra himself sometimes adopts this method of exegesis, but he does not apply it in as sweeping a manner as Ibn Chiquitilia (supercommentary to Ibn Ezra, Joel 3:1; *Four Approaches*, 96-99 and 172-181, “Ibn Ezra between Medievalism and Modernism”). Among subsequent medieval exegetes, Tanḥum appears to be the only one to cite the conditional interpretation of our verse.

⁷⁵ **As Zechariah said, “If only you will obey the Lord your God!”** – Zechariah 6 concludes a messianic vision about the Second Temple with this stipulation, thus demonstrating that prophecies about the Second Temple which failed to materialize were in fact conditioned upon the nation’s obedience to God.

⁷⁶ **R. Jeshuah** – Ibn Ezra is referring to the eleventh-century Karaite Jeshuah ben Judah (see Nemoj, “Jeshua ben Judah.”).

⁷⁷ **R. Jeshuah said that ninth is from the start of Darius’ reign. But... the count is from Nisan** – While Jeshuah believes that Haggai is counting months from Darius’ reign, Ibn Ezra cites Zech. 7:1, where Kislev is named as the ninth month. Zechariah and Haggai both prophesied during Darius’ reign, so Ibn Ezra proves that when the Bible mentions the “ninth month” during Darius’ reign, it is counting from the traditional first month of Nisan, not from the month when Darius began his reign. Commenting on Zech. 1:7, Tanḥum similarly observes that that verse also proves that months are counted from Nisan and not from the king’s reign, because it lists Shebat – the eleventh month from Nisan – as “the eleventh month.”

⁷⁸ **“The month of Ziv” is Iyyar, because “the second month” is not connected to “of Solomon’s reign”** – Without punctuation, I Kings 6:1 reads: “In the fourth year in the month of Ziv that is the second month of Solomon’s reign over Israel.” One could thus conclude that Ziv “is the second month of Solomon’s reign,” rather than the second month from Nisan. Ibn Ezra rejects such a possibility and renders the verse: “In the fourth year (in the month of Ziv, which is the second month) of Solomon’s reign over Israel,” such that Ziv is the month later known as Iyyar (the month after Nisan), while the *years* are counted from the start of Solomon’s reign.

the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv — that is, the second month,⁷⁹ which is Iyyar.

(11) Thus... the priests – They are the teachers of the **Torah**.⁸⁰ And in the days of Haggai, they were offering sacrifices⁸¹ for nineteen years before the Temple was rebuilt;⁸² in the Book of Daniel, this is explained in [my] commentary.⁸³ At this time, Joshua, was among **the priests** – for he was the high priest, “and men seek rulings from his mouth” (cf. Mal 2:7) – so he would not err in his response.⁸⁴ And we have seen according to the plain sense⁸⁵ that

⁷⁹ **So [the verse] is thus... that is the second month** – Ibn Janaḥ already proposed Ibn Ezra's interpretation of the syntax of I Kings 6:1 (הַרְקֵמָה 364), which is shared by most exegetes to Kings (Rashi, Radak, Ralbag, Ibn Caspi, Isaiah of Trani; also Pseudo-Rashi, II Chron. 3:2). See Peretz, לדרכו הפרשנית, regarding Ibn Janaḥ's underlying exegetical methodology that led to this interpretation. Joseph Kara, however, claims that “the second month” indeed refers to the second month “of Solomon's reign” (cf. *Mekhilta* to Exod. 12:1, bR.H. 3a).

⁸⁰ **They are the teachers of the Torah** – So Haggai addresses his question about religious law to them.

⁸¹ **Sacrifices** – Literally, “burnt offerings,” but Ibn Ezra appear to be making a general statement about the offering of sacrifices rather than limiting his comments to one specific type of offering.

⁸² **They were offering sacrifices for nineteen years before the Temple was rebuilt** – Ezra 3:3-6 recounts: “They set up the altar on its site... From the first day of the seventh month they began to make burnt offerings to the Lord, though the foundation of the Temple of the Lord had not been laid.” Indeed, the Talmud (bZeb. 62a) claims that one critical function of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi was to affirm the permissibility of offering sacrifices even without a physical temple. Ibn Ezra stresses this historical detail here in order to explain why Haggai is asking legal questions that are only relevant at a time when sacrifices are being offered.

Regarding the precise number of years that they offered sacrifices before the Second Temple's completion, Ibn Ezra's calculation of nineteen corresponds to his long commentary to Dan. 9:1, where he claims that Cyrus reigned for three years, followed by Ahasuerus for fourteen years, followed by Darius. Hence, Darius' second year – when Haggai is prophesying and when they laid the foundations for the Second Temple – was nineteen years after Cyrus permitted exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem in his first year (Ezra 1:1, II Chron. 36:22). I discuss this chronology in detail in my analytic introduction.

⁸³ **In the Book of Daniel, this is explained in [my] commentary** – See both commentaries to Dan. 9:1.

⁸⁴ **So he would not err in his response** – Ibn Ezra posits the presence of Joshua, the high priest, in order to reject the possibility that the priests failed to answer Haggai's legal queries correctly.

⁸⁵ **According to the plain sense** – Ibn Ezra is stressing that his view – that the priests correctly answered Haggai's legal queries – is “the plain sense,” because some rabbinic interpretations of this story maintain that the priests answered one of the questions incorrectly (ySot. 5:2, bPes. 16b-17a).

More broadly, Ibn Ezra's commentary to v.11-14 rejects the Talmud's fundamental characterization of Haggai's conversation with the priests. Rashi, following the Talmud, writes that God instructed Haggai to ask technical legal questions in order to test the priests, “perhaps they forgot the laws of holiness, uncleanness, and cleanliness while in exile” (v.11), and Haggai's response in v. 14 warned that the people “also err regarding many [other] laws.” Ibn Ezra, however, does not view this passage as a true legal discussion. Instead, he believes that Haggai presented two legal queries as a parable through which he could teach a broader religious message. Therefore, as Ibn Ezra addresses different details of this dialogue, his ultimate purpose is not to reject any particular understanding of religious law, but rather to demonstrate that “the plain sense” of this conversation is not about legal minutiae. Tanḥum follows Ibn Ezra in both his fundamental approach to this dialogue (as a parable that enabled Haggai to rebuke the nation) and Ibn Ezra's interpretations of individual

Haggai did not tell the priests that they did not rule⁸⁶ correctly,⁸⁷ but rather he said, “That is how this people...” (v. 14).⁸⁸

(12) If... שִׁקְדָּה (holy) flesh is like its literal meaning, “holy”; and the opposite of **become holy (שִׁקְדָּה)** is “become unclean” (v. 13).⁸⁹ But if שִׁקְדָּה [means] “become unclean,” why would [the text’s wording] change, since that verse (v. 13) is after this verse.⁹⁰ It is written, “You shall not make yourselves unclean... you shall sanctify yourselves” (לֹא תִשְׁקְדָּה אֶתְכֶם);⁹¹ “For

phrases of the conversation. Ibn Ezra’s claim that this passage is a parable also appears to have influenced Ibn Caspi and Abarbanel.

⁸⁶ **They did not rule** – According to some manuscripts, this literally translates as, “You do not rule.”

⁸⁷ **Correctly** – Literally, “a ruling of truth.”

⁸⁸ **But rather he said, “That is how this people...”** – Ibn Ezra points to v. 14 as further evidence against the aforementioned opinions of some sages in the Talmud, who claimed that the priests incorrectly answered Haggai’s questions. When Haggai replies in v. 14, one might interpret his words, “Whatever they offer there is unclean,” as accusing the priests of defiling sacrifices through their misunderstanding of ritual law (cf. Rashi). However, Ibn Ezra understands v. 14 as Haggai rebuking the priests and the nation for many other sinful behaviors, but not for failing to correctly answer his legal queries. Accordingly, Ibn Ezra’s presentation of v. 14 as a proof-text is somewhat circular: If one accepts that v. 14 does not blame the priests for answering the legal questions incorrectly, then v. 14 can serve as proof that Haggai was never truly concerned with the legal minutiae that the Talmud reads into vv. 12-13. Although Radak fundamentally adopts the Talmud’s approach to this passage, it appears that this sentence of Ibn Ezra’s commentary influenced Radak to prefer the view in the Talmud according to which the priests answered all of the questions correctly, because Haggai rebukes them for failing to rebuild the Temple more efficiently but does not accuse them of issuing an incorrect legal ruling.

⁸⁹ **Like its literal meaning, “holy”; and the opposite... is “become unclean”** – Ibn Ezra is attacking yet another aspect of the Talmud’s aforementioned approach to this narrative. While the Talmud records multiple views regarding the precise legal intricacies of Haggai’s question, all of the Talmud’s sages agree that Haggai’s first question involved some case of contact with ritually *unclean* meat. They thus claim that the verb שִׁקְדָּה (which literally means “become holy”) – and perhaps also the adjective שִׁקְדָּה from the same root – are euphemisms for uncleanness. Many medieval exegetes adopt this euphemistic interpretation of at least the verb (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak; cf. Maimonides’ Mishnah commentary, introduction to mToh.). Jonathan also appears to adopt this euphemistic interpretation, although the precise text of his translation to this verse is unclear (cf. Rashi, Radak, and Sperber’s notes).

Ibn Ezra reiterates his view that our verse refers to “holy” meat in his long commentary to Exod. 30:29. His insistence that שִׁקְדָּה cannot connote uncleanness reflects his general opposition to the claim that the same root can have two opposite meanings (e.g. יסוד דקדוק, Aloni 88-89; cf. Simon, לדרכו הפרשנית 111-130, and supercommentary to Hos. 5:13). Therefore, after attempting to prove that שִׁקְדָּה cannot mean “become unclean” in this case, Ibn Ezra proceeds to cite other biblical verses in order to prove that the root שִׁקְדָּה can *never* connote uncleanness.

⁹⁰ **Since that verse is after this verse** – In v. 13, Haggai uses the root טָמֵא – the standard Hebrew root for becoming “unclean.” Accordingly, asks Ibn Ezra, if the Bible intends for the root שִׁקְדָּה to connote uncleanness in v. 12, then why does it use the standard root טָמֵא one verse later to convey an identical meaning?

⁹¹ **You shall not make yourselves unclean... you shall sanctify yourselves** – The HaKeter edition cites Lev. 11:44 (“You shall sanctify yourselves and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not make yourselves unclean”). However, that reference would mean that Ibn Ezra cited the verse out of order. More likely, he intended to cite the phrase “you shall not make yourselves unclean” from Lev. 11:43, so that his citation presents the words in the correct sequence (flowing from Lev. 11:43 into 11:44). Moreover, while both verses contain verbs from the

she was purified (מתקדשת) from her uncleanness” (II Sam. 11:4).⁹² As for the word “else [the crop—from the seed you have sown—and the yield of the vineyard] תקדש” (may not be used; Deut. 22:9) – [it denotes] literal “holiness” (קדש), because everything mixes together and turns holy if they do not remove the holiness in time, as Menahem b. Saruk the Spaniard thoroughly explained this (מהברת מנהם, Philipowski 105, Sáenz-Badillos 403).⁹³ As for the word קדשה (a female prostitute)⁹⁴ – she sets herself apart (מתקדשת) and prepares herself for all who desire [her],⁹⁵ so the word’s meaning is not “unclean.” Also, קדש (a male prostitute) is

root טמא, v. 43 has the root in its *hitpa’el* form, which would more closely parallel the *hitpa’el* form of the root קדש in v. 44.

⁹² **“You shall not make yourselves unclean... you shall sanctify yourselves”; “for she was purified from her uncleanness”** – Both of these verses use a word from the root קדש as the opposite of the root טמא, further proving that in situations such as the present passage, the root טמא means “unclean” and קדש is the opposite of טמא, not its synonym.

⁹³ **[קדש denotes] literal “holiness”... as Menahem b. Saruk thoroughly explained this** – After proving that the word קדש in our verse is not a euphemism, Ibn Ezra turns his attention to other verses where the root קדש has been interpreted as a euphemism. The first such verse is Deut. 22:9, which teaches that planting certain crops in a vineyard can cause them and the vineyard to become prohibited. The word תקדש is often understood as a euphemism for “be defiled” (KJV, NASV), thus proving that the root קדש can be a euphemism for the opposite of its true meaning (see Onkelos and Rashi, *ad loc.*; Maimonides’ Mishnah commentary, *ibid*). However, because Ibn Ezra believes that the root קדש never connotes defilement or impurity (see note 89), he needs an alternative interpretation of תקדש in that verse. Some of Ibn Ezra’s predecessors interpreted תקדש as “will become prohibited” (Saadiah *ad loc.*, one view in *Sifra ad loc.*), while others suggested a homiletic interpretation, “will need to be burned” (Pseudo-Jonathan *ad loc.*; cf. bKid. 56b). Ibn Ezra prefers the view of Ibn Saruk (and Ibn Janah, הרקמה 66 and השרשים 442-443) that the Bible forbids the planting of grains in a vineyard because the grains and the fruit become obligated in priestly tithes at different times. The Bible thus worries that by juxtaposing these items to one another, the landowner might harvest all of the produce at the same time. Harvesting everything together could then lead to tithes inadvertently mixing with foods that are not fit to be tithed at that time, thereby necessitating that the landowner treat the entire mixture with the tithe’s sanctity. Hence, the word תקדש in Deut. 22:9 indicates that produce can literally “become holy” if one plants other crops in a vineyard.

Ibn Ezra also endorses Ibn Saruk’s view in his commentary to Deut. (*ad loc.*) and in יסוד מורא (Cohen and Simon, 159-160). Although Ibn Janah appears to support Ibn Saruk’s interpretation, Profiat Duran claims that they disagree with one another (מעשה אפור 76-77), prompting Wilensky (הרקמה 66) to suggest that Duran had a different text of Ibn Saruk. Moreover, Sáenz-Badillos has questioned whether the entire relevant passage in מהברת מנהם was actually written by Ibn Saruk, or even by his students (עקרונות להדרת חיבורים 226-227). Regardless of the interpretation’s origins, it also drew harsh criticism from S. D. Luzzatto (אגרות שד"ל 543).

It is somewhat ironic that Ibn Ezra relies here on Ibn Saruk’s novel interpretation in order to avoid the possibility of קדש having meaning both “clean” and “unclean,” since he attacks Ibn Saruk elsewhere for espousing the fundamental view that roots can have two opposite meanings (יסוד דקדוק, Aloni 88-89).

⁹⁴ **As for the word קדשה** – Ibn Ezra now addresses the word קדשה, which refers to a female prostitute (e.g. Gen. 38:21), because it could potentially undermine his aforementioned argument that the root קדש never connotes uncleanness.

⁹⁵ **She... prepares herself for all who desire [her]** – According to Ibn Ezra, the fact that a female prostitute is called a קדשה is neither a euphemism (“holy woman” instead of “unholy woman”) nor a case in which a root has two opposite meanings (“holy” and “unholy”). Instead, Ibn Ezra posits that the true meaning of the root קדש is

like the Egyptian practice regarding virgins. Since the Egyptians' nature is weak – due to their Nile River, which increases their phlegm (לה) – they therefore do not have the vigor once they are close to forty, or older, to have intercourse with a virgin until a lad from their young men comes and lies with her a little,⁹⁶ to the point that “the entrance is open”;⁹⁷ [the lad] is called a קדש,⁹⁸ in the manner of prostitution, this being his profession.⁹⁹ And

to “set apart” or “prepare” something. While that verb normally refers to sanctifying an object by preparing or designating it for sacred use, the same verb could apply to a woman who actively prepares herself for immoral behavior. Commenting on Deut. 23:18, Ibn Ezra supports his interpretation of קדשה from Gen. 38:21 (describing Tamar). The context of that verse prompts many exegetes to claim that a קדשה is a woman who stations herself in a specific location for the express purpose of attracting men, rather than a woman who engages in promiscuous behavior when a man chances upon her (cf. Rashi, Rashbam, and *Bekhor Shor ad loc.*).

⁹⁶ **Since the Egyptians' nature is weak... they therefore do not have the vigor... to have intercourse with a virgin until a lad... comes and lies with her a little** – This passage is based on Greek climatology, according to which the world is divided into seven zones whose climates influenced their inhabitants' physical traits and personalities. A moist climate could impact the moisture (לה) of one's physical makeup (=phlegm) and thus affect one's traits (e.g. Ibn Ezra's frequent references to moisture in his scientific work *Book of Reasons*, listed by Sela 386). Ibn Ezra thus claims that the Egyptians' climate necessitated the use of a קדש before any man over forty could have relations with a virgin. Elsewhere, Ibn Ezra cites an unnamed Spanish sage who attributed the eating of bitter herbs with the paschal sacrifice to Egypt's excessive humidity (Exod. 12:8). Hippocrates discusses some traits of Egyptians which he attributes to their climates (*Airs, Waters, Places*, Ch. 18-20; Jones 119-131). Regarding the influence of this climatology on medieval Jewish thinkers, see Altmann (215-246), M. Schwartz (מורה נבוכים, 3:29 n. 13), and Melamed (ארץ-ישראל והתיאוריה האקלימית). Regarding the impact of medieval climatology on Ibn Ezra's understanding of the holy land, see Langermann (“Some Astrological Themes” in Twersky and Harris 42-49).

⁹⁷ **The entrance is open** – This phrase is a rabbinic euphemism for rupturing the hymen (e.g. bKet. 9a).

⁹⁸ **קדש is like the Egyptian practice regarding virgins... [the lad] is called a קדש** – Here, Ibn Ezra does not hesitate to elaborate regarding his interpretation of the prohibition against a קדש, providing specific details about the role of male prostitutes in ancient Egypt. However, in Deut. 23:18, the source of the prohibition against tolerating a קדש, Ibn Ezra appears to deliberately conceal his interpretation by simply stating that a קדש was “like the practices of Egypt, and one who understands will understand.” Ibn Ezra undoubtedly recognized that his interpretation of קדש as originating in a specific Egyptian context was deviating from earlier rabbinic interpretations and could be controversial. Earlier rabbis identified the קדש of Deut. 23:18 as a Gentile male slave (Onkelos), any participant in homosexual male relations (Mid. Tann. and Rashi, *ad loc.*), or specifically the passive partner in male homosexual relations (R. Ishmael, bSan. 54b and ySan. 7:7; cited by Ibn Ezra, *ad loc.*). In addition, a prevalent Geonic-Andalusian interpretation identified קדש and קדשה with the practice of *mut'a* (temporary marriage) in Muslim society (Ibn Balaam, *ad loc.*; Ibn Janah, 443; and the Karaite exegetes cited by Zucker, על תפסיר רס"ג, 477-478; cf. Saadiah's translation of the words קדש and קדשה in Gen. 38:21-22 and Deut. 23:18). Perhaps Ibn Ezra refrained from offering too detailed an explanation of קדש in Deut. 23:18, knowing that his interpretation's sexually graphic content and historical contextualization of religious law might generate unwanted controversy (cf. Tuv-Elem, צפנת פעה, Deut. 23:18, who alleges that a student inserted this radical interpretation of קדש into Ibn Ezra's Haggai commentary).

⁹⁹ **In the manner of prostitution, this being his profession** – Ibn Ezra stresses that the biblical קדש is not someone who merely engages in this behavior sporadically. Ibn Ezra is reiterating his position that the root קדש means to “set apart” or “prepare.” Hence, the word קדש is not a euphemism but rather an appropriate description of one who commits himself to sinful behaviors on a professional basis.

therefore, Scripture commanded, “[You shall not copy] the practices of the land of Egypt” (Lev. 18:3).¹⁰⁰

Now, the question was about **holy flesh**, where it is written, “Anything that touches its flesh shall become holy” (Lev. 6:20). If the vessel, that is, the **fold** where the flesh – that is the holiness – is, touches **bread** or one of the other mentioned items, **will the latter become holy?** Then **in reply, the priests said, “No,”** and they spoke correctly, since only the **fold** touched these, but the actual **holy flesh** did not touch them. It does not logically follow that they should become holy, because they did not touch **holy flesh**.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ **And therefore, Scripture commanded “[You shall not copy] the practices of the land of Egypt”** – Although Ibn Ezra attributes the prohibition of $\psi\eta\eta$ to an Egyptian custom, his commentary to Leviticus makes it evident that he does not believe that this practice was the *only* practice proscribed by the Bible’s ban on “the practices of the land of Egypt.” Commenting on Lev. 19:26, Ibn Ezra lists several other pagan practices that are forbidden as “the practices of the land of Egypt,” and his commentary to Lev. 18:3 further interprets the prohibition against emulating “the practices of the land of Egypt” as a broad statement that the Israelites must obey the laws of their covenant with God rather than behaviors or norms that they might have encountered in Egypt (cf. Ibn Ezra, Ps. 111:6).

¹⁰¹ **Now, the question was about holy flesh... If the vessel... touches bread or one of the other mentioned items, will the latter become holy... The priests said, “No”... because they did not touch holy flesh** – According to Ibn Ezra, Haggai asked the priests whether the meat of an animal sacrifice, such as meat from a sin offering (the context of Lev. 6:20, Ibn Ezra’s proof-text), could transfer its sanctified status to foods that do not touch it directly but do touch the receptacle which holds it. The priests correctly answered that this sanctity cannot be transferred without direct contact. Indeed, according to rabbinic law, “any food item that touches and absorbs” anything from the flesh of an animal sacrifice must be treated with the sanctity of that sacrifice (Rashi to Lev. 6:20; cf. bZeb. 97). However, Ibn Ezra’s interpretation differs from the aforementioned interpretations of Haggai’s conversation that appear in the Talmud (see note 85) – all of which relate to the ability to transmit *uncleanness* via indirect contact.

Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of this passage thus conforms to his fundamental approach toward legal passages in the Bible. He attributes many of the Talmud’s laws to oral tradition – rather than accepting their derivations from the Bible as valid biblical exegesis – yet he strives not to interpret biblical passages in a manner that contradicts the substance of Oral Law (see Lockshin, “Tradition or Context”; S. Japhet, בעיה ללא פתרון; Cohen and Simon, יסוד מורא 39-41; and Simon, “Abraham Ibn Ezra” 381). In our case, Ibn Ezra does not accept that Haggai and the priests were debating the particular laws that the Talmud reads into their discussion. Nevertheless, Ibn Ezra’s reading of this passage still maintains that Haggai’s legal assumptions do conform to the rabbinic laws of sanctity and uncleanness.

(13) Said – The meaning of **all of these** is “any of these,”¹⁰² like “[on a donkey] foaled by she-asses” (Zech. 9:9),¹⁰³ and there are many such [cases]; “And he was buried in the towns of Gilead” (Jud. 12:7).¹⁰⁴

(14) Answered – [Its] meaning is that Israelites¹⁰⁵ [who]¹⁰⁶ would bring a sin offering for their unintentional sins were willfully guilty of severe matters, which were grave, yet they were not careful regarding them. So they would bring a sacrifice for a matter that escaped them,¹⁰⁷ yet they were knowingly and willfully acting improperly.¹⁰⁸ [The same applies to]

¹⁰² **Any of these** – Ibn Ezra is rejecting the possibility that an unclean individual would have to literally touch “all” of the different foods mentioned in v. 11 in order to transmit his uncleanness. In יסוד מורה, Ibn Ezra includes our verse in a list of several verses in which “all of” actually means “one of” (Cohen and Simon, 117-118), and he cites it as a proof-text in Exod. 21:11 to prove that the phrase “these three ways” means “[any one of] these three ways.” Moses Kimḥi’s biblical commentaries, which were erroneously attributed to Ibn Ezra, twice cite our verse as a proof-text for the same purpose (Prov. 6:13, Ezra 2:61).

Eliezer of Beaugency, Ibn Caspi, Tanḥum, and Abarbanel interpret our verse in the same manner as Ibn Ezra (although they do not cite any proof-texts). While this interpretation might seem obvious, they are rejecting the Talmud’s aforementioned interpretation of this dialogue (cited approvingly by Joseph Kara), according to which Haggai asked the priests about whether uncleanness could be transmitted through several steps of contact, when an unclean individual touches “bread,” which then touches “stew,” which then touches “wine,” which then touches “oil” (cf. v. 12). Hence, the Talmud interprets the phrase “all of these” literally, as it believes that “all of these” foods were touched in the case that Haggai describes.

¹⁰³ **[On a donkey] foaled by she-asses** – According to Ibn Ezra, this phrase clearly means, “On a donkey foaled by a *she-ass*,” since the specific donkey has only one mother.

¹⁰⁴ **In the towns of Gilead** – Assuming that Jephthah was buried in one location, this verse must mean, “And he was buried in *one of* the towns of Gilead.” Ibn Ezra rejects a midrashic interpretation of the plural word “towns,” which claims that Jephthah’s remains were scattered throughout the towns of Gilead (Gen. R. to 24:13, cited by Radak and Joseph Kara to Judges, *ad loc.*, and adopted by Ralbag to Judges). Radak (Judges 12:7) also cites Zech. 9:9, the same proof-text that Ibn Ezra cites here, to prove that “towns” means “one of the towns,” and Joseph Seniri (I Sam. 1:1, Kogel 57*), too, cites Jud. 12:7 and Zech. 9:9 alongside each other as proof-texts.

Ibn Ezra cites Judges 12:7 as a proof-text in several other cases where he wishes to demonstrate that a plural noun actually means “one of” that noun (Gen. 9:29, Lev. 11:33, Num. 1:53, Jon. 1:5, Ps. 1:3, Esth. 2:23). The entire phrase, “And he was buried in the towns of Gilead,” is missing in MS Leningrad 34, but it appears in all other witnesses. This citation’s appearance in our verse *after* Ibn Ezra already wrote that “there are many such” cases might indicate that it is a gloss, added by a student who wished to add another example and knew that Judges 12:7 was one of Ibn Ezra’s favorite proof-texts for this point. Additional examples do not normally appear after the phrase, “There are many such,” in Ibn Ezra’s commentaries.

¹⁰⁵ **Israelites** – Literally, “Israel,” but the rest of the passage clarifies that Ibn Ezra is referring to “Israelites” from various tribes of Israel, as opposed to “priests” from the family of Aaron.

¹⁰⁶ **[Who]** – I put “who” in brackets due to its absence in the base manuscript, but it does appear (as the Hebrew prefix ה) in most manuscripts.

¹⁰⁷ **That escaped them** – Ibn Ezra likely intends the word “escaped” in its technical legal sense (cf. Lev. 4:23, 5:2-4; mShebu. 2:1-8), that a sinner only brings a sin offering for an unintentional sin in which he forgot some aspect of the prohibition at the time of his transgression (i.e., some aspect of the transgression “escaped” him).

the priests, too, regarding the matter of cleanness and uncleanness.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, Haggai said: **So is this people (הַעַם)** – they are the priests – **and so is this nation (הַגּוֹי)** – they are Israel.¹¹⁰ And the meaning of this is: **And so, too, the work of their hands, whatever they offer on the altar before Me** –which is **there¹¹¹** – **is unclean.** Hence, it has become clear that something holy lacks the ability to sanctify what was not holy via contact with an intermediary, [un]like the power of one who has become unclean from contact with a corpse,¹¹² [who can] render [others] unclean.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ **Yet they were knowingly and willfully acting improperly** – According to Ibn Ezra, Haggai is lamenting that people who are meticulous about bringing sin offerings for unintentional sins nevertheless commit many deliberate transgressions at the same time.

¹⁰⁹ **[The same applies to] the priests, too, regarding the matter of cleanness and uncleanness** – Without the added words in brackets, this phrase is quite cryptic. In the previous sentence, Ibn Ezra wrote that the people were meticulous about their sin-offerings for unintentional sins while also being guilty of deliberate transgressions. He now compares the priests' behavior regarding ritual cleanness to the people's aforementioned behavior, yet he does not specify which part of the people's behavior serves as the basis for his equation. Ibn Ezra could intend one of two things:

- a) The priests meticulously observed the laws of ritual cleanness, just as the rest of the nation meticulously brought sin offerings, but both groups deliberately neglected other important laws.
- b) The priests neglected the laws of ritual cleanness just as the rest of the nation deliberately neglected many laws.

The broader context of this dialogue appears to support the former possibility, since Ibn Ezra believes that the priests correctly answered several questions about the laws of cleanness – implying that they observed those laws properly. If Ibn Ezra nevertheless intended the latter possibility, then the text would read smoothly in Hebrew with a minor emendation that would make the phrase “they were knowingly and willfully acting improperly” into the beginning of this sentence: והם [ויכין] עושים שלא כהוגן בדעתם בזדון גם הכהנים, [ב]קבר הטהרה, “So, too, were the priests also knowingly and willfully acting improperly regarding the matter of cleanness and uncleanness.” (I am indebted to Prof. Richard Steiner for pointing out this possible emendation.)

¹¹⁰ **So is this people (הַעַם)** – **they are the priests** – **and so is this nation (הַגּוֹי)** – **they are Israel** – Ibn Ezra is seeking meaning for the seemingly needless repetition in the phrase “so is this people, and so is this nation” by claiming that “this people” and “this nation” are not synonymous: The former is an allusion to the priests rather than the entire nation. This interpretation fits with Ibn Ezra's fundamental approach to such phrases, which is to view them as stylistic repetition in poetic or rhetorical passages but to differentiate between seemingly synonymous phrases in prose narratives (as I discuss in the analytic introduction). Radak and Tanḥum both cite this interpretation anonymously but also cite the possibility that the phrase is mere stylistic repetition, with “the people” and “the nation” referring to the same individuals.

Al-Qumisi also views “the people” and “the nation” as two separate groups, but he offers a different distinction than Ibn Ezra, claiming that the phrases refer to two different factions of the nation. Yefet was likely the source for Ibn Ezra's interpretation. He draws the same distinction between priests and Israelites, but associates each of them with the opposite word from Ibn Ezra: According to Yefet, הַעַם refers to the entire nation, while הַגּוֹי alludes specifically to the priests.

¹¹¹ **Whatever they offer on the altar before Me** –which is **there** – Ibn Ezra is rearranging the word of the verse, so that “before Me” refers to sacrifices in the Temple.

¹¹² **One who has become unclean from contact with a corpse** – I have translated the Hebrew phrase טָמֵא נֶפֶשׁ according to its standard biblical usage (e.g. Lev. 22:4, Num. 5:1 and 9:6-10). Ibn Ezra does not discuss the

This was in the way of an allegory, like Nathan's parable to David, where he caught [David] in his words and said to him, "That man is you!" (II Sam. 12:7).¹¹⁴

Answered – It is also correct that the parable [teaches] that they were building houses for their own dwelling while the House of the Lord was in ruins.¹¹⁵ Therefore, **(15) And now consider [from this day and forward – before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the Lord...]** comes after it.

meaning of the phrase in our verse, but the standard meaning of "one who has become unclean from contact with a corpse" fits Ibn Ezra's interpretation of this verse, in which Haggai is highlighting the fact that a human who had contact with a corpse can defile food by touching it, because *indirect* contact with a corpse is sufficient to defile food. Abarbanel, who adopts Ibn Ezra's belief that this passage is a parable rather than a discussion of legal minutia, writes explicitly that Haggai's second question sought to prove that food can be defiled through indirect contact with a corpse (cf. Schrem). However, this standard meaning of *שֶׁנֶחְמָס* differs from the Talmud's interpretation of Haggai's questions. The Talmud treats *שֶׁנֶחְמָס* in our verse as referring to the corpse itself (see Rashi and Joseph Kara).

¹¹³ **Hence... something holy lacks the ability to sanctify... [un]like... one who has become unclean... [who can] render [others] unclean** – The priests correctly stated that holy flesh is unable to sanctify foods through indirect contact, yet one who is unclean from contact with a corpse can defile those foods through indirect contact. Therefore, Ibn Ezra concludes that the power to defile is stronger than the power to sanctify. Here, he does not explain how this difference fits Haggai's message (see Filvarg 13a), but the oral commentary presents Haggai's questions as a parable for God and the Jewish people, with the holy flesh symbolizing God and the unclean individual symbolizing the people: "For as long as the Holy One, Blessed Be He – Who is holy – was within your midst, you did not sanctify yourselves. So when you did evil before Him, He went away." Accordingly, Ibn Ezra appears to be suggesting that there were two messages behind Haggai's queries:

- a) Everyone is punctilious about bringing sacrifices and observing the laws of ritual cleanness, yet they are committing many other, worse sins.
- b) The legal principle that indirect contact can defile but cannot sanctify is an allegory for the people's relationship with God. Although God cannot sanctify the people by merely dwelling in their midst while they continue to sin, their continued sinful behavior can drive God away.

¹¹⁴ **Like Nathan's parable to David, where he caught [David] in his words and said to him, "That man is you"** – Haggai's and Nathan's parables share the feature of asking questions in order to elicit a particular response from the addressee and then using that response to rebuke the addressee. Nathan crafted his parable about the rich man and the sheep so that David would condemn the rich man, after which Nathan could tell him, "That man is you!" Similarly, Haggai elicited correct answers from the priests in order to rebuke them for mastering the laws of ritual cleanness while deliberately sinning in other ways. According to Ibn Ezra's second understanding of the allegory (see note 113), Haggai sought to elicit from them the distinction between defiling and sanctifying via indirect contact, so that he could then equate them with the unclean individual.

Regarding the significance of this comment to Ibn Ezra's general understanding of biblical parables, see Cohen (*Three Approaches* 84).

¹¹⁵ **Answered... they were building houses for their own dwelling while the House of the Lord was in ruins** – Ibn Ezra is now suggesting a narrower focus for Haggai's rebuke. Initially, he assumed Haggai was criticizing unspecified sins ("were willfully guilty of severe matters, which were grave"), but he now suggests that Haggai was specifically criticizing their failure to rebuild the Temple – a sin which Haggai already addressed (1:2-5). Ibn Ezra supports this suggestion by noting that v. 15 reiterates that the Temple's stones had not yet been laid.

And the meaning of **ומעלה (forward)** is the day that comes after this one,¹¹⁶ like “from the age of twenty years up” (ומעלה; Num. 1:3),¹¹⁷ while the word כי (“because”) is missing.¹¹⁸

Before a stone was laid upon a stone – **מִפְּנֵי (before)** serves for another, and so it is:

Before (16) the stones were the Temple’s foundation,¹¹⁹ everyone **would come to a heap** of grain, and people¹²⁰ would estimate¹²¹ that it has **twenty** measures, but in fact [it would have] half that, because the curse came upon it.

¹¹⁶ **And the meaning of ומעלה is the day that comes after this one** – Ibn Ezra stresses that the word ומעלה means “forward” lest the reader believe that Haggai is referring to the past (as Rashi apparently believes). This erroneous interpretation would come from reading the next phrase (“before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of the Lord”) as describing “this day ומעלה.” Eliezer of Beaugency and Abarbanel share Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of ומעלה.

¹¹⁷ **From the age of twenty years up** – In this verse, ומעלה clearly refers to numbers that are higher than twenty, not lower. Ibn Ezra claims that “from this day ומעלה” similarly refers to subsequent dates rather than previous dates. Elsewhere, he cites Num. 1:3 to attack Ibn Janah (השרשים 390) for implying that על could indeed refer to a lower number (Num. 7:72; צחות, Lippmann 41b, Valle Rodríguez 103).

¹¹⁸ **The word כי is missing** – Ibn Ezra is reconciling his claim that the beginning of v. 15 asks people to look to the future (“from this day forward”) with the next phrase’s focus on the past (“as long as no stone had been laid”). He reconciles them by inserting the word “because,” so that the continuation of vv. 15-16 urges the people to contemplate their future behavior, because until now, they have experienced much disappointment: “Take thought, from this day forward. [Because] as long as no stone had been laid on another in the House of the Lord – before [the stones] were [the Temple’s foundation] – one would come to a heap of twenty measures, but there would be only ten” (cf. note 119)

¹¹⁹ **מִפְּנֵי serves for another, and so it is: Before the stones were the Temple’s foundation** – Ibn Ezra claims that the word “before” in v. 15 applies to v. 16, too. His comment is prompted by the fact that v. 16 begins with the word מִהְיוֹתָם, which literally means, “Since they were,” but without a clear referent for “they.” By viewing v. 16 as a continuation of the previous verse, and by further claiming that the word “before” from v. 15 is implied at the start of v. 16, Ibn Ezra thus attempts to resolve the ambiguity by rendering the phrase “Since [before the stones] were.” However, even with that addition, the opening clause of v. 16 remains incomplete (“Since before the stones were _____”), so Ibn Ezra adds a further paraphrase of v. 15 in order to complete the temporal clause: “Since [before the stones] were [laid as the Temple’s foundation].”

¹²⁰ **People** – Literally, “those who estimate,” but it is redundant in English to write, “Those who estimate would estimate.”

¹²¹ **Estimate** – The Hebrew root that Ibn Ezra uses, חשב, can refer to both a precise calculation and a general perception. Ibn Ezra presumably intends the latter in this case, since he is describing a pile whose actual size was half of this calculation or estimate.

The word **לְקַשֵּׁף** – like “to take water (לְקַשֵּׁף) out of the cistern” (Isaiah 30:14) – is like **לְדַלּוֹת** (“to draw water”).¹²² So the curse was that they would find less than half of what they estimated would be in it.¹²³

(17) I struck – I already mentioned in Amos (4:9) that **שְׂדֵפוֹן** (**blight**) is against the stalks of grain,¹²⁴ like “scorched (שְׂדֵפוֹת) by the east wind” (Gen. 41:23),¹²⁵ while **יִרְקוֹן** (**mildew**) turns [the ears of grain] green.¹²⁶ The proof that this is correct is that [the verse] mentions **hail**.¹²⁷

The meaning of **and**¹²⁸ **all the works of your hands** is that the Lord’s curse included¹²⁹ everything, reversing: “The Lord your God will bless you in all your undertakings that you do.”¹³⁰

¹²² **לְקַשֵּׁף... is like לְדַלּוֹת** – Ibn Ezra is explaining the more difficult word by offering the synonym **לְדַלּוֹת**, whose literal meaning is “to draw water.” Elsewhere (Isa. 30:14), Ibn Ezra explains that the root **קִשַׁף** literally means “to reveal,” but it is used for drawing water “because the water is hidden” until one draws it. Rashi, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, and Abarbanel use the same proof-text from Isaiah to prove the meaning of **לְקַשֵּׁף**.

¹²³ **Less than half of what they estimated would be in it** – Ibn Ezra writes “less than half” based on the numbers in the verse: “When one came to the wine-vat to draw out *fifty* press-measures, there were but *twenty*.”

¹²⁴ **I already mentioned in Amos that שְׂדֵפוֹן is against the stalks of grain** – See Simon’s supercommentary to Amos, *ad loc.* Ibn Ezra is rejecting the notion that שְׂדֵפוֹן is a disease that plagues humans rather than grain. (Ibn Ezra raises both possible meanings of שְׂדֵפוֹן in Deut. 28:22.) Indeed, some medieval exegetes do believe that שְׂדֵפוֹן is a human disease (Joseph *Bekhor Shor* and Ralbag, Deut. *ad loc.*), while others clearly state that it affects crops (Joseph Kara, Amos *ad loc.*; Tanḥum, Ibn Caspi, and Abarbanel to our verse).

¹²⁵ **“Scorched (שְׂדֵפוֹת) by the east wind”** – Ibn Saruk (מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 171, Sáenz-Badillos 375*) also cites the word שְׂדֵפוֹת from Gen. 41:23 alongside our verse and claims that it shares the same meaning as שְׂדֵפוֹן in our verse.

¹²⁶ **Mildew turns... green** – See Muraoka & Shavitsky. Ibn Ezra is assuming that the Hebrew word **יִרְקוֹן** has the same root (יִרְק) as the color green (cf. Abarbanel).

¹²⁷ **The proof that this is correct is that [the verse] mentions hail** – Hail plagues crops (e.g. Exod. 9:25-32), so the fact that our verse juxtaposes these two other plagues to hail (“with blight and mildew and hail”) indicates that they, too, affect crops. Tanḥum views the connection between **יִרְקוֹן** and hail as even stronger, arguing that stalks that turn green from mildew are more susceptible to breaking when they are struck by hail.

¹²⁸ **And** – “And” (a Hebrew conjunctive **ו**) does not appear in standard editions of the Masoretic text of this verse, but it is in most textual witnesses of Ibn Ezra’s commentary. Kennicott does cite two Masoretic witnesses that had the word **וְאִתּוֹ** with the conjunctive **ו**, so it is possible that Ibn Ezra saw such a text or that he was simply imprecise in his citation of the verse.

¹²⁹ **Included** – Hebrew: **כְּלֻלָּה**; a minority of manuscripts read “cursed” (**קְלֻלָּה**).

¹³⁰ **The Lord your God will bless you in all your undertakings that you do** – This exact verse does not appear verbatim in the Bible. Ibn Ezra was likely citing Deuteronomy from memory since this quote is very similar to three verses in Deuteronomy (14:29, 15:18, and 24:19). Those verses convey the message that if someone fulfills God’s commandments, then God will bless him in all his endeavors. Haggai is expressing a parallel concept regarding his generation’s sinners – God has cursed all of their endeavors.

But there is none of you with Me – Its meaning is: “**But you did not return to Me.**”¹³¹

Hence, it has become clear that the Lord afflicted them [hoping that] perhaps they would return from their evil path (cf. Jonah 3:10), but they did not return. Therefore, he gave them the aforementioned parable.

(18) Take note [from this day forward—from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day when the foundation was laid for the Lord’s Temple] – It mentioned earlier, “They set to work [on the House of the Lord of Hosts, their God, on the twenty-fourth day] of the sixth month” (1:14-15), and that was to bring the stones and for them to be hewed and prepared; in **the ninth month** they began to put “a stone upon a stone” (v. 15) to lay the foundation.¹³²

The ל in **לְמִן הַיּוֹם** (**from the day**) is superfluous, like the ל of הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם (“the third, Absalom”; I Chron. 3:2).¹³³

¹³¹ **But you did not return to Me** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the seeming absence of a subject and verb in this phrase, which literally means: “But there is no _____ you to Me.” (“You” is marked by the direct object marker תָּךְ.) Ibn Janah resolves this difficulty by filling in the missing part of the sentence: “But there is no [one who returns] you to Me” (הַרְקָמָה 268). Ibn Ezra appears to agree with Ibn Janah that the verse laments the people’s failure to return to God, but he disagrees regarding the syntax. Ibn Ezra does not interpret תָּךְ before “you” as marking a direct object; instead he treats “תָּךְ you” as the subject: “You are not to Me,” with the implied verb of being (which is omitted in Hebrew) alluding to the act of returning. Ibn Ezra’s was preceded by Jonathan in his interpretation. Tanhum and Abarbanel also share this interpretation, and Radak presents it as one possibility.

¹³² **It mentioned earlier... in the ninth month they began to put “a stone upon a stone” to lay the foundation** – Ibn Ezra is raising a seeming contradiction between our verse, which indicates that construction began now, and a passage in the previous chapter (1:14-15), which indicates that the people began work on the Temple three months earlier. Ibn Ezra resolves the contradiction by explaining that they began preparing stones for construction three months earlier, but only now did they begin the actual construction. This resolution (with slight variations regarding precisely which preparations began three months earlier) is suggested by Tanhum and by several exegetes to 1:14-15 (Rashi, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Abarbanel).

¹³³ **The ל in לְמִן הַיּוֹם (from the day) is superfluous, like the ל of הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם** – The prefix ל adds nothing to either word’s meaning (cf. Tanhum). Ibn Ezra frequently cites I Chron. 3:2 as proof that a prefix ל can be superfluous (Exod. 20:16; Deut. 24:5; Isaiah 32:1, 63:2; Mal. 3:7; Ps. 61:6; צְחֹרֶת, Lippmann 28a, Valle Rodríguez 70). Also see Exod. 21:2 and the long commentary to Gen. 1:14, where he rejects claims that those verses contain a superfluous ל that could be compared to I Chron. 3:2. Ibn Ezra presumably felt that I Chron. 3:2 constitutes a compelling proof that a ל can be superfluous, since the parallel verse in II Sam. 3:3 (הַשְּׁלִישִׁי

(19) הָעוֹד (is it yet) – The הָ is interrogative, but it has a *pataḥ* due to the guttural letter, as per the rule.¹³⁴ This is like, “Is your father still (הָעוֹד) living?” (Gen. 43:7).¹³⁵

The **seed** was planted in the ground,¹³⁶ meaning: “You do not have [even] one¹³⁷ **in the מגורה (granary),**” [i.e.,] places where they would put the grain in the houses,¹³⁸ like, “The granaries (אֶצְרוֹת) are desolate, barns (מִמְגָּרוֹת) are in ruins” (Joel 1:17).¹³⁹ Since the hail struck them (v. 17), they had only a little. So the [verse’s] meaning is as follows: “If I strike you this year, you will die, but once you have begun to lay the Temple’s foundations, then blessings will begin everywhere.”

From this day on which the Temple’s foundation was laid, **I will send blessings.** This is the same as the aforementioned “from this day forward” (v. 18).

(אֶבְשָׁלוֹם) has no prefix ל. Radak (I Chron. 3:2) interprets the prefix ל in Chronicles as a direct-object marker, substituting for אֶת (see my supercommentary to Mal. 3:7). See Charlap (175 תורת הלשון) regarding the range of cases in which Ibn Ezra accepts that a prefix ל before a name is superfluous.

¹³⁴ **The הָ is interrogative, but it has a *pataḥ* due to the guttural letter, as per the rule** – Normally, a prefix הָ is vocalized with a *pataḥ* if it represents the definite article and a *hataf pataḥ* if it is interrogative. However, when an interrogative הָ is followed by a guttural letter, such as the ע in הָעוֹד, then the *hataf pataḥ* becomes a regular *pataḥ*. Tanḥum also writes that the הָ is interrogative, without explaining the change in its vowel. They are thus rejecting Ibn Janah’s claim that the הָ in our verse is not interrogative (הַרְקָמָה 102; see below, note 136).

¹³⁵ **This is like, “Is your father still living?”** – The interrogative הָ in הָעוֹד in Gen. 43:7 also has a *pataḥ* under it (rather than a *hataf pataḥ*) due to the ע that follows it.

¹³⁶ **The seed was planted in the ground** – This interpretation follows from Ibn Ezra’s assertion in the previous paragraph that “the הָ is interrogative” at the start of the verse. Hence, Haggai is asking rhetorically whether there is still grain in the storehouse (to which the answer is, “No”). Ibn Ezra is disagreeing with Ibn Janah (הַרְקָמָה 102), who denies that the הָ is interrogative and therefore believes that Haggai was stating that the grain was indeed in storehouses. The oral commentary appears to follow Ibn Janah’s view. Rashi and Joseph Kara believe, like Ibn Janah, that the grain had not yet been planted, but Eliezer of Beaugency writes that the seeds were already planted in the ground. Radak offers a compromise view: Most of the seeds were planted but some remained in the storehouses.

¹³⁷ **You do not have even one** – The HaKeter edition reads: “You do not have another” (אֶחָד), but the six textual witnesses that contain this passage appear to read אֶחָד (“one”), despite the resemblance between the Hebrew letters וָ and רָ. Tanḥum writes, “You have nothing (לֹא שֵׁי עֵנְדֹכֶם),” which might parallel the reading of אֶחָד more closely but could be a paraphrase of either reading.

¹³⁸ **מגורה – places where they would put the grain in the houses** – Saadiah describes a מגורה as something that was dug into the ground in order to pour grain into it (Ratzhabi, מִפְּרוּשֵׁי רַס”ג 229). In the oral commentary, Ibn Ezra simply states that a מגורה is “a storehouse” (אֹצֵר) without elaborating.

¹³⁹ **The granaries are desolate, barns are in ruins** – That verse contains a synonymous parallelism in which the word מִמְגָּרוֹת (which Ibn Ezra *ad loc.* interprets as an irregular plural of מגורה) parallels the more common word for granaries, אֶצְרוֹת, thus confirming the meaning of מגורה. Ibn Saruk also juxtaposes our verse and Joel 1:17 in his discussion of the roots אָגַר and גָּר (מִחֲבַרְת מִנְחָם, Philipowski 15 and 59, Sáenz-Badillos 23* and 112*).

And it mentioned fruit of the trees that are mentioned: **grapevine, fig, pomegranate, and olive**. And the meaning of **have not yet borne** is not even a blossom or leaf, and certainly not a fruit, until (עַד)¹⁴⁰ now it **has not yet borne**.¹⁴¹

(20) And [the word of the Lord] came [to Haggai] a second time, because he prophesied twice in one day.¹⁴²

(21) Speak... to shake [is] in the way of an allegory,¹⁴³ just as people say nowadays in the land of Ishmael when bad tidings arrive from wars: “The world was overturned.”¹⁴⁴

(22) And I will overturn – Because many wars were [still] in the future in the prophet’s days, when he prophesied that they would happen. And we know that it happened so, although we have not found books by the ancient ones in order to know about the wars that

¹⁴⁰ **Until (עַד)** – Ibn Ezra might be intending to interpret the preposition עַד from the word וְעַד (conjunction + prep.) in the verse. This word appears before the list of “grapevine, fig, pomegranate, and olive,” so Ibn Ezra could be arguing that it should nevertheless be interpreted as if it were juxtaposed to the verb phrase “has not yet borne” – thus rendering the phrase: “The grapevine, fig, pomegranate, and olive have [until now] not borne [fruit].” Tanḥum appears to have understood Ibn Ezra this way (although he cites the interpretation anonymously), but Tanḥum dismisses this view, instead interpreting וְעַד as “also” in order to render it coherent in its current location in the verse – “Also, the grapevine, fig, pomegranate, and olive have not borne [fruit]” (cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 358, cited by Shy *ad loc.*).

¹⁴¹ **Even a blossom or leaf, and certainly not a fruit... has not yet borne** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the fact that this verse states that these fruit-bearing trees have “not yet borne” without specifying an object. Thus, although the primary intent of the verse is that they have not borne fruit (cf. the oral commentary and Tanḥum), Ibn Ezra interprets the lack of an explicit object as indicating that these trees have borne nothing, not even a blossom or leaf.

¹⁴² **He prophesied twice in one day** – The continuation of v. 20 dates this prophecy to “the twenty-fourth day of the month” – the same date as the prophecy in v. 10 – so Ibn Ezra remarks that Haggai is prophesying for the second time on that date (hence, the verse’s phrase: “a second time”). Radak, Tanḥum, and Abarbanel make the same observation.

¹⁴³ **In the way of an allegory** – Ibn Ezra offers this interpretation as opposed to the possibility that God would literally “shake” the world, perhaps through an earthquake (cf. note 68 above). Radak and Tanḥum similarly claim that “shake” is allegorical.

¹⁴⁴ **Just as people say nowadays in the land of Ishmael ... “The world was overturned”** – See Shy (ראב"ע) והערבית היהודית, in Diaz Esteban 316). Ibn Ezra appears to be alluding to the Arabic root عكس which has a similar semantic range to the Hebrew root הפך and could thus refer to both turning something over in the literal sense and “overturning” in the sense of destruction (see Blau, מילון 561). Blau cites a similar Arabic expression from Maimonides: “What is said by the Arabs with regard to someone whom a great misfortune has befallen: his heavens were cast upside down (אקתלבת) upon his earth” (*Guide* 2:29, trans. Pines 336).

Ibn Ezra’s use of the word “overturned” might also allude to the next verse, in which God promises to “overturn” thrones and chariots in battle: “I will overturn the thrones of kingdoms... I will overturn chariots and their drivers.”

happened in the days of this Persian Darius¹⁴⁵ or in the days of Artaxerxes who reigned after him.¹⁴⁶ In their days, Zerubbabel was the governor of Judah, for he is Sheshbazzar according to compelling proofs from Scripture.¹⁴⁷

(23) On that day... I will take you is in the same manner as “He reached down from on high, He took me” (Ps. 18:17).¹⁴⁸ **And I will make you** protected as if you were a **signet** on my right hand (cf. Jer 22:24)¹⁴⁹ – this is in the manner of an allegory.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ **This Persian Darius** – See note 1.

¹⁴⁶ **Although we have not found books by the ancient ones... about the wars that happened... or in the days of Artaxerxes who reigned after him** – Ibn Ezra believes that Haggai is prophesying about wars from the Persian Period whose details have been forgotten, so Haggai was not presenting an eschatological vision that remained unfulfilled even after the Second Temple’s destruction (cf. Mid. Tan. to Exod. 21:1 and Lev. 19:1, Eliezer of Beaugency). Tanhum agrees with Ibn Ezra, while Radak presents this possibility as well as the possibility that Haggai is prophesying about the destruction of the Persian Empire by the Greeks (cf. Rashi). Abarbanel interprets this prophecy as eschatological, alluding to the future redemption. Regarding Ibn Ezra’s willingness to sometimes confine prophecies to their immediate historical context (as Moses Ibn Chiquitilia routinely does), see note 74 above.

¹⁴⁷ **Zerubbabel... is Sheshbazzar according to compelling proofs from Scripture** – Regarding Ibn Ezra’s identification of Zerubbabel with Sheshbazzar, see the oral commentary to Zech. 4:9.

¹⁴⁸ **I will take you is in the same manner as “He reached down from on high, He took me”** – Ibn Ezra comments on the proof-text that God “took” David in the sense of sending “His word or His agent” to “take” David away from his enemies. Here, too, Ibn Ezra apparently understands that God will “take” Zerubbabel in the sense of protecting him from enemies (cf. Schrem 41b). Ibn Ezra also cites Ps. 18:17 elsewhere to prove that God “takes” in the sense of salvation from enemies (Ps. 144:7).

¹⁴⁹ **A signet on my right hand** – Jonathan similarly adds “on a hand” in his description of the signet ring.

¹⁵⁰ **This is in the manner of an allegory** – Zerubbabel cannot literally become a signet ring, so the comparison to a signet ring is allegorical, alluding to the manner in which God will protect him.

Ibn Ezra to Zechariah – Standard Commentary

The Book of Zechariah: There are many levels of prophecy, and there is no way to count them, for regarding worthy souls, who receive the holy spirit,¹⁵¹ the faculty of prophecy is not [limited] to one manner.¹⁵² When the [divine] glory¹⁵³ was with Israel, before they went into exile, there was no need to explain a prophecy – like, “A son shall be born to the House of David, Josiah by name” (I Kings 13:2), and the matter was self-explanatory.¹⁵⁴ But after the exile, [prophecies] were “visions” and required explanation, like the visions of Daniel: If the angel was not explaining them, Daniel would not have understood, and certainly nobody else would have.¹⁵⁵ Similarly, Zechariah’s visions: Those “visions of the night” that “the angel who talked with [Zechariah]” explained (1:9) are intelligible, but those that [the angel]

¹⁵¹ **The holy spirit** – The Hebrew phrase רוח הקודש is frequently used in Jewish writing as referring to the divine inspiration that prophets receive (cf. below 13:2).

¹⁵² **There are many levels of prophecy... the faculty of prophecy is not [limited] to one manner** – Ibn Ezra’s introduction to Isaiah similarly discusses different levels of prophecy in order to elucidate the quality of Isaiah’s prophecy. Elsewhere, in the context of a debate between Saadiah and Dunash, Ibn Ezra argues that individual prophets have unique writing styles (ההגנה, Oshri 88). For further discussion of Ibn Ezra’s understanding of prophecy, see Yosef Cohen (ע) הגותו הפילוסופית של ראב"ע (300-307). Regarding the significance of Ibn Ezra’s comments in these sources to his understanding of Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, cf. Viesel, השקפתו של ראב"ע 389-391.

¹⁵³ **The [divine] glory** – The Hebrew word כבוד refers to the visible manifestation of God’s presence. It was visible above the cherubs that adorned the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle and the First Temple. However, it was absent from the Second Temple, which lacked the Ark of the Covenant. See below, 11:13, and my supercommentary to Mal. 3:1.

¹⁵⁴ **A prophecy – like “A son shall be born to the House of David, Josiah by name”... was self-explanatory** – Ibn Ezra chooses this verse as proof of the clarity of early prophecies, because the prophecy contains Josiah’s actual name despite appearing in a narrative about Jeroboam, who reigned three centuries before Josiah. Ibn Ezra cites the same verse in his introduction to Psalms, when discussing whether certain Psalms contain prophecy.

¹⁵⁵ **The visions of Daniel... Daniel would not have understood, and certainly nobody else would have** – A series of visions in Dan. 8-12 are explained to Daniel by various angelic figures. This fact supports Ibn Ezra’s claim that post-exilic visions required explanation.

did not explain are closed off and hidden [even] from the eyes of enlightened people.¹⁵⁶ If we would find an ancient book that recounted what new wars transpired in those days,¹⁵⁷ we would be groping like blind men,¹⁵⁸ saying: “Perhaps the prophecy was [referring] to this.”¹⁵⁹ But now, we have nothing upon which to lean. I saw books by sages who were in France, who explained the visions that Zechariah saw retrospectively, referring to events that had already occurred by this prophet’s time, like Judah being exiled to Babylon due to “the ephah” (5:6); as for the “two staffs” (11:7), [the French sages] explained that they are Israel and Judah.¹⁶⁰ Yet Scripture states:¹⁶¹ “[Thus said my God the Lord:] Tend the sheep meant for slaughter” (11:4), where the prophecy refers to the future during the prophet’s time.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁶ **Zechariah’s visions... those that [the angel] did not explain are closed and hidden [even] from the eyes of enlightened people** – Rashi similarly opens his commentary to Zechariah by noting that many of Zechariah’s visions are difficult to interpret, and Radak (1:8) – like Ibn Ezra – remarks that Daniel’s and Zechariah’s visions are particularly difficult to understand due to the effects of exile. Yefet (1:8) lists five levels of prophecy and rates Zechariah as the lowest of these levels (see De Vreugd, “Yefet ben ‘Eli’s Commentary” 282-284). By contrast, Maimonides (*Guide* 2:45) lists ten levels of prophecy and places Zechariah on the third level (cf. *Guide* 2:43). Abarbanel (1:8) challenges the widespread assumption the Zechariah’s enigmatic visions were the result of exile and a dwindling of prophecy, arguing that the prophecies of Zechariah’s contemporaries, Haggai and Malachi, contain straightforward images and language. Hence, Zechariah’s time and place cannot explain the enigmatic nature of his prophecies.

¹⁵⁷ **What new wars transpired in those days** – Literally, “what renewed itself regarding wars.”

¹⁵⁸ **We would be groping like blind men** – This phrase may be a paraphrase of Isa. 59:10, especially according to those manuscripts that read, “We would be groping like blind men *along a wall*,” even though all witnesses of Ibn Ezra use variations of the root מַשֵּׁשׁ for groping, whereas the Masoretic text of Isa. 59:10 uses the root גָּשַׁג. Elsewhere, Ibn Ezra similarly paraphrases Isa. 59:10 in order to make a general statement that one who studies predictive prophecies is frequently “groping like blind men along a wall” to correctly interpret the predictions (יסוד מורה 1:3, Cohen and Simon 76). This fundamental argument – namely, that predictive prophecies contain details that we cannot comprehend due to our own lack of knowledge – guides Ibn Ezra’s interpretations of several subsequent passages in Zechariah, such as his claim that the mourning of “Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddon” (12:11) was a well-known event in Zechariah’s time or that Zechariah foresaw that the families of Nathan and Shimeites (12:11-13) would be prominent families at the time of his prophecy’s fulfillment.

¹⁵⁹ **If we would find an ancient book... perhaps the prophecy was [referring] to this** – Abarbanel (1:8) cites this comment from Ibn Ezra after struggling to explain the significance of each color of horse in Zechariah’s vision.

¹⁶⁰ **I saw books by sages who were in France... that they are Israel and Judah** – Ibn Ezra does not identify these French sages by name, but he claims that they interpreted two prophecies as referring to past events: the “ephah” of 5:6 and the “staffs” of 11:7. Rashi and Joseph Kara – the two most prominent French exegetes who lived shortly before the composition of Ibn Ezra’s commentary – both interpret these visions in a manner that could fit Ibn Ezra’s terse description. Hence, he could be alluding to either exegete’s commentary, to another unknown French rabbi, or to interpretations that were widespread in France (cf. Schrem 41b, who identifies Ibn Ezra’s source as Rashi). Regarding the ephah, Ibn Ezra himself also believes that Zechariah is alluding to the

And now, I will begin to explain:

Chapter 1

(1) In the [eighth] month... [this word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah...] to say (לְאמֹר) to Israel. But the correct [interpretation] is: saying (לְאמֹר) to the prophet.¹⁶³

(2) [The Lord] was very angry [with your fathers] is because the prophet is equivalent to all of Israel, so the Lord speaks to him as if He is speaking to all of Israel,¹⁶⁴ like, “[The Lord said to Moses,] ‘Why do you¹⁶⁵ cry out (תִּצְעַק) to Me?’” (Exod. 14:15) – [even though] the

Jewish community in Babylonia, because 5:11 mentions “the land of Shinar” (see note 387). However Ibn Ezra believes that Zechariah is addressing the misdeeds of Babylonian exiles in *his own* generation, whereas these French rabbis apparently interpreted that vision as addressing the sins of the generation that Nebuchadnezzar had previously exiled to Babylonia.

Birnbaum (XXV n. 70) observes that Yefet has a similar tendency to offer retrospective interpretations (cf. Simon, “Marginal Notes” *ad loc.*).

¹⁶¹ **States** – The Hebrew verb is spelled אומר in some manuscripts, which would clearly make it a participle (אומר). However, other manuscripts, including the base manuscript, spell the word אמר, which could be vocalized either as the participle אומר or as the perfect verb אמר. Levine vocalizes it as אמר (ע"ע 242 ילקוט אב"ע).

¹⁶² **Yet Scripture states: “Tend the sheep meant for slaughter,” where the prophecy refers to the future during the prophet’s time** – Ibn Ezra to 11:4 claims that God is commanding Zechariah himself to tend the sheep in a prophetic vision. Here, Ibn Ezra derives from his understanding that Zechariah is doing a symbolic act to foreshadow what would happen in the future. The oral commentary to 11:4 claims that, in fact, that prophecy applied to both past and future.

¹⁶³ **To say (לְאמֹר) to Israel. But the correct [interpretation] is: saying (לְאמֹר) to the prophet** – Ibn Ezra is debating the function of the infinitive לְאמֹר: Does it indicate that Zechariah was charged with sharing the prophecy with the nation, or is it simply a way of introducing the quote of what God said to the prophet? Ibn Ezra prefers the latter possibility here, which fits with his claim elsewhere that לְאמֹר only means “to say to Israel” in select verses (Hag. 1:3; cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Ibn Ezra might have seen support for his position in the fact that v. 3 separately commands Zechariah to speak to the nation. Radak, by contrast, interprets לְאמֹר in our verse as “to say to Israel.”

¹⁶⁴ **The prophet is equivalent to all of Israel, so the Lord speaks to him as if He is speaking to all of Israel** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the fact that v. 2 does not begin with an introductory statement, such as, “Say to them,” as v. 3 does. Therefore, lest one think that v. 2 is directed at Zechariah himself, Ibn Ezra clarifies that God is not addressing Zechariah as an individual but rather Zechariah as a representative of his nation. Ibn Ezra’s comment that v. 2 is addressing the entire nation – and not just Zechariah – also serves to explain why the possessive pronoun of “your fathers” (אבותיכם) is plural.

¹⁶⁵ **You** – The Hebrew verb תִּצְעַק has a masculine singular prefix, which supports Ibn Ezra’s argument that God spoke as if He were addressing Moses alone even though His words were actually directed at the entire nation.

Israelites were crying out, as is written earlier, “The Israelites cried out to the Lord” (Exod. 14:10).¹⁶⁶

(3) Therefore, Say [to them further:] Thus said [the Lord of Hosts: Turn back to Me—says the Lord of Hosts—and I will turn back to you—said the Lord of Hosts] – It mentions the Lord three times in this verse; the meaning is **turn back [to Me]**, but the Lord will rebuke and warn you many times.¹⁶⁷

(4) Do not you behave toward me as **your fathers** behaved, that many **prophets called to them... but they did not obey.**

(5) [Where are] your fathers [now? And did the prophets live forever] – So those who were rebuked and those who offered rebuke have died.¹⁶⁸ **(6) But you should know that My**

¹⁶⁶ **The Israelites were crying out... “The Israelites cried out to the Lord”** – The validity of Ibn Ezra’s proof-text rests upon the assumption that Moses himself did not cry out to God as the Egyptians approached the Israelites, so God’s response addresses Moses as if the nation’s cry is his own cry. Although Exod. 14 does not record any personal prayer of Moses at that moment, a midrashic tradition interprets Exod. 14:15 as proof that Moses “was standing in prayer” (*Mekhilta* and Rashi *ad loc.*). In fact, Ibn Ezra’s short commentary to Exod. 14:15 cites this midrashic view as one possible way to interpret the verse: “It is possible that the prophet was crying, or this remark is on account of Israel, since he is their messenger and king.” However, Ibn Ezra apparently became more decisive over time regarding his interpretation of this verse, since his long commentary to Exod. 14:15 asserts: “Some say that Moses was crying to the Lord, but this is incorrect... rather, Moses represents all of Israel.” Ibn Ezra wrote his long commentary to Exodus very close in time to his standard commentary to Minor Prophets (Sela and Freudenthal 45), so it is understandable that Ibn Ezra’s view remains consistent in both of them.

¹⁶⁷ **It mentions the Lord three times in this verse... the Lord will rebuke and warn you many times** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting repetition of “says/said the Lord of Hosts” in this verse as reflecting God’s repeated warnings that they return to Him. While the repetitive nature of the verse might have been sufficient to prompt Ibn Ezra’s remarks, Ibn Ezra might have been especially struck by the repetition because of the verse’s similarity to Mal. 3:7, “Turn back to Me, and I will turn back to you—said the Lord of Hosts,” which only mentions “the Lord of Hosts” once. Yefet, too, stresses that God has already warned them that He is displeased with their forefathers’ behavior, but Yefet does not emphasize that God will continuously rebuke the current generation, nor does he liken the constant rebuke to the repetition of the Tetragrammaton in this verse. For an alternative explanation of the repetition of “says/said the Lord of Hosts” in this verse, see Abarbanel.

¹⁶⁸ **So those who were rebuked and those who offered rebuke have died** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting Zechariah’s question, “And did the prophets live forever,” as referring to the prophets who rebuked previous generations. Although the Hebrew imperfect verb could also be interpreted as referring to the future (“And will the prophets live forever?”), virtually all medieval exegetes interpret it as referring to the past prophets, since Zechariah was citing earlier prophets in the adjacent verse (v. 4). Ibn Ezra does not accept the Talmud’s interpretation that, “And did the prophets live forever,” was the nation’s sarcastic response to the implication

words and My prophecy¹⁶⁹ **overtook (השיגו) your fathers**, meaning, they came upon [your fathers],¹⁷⁰ so [your fathers] acknowledged: [**“The Lord has dealt with us according to our ways and our deeds, just as He purposed”**].

And the meaning of **just as He purposed (זמם)** is that He knew their actions even before they did them.¹⁷¹

But Yefet said that the meaning [of vv. 5-6] is: “Know that prophecy will cease,” so that is the meaning of **“Do the prophets live forever?”** But as for the words and laws of the Torah, **did not your fathers attain it (השיגוה)?** For it is written in the Torah that if you return to the

that their ancestors had died as a punishment for sinning (bSan. 105a; cf. Jonathan, Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Radak).

Ibn Ezra also assumes that the rhetorical question, “Where are your fathers now,” is alluding to the death of the previous generation. Most exegetes share this interpretation, but Abarbanel claims that the question is alluding to the previous generation being sent into exile.

¹⁶⁹ **My words and My prophecy** – Ibn Ezra replaces the word *חוקי* (My laws or decrees) with “My prophecy,” presumably in order to stress that *חוקי* refers to the prophets’ exhortations rather than God’s laws or commandments (cf. my supercommentary to the oral commentary). Ibn Ezra presumably bases his interpretation of *חוקי* in the continuation of the verse: “*חוקי*, which I charged My servants the prophets.” Radak interprets *חוקי* as punishments that God “decreed,” presumably agreeing with Ibn Ezra that they are not “laws” but nevertheless justifying Zechariah’s use of a word with a legal connotation, because God “decreed” the punishments.

¹⁷⁰ **Meaning, they came upon [your fathers]** – Ibn Ezra is addressing a double ambiguity: First, there is a syntactical ambiguity regarding which of “My words” and “your fathers” is the subject of the verb *השיגו* and which phrase is the object. Ibn Ezra and virtually all medieval exegetes assume that “My words” is the subject and “your fathers” is the object (but cf. the HaKeter edition’s text of Rashi, which adds an object suffix to the verb - *השיגום*, they overtook *them* – in a manner which implies that “your fathers” is the subject). The second ambiguity is the lexical meaning of *השיגו* in this verse. *השיגו* has a range of connotations (overtake, reach, attain), and it is not entirely clear which of these words could be an action that “words” did to the people’s ancestors. Ibn Ezra believes that God’s words “overtook” their ancestors in the sense that the prophecies’ fulfillment compelled the ancestors to acknowledge that their misdeeds warranted divine punishment (as described in the continuation of the verse).

¹⁷¹ **He knew their actions even before they did them** – Ibn Ezra believes that the Hebrew root *זמם* (“purposed”) implies that God had planned to punish them even *before* they had sinned. He therefore treats this phrase as indicating divine foreknowledge. Ibn Ezra does not explain why he cannot simply interpret this verse as meaning that after they sinned, God then “purposed” their punishment and subsequently executed it. Perhaps Ibn Ezra’s desire to treat *זמם* as something purposed far in advance was influenced by Lam. 2:17, in which the root *זמם* is used to describe the destruction of the First Temple, which God had “purposed” (*זמם*) much earlier, through prophecies of “the early prophets” (Ibn Ezra, *ad loc.*).

This comment touches upon broader issues of free will, divine foreknowledge, and determinism, yet it is too terse to shed meaningful light on Ibn Ezra’s understanding of these issues. Ibn Ezra alludes to issues of divine foreknowledge in several places in his biblical commentaries, but his comments tend to be cryptic (cf. sources cited by Cohen and Simon, *יסוד מורא* 10:2, 175 n. 21). Regarding Ibn Ezra’s understanding of the relationship between determinism and free will, cf. Langermann (“Some Astrological Themes,” in Twersky and Harris 49-58), Manekin (196-204), and Sela (*Elections* 10-13).

Lord, then He will return your captivity,¹⁷² and therefore, [your fathers] **returned** and acknowledged.¹⁷³

(7) On the [twenty-fourth] day... [this word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah]

– Now the visions of prophecy begin.¹⁷⁴

(8) I had a vision... [I saw a man] – It is written in the Torah: “He will send His angel before you” (Gen. 24:7), “The two angels went (ויִלְכוּ) to Sodom” (cf. Gen. 19:1);¹⁷⁵ and it is written: “The angel who has redeemed me” (Gen. 48:16), “He sent an angel [who freed us from Egypt]” (Num. 20:16),¹⁷⁶ “I am sending an angel” (Exod. 23:20), and, “And the angel of His Presence delivered them” (Is. 63:9). And in the Book of Daniel it is explicit: the prince of Greece (10:20), the prince of the Persian kingdom (10:13), and the chief of all princes is Michael (cf. Dan. 12:1).¹⁷⁷ So here is the general principle: Every action of the

¹⁷² **For it is written in the Torah... then He will return your captivity** – Ibn Ezra’s exact Hebrew words do not appear as a verse in the Pentateuch, but he is paraphrasing Deut. 30:2-3, which he considers an authoritative source for belief in messianic redemption (cf. his commentary to Num. 24:17).

¹⁷³ **But Yefet said... returned and acknowledged** – This citation bears some resemblance to Yefet’s commentary, but major discrepancies exist between Yefet’s actual commentary to this verse and the manner in which Ibn Ezra cites it. Yefet does believe that the phrase “My words” includes the curses of Lev. 26 as well as other curses that afflicted specific generations. However, Yefet’s commentary does not interpret “did the prophets live forever” as a warning that prophecy will soon cease, nor does he interpret “My decrees” as referring to the Torah’s *laws*. Moreover, Ibn Ezra’s use of the Hebrew word השיגוה implies that Yefet understood the fathers to be the subject of the word השיגו in the verse (and the Torah to be the object of השיגו; see note 170), but Yefet’s own commentary makes no such claim. Abarbanel adopts the interpretation that Ibn Ezra attributes to Yefet (which fits Abarbanel’s claim that the first half of the verse also did not allude to death; see note 168).

¹⁷⁴ **Now the visions of prophecy begin** – Ibn Ezra is observing that after six verses of rhetoric, v. 7 begins Zechariah’s actual visions.

¹⁷⁵ **The two angels went to Sodom** – This quote differs slightly from the actual text of Gen. 19:1: “The two angels arrived (ויָבִאוּ) in Sodom.” Perhaps Ibn Ezra intended to merely paraphrase the verse, but more likely, he was citing from memory and misremembered the precise text of Gen. 19:1 due to its similarity to Gen. 18:22 – “The men turned from there and went (ויָלְכוּ) toward Sodom.”

¹⁷⁶ **He sent an angel [who freed us from Egypt]** – Many translations prefer “messenger” to “angel” for the Hebrew word מַלְאָךְ in that verse (see my supercommentary to Hag. 1:13). However, it is clear from Ibn Ezra’s commentary *ad loc.* that he would prefer “angel”: “He sent a מַלְאָךְ is literal (i.e., “angel” -EF)... Some have interpreted is as referring to Moses (i.e., the Lord’s “messenger” -EF)... but this is not my opinion.”

¹⁷⁷ **And in the Book of Daniel it is explicit... and the chief of all princes is Michael** – Ibn Ezra is observing that unlike earlier books of the Bible, which speak of angels in a general sense, Daniel provides identifying information for specific angels, such the angels’ names (e.g., Michael) or their particular areas of responsibility.

honored Lord is via angels who fulfill His word.¹⁷⁸ The parable that humans can comprehend is that of a king “who sits on his throne” (cf. I Kings 22:19) and sends his agents – some on foot and some riding on horses – to come quickly and inform him of matters that are [happening] in his kingdom. Similarly, this **man** was an angel, like “the man Gabriel” (Dan. 9:21).¹⁷⁹

On a red horse – That is what he saw; there is no need to seek a reason why [the horse was] **red**.¹⁸⁰ Similarly, we do not seek a reason why “a loaf of barley (שְׁעָרִים) bread [was whirling

¹⁷⁸ **Every action of the honored Lord is via angels who fulfill His word** – Ibn Ezra sees fit to comment here on the role of angels, because Zechariah depicts interactions between God and angels. According to Ibn Ezra, this vision accurately depicts the heavenly court. Radak appears to paraphrase Ibn Ezra’s comment about the role of angels in his own interpretation of Zechariah’s vision. Ibn Ezra offers more detailed explanations of the role of angels in the heavenly court elsewhere (Exod. 3:15, Dan. 10:21; cf. Dan, תולדות תורת הסוד IV:410-415). For analysis of Ibn Ezra’s comment to our verse within the larger context of his angelology, see Yosef Cohen (97 הגותו הפילוסופית של ראב"ע).

¹⁷⁹ **Similarly, this man was an angel, like “the man Gabriel”** – Yefet, Radak, and Tanḥum also cite this verse to demonstrate that an angel can be called “man.” Abarbanel rejects this view and claims that the “man” in our verse was a human warrior.

¹⁸⁰ **There is no need to seek a reason why [the horse was] red** – Ibn Ezra is dismissing the significance of the horse’s color, as opposed to the view that he rejects later in this passage, which saw the horse’s redness as symbolizing blood. Tanḥum describes the same view that the color red symbolizes blood as “allegorical” (תאורי), thus acknowledging that it is not the plain sense without disparaging it as Ibn Ezra does. Radak writes that “it is possible” that the horses’ colors are meaningful, perhaps acknowledging Ibn Ezra’s reservations about the color’s symbolism without completely sharing them. Some exegetes suggest other deeper meanings for the horse’s redness, such as the color of sin (al-Qumisi and Eliezer of Beaugency, based on Isa. 1:18). Several of Ibn Ezra’s predecessors and successors interpret this vision as parallel to Daniel’s visions of the four kingdoms (Dan. 2, 7-8), with each colored horse representing a different kingdom (Yefet; Eliezer of Beaugency; Radak, citing Joseph Kimḥi; one view cited by al-Qumisi). Abarbanel offers a variation of this position by connecting Zechariah’s vision specifically with Greece under Alexander the Great. Ibn Ezra would seemingly reject all such interpretations, since they all depend – at least partially – on tenuous connections between the horses’ colors and the nature of each kingdom. Indeed, Abarbanel remarks that Ibn Ezra does not offer an allegorical interpretation (פתרון) to this vision or any of Zechariah’s subsequent visions in this sequence (through Chapter 6). However, the oral commentary (6:5) does interpret Zechariah’s subsequent vision of four chariots (6:1-8) as alluding to four kingdoms (presumably Daniel’s four kingdoms, although he does not explicitly state so).

Ibn Ezra’s criticism of those who read too much into the colors resembles Maimonides’ assertion that some allegories contain details that lack any deeper meaning (Introduction to *Guide*; cf. Abarbanel 1:8). Ibn Ezra’s position here also fits his broader tendency to dismiss attempts to read meaning into minor details, especially when one cannot offer a compelling case for a better alternative than the specified detail. For example, his introduction to Exod. 20 argues that if one cannot make a compelling case for why a plene spelling is more natural than a defective spelling, or vice versa, then one cannot attribute significance to either spelling. Similarly, he dismisses the significance of Nimrod’s name (Gen. 10:8) – which literally means, “We shall rebel” – presumably because there is no obvious default name that Nimrod should have been called.

For discussion of the relationship between Ibn Ezra’s comments to this verse and his overall approach to interpreting allegories, see Cohen (*Three Approaches* 245-248).

through the Midianite camp]” (Jud. 7:13) and not wheat.¹⁸¹ As for he who explained that שְׁעָרִים alludes to a tempest (סַעֲרָה),¹⁸² and **red** is like blood, for the spilling of blood¹⁸³ – these (וְאֵלֶּה)¹⁸⁴ are like words of *derash*.

This **mounted man** was a chief.¹⁸⁵

The meaning of **בְּמַצְלָה (in the Deep)** is difficult. Yefet said that [מצולה] is the name of a place,¹⁸⁶ but the [prefix] ב received a *pataḥ* like, “Zebah and Zalmunna were in the Qarqor” (בְּקַרְקֹר; Jud. 8:10), even though it is not normal for there to be a *pataḥ* [under the prefix] ב before the name of a place;¹⁸⁷ for it would not be said¹⁸⁸ “in the Zion” or “in the Samaria,”

¹⁸¹ **Similarly, we do not seek a reason why “a loaf of barley bread” and not wheat** – By asserting that there is no inherent significance to the loaf of the Midianite’s dream being barley, Ibn Ezra is implicitly rejecting not just the view that he cites but also the midrashic view that the barley loaf alludes to the barley of the ‘omer sacrifice (Lev. R. 28:6, cited by Rashi, *ad loc.*), and Yefet’s view that barley – rather than wheat – appeared in the dream because barley is inferior to wheat. I am indebted to Dr. Michael Wechsler bringing this last source to my attention, since Yefet’s commentary to Judges is unpublished.

¹⁸² **As for he who explained that שְׁעָרִים alludes to a tempest** – I have not found any extant commentary from before Ibn Ezra that interprets the barley loaf in the Midianite’s dream as symbolizing a tempest.

¹⁸³ **Red is like blood, for the spilling of blood** – The Talmud (bSan. 93a, cited by Radak) interprets this vision as a parable for the story of Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah in the furnace (Dan. 3). According to this view, the redness of the horse symbolizes the blood which God wanted to spill if not for the pious act of Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. Just as Ibn Ezra rejects this interpretation, Rashi, too, remarks that the Talmud’s interpretation does not fit “the sequence of the passage and [its] language,” although Rashi nevertheless incorporates much of the Talmudic passage into his commentary.

¹⁸⁴ **These** – My critical edition adopts the majority reading of וְאֵלֶּה (with a prefix ו) rather than the minority reading of אֵלֶּה. Admittedly, the prefix ו seems to be superfluous. Perhaps Ibn Ezra’s writing style was influenced here by Arabic, with the prefix ו serving a similar function to an Arabic prefix *fa* (ف); see notes 294-296 below.

¹⁸⁵ **A chief** – Heb. שָׂר, meaning, a leader among the angels (cf. Tanḥum).

¹⁸⁶ **Yefet said that [מצולה] is the name of a place** – The view that מצולה is the name of a place does not match Yefet’s own commentary, which explains מצולה as depths that symbolize the exile (cf. Jacob b. Reuben).

¹⁸⁷ **It is not normal for there to be a pataḥ before the name of a place** – According to this view, Zechariah is referring to a place named Metzulah. However, Ibn Ezra notes that the *pataḥ* under the prefix ב would represent the definite article (“the Metzulah”), but it does not make sense to put the definite article in front of a proper noun, such as the name of a place (cf. סַפֵּר הַשֵּׁם, Lippmann 3b). This interpretation (which Ibn Ezra attributes to Yefet) thus provides examples of proper nouns that are preceded by the definite article, such as Jud. 8:10, where the place named Qarqor is preceded by the definite article (cf. Rashi and Radak, *ad loc.*). These examples demonstrate that the definite article does occasionally precede proper nouns. Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Deut. 6:16 argues that it and I Sam. 15:4 (cf. Radak *ad loc.*) both contain locations whose proper names are preceded by the definite article. For possible additional examples, see Radak (הַשְּׂרִישִׁים 352-353).

¹⁸⁸ **It would not be said** – My translation assumes that the Hebrew phrase is vocalized לֹא יֵאמָר, as a passive *nif'al* verb. It could also be vocalized לֹא יֵאמֵר (“One would not say”), which is Levine’s vocalization (ע' ליקוט אב"ע 243).

(בציון, בשומרון) but rather with a *sheva* or a *hiriq* [under the prefix ב].¹⁸⁹ R. Moses the Priest [Ibn Chiquitilia] said that **במצולה** [means “in] a pool of water,” with **myrtles** around it.¹⁹⁰

And behind him were [red, sorrel, and white] horses – But no man was mounted on them.¹⁹¹

And these words are like the words of Ezekiel (1:10): “[They four] had the face of an ox on the left.”¹⁹²

And the word **שָׂרְקִים (sorrel)** is from the same derivation as שָׂרְקָה (Gen. 49:11),¹⁹³ like the appearance of a choice vine (שורק).¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁹ **Even though it is not normal for there to be a *patah*... but rather with a *sheva* or a *hiriq* [under the prefix ב]** – Roth (מבשר עזרא 37) claims that this passage is a gloss, but it appears in all witnesses.

¹⁹⁰ **R. Moses the Priest said that **במצולה** means in a pool of water, with myrtles around it** – In other verses, Ibn Ezra himself interprets the word מצולה as a body of deep waters (Ps. 69:15, short commentary to Exod. 15:5). Abarbanel approvingly cites this interpretation of מצולה as Ibn Ezra’s own view, without naming Ibn Chiquitilia. Tanhum also interprets מצולה as a body of deep waters, but he debates whether the myrtles were in the water or next to it. According to the Talmud’s interpretation of this vision (bSan. 93a), which Ibn Ezra rejects, the מצולה symbolizes Babylonia (cf. Radak and Abarbanel).

¹⁹¹ **But no man was mounted on them** – Here, Ibn Ezra asserts that the other horses did not have anyone mounted on them, but the oral commentary states that angels were mounted on the sorrel horses and presumably on the horses of other colors (cf. Student of Trani). Radak agrees with the standard commentary that these horses did not have riders (cf. Abarbanel, who adopts that view and connects it to his own interpretation of the vision’s symbolism).

¹⁹² **And these words are like the words of Ezekiel: “[They four] had the face of an ox on the left”** – The nature of Ibn Ezra’s comparison to Ezekiel is not entirely clear. Ibn Ezra might simply be observing that both Zechariah and Ezekiel saw exotic creatures in prophetic visions (cf. his short commentary to Exod. 24:10). Schrem (41b) suggests that Zechariah’s vision is part of the same vision as 6:1-8, where he sees four chariots (cf. Ibn Ezra to 6:2). Hence, Ibn Ezra intends to equate Ezekiel’s vision of these four creatures – a vision which the Talmud calls “the chariot” (e.g., mMeg. 4:10) – with Zechariah’s subsequent vision of four chariots (6:1-8). However, these suggestions do not explain why Ibn Ezra cites one specific verse, “[They four] had the face of an ox on the left,” if he is actually referring to the entirety of Ezek. 1.

Alternatively, perhaps Ibn Ezra is attempting to elucidate the phrase “red, sorrel, and white horses” through a comparison to Ezekiel’s vision. Ezekiel describes four creatures’ appearance: “As for the likeness of their faces, they had the face of a man; and they four had the face of a lion on the right side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four had also the face of an eagle.” It is clear from the verse that Ezekiel did not see one human, one lion, one ox, and one eagle, but rather each creature had all four faces. Zechariah’s words are more ambiguous – did he see a red horse, a sorrel horse, and a white horse, or was each horse multi-colored? Ibn Ezra might be arguing that here, too, all of the colors were visible on each horse (see note 195).

It is not possible to shed more light on this cryptic comment by checking his commentary to Ezekiel, since it has not survived – although he occasionally refers to it (Isa. 6:1-2, short commentary to Exod. 28:41). Ibn Ezra does mention Zechariah and Ezekiel alongside each other elsewhere (Hos. 1:2), as examples of prophets who saw many things in a vision, but he does not suggest any deeper connection between them.

These horses are many, comprised of two colors (עינים),¹⁹⁵ meaning shades (גוונים).¹⁹⁶

(9) I said to the angel who talked with me – He is not “the one who was standing among the myrtles,” as Yefet explained; rather, in my opinion, **the angel who talked with him is the one who was mounted on a red horse**, because he is the chief.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹³ שַׁרְקָה – Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Gen. *ad loc.* identifies שַׁרְקָה as a synonym of גֶּפֶן, the more common Hebrew word for a grapevine. The oral commentary cites the same proof-text.

¹⁹⁴ **Like the appearance of a choice vine** – Ibn Ezra presumably considers this color to be a shade of red or purple. This appears to be the view of Ibn Janah (השרשים 537), who explains that this color is red and cites our verse alongside Gen. 49:11, where he, too, interprets שַׁרְקָה as a choice vine. Ibn Saruk (מהברת מנחם, Philipowski 182, Sáenz-Badillos 390*) interprets שַׁרְקָה in our verse as multi-colored and explicitly distinguishes between its meaning here in and the word שַׁרְקָה in Gen. 49:11. Rashi and Radak write that they do not know what color שַׁרְקָה is. Eliezer of Beaugency believes it to be a “reddish white” (cf. Lev. 13:42-43), so he might intend a similar color to Ibn Ezra’s view (Poznanski, *ad loc.*) depending on whether “reddish white” is pink or light red.

¹⁹⁵ **These horses are many, comprised of two colors** – Ibn Janah (השרשים 537) and Ibn Balaam understand that all three adjectives of color modify the same horses, which were white with reddish spots (Judeo-Arabic: בורש). By contrast, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, and Student of Trani understand that there were separate horses in each of the three colors. Ibn Ezra’s remark, “These horses are many, comprised of two colors,” endorses the former view (see note 192; cf. Schrem 42a). Tanḥum also appears to believe that each horse was multi-colored, as he debates whether they were splotched or spotted.

¹⁹⁶ **עינים, meaning shades (גוונים)** – the HaKeter edition considers the addition of the synonym גוונים to be a gloss. That suggestion seems plausible, because Ibn Ezra uses the word עין for “color” or “shade” in many places without explaining its meaning (e.g., Isa. 19:9; both commentaries to Cant. 7:6; Esther, first commentary, 1:6 and 2:7, second commentary, 1:6 and 8:15). So, according to the HaKeter edition’s suggestion, Ibn Ezra was not adding the word גוונים to further explain that the colors were different shades of similar colors. Rather, a student or subsequent scribe realized that people might not recognize that meaning of the word עין, which is not a common word for “color” or “shade,” so he added a synonym.

¹⁹⁷ **He is not “the one who was standing among the myrtles”... he is the chief** – Zechariah’s vision mentions several different figures: V. 8 mentions a man “who was standing among the myrtles” and was mounted on a red horse, v. 9 mentions the angel “who talked with” Zechariah, and v. 10 again mentions a man “who was standing among the myrtles.” Ibn Ezra cites Yefet’s as maintaining that all three figures are the same angel. This interpretation indeed appears in Yefet’s commentary and is shared by several other exegetes (Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Tanḥum). By contrast, Rashi’s commentary (in a possible gloss; cf. the HaKeter edition) indicates that the “lord” to whom Zechariah addressed his question, “What are those, my lord?” (v. 9) is the angel who “was mounted on a red horse” in v. 8, but “the angel who talked with me” (who actually answered Zechariah’s question) is a different angel. Radak – despite disagreeing with Rashi regarding some details of the narrative – similarly argues that there are two angels in the narrative: 1) the angel “who was standing among the myrtles” in v. 8 and v. 10 (and was also mounted on a red horse), and 2) the angel who “talked with” Zechariah.

Ibn Ezra, too, indicates that there are two angels in this narrative – one angel who “was standing among the myrtles” and another who “talked with” Zechariah. However, Ibn Ezra appears to differ from Rashi and Radak in that he believes the angel who was mounted on the red horse in v. 8 to be the same angel who “talked with” Zechariah and not the one “who was standing among the myrtles.” It is not entirely clear how Ibn Ezra can differentiate between the angel who was standing among the myrtles and the angel who was mounted on the red horse, in light of v. 8, which clearly implies that they are one and the same: “I saw a man, mounted on a red horse, standing among the myrtles” (cf. al-Qumisi).

All of these exegetes are rejecting the Talmud’s interpretation of 1:8, in which God Himself was mounted on the red horse (bSan. 93a, cited by Joseph Kara).

(10) Then [the man who was standing among the myrtles] answered (וַיַּעַן) – Now it explains that he **was standing among the myrtles**:¹⁹⁸ “These horses are the Lord’s agents to roam (לשוט)¹⁹⁹ the earth,” like Job’s Satan (1:7), who is also an angel.²⁰⁰

(11) They answered the angel of the Lord – He is the aforementioned man, who was one of the princes.²⁰¹ And these horses are his agents in [fulfilling] the Lord’s command.

(12) He spoke up (וַיַּעַן) and said – Like “You shall then begin (וַיַּעֲנֵה) and say” (Deut. 26:5), the first²⁰² “Job began (וַיַּעַן) and said” (Job 3:2).²⁰³ Alternatively, its meaning is that he is answering the Lord, who sent him, and this is correct.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ **Now it explains that he was standing among the myrtles** – It is difficult to understand to whom Ibn Ezra is referring when he asserts that “he” was standing among the myrtles. If Ibn Ezra intends that – in addition to the angel who “was standing among the myrtles” in v. 8 – the angel who “talked with” Zechariah (v. 9) was *also* “standing among the myrtles,” this would lead to the bizarre conclusion that the same phrase (“was standing among the myrtles”) refers to two different angels within the span of three verses (cf. note 197). On the other hand, if “he” refers to the angel who was “standing among the myrtles” in v. 8, then it is unclear what Ibn Ezra means by, “*Now it explains that he was standing among the myrtles*” when v. 8 described this angel the same way. Deleting the Hebrew words **כִּי הוּא** (“that he”) would yield a more logical reading: “Now the one who was standing among the myrtles explained” (**עַתָּה פִּירֵשׁ כִּי הוּא הַעוֹמֵד בֵּין הַהַדְסִים**), in which Ibn Ezra is not commenting on the identity of this angel but merely observing that this aforementioned angel now explains Zechariah’s vision. The phrase **כִּי הוּא** might have mistakenly entered this comment because Ibn Ezra used it twice in the previous verse regarding the identity of the angel who “talked with” Zechariah. However, there is not manuscript evidence for deleting the entire phrase **כִּי הוּא**.

¹⁹⁹ **לשוט** – Ibn Ezra replaces the word, **לְהַתְּקֵלָךְ**, with a synonym from the narrative in Job 1 to which subsequently alludes.

²⁰⁰ **Like Job’s Satan, who is also an angel** – Ibn Ezra cites Job 1:7, in which Satan describes how he roamed the earth, to demonstrate that it is normal for angels to roam the earth. Regarding Satan’s status as an angel, Ibn Ezra writes in multiple places that the “Satan” of the Job narrative was an angel, not a human adversary (Num. 22:22; Job 1:6; **הַהַגְנָה**, Oshri 82; cf. Friedlander, *Essays* 70-71). Ibn Ezra is siding with Dunash’s critique of Saadiah for suggesting that the “Satan” of Job 1:6-8 was human (**#67, תשובות דונש על רס"ג**, Schroeter 21). Indeed, Ibn Ezra implies that Saadiah himself knew that Job’s Satan was not human but nevertheless adopted such a position because most readers would not be able to understand how God could have an angel like Satan.

Unlike his understanding of Job’s Satan, Ibn Ezra maintains that in Zechariah’s subsequent vision of a “Satan” (3:1), the prophet sees a human adversary (cf. note 264 below).

²⁰¹ **The angel of the Lord... is the aforementioned man, who was one of the princes** – Presumably, Ibn Ezra is referring to the “man who was standing among the myrtles” in v. 10. He is noting that the horses are directing their reply to him, not at the angel who talked with Zechariah.

²⁰² **The first** – The phrase **וַיַּעַן אֵיב** appears several times in Job, but Ibn Ezra’s comment is limited to its first appearance, since the subsequent cases contain Job’s responses to the arguments of other people.

²⁰³ **He spoke up (וַיַּעַן) and said – like... “Job began and said”** – The root **ענה** literally means to answer, but Ibn Ezra is demonstrating that in many contexts, it means to begin a statement. He seeks to reinterpret the root **ענה** here because this verse does not appear to continue the conversation from the previous verses. In v. 9, Zechariah asks a question, so v. 10 opens with one angel’s response to Zechariah (using the root **ענה**), and v. 11

So the meaning [of this vision] is that when wars erupt, then the Lord's Temple will be built by Zerubbabel,²⁰⁵ as Haggai prophesied: "I will make you as a signet" (2:23).²⁰⁶

And **seventy years ago** – I explained it thoroughly in the Book of Daniel (9:2)²⁰⁷

presents the colored horses' response to that angel (again using ענה). However, although v. 12 once again opens with a verb from the root ענה, the angel is addressing God – who was not a part of the conversation until now – rather than responding to the horses. Hence, Ibn Ezra initially suggests that the angel is not "answering" but rather is turning to God with a new request.

Ibn Ezra substantiates this interpretation with two verses in which the root ענה appears juxtaposed to the root אמר ("to say") and without any preceding question, so "to begin a statement" seems like a more correct interpretation than "to answer and say." Ibn Janah (השרשים 377) and Radak (השרשים 271) cite the same proof-texts. Ibn Ezra often cites one or both of these verses to prove that ענה should not always be interpreted literally as "to answer," even in cases where it is not juxtaposed to the root אמר (Exod. 21:10, short commentary to Exod. 15:21, Deut. 21:7 and 27:14, Ps. 116:10 and 147:7, Ecc. 1:13). Interestingly, however, Ibn Ezra's commentaries to both proof-texts (Deut. 26:5 and Job 3:2) offer two possible interpretations of the root ענה in each verse – either it does literally mean to answer, with an implied question preceding each verse, or it means to begin a statement.

Radak also cites the same proof-texts to demonstrate that ענה does not mean "reply" in our chapter. However, Radak is addressing the root ענה in v. 10, because Radak believes that "the angel who talked with me" is not the same as the angel "who was mounted on the red horse." Accordingly, Radak believes that Zechariah asked one angel ("the angel who talked with me") to explain his vision, but a different angel "answered" in v. 10. Since the latter angel was not asked anything by Zechariah, Radak suggests that perhaps ענה does not mean "answer" in v. 10, instead offering a creative reinterpretation of v. 10. Ibn Ezra, on the other hand, believes that the angel who responds to Zechariah in v. 10 is *the same angel* to whom Zechariah addressed his question, so v. 10 is indeed a true "answer"; hence, Ibn Ezra does not weigh alternative meanings for the root ענה until v. 12.

Abarbanel also claims that the root ענה does not mean to answer in our verse, and he cites the same proof-texts as Ibn Ezra. However, Abarbanel suggests that the alternative meaning for ענה is not simply to begin a statement but specifically to utter a statement in a loud voice (cf. Deut. 27:14; Rashi, Jer. 35:30, Ps. 119:172, Job 3:2, Cant. 2:10, and Dan. 3:9).

²⁰⁴ **He is answering the Lord, who sent him, and this is correct** – According to this second explanation, the root ענה can be interpreted literally as "responded," because the angel was initially sent by God (cf. v. 10). Hence, although God has not yet spoken in this conversation (vv. 9-11), the angel can now "respond" to Him. Tanḥum cites both of Ibn Ezra's explanations.

²⁰⁵ **When wars erupt, then the Lord's Temple will be built by Zerubbabel** – Ibn Ezra is deriving from the horses' report ("We have roamed the earth, and have found all the earth dwelling in tranquility") and the angel's response ("How long will You withhold pardon from Jerusalem?") that apparently the Temple would not be rebuilt during this period of tranquility, but only after war would break out (cf. the oral commentary). Yefet and Tanḥum also understand this dialogue as indicating that Jerusalem would not be rebuilt during this period of tranquility for the Gentiles (cf. v. 15: "I am very angry with those nations that are at ease").

²⁰⁶ **As Haggai prophesied: "I will make you as a signet"** – Haggai's final vision (2:20-23) predicts wars and upheaval, after which God will strengthen Zerubbabel and make him "as a signet." Since Zerubbabel was the leader who rebuilt the Temple, Ibn Ezra cites Haggai's prophecy as proof that the reconstruction will be preceded by war.

²⁰⁷ **And seventy years ago – I explained it thoroughly in the Book of Daniel** – I discuss Ibn Ezra's understanding of the chronology of this period in a separate chapter of my analytic introduction (cf. the oral commentary to 9:9). Yefet believes that the seventy years of this verse are counted from the destruction of the First Temple. Radak debates whether these seventy years are counted from the beginning of the Babylonian empire until its defeat at the hands of Cyrus or from the destruction of the First Temple until the time of Zechariah's vision. Tanḥum adopts the latter calculation.

(13) The Lord replied – Now it mentions the Lord’s reply in a general sense, as the prophet heard it, and then the angel continued to explain [it] to him.²⁰⁸

(14) Then [the angel]... said [to me: “Proclaim! Thus said the Lord of Hosts: I am very jealous for Jerusalem (קנאת יְלִירֵי־שָׁלֹמֶ)] – All “jealousy” (קנאה) that is followed²⁰⁹ by a [prefix] ל is unlike “jealousy” followed by a [prefix] ב. So this [verse] is like “Are you jealous for me?” (לִי; Num. 11:29).²¹⁰ The meaning [of לִי] is “on my behalf”; “The Lord was jealous for His land” (לְאַרְצֵי; Joel 2:18), [means] “on behalf of His land.”²¹¹ This jealousy is positive, on behalf of the individual who is mentioned. But when [jealousy] is followed by a [prefix] ב, like, “The Philistines were jealous of him” (בו),²¹² it is the opposite.²¹³

(15) [And I am very] angry – This indicates many wars and difficult tribulations **upon those nations** in those days.²¹⁴

I was only angry a little at Israel, but they added.²¹⁵

²⁰⁸ **It mentions the Lord’s reply in a general sense... and then the angel continued to explain [it] to him** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the fact that v. 13 states that God replied, but it does not cite what God said.

²⁰⁹ **Is followed** – Heb. קשורה (literally, “linked”). Ibn Ezra uses this Hebrew word to describe the relationship between a verb and the preposition that connects that verb to an indirect object.

²¹⁰ **Are you jealous for me** – Ibn Ezra frequently comments on verses in which a prefix ל means “regarding,” “on behalf of,” or “for the sake of” rather than “to” (cf. Simon’s supercommentary to Joel 2:18).

²¹¹ **On behalf of His land** – Ibn Ezra offers the same interpretation to Joel *ad loc.* He also uses Joel 2:18 to illustrate this meaning of “jealousy” in his commentary to Nah. 1:2 and Zech. 8:2.

²¹² **The Philistines were jealous of him** – The Hebrew phrase בּו פִּלִּשְׁתִּים וַיִּקְנְאוּ does not appear verbatim in the Bible. The closest verses are Gen. 26:14 (וַיִּקְנְאוּ אֵתוֹ פְּלִשְׁתִּים) and 37:11 (וַיִּקְנְאוּ בּוֹ אֶתְיוֹ), with the latter verse being the only case in the Bible in which the word וַיִּקְנְאוּ is followed by the preposition ב. Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Gen. 26:14 interprets the word אֵתוֹ as בּו, so perhaps that verse was etched into his memory in accordance with his interpretation of it.

Radak (Ps. 106:16) uses Gen. 37:11 as the proof-text for demonstrating that the preposition ב indicates “jealousy of.”

²¹³ **But when [jealousy] is followed by a [prefix] ב... it is the opposite** – In this last verse, jealousy is a negative trait – being jealous *of* someone’s success rather than being jealous on that individual’s behalf.

Ibn Ezra’s distinction between different types of “jealousy” – depending on the subsequent preposition – appears to be Radak’s source for making the same distinction in his commentary to Ps. 106:16, although Radak does not address the issue in his commentary to Zechariah.

²¹⁴ **This indicates many wars and difficult tribulations upon those nations in those days** – See note 205.

(16) Therefore... and a line (קו) – A plumb line (משקולת) of builders.²¹⁶

(17) [My towns] shall yet overflow [with prosperity] in every direction. The settlement will expand due to the abundance of prosperity.²¹⁷

Chapter 2

(1) I looked up – This, too, [happened] in a [prophetic] vision.

[And I saw] four horns from the four corners of Jerusalem.²¹⁸

(2) I asked [the angel who talked with me, “What are those?” “Those,” he replied, “are the horns that tossed Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem”] – So the meaning of “horns” (v. 1) is the enemies who surrounded Jerusalem to scatter her,²¹⁹ in the same manner as: “He has

²¹⁵ **But they added** – In other words, God wished to punish the Jews by enabling Gentiles to subjugate them, but the Gentiles overdid the punishment. Thus, although they “helped” (עָזְרוּ) fulfill God’s will, the prophet characterizes their behavior as “helped for evil.” Ibn Ezra is using “added” (הוסיפו) as a synonym for “helped,” which could have a more positive connotation if not for the context.

²¹⁶ **A plumb line of builders** – The interpretation of this “line” as a plumb line fits the context of a line “being applied to Jerusalem” and is shared by most exegetes (e.g., the explicit statements of Jonathan, Radak, Student of Trani, and Tanḥum). Yefet stresses that the “line” is used for construction, as opposed to verses in which a “line” alludes to destruction (II Kings 21:13, Isaiah 34:11). Indeed, Ibn Saruk (מהברת מנחם, Philipowski 154, Sáenz-Badillos 328*) groups our verse with other verses in which a “line” refers to a plumb line and the same Hebrew verb (נטה) is used. Later, Ibn Ezra notes that Zechariah refers to a “stone” which also symbolizes a plumb line that Zerubbabel would use to rebuild Jerusalem (3:9 and 4:10).

²¹⁷ **The settlement will expand due to the abundance of prosperity** – Radak, Student of Trani, and Tanḥum offer the same interpretation and appear to be paraphrasing Ibn Ezra. The oral commentary similarly explains that the towns will overflow “from an abundance of prosperity.”

²¹⁸ **From the four corners of Jerusalem** – While Ibn Ezra describes the corners as representing the corners of Jerusalem, other exegetes believe that they represent the four directions of the heavens (Rashi), the four kingdoms of Dan. 2 and 7-8 (Joseph Kara, Radak, Student of Trani, Abarbanel; see note 180), or four kingdoms that were created following the breakup of the Greek Empire (Eliezer of Beaugency). Jonathan translates “horns” as “kingdoms” (מלכויות), likely reflecting the view that Zechariah’s vision parallels Daniel’s four kingdoms. Perhaps Ibn Ezra limits these corners to Jerusalem – not the four corners of the earth – because he interprets this prophecy as addressing Zechariah’s own time and not as an eschatological vision parallel to Daniel’s visions of four kingdoms.

²¹⁹ **So the meaning of “horns” is the enemies who surrounded Jerusalem to scatter her** – The horns that Zechariah saw symbolize the enemy nations who scattered Judah.

horns like the horns of the wild-ox; with them he gores the peoples, [the ends of the earth] one and all” (Deut. 33:17).²²⁰

(3) Then [the Lord] showed me – It mentions the Lord, because this is the deeper meaning (סוד) of the first vision.²²¹

And **craftsmen** are “craftsmen of destruction” (Ezek. 21:36).²²²

(4) I asked the “angel who talked with me” (1:9), even though it does not mention him, because it uses a terse style.²²³

And the meaning of **so that each (כָּפִי) man** refers to the Jews; each one, according to his virtues, **could not raise his head** – any of [the Jews]²²⁴ – against **those horns**.

²²⁰ **In the same manner as... the horns of the wild-ox; with them he gores... one and all** – Ibn Ezra cites this verse to demonstrate that horns can be used to violently gore people, making them an appropriate metaphor for Judah’s enemies (cf. Tanḥum). Radak and Tanḥum cite the same proof-text.

²²¹ **It mentions the Lord, because this is the deeper meaning of the first vision** – In 2:1-2, Zechariah saw a vision of horns, which the angel explained to him as symbolizing Judah’s enemies. One might therefore conclude that v. 3 begins a new prophecy in which God communicates directly with Zechariah. Instead, Ibn Ezra explains that vv. 3-4 are part of the same prophecy (see note 227), but God showed Zechariah a new image within this prophecy so that he would understand the deeper meaning of the vision of the horns (i.e., Judah’s enemies will be vanquished). Ibn Ezra does not believe that God and Zechariah spoke to each other directly in this vision, because he comments on v. 4 that Zechariah is addressing the angel. For an alternative interpretation of “the deeper meaning of the first vision” – based on an esoteric interpretation of the word סוד, cf. Schrem (42a).

²²² **Craftsmen of destruction** – Ibn Ezra is explaining the role of these craftsmen in accordance with v. 4, in which they cast away the enemies’ horns. The verse from Ezekiel demonstrates that the word חָרָשׁ (a craftsman) can have a connotation of destruction. Ibn Ezra ignores a rabbinic interpretation of these four craftsmen as eschatological figures: “Who are these ‘four craftsmen’? R. Hana b. Bizna citing R. Simeon Hasida replied: The Messiah the son of David, the Messiah the son of Joseph, Elijah and the Righteous Priest.” (bSuk. 52b; cf. Abarbanel). Rashi mentions the existence of such a rabbinic interpretation without endorsing it (“Our sages explained... what they explained about who [the craftsmen] were”). Other exegetes suggest that the four craftsmen allude to other figures, such as the three patriarchs and Moses (al-Qumisi), Hasmonean kings (Eliezer of Beaugency), or the guardian angels of Daniel’s four kingdom’s (Radak).

²²³ **It uses a terse style** – The Hebrew phrase תָּפַס דֶּרֶךְ קְצֵרָה literally means that the text “took the short path,” meaning that it opted for brevity by not specifying to whom Zechariah was speaking.

²²⁴ **Could not raise his head – any of [the Jews]** – Ibn Ezra is explaining that the singular pronoun “his” refers to individual Jews: Not one Jew could raise “his” head against the horns, which symbolize the Gentile adversaries (cf. Rashi, Radak).

These men have come to throw (לִידוֹת) the horns, [meaning] to cast them away (להשליכם) from their place,²²⁵ like, “They cast (יָדוּ) lots” (Joel 4:3).²²⁶ The meaning is that all of the adversaries will turn away, and [the Jews] will rebuild the Temple.

(5) I looked up – This, too, was in a vision of the night.²²⁷

(6) Then said I... למד (to measure) is a geminate verb,²²⁸ like לָהַג (to observe a feast, 14:18), לָרַם (to moisten, Ezek. 46:14),²²⁹ and לָבוֹז (to plunder, Est. 3:13).²³⁰

Thus, [Zechariah] saw that the Lord commanded and decreed that [Jerusalem] would be built according to such-and-such length and such-and-such width inside of the wall.²³¹

²²⁵ **To cast them away (להשליכם) from their place** – Ibn Ezra uses the better known root שלַכ, which is synonymous with יָדָה, in order to elucidate the meaning of יָדָה. He employs the same synonym in Lam. 3:53. Rashi, Radak, Student of Trani, and Abarbanel also use synonyms from the root שלַכ to explain לִידוֹת, while Eliezer of Beaugency understands לִידוֹת as “to push and knock down” the horns.

²²⁶ **They cast (יָדוּ) lots** – See Ibn Ezra’s standard commentary to Joel *ad loc.* where he cites our verse and discusses the etymology of יָדוּ. The phrase “they cast lots” also appears in Obad. 1:11 and Nah. 3:10, so Ibn Ezra could have intended any of those verses. Regarding Ibn Ezra’s understanding of the etymology of יָדוּ, see his commentary to Joel 4:3 and Simon *ad loc.*

²²⁷ **This, too, was in a vision of the night** – Ibn Ezra is explaining the structure of this chapter. 2:1-4 is one unit, in which Zechariah saw horns “in a prophetic vision” (Ibn Ezra to v. 1). Ibn Ezra already explained that 2:3-4 is part of that unit (see note 221). Verse 5 now opens with the same words as v. 1 (“I looked up, and I saw”), because it is beginning a new prophecy, which was “a vision of the night” just like the previous vision (cf. Radak).

²²⁸ **למד (to measure) is a geminate verb** – The root of לָמַד is מָדַד, just as the roots of the other words that Ibn Ezra subsequently cites are חָגַג, רָסַס, and בָּזַז, respectively.

²²⁹ **לָרַם** – The similarity between the Hebrew letters ס and ם makes it virtually impossible to determine whether certain witnesses read לָרוּם rather than לָרוֹם. The only witnesses that read לָרוֹם without question are MS Vatican 75 and the Second Rabbinic Bible, while MS British Library 24896 clearly reads לָרוּם. The rest of the witnesses are less clear, but לָרוּם appears to be the correct reading. The word לָרוּם has the exact same vowel pattern as the other verb infinitives that Ibn Ezra cites, whereas לָרוּם is vocalized לָרוּם (*larum*) in both places that it appears (Ezek. 10:16 and Prov. 25:3). Ibn Ezra indicates that רָסַס is the root of לָרַם in both commentaries to Cant. 5:2 (where he notes that לָרוּם and the word רָסַסִּי share the same etymology). Radak also cites רָסַס as an example of a geminate root, parallel to מָדַד, so his text of Ibn Ezra likely read לָרוּם.

²³⁰ **לָבוֹז** – The root of לָבוֹז is בָּזַז.

²³¹ **Inside of the wall** – This phrase alludes to the fact that the city will overflow its borders according to v. 8. The Talmud claims that in this verse, God intended to completely restrict Jerusalem to fixed measurements, but the angels convinced Him to allow Jerusalem to expand, prompting God to proclaim in v. 8 that Jerusalem would not have walls (bB.B. 75b, cited by Rashi and Joseph Kara). Ibn Ezra appears to reject that view, as he presents the measurements as being intended solely for what is “inside of the wall,” which is not contradicted by the subsequent promise that people will also settle outside the wall (cf. Poznanski’s observation regarding Eliezer of Beaugency’s interpretation of this verse).

(7) But [the angel who talked with me] came forward – from “among the myrtles” (cf. 1:8-10) – **and another angel came forward** – lo, **another** agent from the Lord to **the angel who talked with me**

(8) He said [to him, “Run to] that (הַלֵּז) [young man]” – [הַלֵּז] is like הַלֵּזָה (that; Gen. 24:65),²³² the one who was standing.²³³

So three prophets prophesied when they were young men: Zechariah, Samuel, and Jeremiah.²³⁴

פְּרוּזָה (open) – outside of the walls.²³⁵

²³² **הַלֵּז is like הַלֵּזָה** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting הַלֵּז and הַלֵּזָה as demonstrative adjectives (cf. Ibn Saruk, מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 113, Sáenz-Badillos 230*; and Rashi, I Sam. 14:1). For further discussion of the word הַלֵּז by Ibn Ezra, see Exod. 1:1, יסוד דקדוק (Aloni 96), and צחות (Lippmann 34b, Valle Rodríguez 86).

²³³ **The one who was standing** – The HaKeter edition puts “the one who was standing” in quotation marks and identifies it as referring to the aforementioned angel “who was standing among the myrtles” (1:8-11). Indeed, many exegetes do believe that one of the angels in this narrative is referring to the other angel as “that young man” (Eliezer of Beaugency; Student of Trani; *Tosafot*, bHul. 60a s.v. פסוק; one view in *Yal. Shimoni* to Exod. 2:6). However, the continuation of Ibn Ezra’s comments indicates that he understood “that young man” to be Zechariah, since he uses that phrase to prove that Zechariah prophesied in his youth. Hence, Ibn Ezra cannot simultaneously maintain that the phrase “that young man” refers to both Zechariah and the angel who was standing before him. It thus seems probable that Ibn Ezra’s words “the one who was standing” refer to Zechariah. Alternatively, if one assumes that his phrase “the one who was standing” must refer to an angel, then perhaps Ibn Ezra’s explanation of the word הַלֵּזָה severed “the one who was standing” from its original lemma, the word ויאמר (“He said”); Ibn Ezra’s comments would thus intend as follows:

He said - the [angel] who was standing [said].

That (הַלֵּז) – is like הַלֵּזָה.

However, reconstructing Ibn Ezra’s comments in this manner, without any supporting evidence from any manuscripts, seems unnecessary and unconvincing.

²³⁴ **Three prophets prophesied when they were young men: Zechariah, Samuel, and Jeremiah** – Samuel is portrayed as a “young man” (נֶעָר) when God first appears to him (I Sam. 3:1-8), and Jeremiah refers to himself as a “young man” during his first prophecy (1:6). The fact that the angel refers to Zechariah as a “young man” in this verse prompts Ibn Ezra to add Zechariah to his list of young prophets. Before Ibn Ezra, Yefet derived from this verse that Zechariah was a young man, even concluding based on this verse that Zechariah was too young to have seen the First Temple himself.

Abarbanel adopts Ibn Ezra’s entire comment (about all three prophets) without attribution. Radak, too, suggests that Zechariah might have been young, based on this verse, but he adds that נֶעָר could instead mean that Zechariah served as an apprentice to a more senior prophet (cf. Exod. 33:11, referring to Joshua as Moses’ נֶעָר). Some exegetes maintain that the “young man” in this verse is the man who was measuring Jerusalem and not Zechariah (see note 233), so they would dismiss Yefet and Ibn Ezra’s proof that Zechariah was young.

²³⁵ **פְּרוּזָה – outside of the walls** – The root פרוז is used specifically for cities that have no surrounding wall (e.g., Est. 9:19). The oral commentary interprets פְּרוּזָה in the same manner, as do many exegetes (al-Qumisi, Rashi,

(9) And I Myself... [will be] a wall of fire to protect Jerusalem and the “open” area (v. 8).

All around it, to destroy all who approach them to harm them.

(10) הוי (Ho) is a vocative expression:²³⁶ the Lord’s command via the prophet to those who remained in Babylonia to come to Jerusalem and assist with rebuilding the Temple and fulfilling the land-based commandments.²³⁷

From the land of the north, which is Babylonia, Elam, and the empire of Persia and Media.²³⁸

And the meaning of **[I swept you] like the four [directions of heaven]** is: Just as one direction cannot connect to another direction,²³⁹ so have you been [dispersed] until now.

Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Student of Trani). The fact that people will dwell outside the walls explains why God must promise to protect Jerusalem as “a wall of fire” in v. 9.

²³⁶ **הוי is a vocative expression** – Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Isa. 1:4 cites an interpretation of the word הוי as a variant spelling of the word אוי (a cry of grief or despair, “Woe!”), but he prefers to interpret it as a vocative expression. He does interpret הוי as a cry of grief in Isa. 30:1 and 31:1, and he sometimes presents that view as one valid interpretation of הוי, alongside the view that הוי is a vocative expression (Isa. 5:8, Nah. 3:1). However, in most instances of הוי, he interprets it exclusively as vocative (Isa. 10:1, 10:5, 18:1, 45:9, 55:1). Zech. 2:10-11 serve elsewhere as his proof-text for the latter interpretation, presumably because Zechariah is issuing a positive call to action rather than expressing grief or despair in these verses (צחוק, Lippmann 13a, Valle Rodríguez 34).

Among Ibn Ezra’s predecessors, both Saadia (Isa. 18:1, Ratzhabi, תפסיר ישעיה, 273-274) and Ibn Janah (השרשים 117-118) cite our verse as an example of a vocative הוי, which they distinguish from other uses of הוי to express either grief or condemnation. In our verse, many other exegetes also interpret הוי as a proclamation or call to assemble (Jonathan, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak).

²³⁷ **The land-based commandments** – Heb. המצוות שהם תלויות בארץ literally means “the commandments that are dependent upon the land.” This phrase is a technical term for agriculture-based religious laws that only apply to the produce of the Holy Land (e.g., tithes).

²³⁸ **From the land of the north, which is Babylonia, Elam, and the empire of Persia and Media** – Ibn Ezra is identifying these places with the land of the north because Zechariah is directing his words at the Jewish Diaspora in these places (cf. Ibn Ezra to 6:6). Other exegetes single out Babylonia (Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak) or Babylonia and Assyria (Rashi). Regardless, Zechariah’s primary target audience appears to be Babylonian Jewry, in light of v. 11 – “Ho, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon!”

²³⁹ **Just as one direction cannot connect to another direction** – Heb. רוח (“direction”) could also be translated literally as “wind.” Ibn Ezra appears to be commenting on the precise formulation that God dispersed them “like” the four directions (or like “winds” blowing in the four directions), rather than “to” the four directions (cf. Radak, Tanḥum, and Ibn Caspi). Tanḥum’s presentation of this view appears to prefer a literal translation of רוח as wind: “Just as one wind cannot connect to another wind...”

(11) Ho, [Zion! Escape], you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon, meaning, return to your land and do not reside with foreigners.

(12) For thus [said the Lord]... after sending His glory to me.²⁴⁰

Its meaning is to tell those who dwell in Babylonia that they have no [reason to] fear from any enemies on the way back to Zion.²⁴¹

(13) For I will lift My hand to strike all who seek to plunder you.²⁴²

(14) Shout... I will dwell in your midst is conditional, if Israel had assembled from all of the nations. But, in fact, they did not do so,²⁴³ as I explained in the Scroll of Canticles.²⁴⁴

So, too, the vision of the ephah (5:5-11), as I shall explain.²⁴⁵

(15) [Many nations] will attach themselves [to the Lord] if Israel will come.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁰ **After sending His glory to me** – See the oral commentary.

²⁴¹ **Its meaning is... that they have no [reason to] fear from any enemies on the way back to Zion** – This comment explains the meaning of the second half of the verse: “Concerning the nations that have taken you as spoil, whoever touches you touches the pupil of his own eye.”

²⁴² **I will lift My hand to strike all who seek to plunder you** – Jonathan similarly interprets God’s hand as symbolizing His ability to strike (מהח גבורתי) the enemies.

²⁴³ **Conditionally... But, in fact, they did not do so** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the fact that the redemption described in vv. 14-17 does not appear to have been fulfilled in Zechariah’s time. He explains that this prophecy was indeed intended for that time, but it was contingent upon Jews returning *en masse* from the Diaspora, which did not occur (cf. his interpretation of Hag. 2:9). *Pesiqta R.* (35, Ish Shalom 160a-161a) cites a rabbinic debate regarding whether this prophecy applied conditionally to Zechariah’s time or describes a future messianic redemption (cf. Radak). Tanḥum cites the same debate anonymously, along with an additional allegorical interpretation, but he appears to favor the first view (i.e., Ibn Ezra’s view). Abarbanel adopts the messianic interpretation. Eliezer of Beaugency believes that this prophecy was fulfilled by the Hasmoneans.

²⁴⁴ **As I explained in the Scroll of Canticles** – See both of Ibn Ezra’s commentaries to Cant. 5:4-6. Sela and Freudenthal (45) apparently assume that Ibn Ezra is citing his second commentary to Canticles, so they use this reference to prove that Ibn Ezra composed that commentary *before* the standard commentary to Minor Prophets. However, Ibn Ezra’s comments to our verse could easily be citing his first commentary to Cant. 5:4-6, which describes how God left the promise of Zech. 2:14 unfulfilled after much of the nation failed to return from Babylonia.

²⁴⁵ **So, too, the vision of the ephah as I shall explain** – In his commentary to 5:5-11, Ibn Ezra interprets the vision of the ephah as alluding to divine punishment against Jews who remained in Babylonia rather than heeding the prophet’s directive to return to Jerusalem. Therefore, it seems that his comment here, “so, too,” does not mean that the vision of the ephah constitutes another example of a conditional blessing. Rather, the ephah corroborates Ibn Ezra’s claim here and in Canticles that God punished people for remaining in Babylonia, so He did not fulfill all of Zechariah’s prophecies (cf. Schrem 42a).

(16) And [the Lord] will inherit (נָחַל) [Judah his portion] – He will take him to be **His portion**,²⁴⁷ like, “And take us for Your own” (וְנִחַלְתֵּנוּ; Exod. 34:9).²⁴⁸ Or the verb is transitive (יִרְצֵא),²⁴⁹ like, “[The men] who shall divide (יִנְחִלּוּ) the land to you” (Num. 34:17).²⁵⁰

(17) Hush [all flesh, before the Lord!] – In the sense of: “[Terror and dread descend upon them; through the might of Your arm] they are still as stone” (Exod. 15:16).²⁵¹

And the word נֶעוֹר (He has become awake²⁵²) is in the *nif'al* form, like נָכוֹן (Gen. 41:32).²⁵³

This form is attested²⁵⁴ as a passive participle, but also in past tense, like “[Punishments]

²⁴⁶ **If Israel will come** – Ibn Ezra is continuing his argument from the previous verse, that the fulfillment of these prophecies was contingent upon the Jews leaving the Diaspora and returning to Jerusalem.

²⁴⁷ **And [the Lord] will inherit (נָחַל) [Judah his portion] – He will take him to be His portion** – Ibn Ezra is addressing two interdependent ambiguities in the Hebrew verse – 1) The *qal* form of the verb “inherit” normally takes one direct object (the item that is being inherited) but can also take a second direct object as a causative verb – “to cause someone to inherit an item.” 2) The antecedent of “his” in the phrase “his portion” could be either God or Judah. Ibn Ezra first proposes reading the verse with the non-causative meaning of “inherit” and with God as the antecedent of “his” – “God inherited Judah [as] His portion.” Similar readings are proposed by al-Qumisi, Yefet, Rashi, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, and Student of Trani, with most of them pointing to a parallel in Deut. 32:9.

²⁴⁸ **And take us for Your own (וְנִחַלְתֵּנוּ)** – In this context, Ibn Ezra is citing Exod. 34:9 to demonstrate that the root נחל (“to inherit”) can be used in the sense of God taking His people as His inheritance. However, Ibn Ezra appears to have wavered about whether the root נחל might instead be causative in Exod. 34:9, just as he wavers in our verse. His short commentary to Exod. 34:9 cites both interpretations of וְנִחַלְתֵּנוּ – “Take us for Your own,” or, “Cause us to inherit.” In our verse, he clearly prefers the former interpretation, but his commentary to Ps. 82:8 also cites Exod. 34:9 and adopts the latter reading (cf. his commentary to Num. 34:17).

²⁴⁹ **Or the verb is transitive (יִרְצֵא)** – The root נחל is always transitive. Ibn Ezra means that according to this view, the root נחל takes *two* direct objects (cf. Ibn Ezra to Ps. 82:8, Student of Trani)

²⁵⁰ **Or the verb is transitive, like, “[The men] who shall divide (יִנְחִלּוּ) the land to you”** – According to this second suggestion – which is the view of Ibn Janah (השרשים 297) and Ibn Balaam – “inherit” is to be interpreted in our verse as a causative verb. Although Ibn Janah and Ibn Balaam do not explicitly address the reference ambiguity in “his portion,” they presumably maintain that Judah is the antecedent of “his” and thus render the verse: “God shall cause Judah to inherit [Judah’s] portion” of the Holy Land. Joseph Kara and Abarbanel propose similar readings. Jonathan’s translation also supports this interpretation, since he adds a preposition before Judah (לדבית יהודה, “to the house of Judah”), and he translates חֵלְקוֹ (“his portion”) as חולקהוֹן (“their portion”). Ibn Ezra appears to favor this second interpretation of our verse in his commentary to Ps. 82:8, where he cites Zech. 2:16 as evidence that the *qal* form of the root נחל can have a causative meaning. Tanhum cites both possible interpretations of נִחַל in our verse but does not endorse one over the other. The oral commentary also cites a dispute regarding the syntax of this verse, but its presentation of the dispute is not entirely clear (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

²⁵¹ **Hush... In the sense of: “They are still as stone”** – Ibn Ezra cites this verse as a parallel case of Gentile nations being still and silent due to their fear of God. Abarbanel cites the same proof-text. Jonathan interprets v. 17 as stating that the Gentiles will be vanquished, although it is not clear how he understands the lexical meaning of “hush” (הָסָ).

²⁵² **He has become awake** – Regarding my decision to translate the root עור as “to become awake,” see 4:1.

were prepared (נְכוֹנָו) for scoffers” (Prov. 19:29), “Thus the kingdom was secured (נְכוֹנָה) [in Solomon’s hands]” (I Kings 2:46).²⁵⁵ This [occurrence of] נְעוֹר is also past tense, while the future tense is יְעוֹר (4:1).²⁵⁶

The small *qamatz*²⁵⁷ replaces a large *qamatz*; perhaps this is due to the guttural letter.²⁵⁸

As for the one who explained that [נְעוֹר] is like, “They growl (נְעָרוּ) like lion cubs” (Jer.

51:38),²⁵⁹ he thought a correct idea, due to [the word] **hush**.²⁶⁰

²⁵³ **נְעוֹר is in the *nif'al* form, like נִכּוֹן** – According to Ibn Ezra, the word נְעוֹר derives from the hollow root עור (to be roused; cf. the oral commentary’s proof-text). The initial נ is a prefix because the word is *nif'al*. This explanation of the etymology comes from Ḥayyuj (כתאב אלנתרף), Maman and Ben Porat 318, Basal 186 and 214; Wated and Sivan 116-117; cited by Ibn Janah, השרשים 310, and Ibn Balaam). It is later adopted by Radak (*ad loc.* and השרשים 512), despite his father’s view to the contrary (below, note 259). Ibn Saruk (מחברת מנחם), Philipowski 127, Sáenz-Badillos 290*) and Abarbanel also share Ibn Ezra’s opinion regarding the lexical meaning of נְעוֹר, but Ibn Saruk considers the root to be ער (based on his own grammatical system), and Abarbanel does not discuss the etymology in detail.

²⁵⁴ **Is attested** – Literally, “comes” (יבא).

²⁵⁵ **As a passive participle, but also in past tense... was secured (נְכוֹנָה) [in Solomon’s hands]** – The third-person masculine perfect and the masculine singular participle of hollow roots look identical in *nif'al*, so the word נְכוֹן could be either one. Ibn Ezra therefore proves that the Bible uses words like נְעוֹר and נְכוֹן as perfect verbs by citing the word נְכוֹנָו, whose context and suffix demonstrate that it must be a perfect verb (the participle would be נְכוֹנִים), and the word נְכוֹנָה, whose context in I Kings 2:46 indicates that it is a perfect verb (although the feminine singular participle would look identical).

²⁵⁶ **נְעוֹר is also past tense, while the future tense is יְעוֹר** – Ibn Ezra interprets the word נְעוֹר as: “He *has become* awake” (not, “He *is becoming* waking”).

²⁵⁷ **Small *qamatz*** – Ibn Ezra uses this term for a *tzeirei*, not for the vowel commonly referred to today as a *qamatz qatan*.

²⁵⁸ **The small *qamatz*... perhaps this is due to the guttural letter** – According to the standard *nif'al* past tense vowel pattern for hollow roots, the word should have been נְעוֹר (like Ibn Ezra’s example of נְכוֹן). Ibn Ezra thus suggests that the ע in the word נְעוֹר causes the preceding vowel to change from a *qamatz* to a *tzeirei* (cf. Ibn Janah, הרקמה 206, and my supercommentary to Hag. 2:13). Radak makes the same suggestion.

²⁵⁹ **The one who explained that [נְעוֹר] is like, “They growl (נְעָרוּ) like lion cubs”** – Ibn Ezra is referring to Ibn Janah, who argues in detail that נְעוֹר is a *qal* perfect verb from the root נער (“to roar”), following a similar vowel pattern to the verb נָכוֹל (e.g., Num. 13:30), which is also *qal* perfect (השרשים 309-310; ההשגה, Tene 93-94; cited by Ibn Balaam; cf. Wilensky, הרקמה 139). This view is also espoused by al-Qumisi and is attributed to Joseph Kimḥi (Radak, השרשים 442). A midrashic view also presumes that the root of נְעוֹר is נער but adopts a different meaning of that root – “to shake” (Gen. R. to Gen. 32:4, Cant. R. to Cant. 4:8). Tanḥum cites and criticizes both views that appear in Ibn Ezra before presenting what he his own original view, which in fact closely resembles the aforementioned midrashic view, based on the meaning of “to shake.” Tanḥum argues that the vocalization of נְעוֹר is consistent with the *nif'al* pattern of the word נְשָׁלוּחַ (Est. 3:13). It should have been נְעוֹר but underwent changes due to the elision of the initial נ and the consequent compensatory lengthening of the first vowel due to the guttural letter ע.

²⁶⁰ **He thought a correct idea, due to [the word] hush** – In other words, the fact that the nations will be silent in the face of God lends credibility to the claim that Zechariah intended the metaphor of a growling lion, to contrast God’s growling with the nations’ silence (Filvarg 13a, Schrem 42a). Ibn Ezra approves of this idea, but

Chapter 3

(1) The Lord **showed me**²⁶¹ through the medium of visions of the night.²⁶²

And השטן (the adversary) [means] an enemy, [**to threaten him (לשטנו)**] as Sanballat did,²⁶³

and as the adversaries of Judah did; it is written there: “They wrote an accusation” (שטנה);

Ezra 4:6). So they were adversarial toward Joshua because they did not want the Temple to

be rebuilt or Joshua to be the High Priest.²⁶⁴

(2) **He said** that the Lord would remove any **adversary** who is threatening that the Temple

not be rebuilt. So the work on (עבודה) the Temple will be fully rebuilt.²⁶⁵

he believes that it is based on incorrect etymology, since it assumes that the root of נָעוּר is נָעַר. The oral commentary also cites both interpretations of נָעוּר but is less decisive regarding which one is correct.

²⁶¹ **The Lord showed me** – Ibn Ezra is supplying a subject, because the verse states that “he showed me” without a clear antecedent for “he.”

²⁶² **Through the medium of visions of the night** – Ibn Ezra is stressing that Zechariah saw this through a prophetic vision, as opposed to seeing Joshua in the physical world (cf. Ibn Caspi). This parallels his earlier comments to 2:1 and 2:5, where he stressed that the prophecies in Chapter 2 were also prophetic visions (cf. Tanḥum).

²⁶³ **As Sanballat did** – Sanballat is Nehemiah’s nemesis throughout the Book of Nehemiah. At various points, he accuses Nehemiah of rebelling against Persia (Neh. 2:19-20, 3:33-34, 6:5-7) and attempts to foil Nehemiah’s efforts to rebuild Jerusalem (Neh. 4:1, 6:1-2). Radak and Tanḥum also compare this adversary to Sanballat and his colleagues.

²⁶⁴ **And השטן (the adversary) [means] an enemy... because they did not want the Temple to be rebuilt or Joshua to be the High Priest** – Ibn Ezra maintains that the שָׁטָן in this vision is a human adversary who represents the human enemies who harassed the Jews of Jerusalem during this period. This view originates with Saadiah (Ratzhabi, ג' מפירושי רס"ג, 230) and fits Ibn Ezra’s subsequent comments that Joshua’s “filthy garments” (v. 3) and עוֹן (v. 4) symbolize his and the Jews’ downtrodden state. His approach is adopted by Tanḥum (and cf. Eliezer of Beaugency), who notes that the Bible labels Solomon’s human adversaries with the word שָׁטָן – a proof-text that was also familiar to Ibn Ezra (oral commentary and Ps. 109:6; cf. Friedlander, *Essays* 70). Their approach contrasts with those who view the שָׁטָן as a spiritual accuser (Satan) who is pointing out Joshua’s sins, which are represented by the “filthy garments” (cf. Jonathan, Rashi, and Joseph Kara). The oral commentary presents both approaches without favoring one over the other.

²⁶⁵ **So the work on (עבודה) the Temple will be fully rebuilt** – Ibn Ezra’s Hebrew phrase עבודת בית המקדש would typically be translated as “the Temple service” but can also be translated as “work on the Temple.” The verb תבנה (“will be rebuilt”) seems somewhat awkward for “work” and even more awkward for “service,” but Ibn Ezra may have been thinking of several verses in Chronicles that mention the Temple עבודה in the context of construction. The strongest example is I Chron. 28:20-21, where the עבודה of the Temple is translated in multiple ways by NJPS:

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד לְשִׁלְמֹה בְנוֹ חֲזַק וְאַמֵץ וַעֲשֵׂה אֶל־תִּירָא אֶל־תִּירָא נֹאֲלִיתָתָת כִּי ה' אֱלֹהִים אֵלָהִי עִמָּךְ לֹא יִרְפָּךְ וְלֹא יַעֲזֹבֶךָ עַד־לְקִלּוֹת
 כָּל־מְלָאכָה תַעֲבֹד תַּבְיִיתָהּ: וְהִנֵּה מִחֲלָקוֹת הַכְּהֹנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם לְכָל־עֲבוֹדַת בַּיִת הָאֵלֹהִים, וְעִמָּךְ בְּכָל־מְלָאכָה לְכָל־יְדֵיב
 בְּהַכְמָה לְכָל־עֲבוֹדָה וְהַשָּׂרִים וְכָל־הָעָם לְכָל־יְדֵיבְרִיךְ

And the meaning of **for [this is a brand rescued from the fire]** is allegorical:²⁶⁶ “These people have suffered enough, for they have escaped from exile!”²⁶⁷ Or: “How can you threaten him (לשטנו) when fire has not harmed him,” which is an allegory for: “How can you threaten him when he has been **rescued** from the exile!”²⁶⁸

(3) Now Joshua [was clothed in filthy garments] – Some explain that the **filthy garments** [represent] one of his grandchildren, who was Sanballat’s son-in-law.²⁶⁹ But that sin is not [the fault] of Joshua, since it did not happen in his time.²⁷⁰ The correct [interpretation] is that

²⁰David said to his son Solomon, “Be strong and of good courage and do it; do not be afraid or dismayed, for the Lord God my God is with you; He will not fail you or forsake you till all the work on the House of the Lord is done. ²¹Here are the divisions of the priests and Levites for all kinds of service of the House of God, and with you in all the work are willing men, skilled in all sorts of tasks; also the officers and all the people are at your command.”

Regardless of how one translates the noun construct עבודת בית המקדש, Ibn Ezra presumably is using it to portray the restoration of the Temple service as the opposite of the adversary’s threat “that the Temple not be rebuilt” (שלא יבנה), where his use of the same verb fits naturally.

²⁶⁶ **And the meaning of for this is a brand rescued from the fire is allegorical** – Ibn Ezra is rejecting midrashic interpretations that Joshua was literally saved from a fire in the Temple (yTan. 4:5) or from being cast into the same furnace as Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah (bSan. 93a, cited by Rashi).

²⁶⁷ **These people have suffered enough, for they have escaped from exile** – According to this interpretation, the image of the brand highlights the Jews’ downtrodden state, so God is telling the adversary that they deserve His pity. Several other exegetes also interpret this image of “a brand rescued from the fire” as alluding to the Jews’ return from exile (al-Qumisi, Jacob b. Reuben, Joseph Kara, Radak), although they don’t always explain it in as much detail as Ibn Ezra does. Eliezer of Beaugency claims that the “brand rescued from the fire” reflects the appearance of Joshua’s clothing, which was blackened and worn out.

²⁶⁸ **An allegory for... he has been rescued from the exile** – Yefet suggests essentially the same symbolism for this brand, which Tanḥum appears to subsequently adopt from Ibn Ezra.

²⁶⁹ **One of his grandchildren, who was Sanballat’s son-in-law** – The claim that Joshua’s grandson married Sanballat’s daughter derives from a combination of verses. Neh. 13:28 recounts that a priest named Joiada married Sanballat’s daughter, and Neh. 12:10 traces Joiada’s lineage to Joshua. Also see Ezra 10:18 for a general statement that Joshua had descendants who married Gentile women. The rabbinic sources that present this sin as the reason for Joshua’s filthy garments are less precise; they speak broadly about how Joshua’s descendants married women who were unfit to marry priests, without specifying that one particular priest married Sanballat’s daughter (Jonathan, bSan. 93a).

²⁷⁰ **Some explain... But that sin is not [the fault] of Joshua, since it did not happen in his time** – Ibn Ezra does not dispute the claim that Joshua’s grandson married Sanballat’s daughter. However, he objects to the midrashic explanation of the “filthy garments” in our verse as symbolizing that sin (Jonathan, bSan. 93a). Ibn Ezra argues that the Bible would not blame Joshua now for a sin that his grandson will commit at a later date. His insistence that the sin took place later might be a way to counter the Talmud’s suggestion that Joshua was liable for his grandchildren’s behavior because he failed to rebuke them.

Al-Qumisi, Yefet, Rashi, and Radak follow the midrashic interpretation of the filthy garments’ symbolism. Tanḥum adopts both Ibn Ezra’s interpretation and Ibn Ezra’s objections to the midrashic interpretation, which Tanḥum labels as *derash* (עלי סביל אלדרש).

he had no vestments of “dignity and adornment,”²⁷¹ for they had only an altar to offer burnt-offerings, but they did not have a temple, nor a curtain or cover or golden altar or golden vestments.²⁷² So the **[filthy] garments** are an allegory for his lack of dignity and splendor.²⁷³

(4) This angel spoke up.²⁷⁴

[And said] to those who were standing before this angel, and he was the chief over them, for they would do what he commanded them.²⁷⁵ Some explain that **before him** refers to Joshua, but this is far-fetched, for why would men stand before him? What superior rank did he have, inasmuch as he **(3) was clothed in filthy garments?**²⁷⁶

Know that לָבַשׁ is a transitive verb, so when it says לִרְבֹּשׁ, one clothes oneself, but לְבָשׁ [means that] someone else put these **filthy garments** on him.²⁷⁷

(4) The word עֲוֹנוֹ is [intended] in the same manner as “עֲוֹנוֹי is too great to bear!” (Gen. 4:13), [meaning,] “My punishment (עוֹנוֹשִׁי)²⁷⁸ and anguish is [too] great”; therefore [Cain] said

²⁷¹ **Dignity and adornment** – A biblical expression for priestly vestments (cf. Exod. 28:2).

²⁷² **They did not have a temple, nor a curtain or cover or golden altar or golden vestments** – Ibn Ezra lists several items from the Tabernacle and First Temple that were lacking in Joshua’s time, before the Second Temple’s completion.

²⁷³ **So the [filthy] garments are an allegory for his lack of dignity and splendor** – Unlike the first view – which interprets the “filthy garments” as a metaphor for sins, Ibn Ezra’s personal view is that “filthy garments” means that Joshua lacked priestly vestments, which is one expression of how the Jews at this time lacked many symbols of the glory that they had in the First Temple. Eliezer of Beaugency suggests that Joshua’s garments were blackened and worn out, because the high priest would not wear priestly vestments until the Temple was built.

²⁷⁴ **This angel spoke up** – Ibn Ezra is referring to the angel before whom Joshua was standing, as the previous verse describes.

²⁷⁵ **Before this angel, and he was the chief over them, for they would do what he commanded them** – Yefet and Tanḥum also remark that the pronoun in “before him” refers to the angel.

²⁷⁶ **Some explain that before him refers to Joshua, but this is far-fetched... he was clothed in filthy garments** – Tanḥum shares Ibn Ezra’s criticism of this view, whose source is unclear.

²⁷⁷ **When it says לִרְבֹּשׁ, one clothes oneself, but לְבָשׁ [means that] someone else put these filthy garments on him** – This comment distinguishes between active and passive participles. If the *qal* verb from the root לָבַשׁ means “to put on clothes,” then the active participle לִרְבֹּשׁ means that the individual dressed himself, while the passive participle implies that someone else dressed him. It is disagreeing with Ibn Janah’s claim that לְבָשׁ in our verse is the equivalent of the active participle לִרְבֹּשׁ (הַרְקָמָה 325). Tanḥum agrees with Ibn Janah. Although this comment appears in all manuscripts, the HaKeter edition identifies it as a later gloss, presumably due to its content.

afterward, “Since You have banished me” (Gen. 4:14). This , עָוֹן, too, is thus: “**I have removed your punishment (עונשך), anguish, and shame from you.**”²⁷⁹ [This is] in the same manner as, “The man shall be clear of עָוֹן,” and thus, “but that woman shall suffer for her guilt” (עוֹנָה; Num. 5:31).²⁸⁰

מְקַלְצוֹת (robes) [is] like “to הִלְצָתוֹ” (his tunic; cf. II Sam. 2:21):²⁸¹ his change of clothes, something that is taken off (נחליץ) of him. Hence, **מְקַלְצוֹת** [means] what he wore in place of what he had been wearing.²⁸²

(5) And I said (וַאֲמַר) – R. Marwan [Ibn Janah] said that it is instead of “He said” (וַיֹּאמֶר),²⁸³ but such [phenomena] do not exist in language!²⁸⁴ But the correct [interpretation] is that the

²⁷⁸ **My punishment (עוֹנִשִּׁי)** – Ibn Ezra is using עונש, the more common Hebrew word for punishment, as a synonym to clarify the meaning of עון.

²⁷⁹ **This , עָוֹן, too, is thus: “I have removed your punishment (עונשך), anguish, and shame from you”** – Here, too, Ibn Ezra uses the Hebrew word עונש as a synonym for עון. His comment is prompted by the fact that the root עון is most commonly used in the sense of “guilt” or “iniquity.” If one assumes that עון means “iniquity” in our passage, then one would conclude that Joshua’s “filthy garments” symbolized some sin of his – a view that many exegetes maintain (Jonathan, al-Qumisi, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak). However, Ibn Ezra already rejected that symbolic meaning (v. 3, cf. note 270), so he feels compelled to interpret עון in a manner that does not attribute sin to Joshua. He makes a similar comment about the word when it appears in v. 10. Eliezer of Beaugency agrees that Joshua was not actually guilty of any sin in our chapter, but he nevertheless interprets our verse as, “I have removed your iniquity” (עֲוֹנְךָ), suggesting that Satan was *falsely* accusing Joshua of sinning by standing before God in filthy garments.

²⁸⁰ **The man shall be clear of עָוֹן... But that woman shall suffer for her guilt (עוֹנָה)** – In both commentaries to Gen. 4:13, Ibn Ezra offers additional examples of verses in which עון is used with the connotation of “punishment” although he acknowledges that it literally means “sin.” However, his commentary to Num. 5:31 does not reject a literal interpretation of עון in that verse. Muraoka and Shavitsky suggest translating עון as “stigma” or “distress” in Num. 5:31 according to Ibn Ezra.

²⁸¹ **To his tunic (מְקַלְצוֹתוֹ)** – I translated this as “to his tunic” based on Ibn Ezra’s Hebrew text, אל הליצתו, but the Masoretic text of the verse reads אֶת הִלְצָתוֹ (“his tunic” preceded by the direct object marker), and the word “to” would not make sense in the context of this verse. Two witnesses read אל הליצתו in Ibn Ezra’s text, but most witnesses read אל הליצתו. Thus, although אל הליצתו could be a scribal error that multiple scribes committed, the more likely explanation is that Ibn Ezra erred when citing from memory, and then a later scribe attempted to fix Ibn Ezra’s error by emending אל to match את in the Masoretic text. Ibn Ezra to Isa. 3:22 also cites II Sam. 2:21 as a proof-text for the meaning of מְקַלְצוֹת, but there he cites the verse correctly. Tanhum cites Jud. 14:19 as a similar proof-text for the meaning of מְקַלְצוֹת.

²⁸² **Hence, מְקַלְצוֹת [means] what he wore in place of what he had been wearing** – The Hebrew phrase שחליץ אחרים תחתיהם is somewhat awkward, as it would literally mean “that he removed other [garments] instead of these,” while the context indicates that these garments called מְקַלְצוֹת came instead of the original, filthy garments. Sid Z. Leiman suggests that the reading of MS Vatican 75 – which reads שחליץ תחתיהם without אחרים (“other”) – reads more smoothly, but this reading is not supported by any other witnesses.

My translation of מְקַלְצוֹת as “change of clothes” comes from Muraoka and Shavitsky. Rashi interprets מְקַלְצוֹת as attractive, white garments (cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 156, and Eliezer of Beaugency).

prophet said: “After they removed the ‘filthy garments’ **and clothed him in garments of adornment,**²⁸⁵ how nice would it be if **a pure diadem were upon his head!**”²⁸⁶

Alternatively, the word **וַיֹּאמֶר** [means that I said] this to myself²⁸⁷ – so I thought to myself, and then I saw that my thought had been fulfilled.²⁸⁸ Indeed, **a pure diadem had been placed upon his head,** and they **had already clothed him in garments,**²⁸⁹ just like, “It became

²⁸³ **And I said (וַיֹּאמֶר) – R. Marwan [Ibn Janah] said that it is instead of “He said (וַיֹּאמֶר)”** – According to Ibn Janah, the verse intends that “he (i.e., the angel) said” to place a pure diadem upon Joshua’s head (הַרְקָמָה 329), because the subject of the verse is the angel rather than Zechariah (Wilensky *ad loc.*). Ibn Balaam interprets this verse the same way. Their interpretation exemplifies Ibn Janah’s broader exegetical claim that often verses use one word but the exegete must substituting a different word in order to correctly interpret the text (הַרְקָמָה 307-333). Ibn Balaam frequently accepts Ibn Janah’s applications of this method, while Ibn Ezra staunchly opposes the method (cf. צְהוּת, Lippmann 72a, Valle Rodriguez 187; הַהֲגָנָה, Oshri 94-97). Regarding Ibn Ezra’s hostile attitude toward these interpretations of Ibn Janah, see Simon (זֶן מְלִין תְּבַחָהּ) 263-276). For a thorough review of this exegetical method among medieval exegetes, see Perez (חֵילוּף מְלָה בְּזוּלָתָהּ) 207-228).

Tanhum argues that in the case of this verse, there is a particular reason to support Ibn Janah’s interpretation, because the biblical text is written **וַיֹּאמֶר** (*ketiv*), so **וַיֹּאמֶר** is only the *qere* (reading tradition). However, standard editions of the Masoretic text write the word **וַיֹּאמֶר**, so it is unclear if Tanhum had a different tradition of the *ketiv* or simply confused our verse with 4:2 which does contain the discrepancy between *qere* and *ketiv* that he describes. The lack of any additional Masoretic evidence for a *ketiv* of **וַיֹּאמֶר** in our verse makes it likely that Tanhum confused our verse with 4:2. (I am indebted to Prof. Michael Segal and Dr. Rafael Zer for confirming the absence of any Masoretic evidence for a *ketiv* of **וַיֹּאמֶר**.)

²⁸⁴ **In language** – Several manuscripts read: “in the holy language” (i.e., Hebrew). Ibn Ezra uses the phrase, “This does not exist in the holy language,” or similar expressions in several places (Exod., short commentary to 4:11, long commentary to 6:3, 12:2, 14:11, 23:19), but he does also use the phrase, “This is not found in language” (long commentary to Gen. 2:23). Hence, it is unclear in our case whether his argument is that Hebrew specifically does not employ the style that Ibn Janah is proposing, or that no language would ever employ such a style.

²⁸⁵ **Garments of adornment** – Ibn Ezra’s use of this phrase, which alludes to the priestly vestments (see note 271) presumably alludes to the fact that Joshua’s new clothes are not merely cleaner than his “filthy garments” but are specifically priestly vestments (cf. Eliezer of Beaugency).

²⁸⁶ **The prophet said... “How nice would it be if a pure diadem were upon his head”** – Radak adopts this interpretation. Yefet similarly writes that Zechariah politely requested of the angel that he instruct to those who were standing before him to place a pure diadem upon Joshua’s head. In a somewhat similar vein, Rashi suggests that Zechariah was praying for mercy for Joshua.

²⁸⁷ **To myself** – Literally, “in my heart.”

²⁸⁸ **So I thought to myself, and then I saw that my thought had been fulfilled** – This is Ibn Ezra’s second explanation for why Zechariah is speaking (“I said”), in response to Ibn Janah’s argument that the text should have said, “He (=the angel) said.” According to this explanation, Zechariah did not command the angels to change Zechariah’s garments – which indeed would have been inappropriate – but rather he thought to himself that it would be appropriate for them to change his clothes. The oral commentary presents this explanation only.

²⁸⁹ **A pure diadem had been placed upon his head, and they had already clothed him in garments** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting the verbs in 3:5 as pluperfect, in order to explain that the angels’ actions were not done in response to Zechariah’s thoughts. Ibn Ezra frequently interprets verbs that appear to be simple past tense as pluperfect in order to solve exegetical difficulties (e.g., Gen. 1:9, 7:21, 29:12, 31:24, 32:23, 35:14, 48:13, 49:23; Exod. 11:1; Lev. 13:58, 17:14; Deut. 3:23,29; Is. 38:22; Jon. 1:13). In the case of our verse, Yefet cites “some

infested with maggots and stank” (Exod. 16:20), [meaning] “it already stank,” because any item would first stink and afterward become infested with maggots.²⁹⁰

(6) Charged (ויצעד) – The *v* has a *pataḥ* because it is guttural, like, “He brought back (וישב) all the possessions” (Gen. 14:16).²⁹¹

(7) Thus – The meaning of [you,] too, [will rule My House] is, “If you do well, as your father, Jehozadak, who was High Priest in the First Temple,²⁹² did.”²⁹³

The *v* of **אֲנִי אֶפְדֶּה (I will permit)** is like a soft²⁹⁴ *f* (fa) in the language of Ishmael,²⁹⁵ likewise, “Then (ו) this stone, which I have set up as a pillar, shall be God’s abode” (Gen. 28:22),²⁹⁶ and, “Then (ו) we will proscribe their towns” (Num. 21:2).²⁹⁷

exegetes” who explained that Joshua was already clothed in garments before the diadem was placed upon his head (cf. Tanḥum).

²⁹⁰ **“It became infested with maggots and stank”... any item would first stink and afterward become infested with maggots** – This text proves that the Bible can write events in a different sequence than they occur, just as Ibn Ezra claims that the angels had given Zerubbabel new clothing even before Zechariah thought to himself that they should do so. Ibn Ezra makes the same observation in both of his commentaries to Exod. 16:20. He may have felt that Exod. 16:20 was a particularly compelling proof-text due the confluence of a logical argument (the maggots should only arrive after the manna spoils) and a textual argument, that the Bible subsequently presents the two actions in the reverse order – “It did not turn foul, and there were no maggots in it” (Exod. 16:24). Indeed, the several of Ibn Ezra’s predecessors (*ad loc.*) stress that the manna stank even before it became infested (*Mekhilta* of R. Ishmael, *Mekhilta* of R. Simon, Rashi). Ibn Ezra therefore uses Exod. 16:20 as his proof-text elsewhere (Exod. 17:13; Ps. 65:8, 78:45; second commentary to Est. 9:6). Radak cites the same proof-text here although he adopts Ibn Ezra’s first explanation of the word *אָמַר* – that Zechariah actually “said” these words and did not merely think them to himself.

²⁹¹ **The *v* has a *pataḥ* because it is guttural, like, “He brought back (וישב) all the possessions”** – Ibn Ezra’s point is that both *ויצעד* and *וישב* are *hif’il* verbs from hollow roots. *וישב* represents the standard vowel pattern for such a word, whereas *ויצעד* has a different final vowel due to the guttural letter, which can be pronounced more easily with a *pataḥ* (Schrem 42a). Radak offers the same explanation and proof-text. Ibn Ezra makes a similar observation regarding the *pataḥ* in the word *ויצעד* in Hag. 1:14 (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

²⁹² **Your father, Jehozadak, who was High Priest in the First Temple** – The Bible never explicitly states that Joshua’s father served as High Priest during the First Temple (cf. I Chron. 5:40-41), but Ibn Ezra believes this to be the case (see my supercommentary to Hag. 1:1).

²⁹³ **The meaning of [you,] too, [will rule My House] is, “If you do well, as your father, Jehozadak, who was High Priest in the First Temple, did”** – Ibn Ezra is focusing on the words *אָתָּה*, (“you, too”), which imply that Joshua’s father also served in the Temple. Tanḥum makes the same observation.

Ibn Ezra interprets the angels’ message as a personal message to Joshua, offering him a reward in exchange for his faithful conduct. Virtually all exegetes share this view (al-Qumisi, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Student of Trani), but Tanḥum – in addition to citing that view – suggests that Joshua might symbolically represent the entire nation, such that the angel is addressing all of Israel.

So [Joshua]’s reward is that he will walk²⁹⁸ among [these] attendants, who are the angels.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁴ **Soft** – Ibn Ezra refers to the letter ف as “soft” because the cognate Hebrew letter פ can make a hard “p” sound or soft “f” sound, whereas the Arabic ف is always pronounced as a soft “f.”

²⁹⁵ **The ו of וְהָיָה is like a soft ف (fa) in the language of Ishmael** – The Arabic prefix ف often serves as a conjunction expressing continuity within the narrative, similar to “so then...” in English. Ibn Ezra frequently observes that a Hebrew conjunctive ו parallels an Arabic ف when that ו introduces the apodosis of a condition (e.g., below 14:17) as well as other circumstances in which the function of the ו is to express the narrative’s continuity (e.g., Gen. 1:2; cf. Krinsky *ad loc.*; Bacher, ראב"ע המדקדק, 118-119). For further analysis of the prefix ف in Classical Arabic, see Lane (2321-2322).

In our verse, Ibn Ezra is addressing the fact that most of the verse is a conditional promise with multiple dependent clauses, but it is unclear which dependent clause begins the apodosis. In Hebrew, all of the clauses begin with a prefix ו, so most of these prefixes function as the conjunction “and,” while one of them functions as “then” – introducing the apodosis. Ibn Ezra argues that the apodosis begins with וְהָיָה, so the full conditional statement is: “If you walk in My paths and keep My charge, and if you, too, will rule My House and also guard My courts, then I will permit you to move about among these attendants.”

Rashi claims that the apodosis begins two clauses earlier: “If you walk in My paths and keep My charge, then you will also rule My House and guard My courts, and I will permit you to move about among these attendants.” Radak accepts both Ibn Ezra’s fundamental argument that a Hebrew prefix ו can function like an Arabic ف (cf. Radak to Josh. 1:1 and I Sam. 1:1) and his claim that וְהָיָה introduces the apodosis in our verse. Several other exegetes also maintain that וְהָיָה begins the apodosis (Yefet, Eliezer of Beaugency, Student of Trani), which appears to be Joseph Kara’s conclusion, too (cf. the HaKeter edition regarding the possibility that his concluding comments are a gloss).

²⁹⁶ **Then (ו) this stone, which I have set up as a pillar, shall be God’s abode** – Gen. 28:20-22 also contains a lengthy conditional statement, where the division between protasis and apodosis is unclear:

If God remains with me, if He protects me on this journey that I am making, and gives me bread to eat and clothing to wear, and if I return safe to my father’s house, and the Lord shall be my God. This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, shall be God’s abode; and of all that You give me, I will set aside a tithe for You.

Ibn Ezra is arguing that the apodosis begins with the phrase, “This stone, which I have set up as a pillar, shall be God’s abode,” so the conjunctive ו which opens that phrase is functioning like an Arabic prefix ف (“If God remains with me... Then this stone...”). Ibn Ezra repeats this division of the protasis and apodosis in Zech. 14:17, and Rashi and Ralbag (Gen. *ad loc.*) interpret Jacob’s vow in the same manner. However, elsewhere Ibn Ezra implies that the apodosis begins one clause earlier: “If God remains with me... Then the Lord shall be my God, and this stone...” (Exod. 3:15; יסוד מורא 7:9, Cohen and Simon 151; cf. Roth, מבשר עזרא 120-121). Joseph Bekhor Shor, Radak, and Ramban (Gen. *ad loc.*) also understand the apodosis to begin: “Then the Lord shall be my God.” Ibn Ezra might have changed his mind regarding the vow’s syntax. Alternatively, he might have sought to conceal from the masses his explanation for how the apodosis could begin with, “Then the Lord shall be my God,” since readers who did not grasp his esoteric explanation might conclude that Jacob intended to serve God only if He fulfilled Jacob’s condition. Indeed, Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Gen. 28:21 seems deliberately cryptic: “‘The Lord shall be my God’ – This is the glorious [divine] name... You shall find it in the passage of ‘These are the names’ (Exod. 1:1).” Thus, one must read his philosophically-oriented excursus to Exod. 3:15 or philosophically-oriented work, יסוד מורא, to discover this interpretation.

²⁹⁷ **Then (ו) we will proscribe their towns** – The conjunctive ו begins the apodosis, “If You deliver this people into our hand, then (ו) we will proscribe their towns.”

²⁹⁸ **That he will walk** – Ibn Ezra’s paraphrase substitutes an imperfect verb (יהלך) for the word מְהַלְכִים, whose etymology is difficult. Jonathan translates it as “feet that walk” (רגליו מהלכן). Ḥayyuj (כתאב אלנתר, Maman and Ben Porat 318) considers it to be the plural of מְהַלֵּךְ (cf. Ezek. 42:4), which generally means “a walk,” yet Ḥayyuj interprets it here as synonymous with the *qal* participle הוֹלְכִים (those who walk). Ibn Ezra appears to be interpreting מְהַלְכִים as “[the ability] to walk” (cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 119, and Radak).

²⁹⁹ **So [Joshua]’s reward is that he will walk among... the angels** – According to Ibn Ezra, the prophet is charging Joshua with protecting God’s temple and its courtyard, and he promises that if Joshua does so, “then” God will permit him to move about the angels (see oral commentary). Jonathan and Rashi interpret this verse as

(8) Hear now (עַתָּה).³⁰⁰

[O High Priest Joshua] – I saw someone explain that “High Priest” refers to Jehozadak – not to Joshua³⁰¹ – because he said that Joshua served in defilement.³⁰² But he did not explain correctly, for I then showed him the angel’s words – this verse – in which he refers to [Joshua] himself [as] “High Priest.”

And your fellows [sitting before you] – They are the rest of the priests, who ought to sit before him, because he is **High Priest**.

For those are miracle men – They deserve that the Lord should perform miracles for them.³⁰³

offering Joshua to walk among the angels when he is resurrected from the dead. Saadiah (*Beliefs and Opinions* 9:8, Rosenblatt 347) similarly writes that Joshua’s reward was to walk with angels in the afterlife. Ibn Ezra does not elaborate here on when or how Joshua would walk with the angels, although the oral commentary does compare this reward to Enoch’s experience (cf. my super-commentary *ad loc.*). Yefet offers several possible ways to interpret Joshua’s reward figuratively, as a metaphor for the lofty status that he will attain.

³⁰⁰ **Hear now** (עַתָּה) – According to this punctuation, Ibn Ezra is using the word עַתָּה as a Hebrew synonym for the word אָּ, to clarify that Joshua is being told to listen “now.” Ibn Ezra does frequently comment that אָּ means “now” (e.g., Gen. 12:1, 27:3; Exod. 4:13, 11:2, 12:9; Num. 10:31, 12:11-12; Deut. 4:32; Isa. 5:1, 7:3, 47:12; Amos 7:2; Ps. 115:2, 124:1). Schrem (42b) interprets Ibn Ezra this way, which is particularly compelling according to those witnesses that read שמע נא עתה, such that Ibn Ezra includes the word אָּ in his lemma and then adds a synonym. The HaKeter edition suggests a different punctuation, according to which עתה is part of the next exegetical comment and does not address the meaning of אָּ at all: ...עתה ראיתי מפרשׁוּ (‘‘Hear – Now I saw someone explain...’’).

³⁰¹ **‘‘High Priest’’ refers to Jehozadak – not to Joshua** – This anonymous commentator could be addressing Zech. 6:11, where the phrase ‘‘Joshua son of Jehozadak, High Priest,’’ in which ‘‘High ‘‘Priest’’ could modify either name. Alternatively, this commentator might be referring to the fact that the ‘‘Joshua son of Jehozadak, High Priest’’ is the standard title for Joshua throughout Haggai, and Haggai never refers to Joshua as simply ‘‘Joshua, High Priest’’ (cf. Filvarg 13a). Although I have not found a written source for this interpretation, Ibn Ezra’s subsequent comment, ‘‘I then showed him,’’ implies that the source was someone whom Ibn Ezra knew personally.

³⁰² **Joshua served in defilement** – Ibn Ezra is presumably alluding to the aforementioned view – which he rejects – that Joshua’s ‘‘filthy garments’’ symbolized his descendants’ sins (3:1).

³⁰³ **They deserve that the Lord should perform miracles for them** – Ibn Ezra is rejecting the rabbinic view that the ‘‘miracle men’’ were Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, who experienced a miracle in the furnace (bSan. 93a, Gen. R. to 22:19, Exod. R. to 7:9). Jonathan translates ‘‘miracle men’’ as ‘‘men who are worthy of a miracle being done for them,’’ which could be consistent with Ibn Ezra’s interpretation (but cf. the variant cited by Sperber, which explicitly identifies Joshua’s ‘‘fellows’’ as Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, and Rashi’s presentation of Jonathan). Rashi accepts the identification of these men as Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

The Branch (צֶמַח) is Zerubbabel,³⁰⁴ as it says, “[A man] called the Branch [shall branch out... and he shall build the Temple of the Lord]” (6:12).³⁰⁵ And the end of this passage proves this: “[Whoever you are, O great mountain] in the path of Zerubbabel, [turn into level ground]” (4:7).³⁰⁶

But many commentators said that the **branch** is the Messiah,³⁰⁷ and he is called “Zerubbabel” because he is descended from him, like “with My servant David as their prince for all time” (Ezek. 37:25).³⁰⁸ I, too, [interpreted] according to the method of *derash* that the numerical value of צֶמַח equals מְנַחֵם (Menaḥem),³⁰⁹ who is the son of ‘Amiel.³¹⁰

A second midrashic interpretation of “miracle men” interprets the phrase as referring to prophets, who performs miraculous signs (tHor. 2:9, bHor. 13a, yHor. 3:5, Num. R. to 4:21). Joseph Kara cites the view that the “miracle men” were Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah but adds his own “*peshat*” interpretation that the “miracle men” were the Jews whom God miraculously enabled to return from Babylonia. Al-Qumisi interprets the Hebrew phrase מִוִּפְתֵי אֲנָשִׁי as “exemplary men” rather than “miracle men” (cf. Ps. 71:7), and he believes these men to be future righteous men whom Zechariah saw in his vision. Yefet interprets מִוִּפְתֵי אֲנָשִׁי as “men who are a sign,” explaining that the “fellows sitting before” Joshua were contemporary Jewish leaders (שרים, not priests), and they served as manifest evidence (בְּרָהָאן; cf. Lane 196-197) of the future redemption (cf. De Vreugd *ad loc.*). Eliezer of Beaugency interprets מִוִּפְתֵי אֲנָשִׁי as “men who are a sign” or reminder, and he claims that Zechariah is referring to Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah (see 6:10).

³⁰⁴ **The Branch (צֶמַח) is Zerubbabel** – Ibn Ezra believes that Zechariah is prophesying about the potential success of the current generation under Zerubbabel. The identification of צֶמַח with Zerubbabel – rather than a later Messiah – is shared by many exegetes (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Student of Trani, Tanḥum; cf. Radak). In Ibn Ezra’s case, this interpretation fits with his general preference for interpreting prophecies in a manner that would have been meaningful in their own time (see my supercommentary to Hag. 2:9).

³⁰⁵ **As it says, “[A man] called the Branch [shall branch out... and he shall build the Temple of the Lord]”** – That chapter does not mention Zerubbabel by name, but its context indicates that it is alluding to Zerubbabel, as Ibn Ezra also observes in his commentary to 6:12. Ibn Ezra’s proof is somewhat circular, because a midrashic interpretation of 6:12 claims that it, too, is alluding to the Messiah (see note 420).

³⁰⁶ **[Whoever you are, O great mountain] in the path of Zerubbabel, [turn into level ground]** – That verse proves that Zerubbabel is the heroic figure whom Zechariah describes, as opposed to a later messianic figure – the view that Ibn Ezra now proceeds to attack.

³⁰⁷ **But many commentators said that the branch is the Messiah** – This is the view of Jonathan, al-Qumisi, and Yefet (cf. note 420). Tanḥum cites this view but insists that the first view is the plain sense of the text. The association of the word צֶמַח (branch) with a messianic figure likely derives from its usage in Isa. 4:2 and Jer. 23:5, and perhaps the use of other synonyms in Isa. 11:1. Jonathan and many subsequent exegetes interpret all of those passages as messianic prophecies, while Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Isaiah rejects the messianic interpretations. (We do not have his commentary to Jeremiah.) Ibn Ezra influenced Ibn Caspi, who rejects messianic interpretations of all three verses, and cites Ibn Ezra as a precedent in one case (11:1). In the case of Jer. 23:5, Ibn Caspi indicates that the messianic “branch” is Zerubbabel.

³⁰⁸ **Like “with My servant David as their prince for all time”** – Ezekiel’s vision of a future redemption refers to the messianic king as “David.” Ibn Ezra assumes that this king will have a different name, but Ezekiel refers

(9) For [mark well this stone which I place before Joshua] – This stone is the stone of the plumb line – as it will explain further (4:10) – that will be in Zerubbabel’s hand when he begins to lay the Temple’s foundation, and that will be before Joshua.³¹¹ So this is the verse’s explanation (פִּי):³¹² the stone which I place in Zerubbabel’s hand before Joshua.

to him by the name of his royal ancestor. He cites this verse in several places where an ancient figure is mentioned in a passage that he interprets as referring to later events (long commentary to Gen. 4:15, Hos. 3:5, Ps. 45:2, Cant. 8:12). Radak (Ezek. 37:24) cites a debate regarding whether Ezekiel is indeed referring to the Messiah by his ancestor’s name, or the Messiah himself will also be named David.

³⁰⁹ **I, too, [interpreted] according to the method of *derash* that the numerical value of צָמָה equals מְנַחֵם (Menahem)** – All Hebrew words have a numerical value according to an interpretive method known as *gematria*. Ibn Ezra observes that the numerical values of צָמָה and מְנַחֵם both equal 138, which could make צָמָה an allusion to the Messiah (see below), yet he qualifies this comment by labeling it as *derash*. Radak cites the same *gematria*-based interpretation. Although Ibn Ezra presents this interpretation as his own, it appears in the Jerusalem Talmud (yBer. 2:4). Abarbanel criticizes Ibn Ezra for using *gematria* to present this “*derash*” interpretation, as if Ibn Ezra is mocking those who see צָמָה as an allusion to the Messiah, when in fact the idea of a branch symbolizing the Messiah has a basis in Isa. 11:1 (although Ibn Ezra’s own commentary to Isa. 11:1 does not accept that assumption; cf. note 307). Regarding Abarbanel’s criticism of this comment, cf. Lipshitz, ע”פ 100-101 פרקי עיון במשנת הראב”ע.

Regarding Ibn Ezra’s attitude toward the use of *gematria* as an exegetical tool, see his comments to Gen. 14:14, Exod. 1:7 (short commentary), Est. 3:11 (second commentary), and Dan. 11:31; and Mondschein, ליהסו של ראב”ע אל השימוש הפרשני במידת הגמטריה, 137-161.

³¹⁰ **The numerical value of צָמָה equals מְנַחֵם, who is the son of ‘Amiel** – Ibn Ezra is alluding to a tradition that there would be a messianic figure named Menahem b. ‘Amiel. He likely learned this tradition from the book of Zerubbabel, a pseudo-epigraphic apocalyptic text (see Reeves, 448-454). Ibn Ezra was familiar with this work, although he describes it unfavorably (Exod. 2:22; cf. note 658). This work has been printed by Even-Shmuel (מדרשי גאלה 55-88) and translated by Reeves (455-466); for additional versions of it, see Reeves 449-451.

³¹¹ **For this stone is the stone of the plumb line... that will be in Zerubbabel’s hand... and that will be before Joshua** – Ibn Ezra believes that the stone in this vision is equivalent to the stone that is in Zerubbabel’s hand in 4:10. That verse also has an image of seven eyes (“Those seven are the eyes of the Lord”), which might strengthen the parallel between that stone and the stone in our verse – “a single stone with seven eyes” (cf. Rashi, Radak, Tanḥum).

Other exegetes interpret symbolism of the stone differently, as alluding to the foundation of the Temple that was laid during Cyrus’ reign (Rashi, Joseph Kara), or the Jews’ enemies and the Persian kings who blocked the Temple’s construction (Eliezer of Beaugency).

³¹² **Explanation (פִּי)** – According to MS Montefiore 34, the Hebrew word is פִּירַשׁ, which could be translated as “he explained” rather than “explanation.” However, several witnesses have the contraction פִּי, which likely stands for פִּירוּשׁ (“explanation”), and even the word פִּירַשׁ could be vocalized as פִּירַשׁ. While such a defective spelling would be unusual, MS Montefiore 34 has a crossed-out prefix ה before this word. Therefore, the scribe initially wrote הפִּירַשׁ and presumably intended הפִּירַשׁ or simply forgot the letter ו in the middle of the word. Perhaps a later scribe assumed that the vocalization was הפִּירַשׁ and crossed out the prefix, because the definite article cannot precede a perfect verb. I have therefore adopted the reading of פִּי for the base text, rather than the problematic word in MS Montefiore 34.

וּמִשְׁתִּי (and I will remove)... that country³¹³ – This word [וּמִשְׁתִּי] is from the [category of] transitive verbs like the word “return” (שׁוּב), which [function] in two ways: Sometimes it [means] returning oneself, [but] it also [means] returning something else, like וְהָשִׁיב.³¹⁴ So, too, “neither the Lord’s Ark of the Covenant nor Moses departed (מָשׁוּ) from the camp” (Num. 14:44), and **I will remove (וּמִשְׁתִּי) [that country’s] punishment (עֲוֹן).**³¹⁵

And the meaning of עֲוֹן is the punishment, the distress³¹⁶ and the exile.³¹⁷

(10) In that day, on which the foundation of the Temple is laid, then you will dwell securely.³¹⁸ Hence, Zechariah’s words are like the words of the prophet Haggai.³¹⁹

³¹³ **וּמִשְׁתִּי (and I will remove)... that country** – Heb. ומשתי את הארץ. The words את הארץ (“that country”) appear out of place and are missing in some manuscripts and in the HaKeter edition. Their inclusion without the word עון (“punishment”) creates the mistaken impression that the verse threatens exile (“I will remove that country”), when in fact it promises to “remove *the punishment of* that country.” It is possible that the original text omitted them, but some scribes wrote them here in error, perhaps accidentally copying some extra words from the Bible and/or the next lemma. Alternatively, perhaps Ibn Ezra intended [עון] את הארץ and expected the reader to fill in the missing word עון (punishment) by heart. Or perhaps he initially wrote out the entire phrase, but the word עון was accidentally omitted by a copyist, which then prompted some scribes to further delete the words את הארץ in order to make sense out of the remaining phrase.

³¹⁴ **Sometimes it [means] returning oneself, [but] it also [means] returning something else, like וְהָשִׁיב** – The *qal* form of the root שׁוּב (to return) can be both transitive and intransitive. The *hif’il* form וְהָשִׁיב is necessarily transitive. Tanḥum also cites שׁוּב as an example of a *qal* verb that can be transitive and intransitive. Ibn Ezra makes this same observation about the root שׁוּב elsewhere (see my supercommentary to Hag. 1:6)

³¹⁵ **So, too... “departed (מָשׁוּ) from the camp” and I will remove (וּמִשְׁתִּי) [that country’s] punishment** – Ibn Ezra is citing Num. 14:44 as an example of the root מוּשׁ being intransitive in the *qal* form, as opposed to the transitive use here (Schrem 42b). Ibn Janah (השרשים 257), Radak (*ad loc.* and השרשים 375), and Tanḥum also distinguish between the transitive use of מוּשׁ in *qal* in our verse as opposed to its intransitive use in Num. 14:44 (cf. Ḥayyuj, שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק, Wated and Sivan 146-147, who cites both verses but ignores this distinction). The oral commentary simply states וּמִשְׁתִּי means, “I will remove,” without any detailed analysis, as do Rashi and Joseph Kara. Interestingly, Ibn Ezra interprets מוּשׁ as transitive in multiple verses where other exegetes consider the verb to be intransitive (cf. my supercommentary to the oral commentary).

³¹⁶ **The distress** – I would normally translate the Hebrew word רַע as “evil,” but I did not want to use an English word that could possibly connote sinful behavior, since Ibn Ezra is clearly referring to the suffering and punishment of the people rather than their sins.

³¹⁷ **And the meaning of עֲוֹן is the punishment, the distress and the exile** – Ibn Ezra rejects the straightforward meaning that עֲוֹן refers to sinful behavior, just as he rejected that meaning in v. 4 above (cf. note. 279). Others maintain that the word עֲוֹן indeed means “iniquity” or “guilt” in this verse (Jonathan, al-Qumisi, Eliezer of Beaugency). Radak cites both interpretations, while Tanḥum follows Ibn Ezra’s view.

³¹⁸ **In that day... then you will dwell securely** – Ibn Ezra’s paraphrase is interpreting Zechariah’s promise in this verse: “In that day... you will be inviting each other to the shade of vines and fig trees.” Ibn Ezra presumably interprets the images of vines and fig trees as indicating security on the basis of other verses that use similar imagery for that purpose (I. Kings 5:5, II Kings 18:31, Isa. 36:16, Mic. 4:4).

Chapter 4

(1) **Came back**, because it said, **He woke me**, [implying] that [Zechariah] was sleeping.³²⁰

And the meaning of **יָעוֹר** [is] not **יִוָּעַר** (“is woken”) by someone else, but rather on his own, quietly, as if he is waking on his own.³²¹

(2) **He said... וְגַל (with a spring)** is like, “The upper³²² springs” (גַּלְתָּ).³²³

Now, I will briefly tell you the matter of this **lampstand**, because the prophet³²⁴ mentions all of its details hereafter. There were (3) **two olive trees** – to the right and left of the spring – and (12) **the tops of the olive trees** were falling from the trees onto **the two golden tubes**,

³¹⁹ **Zechariah’s words are like the words of the prophet Haggai** – Schrem (42b) explains that Ibn Ezra is referring to Zechariah’s specific promise in this verse that Jews will invite each other “to the shade of vines and fig trees,” which parallels Haggai’s promise that God will bless the “the vine, fig tree, pomegranate, and olive tree” which “have not yet borne fruit” (2:19). The HaKeter edition apparently agrees with Schrem, since it cites Hag. 2:18-19. Alternatively, Ibn Ezra might be addressing the larger message of the book of Haggai. One major theme of Haggai’s prophecy is that the people’s quality of life will improve once they actually built the Temple (cf. Radak to 3:9, citing Hag. 2:23).

³²⁰ **Came back – because it said, He woke me, [implying] that [Zechariah] was sleeping** – Because Zechariah fell asleep, there was an interruption after the previous chapter’s prophecy. Hence, the angel “came back” as this chapter begins (cf. Abarbanel).

³²¹ **And the meaning of יָעוֹר [is]... as if he is waking on his own** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the meaning of the root עוֹר in *nif'al* (cf. Radak). Ordinarily, *nif'al* verbs are passive, so one might view the *nif'al* verb יָעוֹר as the passive of the *hif'il* verb וַיַּעֲרֵנִי (“he woke me”) that appeared earlier in the verse: The angel “woke” Zechariah, so Zechariah “was woken” from his sleep. However, Ibn Ezra argues that the passive of וַיַּעֲרֵנִי would be the *hof'al* verb יִוָּעַר. Instead, the root עוֹר in *nif'al* is intransitive but not passive – “to become awake” (cf. Ibn Ezra to Hab. 3:9, Muraoka and Shavitsky). Accordingly, the verse intends that the angel “woke me as a man awakens from sleep,” meaning that the angel woke Zechariah gently enough that Zechariah felt as if he woke up naturally rather than being aggressively woken by someone else (Schrem 44b).

³²² **Upper** – The Hebrew spelling of the word “upper” in the standard commentary (עלית) comes from Jud. 1:15 (גַּלְתָּ עֲלִיתָ), but a nearly identical verse appears in Jos. 15:19, with minor variations in spelling (גַּלְתָּ עֲלִיּוֹת). Indeed, some manuscripts spell the word “upper” here as עליות.

³²³ **וְגַל is like, “The upper springs” (גַּלְתָּ)** – Ibn Ezra believes that the word גַּלְתָּ means a water channel (see oral commentary). Regarding the precise meaning of the word גַּלְתָּ, Ibn Ezra’s second commentary to Cant. 4:12, implies that it refers to a small stream of water. Ibn Saruk (מהברת מנחם, Philipowski 54, Sáenz-Badillos 103*-104*) also interprets the word גַּלְתָּ in Jos. 15:19/Jud. 1:15 as a spring of water based on Cant. 4:12. Ibn Janah (השרשיהם, 88, 92) and Tanḥum (cf. I Kings 7:41) interpret the גַּלְתָּ in our verse as a bowl, while Joseph Kara clearly interprets it as a flowing spring. It is unclear to what extent these different exegetes actually disagree about the image of the גַּלְתָּ, since a hovering spring would presumably be contained within a bowl or similar receptacle (cf. Rashi, who describes גַּלְתָּ as סֶפֶל עֲגוּל גָּדוֹל – “the language of a spring, like a large, round basin”). Rashi and Eliezer of Beaugency cite the same proof-text as Ibn Ezra for the meaning of גַּלְתָּ, but Eliezer of Beaugency claims that the word cannot refer to a spring in either verse.

³²⁴ **The prophet** – Many manuscripts read “this prophet” (זֶה הַנְּבִיאַ).

and on their own they would fall and become crushed,³²⁵ and they would become oil as pure as gold, and would drain into the spring. In the spring, there were **(2) seven pipes (מוצקות)**³²⁶ – seven lamps and seven pipes.

And **seven** the second time³²⁷ is like, “[When they go out] to the outer court—[to the outer court] where the people are” (Ezek. 44:19).³²⁸

The angel explained the meaning of the vision: **(6) Not by might, nor by power, [but by My spirit]** – Just as you saw the oil being made by itself and burning, so, too, shall the Temple be built, neither by some great power that Zerubbabel has, nor by his great might, but rather by the Lord’s spirit and His assistance.³²⁹

³²⁵ **On their own they would... become crushed** – The olives fell and were crushed without anyone actively picking them from the trees or crushing them.

³²⁶ **Pipes** – Ibn Ezra interprets the Hebrew word מוצקות as a noun, in accordance with the view of Ibn Saruk (מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 54-55, Sáenz-Badillos 104*; cf. Ibn Janah, הרקמה 152).

³²⁷ **And seven the second time** – The verse literally states, “The lamps on it are seven (שבָּעָה) in number, seven and seven (וְשֶׁבַע וְשֶׁבַע) pipes for the lamps above it.” Ibn Ezra argues that each lamp had a pipe pouring into it, so the verse could have simply read: “The lamps on it are seven (שבָּעָה) in number, and seven (וְשֶׁבַע) pipes for the lamps above it” (cf. Yefet). Ibn Ezra explains that the extra “seven” is purely stylistic: “The lamps on it are seven in number, seven [lamps] and seven pipes for the lamps above it.” He thus believes that each of these seven lamps connected to one pipe (Filvarg 13a) and rejects the possibility that each lamp had two pipes – “seven and seven pipes” (cf. *Pesiqta R.*, Ish Shalom 29b-30a; Eliezer of Beaugency) – or that each lamp had seven pipes, for a total of 49 pipes (“seven [times] seven pipes; *Pesiqta R.*, *ibid.*; Rashi, Joseph Kara). Ibn Ezra’s view appears to be adopted by Tanḥum and by Student of Trani, while Radak cites both Ibn Ezra’s and Rashi’s views.

³²⁸ **To the outer court—[to the outer court] where the people are** – Ezekiel repeats the words “the outer court” twice. Ibn Ezra is interpreting the repetition as purely stylistic, since Ezekiel is not indicating that a second courtyard existed. Tanḥum cites the same proof-text. Abarbanel challenges Ibn Ezra’s use of this verse as a proof-text for our verse, because Ezekiel did not use a conjunction, whereas Zechariah uses a conjunctive ו – “seven and (ו) seven pipes.” It is possible that Abarbanel understood Ibn Ezra to be bothered merely by the repetition in the phrase “seven and seven” (וְשֶׁבַע וְשֶׁבַע), so Abarbanel remarks that the conjunctive ו allows one to interpret “seven and seven” as fourteen or forty nine. However, it appears that Ibn Ezra was in fact bothered by the repetition of “seven” after the first half of the verse (cf. Tanḥum): “The lamps on it are seven in number – seven – and seven pipes,” so there was no conjunction in the part of the verse that bothered Ibn Ezra.

³²⁹ **Just as you saw the oil being made by itself and burning, so, too shall the Temple be built... by the Lord’s spirit and His assistance** – After offering a detailed depiction of the image that Zechariah saw, Ibn Ezra now explains its symbolism: The oil’s ability to fuel the lamp on its own – without outside intervention – represents the manner in which God will rebuild the Temple without reliance on Zerubbabel’s might. Ibn Ezra’s presentation of both the image and its meaning appears to be based on Ibn Saruk (מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 54-55, Sáenz-Badillos 103*-104*). Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Radak interpret the symbolism in the

(3) And [by it] are two [olive trees] – It will explain the reason for the **olive trees** [and why] there were **two** (vv. 11-14).

(4) I, in turn, [asked the angel] – The prophet knew that this was in a prophetic vision; therefore, he asked.

(5) [“Do you not know what those things mean?”] asked [the angel] – He was asking [Zechariah] whether he had a sense of wisdom to understand the vision’s meaning.³³⁰

(6) Then he explained – Behold, **the word of the Lord** is that the Temple will be rebuilt;³³¹ it is written: “[Thereupon Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak began rebuilding the House of God in Jerusalem,] with the full support of the prophets of God” (Ezra 5:2).³³²

(7) Whoever – The prophet is addressing every prince and king: If you think of yourself as such-and-such **great mountain**, you will turn **into level ground in the path of Zerubbabel**.³³³

same manner, while Eliezer of Beaugency criticizes Ibn Saruk for claiming that no human effort would be needed to rebuild the Temple.

³³⁰ **He was asking him whether he had a sense of wisdom to understand the vision’s meaning** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting the angel’s question in light of the fact that Zechariah just asked him to explain the vision. Accordingly, the angel could not be asking whether Zechariah already understood the vision – since he obviously did not. Rather, he was asking whether Zechariah had the capacity to figure out the meaning of the vision.

³³¹ **The word of the Lord is that the Temple will be rebuilt** – Zechariah does not explicitly discuss the Temple’s construction until v. 9, so Ibn Ezra cites an additional proof-text – in which Zerubbabel actually builds the Temple – to demonstrate that Zechariah’s main point is indeed that Zerubbabel will rebuild the Temple.

³³² **[Thereupon Zerubbabel... began rebuilding the House of God...] with the full support of the prophets of God** – I have presented the standard NJPS translation of Ezra 5:2, although there appear to be minor errors in Ibn Ezra’s citation of the original Aramaic; see my supercommentary to the oral commentary.

³³³ **The prophet is addressing every prince and king: If you think of yourself as such-and-such great mountain, you will turn into level ground in the path of Zerubbabel** – According to Ibn Ezra, the symbolism of the mountain being flattened into level ground is that all of the world’s leaders will be powerless in the face of Zerubbabel. Others interpret the symbolism in a similar vein, but rather than addressing world leaders in general, they suggest that the angel is addressing specific figures who obstructed the Temple’s

And when he brings forth **that top stone** – which is “the stone of distinction” (v. 10) that will be given into Zerubbabel’s hand, and it is the aforementioned “stone which I place before Joshua” (3:9)³³⁴ – **shouts (תְּשֹׁאוֹת)** – there will be a great tumult (שֹׁאֵן) for it³³⁵ – a tumult of [shouting] “**Beautiful! Beautiful**” – that everyone will rejoice, like, “[O you who were] full of tumult” (תְּשֹׁאוֹת; Isa. 22:2).³³⁶

(8) [The word of the Lord] came [to me] - Now it explains the matter of the lamp.

(9) [Zerubbabel’s] hands have founded (יִקְדוּ), a past-tense verb.³³⁷

reconstruction, such as Persian kings (Eliezer of Beaugency) or the Jews’ local enemies: Tattenai and Shethar-bozenai (Rashi; cf. Ezra 5:3) or Sanballat (Radak; see note 263). Abarbanel dismisses their interpretations on the grounds that the Jews’ enemies did in fact resist their attempts to build the Temple. Abarbanel instead suggests a messianic interpretation of this image, in which the great mountain is a metaphor for the stature of the Messiah who will descend from Zerubbabel.

³³⁴ **That top stone – which... will be given into Zerubbabel’s hand, and it is the aforementioned “stone which I place before Joshua”** – As he already explained (3:9), Ibn Ezra equates the stones in 3:9, 4:7, and 4:10. This stone was the stone that one uses with a plumb-line, so it thus symbolizes the Temple’s reconstruction. Rashi and Joseph Kara share this interpretation of the “top stone,” which is also cited by Tanḥum. Others view this “top stone” as a jewel that symbolizes royalty (Saadiah, Ratzhabi, מְפִירוּשֵׁי רִס"ג 231), as the top stone of the Temple structure (Eliezer of Beaugency), or as the cornerstone of the Temple (cf. Tanḥum). The oral commentary appears to interpret the “top stone” as the top stone of the Temple structure.
³³⁵ **תְּשֹׁאוֹת – there will be a great tumult (שֹׁאֵן) for it** – Muraoka and Shavitsky suggest translating תְּשֹׁאוֹת as “noise” according to Ibn Ezra. Most translations of the verse use some variation of “shouts” because the verse specifies what they will be shouting: “Beautiful! Beautiful!”

It is unclear if by citing the Hebrew word שֹׁאֵן, Ibn Ezra is merely citing a synonym in order to define the lexical meaning of תְּשֹׁאוֹת, or if he further intends to indicate that תְּשֹׁאוֹת and שֹׁאֵן derive from the same etymology. The latter possibility would put him at odds with Ḥayyuj (שְׁלוֹשַׁת חִיבוּרֵי הַדְּקוּקָה), Wated and Sivan (292-293) and Ibn Janah (הַשְּׂרָשִׁים 490 and 500), who derive שֹׁאֵן from the root שֹׂא while deriving תְּשֹׁאוֹת (in Isa. 22:2) from שׂוֹא. (Regarding Ḥayyuj’s view, see above p. 28.) However, Ibn Ezra frequently argues that words with similar but distinct roots share a lexical meaning (cf. Charlap, תּוֹרַת הַלְשׁוֹן שֶׁל רֵאב"ע 93-99). So he need not argue that שֹׁאֵן and תְּשֹׁאוֹת share a common etymology in order to propose similar lexical meanings for them. Although his commentary to Isa 22:2 implies that שֹׁאֵן and תְּשֹׁאוֹת do share a common etymology, as Dukes observed (Ḥayyuj, סְפָרֵי דְקָדוּקָה 137 n. 3), his commentary to Ps. 40:3 rejects any etymological connections between שֹׁאֵן and the word שׂוֹא.

³³⁶ **[O you who were] full of tumult (תְּשֹׁאוֹת)** – Rashi, too, cites this phrase as a proof-text that תְּשֹׁאוֹת can connote loud noise, and Eliezer of Beaugency paraphrases the same verse. The oral commentary interprets תְּשֹׁאוֹת the same way but cites a different proof-text.

³³⁷ **יִקְדוּ – a past-tense verb** – Ibn Ezra presumably feels the need to clarify the tense of יִקְדוּ, because the root’s initial letter י could be mistaken for a prefix that would imply future tense. A future-tense verb יִקְדוּ would require different vocalization (presumably יִקְדוּ in *pi’el* or יִקְדוּ in *qal*, although neither is attested in the Bible) and would be masculine (whereas “hands,” the subject of יִקְדוּ, is a feminine word). Nevertheless, one might mistake יִקְדוּ for a future-tense verb, especially given that the next verb in the verse (תִּבְצַעְנָה) is imperfect.

הַבְּצֵעַ [means] will complete (תשלמנה), [like,] “When the Lord has completed (יִבְצֵעַ) all His work” (Isa. 10:12).³³⁸

Then you shall know (וַיִּדְעֶתָ) alludes to Zerubbabel³³⁹ – who is in place of all of Israel³⁴⁰ – [that it was the Lord of Hosts] who sent me to you (אֶלֵיְכֶם), to [Zerubbabel] and to all of Israel.³⁴¹

(10) For... [a day of] small (קטנות) is an adjective, yet the modified [noun] is missing,³⁴² like, “He spoke harsh (קשות) to them” (Gen. 42:7).³⁴³

And the word בָּז (scorn) is missing the middle consonant,³⁴⁴ like, “They do not despise (יְבוֹזוּ) the thief” (Prov. 6:30).³⁴⁵

³³⁸ **When the Lord has completed (יִבְצֵעַ) all His work** – This verse proves that the root בצע can mean “to complete.” Hence, תְּבַצְעֶנָּה in our verse means that Zerubbabel’s hands will complete the Temple’s construction. Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Isaiah *ad loc.* (and Lam. 2:17) cites our verse as proof that בצע can mean “to complete.”

Ibn Quraysh (רסאלה, Becker 135-136), Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Radak cite the same proof-text to demonstrate that בצע means “to complete” in our verse (cf. Ibn Saruk, מחברת מנהם, Philipowski 47, Sáenz-Badillos 87*). Tanḥum interprets בצע the same way but offers a different proof-text (Lam. 2:17).

³³⁹ **וַיִּדְעֶתָ alludes to Zerubbabel** – The Hebrew phrase (וַיִּדְעֶתָ רְמוֹ לְזִרְבָּבֶל) is based on only two witnesses. The word רְמוֹ (“alludes” or “allusion”) is replaced by the word כְּמוֹ (“like”) in two witnesses and is altogether missing from two additional witnesses. The confusion between כְּמוֹ and רְמוֹ is understandable due to their resemblance in Hebrew script. After the word לְזִרְבָּבֶל, several manuscripts have an additional phrase, וַיִּדְעֶתָ לְזִרְבָּבֶל, which would yield a sentence with a seemingly unintelligible repetition: וַיִּדְעֶתָ לְזִרְבָּבֶל וַיִּדְעֶתָ לְזִרְבָּבֶל – “Then you shall know’ speaks an allusion to Zerubbabel. ‘Then you shall know’ – to Zerubbabel.” The HaKeter edition adopts a reading of וַיִּדְעֶתָ רְמוֹ לְזִרְבָּבֶל וַיִּדְעֶתָ, which does not appear in any witness. Ibn Ezra uses both רְמוֹ לְ... and וַיִּדְעֶתָ לְ... to present the antecedent of a pronoun (e.g., Num. 16:14 and Exod. 3:6, respectively), but I have not found any instances of him using both together, as the HaKeter’s emendation would suggest. It thus seems more likely that in the original text, the word וַיִּדְעֶתָ was followed by either רְמוֹ לְזִרְבָּבֶל or וַיִּדְעֶתָ לְזִרְבָּבֶל (or perhaps just by וַיִּדְעֶתָ).

³⁴⁰ **Zerubbabel... is in place of all of Israel** – See Ibn Ezra’s commentary to 1:2.

³⁴¹ **Then you shall know (וַיִּדְעֶתָ) alludes to Zerubbabel... to you (אֶלֵיְכֶם), to [Zerubbabel] and to all of Israel** – The verb וַיִּדְעֶתָ (“you shall know”) contains a masculine singular suffix (you m.s.), but the suffix אֶלֵיְכֶם (“to you”) is masculine plural (you m.p.). So Ibn Ezra renders the verse: “You (=Zerubbabel) shall know that it was the Lord of Hosts who sent me to you (=the Jews).” The verse switches between singular and plural, yet it retains the same addressee throughout, because even when the addressee appears to be Zerubbabel alone, he represents the entire nation.

³⁴² **The modified [noun] is missing** – Ibn Ezra assumes that “small” cannot modify “day” (i.e., “a minor day”), because the adjective is in a plural form.

³⁴³ **He spoke harsh (קשות) to them** – In both of these verses, the adjective modifies an implied noun, as Ibn Ezra proceeds to explain.

So thus is [the verse]: **For who shall scorn a day of small** consolations or salvations – herein is the absence of a modified noun,³⁴⁶ like “He spoke harsh [words] to them”³⁴⁷ – once they see the stone of the plumb line, which is **the stone of distinction**,³⁴⁸ **in the hand of Zerubbabel** to rebuild the Temple. Indeed, **seven** eyes guard it so that nobody may come knock it down.

It is possible that **seven** eyes [means] many guards.³⁴⁹ Or – another explanation – like the angel explained: **Those seven are the eyes of the Lord**. The angel explained that the **seven are the eyes of the Lord**, which are **ranging over the whole earth**.³⁵⁰

The meaning of **שבעה (seven)** is like: “He named it Shibah” (שִׁבְעָה; Gen. 26:33). And “oath” (שְׁבוּעָה) is derived from שִׁבְעָה, as it says, “[Hence that place was called Beer-sheba (בְּאֵר שִׁבְעָה),] for there the two of them swore an oath” (נִשְׁבְּעוּ; Gen. 21:31),³⁵¹ in the manner that the author

³⁴⁴ **בוּ is missing the middle consonant** – בוּ derives from a hollow root, בּוּ. Ibn Janah observes that בוּ is unusual, because hollow roots normally have a *qamatz* rather than a *patah* under the first consonant of their perfect verbs and participles (ההשגה, Tene 74). Consequently, Ibn Janah debates whether בוּ derives from a hollow root with irregular vocalization or from the final-weak root בּוּה with irregular vocalization (cf. השרשים 59-60).

³⁴⁵ **They do not despise (יבוזו) the thief** – The word יבוזו contains all three consonants of the root, proving that the root is בּוּז. Radak (השרשים 72) agrees that the root of בוּז is בּוּז and cites the same proof-text.

³⁴⁶ **For who shall scorn a day of small consolations or salvations – herein is the absence of a modified noun** – Either “consolations” or “salvations” is the implied noun which completes the phrase: “For who shall scorn a day of small _____.” Radak renders the verse, “For who shall scorn a day of small [salvations],” presumably based on Ibn Ezra. Tanhum presents the same interpretation and proof-text as Ibn Ezra but then adds that קטנות could also allude to the Israelites and Jews, who were small and weak in comparison to other nations.

³⁴⁷ **He spoke harsh [words] to them** – Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Gen. 42:7 explains it the same way. Most modern translations interpret the word קָשׁוּת as an adverb in that verse: “He spoke harshly to them.”

³⁴⁸ **The stone of distinction** – This noun phrase appears in the Bible as הָאֶבֶן הַבְּדִיל, but Ibn Ezra writes it as אֶבֶן הַבְּדִיל (without a definite article in front of the first word), which would be the standard construct form (cf. Radak).

³⁴⁹ **It is possible that seven eyes [means] many guards** – According to this explanation, there is no special significance to the precise number seven here.

³⁵⁰ **Alternatively, another explanation is... that the seven are the eyes of the Lord, which are ranging over the whole earth** – This interpretation takes the number “seven” literally, leading to Ibn Ezra’s subsequent explanation of the significance of this number. In יסוד מספר (Pinsker 161-162), Ibn Ezra similarly observes that the number seven can be used both as a round number (implying “many”) and a precise number.

³⁵¹ **“He named it Shibah” (שִׁבְעָה). And “oath” (שְׁבוּעָה) is derived from שִׁבְעָה, as it says, “[Hence that place was called Beer-sheba (בְּאֵר שִׁבְעָה),] for there the two of them swore an oath” (נִשְׁבְּעוּ)** – Ibn Ezra is alluding to

of the Book of Creation (ספר יצירה) mentioned, “The Holy Palace is aligned in the center” (cf. Hayman §38 pp. 130-133; Kafih 2:3 p. 80).³⁵² This requires a lengthy explanation,³⁵³ because it is written [in the Book of Creation]: “There are six directions – up and down, forward and back, right and left – and the Holy Palace is aligned in the center.” Here is part

an ambiguity regarding origins of the name Beer-sheba. A straightforward reading of the Bible leads to the conclusion that it derives from the root שבע as a *nif'al* verb (to swear), commemorating a vow between Abimelech and Abraham (Gen. 21:27-31) and a similar vow between Abimelech and Isaac (Gen. 26:31-33). However, each narrative also contains an allusion to the number seven: Abraham gave Abimelech seven ewes as part of his oath, and Isaac initially named the place Shibah (שִׁבְעָה), which is the correct vocalization of “seven.” Ibn Ezra resolves that ambiguity by suggesting that the verb “to swear” derives from the number seven, so the names Shibah and Beer-sheba in fact commemorate both the oath and the number seven.

By citing verses from both narratives alongside one another here, Ibn Ezra is assuming that they occurred in the same location. Elsewhere, however, he considers the possibility that each oath took place somewhere else: Abraham’s in Beer-sheba and Isaac’s in Shibah, a different place which also became known as Beer-sheba (צחור, Lippmann 41a, Valle Rodriguez 101)

³⁵² And “oath” (שבועה) is derived from שבועה... in the manner that the author of the Book of Creation mentioned, “The Holy Palace is aligned in the center” – In several places, Ibn Ezra offers brief remarks about this sentence from the Book of Creation, sometimes merely explaining the phrase “Holy Palace” (Dan. 12:7), and sometimes invoking this sentence in order to explain the deeper meaning of the number seven (short commentary to Exod. 20:7; Ecc. 11:2; צחור, Lippmann 41a, Valle Rodriguez 101; יסוד מספר, Pinsker 161-162; ספר האהד, Pinsker 56-57). While he never fully explains this sentence’s meaning, he appears to believe:

- 1) Seven represents “the Holy Palace,” because the palace is in the center of the six directions of a cube.
- 2) “The Holy Palace” is an allusion to a place in the heavens.
- 3) One swears by something eternal, such as swearing by God or by the heavens and earth. Hence, the verb “to swear” derives from the same root as “seven,” i.e., the eternal Holy Palace by which one swears.

As to the exact identify of “the Holy Palace,” his comments in ספר האהד could be read to imply that it is an allusion to God Himself – an interpretation that is consistent with the rest of our passage (which is likely a gloss; see below). However, his commentary to Dan. 12:7 identifies the Holy Palace with the heavens. In his lengthy postscript to Dan. 10, he offers further detail regarding this latter possibility. In that postscript, Ibn Ezra divides the universe into lower, middle, and upper worlds. He writes that angels reside the middle world, and he labels that world “the Holy Palace” (albeit without referencing the Book of Creation). It is beyond the scope of this commentary to analyze Ibn Ezra’s conception of these worlds, which is seemingly contradicted by a different division of the universe in Ibn Ezra’s excursus to Exod. 3:15. For purposes of interpreting our verse, however, it seems that the number seven can allude to God (and/or His heavenly abode) looking in all directions from His perch in the center of the universe. Hence, if the number seven in our verse is intended as a precise number, then it represents “the eyes of the Lord,” which are eternally “ranging over the whole earth” in all six directions. For further discussion of “the Holy Palace” and Ibn Ezra’s divisions of the universe, cf. Fleischer (משנה לעזרא, Exod. 3:13 n.1) and Dan (תורת הסוד 410-413).

Radak (4:2) cites the Book of Creation to explain the symbolism of the seven branches of the lampstand, perhaps influenced by Ibn Ezra’s citation of the Book of Creation here. Abarbanel dismisses Ibn Ezra’s presentation of the Book of Creation as irrelevant to Zechariah’s prophecy.

³⁵³ This requires a lengthy explanation – It seems likely that much of this paragraph is a gloss by a student who sought to explain Ibn Ezra’s cryptic words. The HaKeter edition suggests that the gloss begins from the word “because,” but there is no indication in the manuscripts of where precisely the gloss begins. At a minimum, the subsequent phrase, “Here is part of an explanation,” appears to constitute a gloss, since it begins to briefly explain what Ibn Ezra just stated would require too lengthy of an explanation for the scope of his commentary. Indeed, Simon observes that the phrase, “Here is part of an explanation,” does not match Ibn Ezra’s own writing style (“Marginal Notes” *ad loc.*).

of an explanation: Everything has these six directions that he mentioned, and the Holy Palace is the item that has these directions, and “it is aligned in the center.” [The author of the Book of Creation] called Him “the Holy Palace;” He is the glorious center and is master of the directions, for they [emanate] from Him, and they are His. This matter includes all creations. [The author of the Book of Creation] mentioned “the Holy Palace” for the most glorious one.³⁵⁴

(12) And I answered... [the two שְׁבִלֵי (tops of) the olive trees] – שבליים (tops) are feminine, like נשים (women) and פילגשים (concubines).³⁵⁵

And I said – He also asked about the **two tops** that were cut off of the two **olive trees** that were **emptying themselves** – meaning the **tubes** in which the olives were pressed – and they were **emptying** their good oil, which was pure as **gold,³⁵⁶ from themselves**. They were emptying it into the spring, and in the spring were pipes through which the oil flowed into the lamps on top of the lampstand.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁴ [The Book of Creation] called Him “the Holy Palace”... mentioned “the Holy Palace” for the most glorious one – Throughout this section, I capitalized third-person pronouns that refer to “the Holy Palace” on the assumption that “the Holy Palace” alludes to God. If one were to interpret “the Holy Palace” differently, then these pronouns would need to be lowercase (cf. note 352).

³⁵⁵ שבליים are feminine, like נשים and פילגשים – Ibn Ezra is commenting on this noun’s gender in order to explain why the number “two” appears in its feminine form (שְׁתֵּי). He thus explains that the word שבליים is one of several grammatically-feminine nouns that nevertheless end with the masculine-plural noun suffix ים. Tanḥum (4:3) makes the same observation and cites the same examples.

³⁵⁶ Their good oil, which was pure as gold – The verse describes “gold” flowing through tubes, so Ibn Ezra explains that this “gold” is a metaphor for pure oil. Ibn Janah (הרקמה 307; cf. השרשים 127) includes this case in his list of cases where the Bible writes one word but intends another. According to Ibn Janah, this verse writes “gold” but intends “oil.” Despite Ibn Ezra’s disapproval of many of Ibn Janah’s applications of this exegetical method (cf. note 283), he does not deny that the Bible can employ metaphorical language. In this specific case, several other exegetes also interpret “gold” as a metaphor for oil (Ibn Saruk, מהברת מנחם, Philipowski 55 and 78, Sáenz-Badillos 104* and 155*; Rashi; Radak; cf. Tanḥum), while others claim that “gold” is the indirect object, with an implied direct object: “emptying their [oil into lamps of] gold” (Jonathan; cf. Eliezer of Beaugency, Tanḥum).

³⁵⁷ They were emptying it into the spring... the lamps on top of the lampstand – This description complements Ibn Ezra’s earlier comments about this verse (when discussing v. 2).

(14) Then he explained, [“They are the two sons of oil”] – The meaning: Zerubbabel is a **son of יִצְהָר** – which is oil (שמן)³⁵⁸ – since he was anointed to sit on the throne of Israel, as is written, “And he shall [sit] on his throne and rule” (6:13); and Joshua was anointed, because he was the High Priest.³⁵⁹

It is written “[And there shall also be a priest seated on his throne,] and harmonious understanding shall prevail between them” (*ibid.*), so they will not be jealous of one another.³⁶⁰

Chapter 5

(1) [I looked up] again, [and I saw] a flying (עפה) [scroll] – As if it were flying (תעוף); therefore it is [subsequently] written “which goes out over the whole land” (v. 3).³⁶¹ There

³⁵⁸ יִצְהָר – which is oil – Ibn Ezra uses שמן, the more common Hebrew word for oil, as a synonym to clarify the meaning of יִצְהָר.

³⁵⁹ **They are the two sons of oil... Zerubbabel is a son of יִצְהָר... and Joshua was anointed, because he was the High Priest** – According to Ibn Ezra, the two olive tops symbolize Zerubbabel and Joshua – an interpretation that also appears in the oral commentary. This position conforms to his tendency to interpret prophecies in a manner that would have been meaningful to the prophet’s own generation (see notes 160 and 304 above; cf. my supercommentary to Hag. 2:9). In this case, however, virtually all *peshat* exegetes agree that the olive tops symbolize Joshua and Zerubbabel (Ibn Janah, השרשים 423; Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Student of Trani, Tanhum).

Several earlier midrashic sources viewed the olive tops as symbolizing other people, such as Moses and Aaron (Exod. R. to 12:1), Aaron and David (*Sifra* to Lev. 7:35, Num. R. to 7:84 and 16:1, Lam. R. to 1:16), or Aaron and the Messiah (*Avot de-R. Nathan* I:34, Schechter 50b), while al-Qumisi claimed that they symbolize a priest and a Levite. The earlier rabbinic sources that consider the olive tops to be Aaron and either David or the Messiah might fundamentally agree with the aforementioned interpretation of many *peshat* exegetes, but they are viewing Joshua as representative of all high priests and Zerubbabel as representative of all Davidic leaders (cf. Saadiah, Ratzhabi, מפירושי רס"ג 231; Rashi; Radak).

Ibn Ezra is also rejecting the view that יִצְהָר is a proper name in our verse, just as Izhar is the name of a Levite in Exod. 6:18 and elsewhere (Dunash, תשובות דונש על רס"ג #108, Schroeter 30). Ibn Ezra adamantly rejects this interpretation in several of his writings, insisting that it is impossible to place the definite article in front of a proper name, as our verse does by writing הַיִצְהָר with a prefix ה (ההגנה, Oshri 88; ספר השם, Lippmann 3b; *Moznayim*, Jiménez Patón 55*; cf. Ibn Ezra to Exod. 3:15; יסוד דקדוק, Aloni 171; שפה ברורה, Gonzalez and Saenz-Badillos 23*). Ibn Ezra also rejects the view of Yefet, who interprets “sons of oil” as referring not to two individuals but rather as “two trees the oil for the light (cf. Exod. 35:14) is poured into” (trans. Kees De Vreugd).

³⁶⁰ **It is written... “Harmonious understanding shall prevail between them,” so they will not be jealous of one another** – Presumably Ibn Ezra cites this proof-text to indicate that the terse prophecy of “two sons of oil” also intends to present Zerubbabel and Joshua as a pair of leaders who will serve together in a successful partnership.

are some exegetes who said [that עפה means] “folded,”³⁶² derived from Aramaic,³⁶³ but their interpretation does not make sense.³⁶⁴ And Yefet said that [that עפה means] spread open, and, “They shall pounce (וְנָפְפוּ) on the back of Philistia” (Isa. 11:14), is similar to it.³⁶⁵

(2) He said – It is as if [Zechariah] saw this **flying scroll** emerging from the Temple that Solomon built onto³⁶⁶ the [Temple] portico. Therefore, the measurements of length and width are like those of the portico.³⁶⁷

(3) “That,” he explained...“is the imprecation” (אלה) and the curse (והמארה).³⁶⁸

And the meaning of **which goes out over the whole land** is that [the imprecation] includes Jews who were in Jerusalem and those who remained in Babylonia and the land of Persia

³⁶¹ **As if it were flying (תעוף); therefore it is later written “which goes out over the whole land”** – Ibn Ezra understands from the fact that the scroll was going “over the whole land” that it was literally flying, as opposed to the alternative interpretations of עפה that he cites subsequently. Although he does not offer a lexical definition of עפה, and simply uses a different tense of the same root (תעוף), the context appears to indicate that it means “flying” (“over the whole land”). That meaning is confirmed by the oral commentary, which cites Isa. 6:6 as a proof-text: “It flew (וְנָפְפוּ) over to me.” Jonathan also interprets עפה as “flying” (פרחא); his translation is cited by Rashi and endorsed by Joseph Kara, Radak, and Student of Trani. Ibn Saruk (מחברת מנהם, Philipowski 135, Sáenz-Badillos 287*), Hayyuj (שלושת היבורי הדקדוק), Wated and Sivan 156-157), Jacob b. Reuben, Eliezer of Beaugency and Tanḥum also interpret עפה as “flying,” although Tanḥum also cites the view that עפה means “folded.”

³⁶² **There are some exegetes who said [that עפה means] “folded”** – This view appears in the Talmud (bEr. 21a) and is cited by Ibn Janah (השרשים 359), Rashi and Joseph Kara, although Kara dismisses it as not being *peshat*.

³⁶³ **Derived from Aramaic** – See examples cited by Jastrow (1100) in his entry for the root עפף.

³⁶⁴ **But their interpretation does not make sense** – Literally, “has no sense” or “has no meaning.”

³⁶⁵ **And Yefet said... “They shall pounce (וְנָפְפוּ) on the back of Philistia” (Isa. 11:14), is similar to it** – Ibn Ezra’s commentary to this proof-text cites a debate regarding the etymology of וְנָפְפוּ. Presumably, he has Yefet in mind when he writes there that “some say” it means to spread out and compares it to Zech. 5:1.

³⁶⁶ **Onto** – Hebrew: על. Some witnesses read אל (“toward”). Radak presents this view as the scroll “emerging from the Temple portico.”

³⁶⁷ **The measurements of length and width are like those of the portico** – The portico in Solomon’s temple was twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide (1 Kings 6:3). Radak cites from “commentators” (presumably Ibn Ezra) that these measurements represent Solomon’s portico. A midrashic tradition similarly claims that the scroll flew out of the Temple (Lev. R. 6:3, cited by Rashi) but instead uses the measurements of the Second Temple portico, which were twice as large (mMid. 3:7).

³⁶⁸ **The imprecation (אלה) and the curse (והמארה)** – The scroll contained a curse. It is unclear if Ibn Ezra is arguing that the lexical meaning of אלה in this verse is “curse” (cf. Muraoka and Shavitsky) or that its lexical meaning is “oath,” but the oath in this scroll contained a curse against those who abrogated it (cf. oral commentary).

And the meaning of **on the one side like it is: [Everyone] who has stolen has gone unpunished** was written **on the one side**, while **[everyone] who has sworn has gone unpunished** was on the second side. Alternatively, **both sides**³⁶⁹ [read]: **Everyone who has stolen and everyone who has sworn has gone unpunished**, and that is correct.³⁷⁰

And the meaning of **has gone unpunished (נקה)** is that they every individual – one **who has sworn** or **has stolen** – thought that the Lord had exonerated him (נקהו).³⁷¹

(4) But I have sent it forth... וְלִנְיָהּ (and it shall lodge) is feminine, like וְלִנְיָהּ,³⁷² but it is an irregular word.³⁷³

[And it shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name] – So the meaning is that the prophet is rebuking those who commit these two sins.

³⁶⁹ **Both sides** – Heb. מזה ומזה (literally: “on this and that”), a common Biblical Hebrew idiom (e.g., Exod. 32:15)

³⁷⁰ **[Everyone] who has stolen... was written on the one side, while [everyone] who has sworn... was on the second side. Alternatively, both sides [read]: Everyone who has stolen and everyone who has sworn... and that is correct** – These views debate whether each side of the scroll mentioned only one category of sinners (thieves and people who swear falsely, respectively) or both sides of the scroll mention both groups. Ibn Ezra prefers the latter possibility (perhaps based on Ibn Saruk, מהברת מנהם, Philipowski 57, Sáenz-Badillos 109*), but Radak and Tanḥum prefer the former possibility.

³⁷¹ **The meaning of has gone unpunished (נקה) is... thought that the Lord had exonerated him (נקהו)** – Ibn Ezra seems to interpret the root נקה as connoting exonerated in our verse, reflecting the guilty individuals’ erroneous belief that God has exonerated them (cf. Schrem 42b). Ibn Saruk (מהברת מנהם, Philipowski 57, Sáenz-Badillos 109*), Rashi, and Radak also suggest that נקה means that the sins have gone unpunished, but Rashi and Radak assert that God indeed refrained from punishing individuals until the entire nation deserved punishment, at which point He exiled them (cf. Eliezer of Beaugency). Hence, according to Rashi and Radak, the sinners’ exonerated was not merely a misperception. Gen. 24:41 might support the interpretation of נקה as exonerated, because it uses the root נקה for exonerated from the sin of violating an oath (וְהָיְתָה אִתְּךָ תְּנִיקָה מֵאֲלֹתַי... וְהָיְתָה) – “Thus only shall you be freed from my oath... only then shall you be freed from my oath”).

However, the oral commentary appears to interpret נקה as connoting *punishment* in the context of our verse (to be swept away), reflecting what actually happened to the guilty individuals. Several other exegetes also interpret נקה as connoting punishment or destruction in our verse (Ibn Janah, 317; Tanḥum; cf. Jonathan, al-Qumisi).

³⁷² **וְלִנְיָהּ** – This word appears in two witnesses with the final vowel vocalized as a *pataḥ* (וְלִנְיָהּ), which appears to simply be a lack of precision regarding which *a* vowel to use.

³⁷³ **וְלִנְיָהּ is feminine, like לִנְיָהּ, but it is an irregular word** – Feminine perfect verbs normally end with a *qamatz* as the final vowel. Ibn Ezra asserts that the verb וְלִנְיָהּ must be feminine, presumably because the subject (הַאֲלֹתַי) is clearly feminine, and because the masculine verb would not have a final ה. However, the verb is “irregular” due to its irregular final vowel, a *segol*. This irregularity was observed by Ḥayyuj (כתאב אלגתף, Maman and Ben Porat 319), Radak (Isa. 59:5), and Tanḥum (cf. Eliezer of Beaugency) and is also discussed by Ibn Ezra in שפה ברורה (Lippmann 42b, Gonzalez and Sáenz-Badillos 53*).

(5) [Then the angel who talked with me] came forward from the company of the rest of the angels.

And, behold, something else was **approaching** after the first item that was “going out” (v. 3),³⁷⁴ namely the imprecation.

Now he is returning to rebuke those who stayed in Babylonia and did not come to rebuild the Temple and dwell in the Holy Land, in fulfillment of the Lord’s command.³⁷⁵ For the beginning of the visions was the four horns and the rebuilding of Jerusalem (2:1-11); another one of the visions was the glory that the Lord promised for those who voluntarily returned from the exile (2:12-17). But now, in this first vision, he saw a scroll, but he did not know now what it was, for the imprecation was only visible to one “in whose possession the stolen item was found” (cf. Exod. 22:3) or to one who knows that he has sworn falsely.

And this item that was **approaching** was concealed and hidden within the heart.³⁷⁶

(6) I asked... [And he said,] “This is the ephah” – The meaning of **ephah** is that the Lord will mete out [punishment]³⁷⁷ to men of wickedness according to their thoughts.

³⁷⁴ **Something else was approaching after the first item that was “going out”** – The Bible uses the same Hebrew word for “approaching” and “going out” in these verses (תִּצְוֶה).

³⁷⁵ **To rebuke those who stayed in Babylonia and did not come to rebuild the Temple... in fulfillment of the Lord’s command** – Here, Ibn Ezra views the focus of this vision as the decision of Diaspora Jewry to remain in Babylonia. Other exegetes maintain that Zechariah is addressing the sins that prompted God to exile them to Babylonia when the First Temple was destroyed (Rashi), but Ibn Ezra already rejected that approach in his introduction to Zechariah, arguing that Zechariah’s prophecy must relate to events in his own time (see note 160 above). The oral commentary indicates that Zechariah is depicting Babylonia’s punishment for oppressing the Jews, rather than punishing Diaspora Jewry for remaining in Babylonia.

³⁷⁶ **And this item that was approaching was concealed and hidden within the heart** – Ibn Ezra could be referring to either the scroll or the ephah, both of which are described as “approaching.” Based on the context, he appears to intend the ephah. This ephah was initially hidden, so Zechariah needed to ask about it in v. 6 and be told, “This is the ephah.”

³⁷⁷ **Will mete out [punishment]** – An ephah is a measurement of dry volume (e.g., Exod. 16:36). The word ephah can also refer to a receptacle for measuring that volume (e.g., Deut. 25:14), which appears to be Zechariah’s intent. Ibn Ezra therefore explains its symbolism: God will measure (Hebrew: יָמַד) the appropriate

“This,” said he, “is their eye [in all the land]” – The Lord will reveal what is hidden such that everyone will see it.³⁷⁸

(7) And behold, [a disk of] lead, which is heavy.

The word **נשאה** (**was lifted**) is an adjective from the *nif'al* pattern; the complete [word would be] **גנשאה**, like “a broken (נשברה) spirit” (Ps. 51:19).³⁷⁹

The **lead** was lifted by the **ephah**.

This is a woman, [representing] a family from Israel.

(8) “That,” he said, “is Wickedness,” [i.e.] a thought of wickedness that was in the woman’s heart.³⁸⁰

And the meaning of **he pressed [the leaden weight into its mouth]** is like: “The mouth of all wrongdoers is stopped” (Ps. 107:42).³⁸¹

(9) I looked up – The first vision only concludes here.³⁸²

punishment. Regarding the usage of the root **מדד** (“to measure”) as a metaphor for meting out punishment, cf. mSot. 1:7 (cited by Tanḥum).

³⁷⁸ **This... is their eye [in all the land] – The Lord will reveal what is hidden such that everyone will see it** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting “their eye” as the eyes of everyone throughout the world, all of whom can see this ephah. This interpretation, which is shared by Jonathan, is more explicit in the oral commentary. Radak suggests that “their eye” refers to the divine eye that is monitoring the sinners (cf. 4:10). Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Eliezer of Beaugency claim that “their eye” refers to the eye of the sinners, who were punished for looking to steal and cheat. Tanḥum claims that the word **עין** does not mean “eye” at all in this verse but rather “state of being.”

³⁷⁹ **A broken (נשברה) spirit** – Ibn Ezra offers an example of a *nif'al* participle from a strong root as a means of comparison with how the root **נשא** would appear if its initial **נ** did not assimilate. In truth, his example does not conform perfectly to the *nif'al* vowel pattern: The *qamatz* under the **ב** of **נשברה** reflects a pausal form; ordinarily, the word would be vocalized **נשברה**, as Ibn Ezra explains elsewhere (שפה ברורה, Lippmann 24b, González and Sáenz-Badillos 30*).

³⁸⁰ **A thought of wickedness that was in the woman’s heart** – Ibn Ezra maintains that “wickedness” refers to the woman’s evil thoughts. Ibn Janah (הרקמה 266) and Rashi maintain that “wickedness” refers to the woman herself.

³⁸¹ **The mouth of all wrongdoers is stopped** – Tanḥum cites a nearly identical proof-text: “The mouth of wrongdoing is stopped” (Job 5:16). Both proof-texts provide parallels to the image of stopping up a mouth as a metaphor for vanquishing evil.

The meaning of **two women** is two princes of Artaxerxes – who was the king of Babylonia.³⁸³ He would harm Israelite families who stayed in Babylonia, who remained and did not obey the Lord’s command – via His prophet – to come to the Second Temple.³⁸⁴

So they would not allow the woman who [represents] the family of Israel,³⁸⁵ who was sitting in the ephah, to escape from there.

(10) The meaning of **where are they taking the ephah** is the measure of what He will requite them.³⁸⁶

³⁸² **I looked up – the first vision only concludes here** – According to Ibn Ezra, the vision of the flying scroll is linked to the vision of the ephah, so the vision of the scroll only concludes once the ephah is removed (cf. note 394).

³⁸³ **Artaxerxes – who was the king of Babylonia** – In fact, Artaxerxes reigned over the *Persian* Empire, yet Ibn Ezra describes him as “the king of Babylonia” based on Artaxerxes’ title in Neh. 13:6. Elsewhere, Ibn Ezra argues that Neh. 13:6 assigns that title to Artaxerxes because his Persian name was Darius, while his Babylonian name was Artaxerxes (Dan. 11:2; cf. below 11:15 and note 648). So the Bible refers to him in Neh. 13:6 as “Artaxerxes, king of Babylonia” meaning “the Persian king known in Babylonia as Artaxerxes.” Presumably, Ibn Ezra is deliberately employing the title “king of Babylonia” in our verse in order to stress that Persian emperors such as Artaxerxes did rule over Babylonia once Persia conquered it (cf. oral commentary to 5:11). Hence, Artaxerxes’ administration ruled over the Babylonian Jews who are the focus of this prophecy.

³⁸⁴ **The meaning of two women is two princes of Artaxerxes – who was the king of Babylonia... He would harm Israelite families who stayed in Babylonia** – Ibn Ezra considers the two women to symbolize the regime that controls the Diaspora in Babylonia. His emphasis on governmental control of the Jews fits the standard commentary’s view that this prophecy was directed against Babylonian Jewry. The oral commentary – which maintains that that vision was directed against the Babylonian Empire (see note 375) – suggests that the two women symbolize the kings of Persia and Media, who overthrew the Babylonian Empire. Other exegetes suggest a wide variety of meanings for the two winged women, depending on how they understand the broader message of this prophecy. Joseph Kara, who views this prophecy as explaining the causes for the exile to Babylonia, suggests that the two winged women represent the two First-Temple kingdoms, Israel and Judah, flying off to exile. Eliezer of Beaugency identifies the two winged women with Greece and Macedonia, so he views the prophecy as predicting the punishment that will befall Jewish sinners who will be exiled to Babylonia (=Shinar) and will suffer there when Alexander conquers Babylonia. Radak considers the two women to be Judah and Benjamin. Tanḥum cites Ibn Ezra’s view (from the standard commentary) but himself suggests that the ephah’s transfer to Shinar symbolizes the removal of sin – rather than meting out punishment – so this prophecy is teaching that sin will leave the Jews who are in Israel and stay with the Persian Empire (which ruled Babylonia) until God punishes them by destroying their kingdom. Maimonides (*Guide* 1:49) describes the two women as angels but does not elaborate on their symbolism (cf. Abarbanel).

³⁸⁵ **The woman who [represents] the family of Israel** – Radak writes that this woman represents the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel. However, Ibn Ezra claims that “Israelite families who stayed in Babylonia” are being punished, and the Babylonian exile came primarily from southern kingdom of Judah. Hence, Ibn Ezra does not appear to intend “Israel” in the narrow sense of the northern kingdom but rather in the broader sense of “the sons of Israel” (i.e., all twelve tribes). Despite their divergent views regarding the symbolism of the woman in the ephah, Radak does share Ibn Ezra’s fundamental position that this prophecy is also criticizing the exiles of Judah for remaining in Babylonia, but he claims that Judah is represented by the two winged women (see note 384) rather than the woman in the ephah.

(11) And he answered, “To build a home for the woman who was inside the ephah in the land of Shinar,”³⁸⁷ for they will detain her there against her will, on account of the sin that she did not want to come rebuild the Temple.

The word **וְהִנִּיחָה** (**she shall be set down**) is a composite of **וְהוֹנִיחָה**³⁸⁸ and **וְהִנִּיחָה**,³⁸⁹ like: “You who dwell (**יֹשְׁבֵת**)³⁹⁰ in Lebanon, nestled (**מִקְנִנֶת**) among the cedars” (Jer. 22:23),³⁹¹ “[Your terrors] destroy me” (**צִמְתוּתָנִי**; Ps. 88:17);³⁹² and there are many such [words].³⁹³

Chapter 6

(1) I [looked up] again after this [previous] vision was completed.³⁹⁴

³⁸⁶ **The meaning of... the ephah is the measure of what He will requite them** – In other words, removing the woman inside the ephah, which is a Hebrew unit of measure, represents the measure of punishment that God will mete out to the Israelites whom she symbolizes.

³⁸⁷ **Shinar** – Shinar is identified with Babylonia (cf. Gen. 11:1-9).

³⁸⁸ **וְהוֹנִיחָה** – Regarding the correct vocalization of this *hof'al* verb, see Ḥayyuj (כתאב אלנתר), Maman and Ben Porat 319) and Wilensky (הרקמה 344 n. 8).

³⁸⁹ **The word וְהִנִּיחָה (she shall be set down) is a composite of וְהוֹנִיחָה and וְהִנִּיחָה** – The vocalization of **וְהִנִּיחָה** combines some features with the passive *hof'al* verb **וְהוֹנִיחָה** (“She will be set down”) with other features of the active *hif'il* verb **וְהִנִּיחָה**. Already Ḥayyuj (כתאב אלנתר), Maman and Ben Porat 319) and Ibn Janah observed the irregular nature of **וְהִנִּיחָה** (הרקמה 344, השרשים 291), as do Radak, Tanḥum, and Student of Trani. Most exegetes who observe this phenomenon do not ascribe special meaning to the word’s composite nature, but Radak suggests that it alludes to the fact that the exile was initially coerced, but the people who “were set down” in Babylonia were now staying there willingly.

³⁹⁰ **יֹשְׁבֵת** – This word is a composite of the *qal* perfect verb **יִשְׁבֹּת** and the *qal* participle **יֹשְׁבֵת**.

³⁹¹ **מִקְנִנֶת** – This word is a composite of the *pu'al* perfect verb **קָנְנַת** and the *pu'al* participle **מִקְנִנֶת**. Radak *ad loc.* cites a view that these are composite words. In **מכלול** (60b), Radak suggests that Jeremiah employs this composite word in order to communicate that the subject is continuing to do what she has already been doing.

³⁹² **צִמְתוּתָנִי** – Neither here nor in his commentary to Psalms *ad loc.* does Ibn Ezra tell us here what the two components of **צִמְתוּתָנִי** are. However, in **צחות** (Lippmann 69a, Valle Rodriguez 179) he cites from Ḥayyuj (שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק), Wated and Sivan 70-73) that the two components of **צִמְתוּתָנִי** are **צָמְתוּ** (“They destroy”) and **צִמְתוּתָנִי** (“You destroy me”; cf. Ibn Janah, הרקמה 342, and Schrem 43a). Radak cites and challenges the view that **צִמְתוּתָנִי** is composite; Radak himself argues that **צִמְתוּתָנִי** repeats the final **ת** of its root for stylistic emphasis (Ps. *ad loc.* and **מכלול** 60b; cf. Menaḥem Meiri, Ps. *ad loc.*). Tanḥum also writes that **צִמְתוּתָנִי** is comprised of two words but does not specify what they are.

³⁹³ **And there are many such [words]** – In his grammatical writings, Ibn Ezra lists other composite words, in addition to the proof-texts that he cites here (*Moznayim*, Jiménez Patón 47*-49*; שפה ברורה, Lippmann 25a, González and Saenz-Badillos 30*). All three examples of composite words that Ibn Ezra cites in our verse appear in the same passage of Ḥayyuj (שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק), Wated and Sivan 70-73).

³⁹⁴ **I [looked up] again after this [previous] vision was completed** – As he has done at the start of several other visions, Ibn Ezra is clarifying where one vision ends and the next vision begins. Chapter 6 begins with the exact same phrase as Chapter 5 – “I looked up *again* (וְאָשׁוּב) and I saw” – whereas 5:8 began, “I looked up and I saw” (without וְאָשׁוּב). Ibn Ezra to 5:9 thus asserted that the vision of the ephah (5:8-9) was a continuation of the

Four chariots – Each chariot has four horses, as is written in the Book of Kings.³⁹⁵

And the meaning of [**Four chariots were coming out] from between the two mountains** [alludes] to heavenly decrees (גזרות), in the manner of “with all the host of heaven standing in attendance to the right and to the left of Him” (I Kings 22:19).³⁹⁶

And [**the mountains were of] copper**, such that they stand firm.³⁹⁷

(2) In the [first] chariot [were red horses] – These are the [same] horses from the beginning of the book, in the first vision (1:8).³⁹⁸

(3) In the [fourth] chariot – In the [first] three chariots, he mentions horses that had one color, with each one being different than the others: red, black, and white. Only regarding the fourth one does he mention two shades – **spotted** and also **bay (אֶמְצִים)** – from the same

previous vision, but now he argues that Zechariah “looked up again,” meaning that he looked up and witnessed a new vision rather than the next stage of the previous vision.

³⁹⁵ **Each chariot has four horses, as is written in the Book of Kings** – Ibn Ezra also cites Kings as the source for this claim in his short commentary to Exod. 14:9. However, Kings does not contain an explicit statement that chariots were pulled by four horses each. Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Gen. 41:43 narrows his source to “the chariot(s) of Solomon,” which are discussed in I Kings 5 and 10. Schrem (43a) and the HaKeter edition suggest that Ibn Ezra’s source was I Kings 10:29, which states that a chariot cost four times as many silver shekels as a horse (600 shekels and 150 shekels, respectively). Indeed, Rashi (*ad loc.*, II Sam. 8:4) derives from I Kings 10:29 (and the parallel verse in II Chron. 1:17) that every chariot was pulled by four horses – a position that many later exegetes also adopt (Joseph Kara, *ad loc.*; Radak, *ad loc.*, II Sam. 8:4, Ezek. 1:1, I Chron. 1:17, השרשים 705; Isaiah of Trani, II Sam. 8:4; Ralbag, *ad loc.*).

³⁹⁶ **And the meaning of... from between the two mountains [alludes] to heavenly decrees, in the manner of “with all the host of heaven standing in attendance to the right and to the left of Him”** – These chariots emerging from between the mountains represent divine decrees of what will transpire on earth. In Ibn Ezra’s proof-text, God is surrounded by the heavenly hosts as He discusses how to implement His decree that Ahab be defeated. Ultimately, a spirit offers to mislead Ahab’s prophets and to thus entice Ahab into the battle in which he will be killed. Accordingly, Ibn Ezra appears to be applying the term גזרות not merely to the actually decree but also to the medium by which God sends the decree into the world (cf. Friedlander, *Ibn Ezra on Isaiah* vol. III 11-12).

³⁹⁷ **And [the mountains were of] copper, such that they stand firm** – Rashi, Radak and Student of Trani also emphasize that these mountains were especially strong and firm because they were made of copper (cf. Abarbanel).

³⁹⁸ **These are the [same] horses from the beginning of the book, in the first vision** – Ibn Ezra is equating these red horses with the horses in 1:8, where the prophet saw red horses and multi-colored horses. He does not offer any deeper symbolism for the colors here (cf. *Yal. Shimoni*), just as his commentary to 1:8 dismissed any such symbolism. The oral commentary does compare the four chariots here to four kingdoms – presumably the four kingdoms of Dan. 2 and 7-8 (see note 180 above), although he does not explicitly mention Daniel.

derivation as אַמִּיץ (“mighty”)³⁹⁹ – which is the strongest shade, and can be seen at a greater distance than all other shades.⁴⁰⁰

(4) And I spoke up [and asked the angel] – This vision, too, was while the angel was standing [before Zechariah].

(5) In reply, [the angel said to me,] “Those are the heavenly decrees that are coming out to the four corners of the earth.

And **מֵהִתְיַצֵּב** (after presenting themselves [to the Lord of all the earth]) is like: “presented themselves (לְהִתְיַצֵּב) before the Lord” (Job 1:6).⁴⁰¹

(6) The one [with the black horses] – He mentions the second scene because it is the essence of the vision⁴⁰² about the Jews who remained in **the region of the north** – Babylonia and Persia.⁴⁰³

³⁹⁹ **From the same derivation as אַמִּיץ (“mighty”)** – Because Ibn Ezra cites only one word, it is difficult to determine whether he intended a specific biblical verse as his proof-text. The word אַמִּיץ first appears in II Sam. 15:12, where it apparently means “strong,” although the meaning might be clearer in the context of Isa. 40:26, Amos. 2:16, or Job 9:4. Ibn Saruk (מְחַבֵּר מִנְחָם, Philipowski 27, Sáenz-Badillos 48*) indicates that אֶמְצִים in our verse has a different meaning than אַמִּיץ (“mighty”; cf. the oral commentary to 12:5), presumably because our verse depicts a color. However, Ibn Saruk does not describe the color of אֶמְצִים.

⁴⁰⁰ **אַמִּיץ... is the strongest shade, and can be seen at a greater distance than all other shades** – Although it is difficult to identify exact colors when studying a written commentary, it is clear from 6:7 that Ibn Ezra believes this color to be a shade of red, so I have chosen “bay,” a reddish brown that is not uncommon among horses. Ibn Quraysh is reported to have interpreted אֶמְצִים as red and attempts to link its etymology with the root חמץ (Ratzhabi, מפירושי רס"ג, 231; cf. רסאלה, Becker 191). Ibn Janah (השרשים 38) also interprets אֶמְצִים as red, offering the same etymology that is attributed to Ibn Quraysh. Jonathan interprets אֶמְצִים as “ashen” (קטמנין, cf. Radak), and Saadiah is also reported to have interpreted אֶמְצִים as gray (Ratzhabi, מפירושי רס"ג, 231-232). Tanhum cites the debate regarding whether אֶמְצִים is gray or red. He dismisses any connection between אֶמְצִים and חמץ but nevertheless concludes that אֶמְצִים must be red due to v. 7, where he understands that the red horses are called אֶמְצִים (as does Ibn Ezra; cf. note 405). Radak (השרשים 41) also cites both views and appears to prefer the view that אֶמְצִים is red, albeit a different shade than אֶדְמִים (v. 2).

⁴⁰¹ **מֵהִתְיַצֵּב... is like: “presented themselves (לְהִתְיַצֵּב) before the Lord”** – Although Ibn Ezra offers a proof-text for the word מֵהִתְיַצֵּב, he does not explain what the word means, neither here nor in Job. In their commentaries to Job (*ad loc.*), most exegetes interpret לְהִתְיַצֵּב as “to stand before” (Joseph Kara, Ramban, Isaiah of Trani), perhaps with a connotation of accepting God’s authority (Moses Kimhi; cf. Maimonides, *Guide* 3:22). Ibn Ezra might not have bothered to offer a lexical definition of this word because he felt it was obvious. His proof-text from Job might be intended to convey a conceptual parallel rather than a lexical definition: Our verse parallels Job. 1:6, as both verses depict scenes in the heavenly court, where individuals appear before God.

The white ones have gone out after them – But he does not concern himself to know the region to which they **have gone**.⁴⁰⁴

The spotted ones – who are the fourth chariot – **have gone** southward, [in the] opposite [direction] of the second chariot, which went out **to the region of the north**.

(7) And the bay ones (וְהָאֲחֻזִּים) – They are the exclusively red [horses], who were in the first chariot.⁴⁰⁵

They were ready to start out [and range] the earth – eastward and westward – at the command of the Master of the earth; hence: **and he gave them the order, “Start out [and range the earth!”]**

(8) Then he alerted [me], and the angel who talked with me,⁴⁰⁶ at the behest of the Lord, **said to me** that the black [horses] **who went out to the region of the north** implemented the Lord’s vengeance in the north. That is the meaning of **have eased my spirit**, like, “[He who

⁴⁰² **The second scene because it is the essence of the vision** – Ibn Ezra uses the word מראה twice. I have translated the first occurrence as “scene” and the second as “vision” in order to clarify that Ibn Ezra is discussing the second sub-unit of the larger vision.

⁴⁰³ **He mentions the second scene because it is the essence of the vision about the Jews who remained in... Babylonia and Persia** - In v. 2, Zechariah sees the black horses second, after seeing the red horses, yet the angel’s explanation begins with the black horses. Ibn Ezra explains that the angel is focusing on the black horses before explaining the symbolism of the red horses, because the black horses represent the Diaspora, which is the primary theme of the prophecy.

⁴⁰⁴ **But he does not concern himself to know the region to which they have gone** – Ibn Ezra does not adopt certain earlier rabbinic teachings about this vision’s symbolism in which the white horse represents a specific empire (cf. Rashi, Radak, and the oral commentary). He therefore considers the movements of the white horses to be insignificant (cf. Schrem 43a).

⁴⁰⁵ **And the bay ones (וְהָאֲחֻזִּים)** – **They are the exclusively red [horses], who were in the first chariot** – Some manuscripts read “the first vision” instead of “the first chariot.” Either way, Ibn Ezra’s point is that “the bay ones” in this verse refer to the “red horses” (אֲחֻזִּים) of 6:2 as opposed to the “spotted and bay” (בְּרִדִּים אֲחֻזִּים) horses of 6:3. Tanḥum agrees and proves from this verse that אֲחֻזִּים are red rather than gray (cf. note 400). Some exegetes appear to believe that the אֲחֻזִּים of this verse are actually a separate group of horses, symbolizing a different kingdom than the aforementioned red horses and spotted horses (cf. Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak).

⁴⁰⁶ **The angel who talked with me** – Ibn Ezra is providing a subject for the verbs. The verse states, “He alerted me, and he said to me” without a clear antecedent for “he” (cf. Schrem 43a).

is slow to anger is better than the mighty,] and he who rules his spirit, [than he who captures a city]” (Prov. 16:32).⁴⁰⁷

The meaning of this vision is that the prophet informed Israel that evil will befall any of them who reside **in the region of the north** and do not come to rebuild the Temple, due to all of the wars that will break out **in the region of the north**. But “Jerusalem shall dwell secure” (Jer. 33:16).⁴⁰⁸

(9) [The word of the Lord] came to me – This [prophecy] was written to glorify the entire Temple – the Lord’s Temple – and this prophet prophesied before their arrival, as I shall explain.⁴⁰⁹

(10) לִקְוֹת (receive) is an infinitive [acting] in place of an imperative,⁴¹⁰ like, “זָכוֹר (remember) the Sabbath day” (Exod. 20:8).⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁷ **That is the meaning of have eased my spirit, like, “[He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty,] and he who rules his spirit, [than he who captures a city]”** – In the synonymous parallelism in Proverbs, ruling one’s “spirit” (רוּחַ) parallels having a slow temper, implying that the “spirit” connotes “the spirit of one’s fury” (Moses Kimḥi, *ad loc.*). Ibn Ezra argues for the same connotation here: God’s “spirit” connotes divine wrath. The oral commentary interprets “have eased My spirit” as “have implemented My will.”

⁴⁰⁸ **The meaning of this vision is... that evil will befall any of them who reside in the region of the north... But “Jerusalem shall dwell secure”** – The oral commentary appears to adopt the widespread view that this vision parallels Daniel’s visions of four kingdoms (Dan. 2 and 7-8; cf. above, note 398, and my supercommentary to the oral commentary). According to that approach, this verse depicts the divine wrath that caused Babylonia to fall. The Persian conquest of Babylonia “eased” this wrath by punishing Babylonia, and it was also a positive development for Babylonian Jewry, who could now return to Jerusalem (cf. Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak). However, here Ibn Ezra seems to reject this approach and to instead interpret this vision as a critique of Jews who remain in Babylonia. This difference between his two commentaries resembles their respective interpretations of the vision of the ephah, which the oral commentary interpreted as alluding to the destruction of Babylonia, while the standard commentary maintains that it condemns Babylonian Jewry for remaining there. Tanḥum appears to be the one other medieval exegete who does not explicitly connect this vision to Daniel’s four kingdoms.

⁴⁰⁹ **This prophet prophesied before their arrival, as I shall explain** – According to Ibn Ezra, Zechariah prophesied about Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah even before they had arrived in Jerusalem. Commenting on v. 10, Ibn Ezra stresses that Josiah was already in Jerusalem, as opposed to Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah.

⁴¹⁰ **לִקְוֹת (receive) is an infinitive [acting] in place of an imperative** – The standard Hebrew vocalization of an imperative would be זָכוֹר, with a *sheva* under the initial consonant. However, there are many cases in which the context clearly requires an imperative verb, yet the verb has a *qamatz* under its initial consonant, which would normally be the correct vocalization for an infinitive. Radak and Tanḥum make the same observation about לִקְוֹת.

And you – yourself⁴¹² – proceed the same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah –
which⁴¹³ was in Jerusalem.

Who have come from Babylon returns to **Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah**,⁴¹⁴ just as “on the
shore of the sea” returns to “Israel” (Exod. 14:30).⁴¹⁵

(11) Take silver and gold that they should bring as a voluntary offering to the Temple,
make⁴¹⁶ **crowns** from them, and place them **on the head of Joshua**, just as a crown was
placed upon the king’s head.⁴¹⁷ Thus it says: **(13) [He shall sit on his throne and rule.]**

And there shall also be a priest seated on his throne.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹¹ **זָכוֹר (remember) the Sabbath day** – Ibn Ezra frequently cites Exod. 20:8 as proof that Biblical Hebrew employs the vocalization of an infinitive despite intending an imperative (Lev. 25:14, Num. 4:22 and 25:17, Deut. 1:16, and Dan. 9:5).

⁴¹² **You – yourself** – Ibn Ezra infers that Zechariah must do this “himself” because the verse includes the pronoun אַתָּה (“you”). Hebrew normally omits the pronoun, since the verb’s suffix ת already identifies it as second person. Hence, the phrase וּבָאתָ אִתָּהּ could be translated literally, “You, you shall proceed.”

⁴¹³ **Which** – The Hebrew relative pronoun שׁ could also mean “who,” in which case it would refer to Josiah rather than Josiah’s house.

⁴¹⁴ **Who have come from Babylon returns to Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah** – The relative clause “who have come from Babylon” appears at the end of the verse, so one might think that it modifies Josiah son of Zephaniah. Ibn Ezra thus stresses that this relative clause has wide scope and modifies the characters from earlier in the verse. Eliezer of Beaugency agrees with Ibn Ezra that Josiah was not a member of the exiled community that returned from Babylonia. However, some exegetes claim that the relative clause modifies both Josiah and the three aforementioned men (Rashi, Radak, Tanhum). The plural verb “have come” (בָּאוּ) precludes the possibility of any exegete claiming that the relative clause modifies Josiah alone.

⁴¹⁵ **Just as “on the shore of the sea” returns to “Israel”** – In the proof-text, “Israel saw the Egyptians dead/dying (מָתוּ) on the shore of the sea,” Ibn Ezra suggests that “on the shore of the sea” does not modify the Egyptians’ death. Rather, it has wide scope, modifying the Israelites’ sight: They were “on the shore of the sea” when they saw the Egyptians die. Ibn Ezra elaborates on his interpretation of this verse in several other places (Daniel 10:1, long commentaries to Gen. 6:12 and Exod. 14:30; but cf. short commentary to Exod. 14:30). For an overview of rabbinic exegesis of this verse, see Breuer (מְדַרְשׁ הַתְּנַיִם וּפְשׁוּטוֹ שֶׁל פְּסוּקֵי), who claims that the *Mekhilta* (*ad loc.*) already contains the wide-scope reading that Ibn Ezra endorses. In a 2006 lecture at Yeshiva University, Dr. Richard C. Steiner questioned Breuer’s interpretation of the *Mekhilta* and argued that Yefet was the first exegete to suggest the wide-scope reading, which was later adopted by both Ibn Ezra and Rashbam.

⁴¹⁶ **Make** – Ibn Ezra uses an imperative form (עֲשֵׂה) instead of the second-person perfect form with a conversive ך (וַעֲשֵׂהְתָּ).

⁴¹⁷ **Crowns... on the head of Joshua, just as a crown was placed on the king’s head** – Ibn Ezra assumes that the crowns are literal crowns (cf. Joseph Kara and the HaKeter edition’s gloss to Rashi, based on mMid. 3:8).

⁴¹⁸ **Thus it says... And there shall also be a priest seated on his throne** – The fact that v. 13 presents Joshua as a peer of the king/governor demonstrates that Joshua also had royal status, which is why a crown was placed upon his head.

This, too, could have happened in the manner of prophecy⁴¹⁹ or in a waking state, by an angel.

(12) And say to him, to Joshua

A man called the Branch (צמח) – He is Zerubbabel.⁴²⁰

He shall branch out from under him (ומתחתיו) – From his place,⁴²¹ [in a] similar [sense to] “on his own.”⁴²²

(13) He [shall build] – When he shall build the Temple (הבית),⁴²³ then **he shall assume “regal majesty”** (cf. I Chron. 29:25).⁴²⁴

And High Priest Joshua will also be **seated on his throne**, but there shall not be jealousy between them due to the two thrones.

⁴¹⁹ **In the manner of prophecy** – In a dream. Ibn Ezra maintains that many of Zechariah’s visions were prophetic dreams (e.g., 2:5). He explains Zechariah’s earlier vision of Joshua in filthy garments as a prophetic dream (3:1) – despite the fact that Joshua was Zechariah’s real-life contemporary – because other elements of that prophecy sound like a vision (e.g., Satan’s presence). Here, Ibn Ezra initially describes this depiction of Joshua as another prophetic dream. However, because this prophecy does not contain any elements that could not happen in the real world, Ibn Ezra quickly offers a second possibility: Zechariah witnessed these events actually happen, while he was awake. Ibn Ezra adds that if Zechariah indeed witnessed these events while awake, then the prophecy was conveyed to him “by an angel,” because Ibn Ezra maintains that Zechariah’s level of prophecy was insufficient to receive direct communication from God while awake (see note 156 above).

⁴²⁰ **A man called the Branch (צמח) – he is Zerubbabel** – See 3:8 above (especially note 305), where Ibn Ezra first addresses the identification of צמח with Zerubbabel. He is rejecting the view that this verse is referring to the Messiah (Num. R. and Mid. Tan. to Num. 16:1, Jonathan, al-Qumisi; cf. Abarbanel). Most *peshat* exegetes identify צמח with Zerubbabel (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Ibn Caspi).

⁴²¹ **From under him – From his place** – Both here and in the oral commentary, Ibn Ezra’s uses the Hebrew word ומקומו instead of the ומתחתיו; since ומתחתיו could be translated literally as “underneath himself.” Abarbanel objects to this comment, arguing that ומתחתיו should mean “in his stead” (i.e., Zerubbabel’s future descendant who will be the Messiah).

⁴²² **[In a] similar [sense to] “on his own”** – Ibn Ezra appears to be expounding upon the metaphor of the verse: Zerubbabel is compared to a branch, because he will naturally grow and branch out from his current location, as opposed to actively getting up and going somewhere.

⁴²³ **The Temple (הבית)** – Ibn Ezra substitutes the more common word בית for the word הַיְכָל.

⁴²⁴ **When he will build the Temple, then he shall assume “regal majesty”** – This verse predicts two things: a) Zerubbabel will rebuild the Temple; 2) He will then assume “regal majesty.” According to Ibn Ezra, however, this prophecy takes the reconstruction for granted, presumably because several of Zechariah’s earlier prophecies have already promised that Zerubbabel will rebuild the Temple. Hence, this prophecy is merely adding that *when* Zerubbabel rebuilds the Temple, the potential will exist to establish him as king.

(14) The crowns [shall remain in the Temple of the Lord as a memorial] to Helem, who is Heldai (v. 10), just as Ahimoth⁴²⁵ is Mahath in Chronicles (I Chron. 6:10,20).

And **Hen [son of Zephaniah]** is Josiah [son of Zephaniah] (v. 10), just as Amminadab is Izhar (I Chron. 6:3,7).⁴²⁶

(15) Those who are far off [shall come and build in the Temple of the Lord] – They are Israelites.⁴²⁷

Chapter 7

(1) In the fourth year [of King Darius], when the Temple was being rebuilt.⁴²⁸

(2) Bethel sent – [Bethel] is the name of a prince,⁴²⁹ from the Israelite princes who were in Babylonia;⁴³⁰ so, too, **Sarezzer and Regem-melech** are names of princes. The proof is **and**

⁴²⁵ **Ahimoth** – In manuscripts of Ibn Ezra, this is written as two words (Ahi-moth), while it is one word in the Masoretic text of Chronicles.

⁴²⁶ **Helem, who is Heldai (v. 10), just as Ahimoth is Mahath in Chronicles. And Hen [son of Zephaniah] is Josiah [son of Zephaniah], just as Amminadab is Izhar** – Ibn Ezra compares Helem/Heldai to Ahimoth/Mahath as an example of two variants of the same name. For Hen/Josiah, he presumably prefers the example of Amminadab/Izhar, because he is arguing that the same person has two distinct names, as opposed to two spellings or nicknames that derive from the same name. Radak and Tanḥum agree with Ibn Ezra that Helem and Hen are Heldai and Josiah, respectively. Rashi also accepts the identification of Helem with Heldai and possibly the identification of Hen with Josiah (cf. the possible gloss in the HaKeter edition). Eliezer of Beaugency accepts the identification of Helem with Heldai. However, Eliezer claims that Hen son of Zephaniah was not the same person as Josiah son of Zephaniah but rather was his brother who had not returned from Babylonia (cf. note 414).

The ease with which Ibn Ezra downplays the significance of these alternative names conforms to Ibn Ezra's belief that "hundreds" of biblical characters have multiple names (Gen. 26:34; cf. above p. 168ff).

⁴²⁷ **Those who are far off... They are Israelites** – Ibn Ezra is rejecting the possibility that the prophet is welcoming Gentiles to participate in the Temple's reconstruction, explaining that only "Israelites" who are far away will come and take part in its reconstruction. Jacob b. Reuben, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, and Abarbanel also assume that this verse speaks of distant Jews. The oral commentary, however, writes that distant "nations" (עַמִּים) – presumably meaning Gentiles – will come. The view that these faraway men are Gentiles appears in an anonymous gloss to Eliezer of Beaugency's commentary (Poznanski 204-205) and is shared by Radak (who also cites the standard commentary's view anonymously).

⁴²⁸ **In the fourth year... when the Temple was being rebuilt** – According to the biblical account, the actual construction of the Second Temple spanned the second to sixth years of Darius' reign (see Ezra 4:24 and 6:15)

⁴²⁹ **[Bethel] is the name of a prince** – This interpretation contradicts the oral commentary's view that Bethel is the name of a place (an allusion to the Temple). Eliezer of Beaugency and Ibn Caspi agree with the standard commentary's claim that Bethel is the name of a colleague of Sarezzer and Regem-melech, but Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Radak (citing Jonathan) all maintain that Bethel refers the city of Bethel (north of Jerusalem).

his men (וְאֵלֶּיךָ שִׁיר) – Regem-melech’s men.⁴³¹ And⁴³² Yefet said that [Regem-melech] is like “the princes of Judah who command them” (רִגְמָתָם; Ps. 68:28), [i.e.,] the senior [officials].⁴³³

(3) Saying: “Shall I weep in the fifth month” – It mentions this fast day because the Temple was burned down on the tenth [day] of **the fifth month**.⁴³⁴ Let there not be any doubt in your heart because you find that it was burned down on the seventh [day] of the

Tanḥum and Abarbanel offer the same interpretation as the oral commentary (that Bethel means “House of God” and alludes to the Temple in Jerusalem), but Abarbanel does not appear to have seen the oral commentary, since he only mentions Ibn Ezra’s name when he rejects the standard commentary’s view that Bethel was a person.

⁴³⁰ **From the Israelite princes who were in Babylonia** – Ibn Ezra maintains that v. 2 lists three characters all of whom were based in Babylonia. Ibn Ezra does not specify which of them “sent” and which were sent. By beginning his citation of the verse with the word “sent,” Ibn Ezra might be indicating that he thinks all of them remained in Babylonia and “sent” their unnamed underlings – a view shared by Ibn Caspi. However, Radak and Tanḥum claim that Sarezzer and Regem-melech are the messengers who *were sent* by unnamed members of the Diaspora in Babylonia. Abarbanel understands that Ibn Ezra – who considers Bethel to be a name – similarly believes that all three men (Bethel, Sarezzer, and Regem-melech) *were sent* by their community. Lipshitz infers from the lemma וישלה ביתאל – which only mentions Bethel’s name – that Ibn Ezra considers Bethel alone to be the subject (“Bethel sent”), while Sarezzer and Regem-melech are the object. Hence, Lipshitz dismisses Abarbanel’s understanding of Ibn Ezra’s view and counters that according to Ibn Ezra, Bethel sent Sarezzer and Regem-melech (101-102 פרקי עיון במשנת הראב"ע).

⁴³¹ **The proof is and his men (וְאֵלֶּיךָ שִׁיר) – Regem-melech’s men** – It is not entirely clear what this word proves. It might prove that Regem-melech is a prince, rather than a layman, since he has underlings. Alternatively, if Ibn Ezra agrees that Regem-melech is a title rather than a proper name (see note 433), then he might be arguing that the masculine possessive suffix in וְאֵלֶּיךָ שִׁיר proves that it is the title of a person, rather than a place, since a place would require a feminine suffix (וְאֵלֶּיךָ שִׁירָה, her men).

⁴³² **And** – The Hebrew conjunction ו could be translated as “and” or “but” depending on whether Yefet and Ibn Ezra actually disagree (see note 433).

⁴³³ **And Yefet said that it is like “the princes of Judah who command them” (רִגְמָתָם) – [i.e.,] the senior [officials]** – According to Yefet, Regem-melech is a title or position (“a commander of the king”). Tanḥum cites this view anonymously. Ibn Saruk also cites Ps. 68:28 as a proof-text for the meaning of Regem-melech (מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 161, Sáenz-Badillos 349*), but he does not necessarily agree with Yefet regarding the phrase’s meaning (cf. Philipowski *ad loc.* n. 306).

Ibn Ezra’s juxtaposition of Yefet’s view to his own view seemingly implies that they disagree with each other. Assuming that they disagree, Ibn Ezra’s initial comment that Regem-melech is a name seemingly intends that Regem-melech is a *proper* name, in which case he disagrees with Yefet’s view that Regem-melech is a title of authority. However, Ibn Ezra’s commentary to the proof-text in Psalms cites our verse as proof that רִגְמָתָם means “those who command them,” implying that he agrees with Yefet that Regem-melech is a title of authority. Ibn Ezra might have changed his mind after writing his commentary to Psalms and decided here that Regem-melech is a proper name (cf. Rashi and Radak). However, given that Ibn Ezra’s commentaries to Psalms and Minor Prophets were completed within months of each other (Sela and Freudenthal 44-46), it is also possible that Ibn Ezra does not intend to disagree with Yefet in either source. His commentary to Minor Prophets might intend that Regem-melech is a “name” in the sense of a *person’s* title rather than a *city’s* title. He would thus be adding Yefet’s proof-text as support for his own view.

⁴³⁴ **It mentions this fast day because the Temple was burned down on the tenth [day] of the fifth month** – Although it will subsequently become clear that the Jews fasted on several dates to commemorate events surrounding the First Temple’s destruction (cf. 7:5, 8:19), the initial query in this verse focuses on the fast of the fifth month (Ab), since it commemorates the actual date of the First Temple’s destruction (cf. Schrem 43a).

[fifth] month, because the meaning is: Its edges were burned.⁴³⁵ Jerusalem was destroyed for the second time, in the days of Titus, on the ninth of Ab,⁴³⁶ and we fast on account of that second destruction.⁴³⁷

Practice abstinence (אָר תּוֹר) [means] that they should abstain from all pleasures and food⁴³⁸ and rather should weep.

The priests did not know how to respond because this fast is not written in the Torah, but rather they accepted it upon themselves when they saw the First Temple's destruction.⁴³⁹

⁴³⁵ **The Temple was burned down on the tenth [day] of the fifth month. Let there not be any doubt... that it was burned down in on the seventh [day] of the [fifth] month... Its edges were burned** – Ibn Ezra is alluding to a contradiction regarding the precise date of the First Temple's destruction. II Kings 25:8 states that Nebuzaradan came on the *seventh* day of the fifth month and burned down the Temple, whereas the parallel verse in Jer. 52:12 states that this took place on the *tenth* day of the fifth month. Rabbinic tradition reconciles these verses by explaining, "On the seventh [day], Gentiles entered the Temple, and they ate and damaged it on the seventh and eighth; on the ninth, close to nightfall, they ignited the fire, and it continued to burn throughout the [tenth] day" (bTan. 29a). Most medieval commentaries to those verses in Kings and Jeremiah accept the rabbinic resolution (Radak and Ralbag to Kings, Joseph Kara and Isaiah of Trani to Jeremiah). Ibn Ezra differs slightly from this tradition in that he claims the fire began on the seventh day. Commenting on our verse, Eliezer of Beaugency argues the opposite extreme, that Nebuzaradan did not kindle the fire until the tenth day, so nothing burned until then. Both Ibn Ezra and Eliezer of Beaugency may have dismissed the Talmud's assertion that the Temple was set ablaze on the ninth of Ab, because the Bible never mentions the ninth as a significant date (cf. Yefet, who argues that from the perspective of Karaites, no connection exists between the ninth of Ab and the Temple's destruction, because the Bible only mentions the seventh and tenth of Ab). Thus, they may have felt that the Talmud only attributed significance to the ninth in order to connect the First Temple's destruction with the Second Temple's destruction on the ninth of Ab.

⁴³⁶ **Ab** – Ab is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar.

⁴³⁷ **Jerusalem was destroyed for the second time... on the ninth of Ab, and we fast on account of that second destruction** – Later, Ibn Ezra stipulates that although the First Temple burned from the seventh to the tenth of Ab, the fast day was on the tenth of Ab in Zechariah's time (8:19) – a view that Tanḥum shares (8:19). However, rabbinic tradition teaches that after the Second Temple's destruction on the ninth of Ab, the fast was instituted on that date, so Ibn Ezra is explaining that the fast which Jews continued to observe in his time was one day earlier (according to Rabbanite practice) than the fast that was instituted following the First Temple's destruction.

⁴³⁸ **אָר תּוֹר** – **that they should abstain from all pleasures and food** – The meaning of אָר תּוֹר as abstention from pleasures is shared by many exegetes (*Sifrei* and Num. R. to Num. 6:3, Jonathan, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Tanḥum, Student of Trani, Ibn Caspi). Radak and Eliezer of Beaugency explicitly include eating on the list of abstentions, just as Ibn Ezra does.

⁴³⁹ **The priests did not know how to respond because this fast is not written in the Torah, but rather they accepted it upon themselves when they saw the First Temple's destruction** – Ibn Ezra is stressing that God did not command the observance of these fast days, in order to facilitate his subsequent view that God is criticizing them for caring more about their non-binding custom of fasting than about His obligatory commandments. Ibn Ezra's view of the fast days contrasts sharply with al-Qumisi, who seeks to anchor these fasts in earlier Scripture. According to al-Qumisi, the Bible mandates these fast days, so the prophet's

So the prophet prophesied and [then] responded at the end of the passage.⁴⁴⁰

(4) [The word of the Lord of Hosts] came [to me] – This happened after they asked.⁴⁴¹

(5) Say to all the people of the land – They are the people of Babylonia and also the people of Jerusalem, because the prophecy includes everyone;⁴⁴² also **to the priests** who did not know how to respond.

And **ספוד (lamentation)** is an infinitive, so [the meaning] is: “You lamented in lamentation,”⁴⁴³ but [the verse] used an abridged style.⁴⁴⁴

In the fifth [month] is the aforementioned [fast], and he added **the seventh** [month], which comes afterward, and it is the Fast of Gedaliah.⁴⁴⁵

subsequent plea to focus on truth and justice rather than fasting parallels other prophecies that criticize people who focus too much on similar obligatory rituals (e.g., prayer, sacrifices, festival observances) at the expense of honesty and justice (cf. Hadassi, *אשכל הכפר* alph. 243). Al-Qumisi’s efforts to anchor the fast days in Scripture are characteristic of Karaism, while Ibn Ezra’s staunch insistence that the fasts are not biblically mandated likely contains an element of polemicizing against Karaism (cf. note 494 below regarding the fast of the seventh month). I discuss the differences between Karaite and Rabanite understandings of these fasts at greater length in the introduction (p. 46ff).

⁴⁴⁰ **So the prophet prophesied and [then] responded at the end of the passage** – Ibn Ezra is alluding to the fact that Zechariah’s prophecies do not directly answer this query until 8:19, so apparently he initially received a prophecy with a broader message and only afterward answered their specific question regarding the fast day.

⁴⁴¹ **This happened after they asked** – See note 440. Ibn Ezra might also be addressing the fact that v. 1 states, “The word of the Lord came to Zechariah,” without citing the contents of any prophecy. Ibn Ezra thus might be suggesting that the prophecy beginning in v. 4 (“The word of the Lord of Hosts came to me”) is the same prophecy that v. 1 introduced. Although v. 1 already stated that “the word of the Lord came to Zechariah,” the revelation in fact took place only after these individuals presented their query regarding the fast day (cf. Filvarg 13b).

⁴⁴² **All the people of the land – They are the people of Babylonia and also the people of Jerusalem, because the prophecy includes everyone** – Yefet deliberates, whether the phrase “all the people of the land” refers exclusively to the Jews of the Land of Israel or to all of world Jewry. Ultimately, he concludes that the word “all” proves that God directed this prophecy toward the entirety of the Jewish people (printed in Erder, *הצומות הקדומה* 510). Ibn Ezra thus agrees with Yefet’s conclusion.

⁴⁴³ **You lamented in lamentation** – Ibn Ezra places a perfect verb of the same root before the infinitive (*וספדתם* (*ספוד*). This creates an awkward redundancy in English but is not uncommon in Biblical Hebrew (e.g., Gen. 19:9, Joel 2:26; cf. GKK 343).

⁴⁴⁴ **Used an abridged style** – Literally, “took the short path.” Ibn Ezra’s point is that in addition to the infinitive *ספוד*, there is an implied perfect verb – “you lamented.”

And he mentions **these seventy years** but does not concern himself to mention an additional year or two, because the “seventy years of the desolation of Jerusalem” (Dan. 9:2) were completed in the second year of Darius, but this prophecy happened in year four.⁴⁴⁶ A portion of the third [year] had begun when the seventy years were completed, and at [the time of] this prophecy, a portion of the fourth [year] had already begun. Therefore, he was not so precise with the calculation of **seventy**, “since it was close” (Exod. 13:17).⁴⁴⁷

The word “fasted” (צם) is an intransitive verb. Hence, צמתי [means], “[Did] you fast on My account” or “in My honor,” for I did not command you to fast?⁴⁴⁸

(6) And when [you eat and drink, are not you the ones who eat, and you the ones who drink] – Its meaning is: **You are the ones who eat, and you are the ones who fast.** What are you giving Me or doing for Me, inasmuch as I have not commanded you [regarding] this matter?⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁵ **The Fast of Gedaliah** – Gedaliah, the governor of Judah whom Nebuchadnezzar appointed shortly after the First Temple’s destruction, was assassinated in the seventh month (II King 25:25, Jer. 41:1-2). Ibn Ezra discusses this fast in greater detail in 8:19.

⁴⁴⁶ **And he mentions these seventy years but does not concern himself to mention an additional year or two... this prophecy happened in year four** – According to Ibn Ezra’s calculations, seventy-two years had passed since the First Temple’s destruction, so he argues that the text is being imprecise. Based on the same calculations as Ibn Ezra, Tanḥum also suggests that seventy might be an estimate, but he adds that they might have also been asking whether the obligation to fast had already ceased two years earlier, when the Second Temple’s construction began.

⁴⁴⁷ **Since it was close** – Although Ibn Ezra is citing Exodus for purely rhetorical purposes and not as any sort of proof-text, it is worth noting that his citation is consistent with his own interpretation of the Hebrew verse (כי קרוב הוא), as opposed to the view of Ibn Chiquitilia, whom Ibn Ezra *ad loc.* cites as interpreting it to mean “*despite* its being close.”

⁴⁴⁸ **צמתי [means], “[Did] you fast on My account” or “in My honor,” for I did not command you to fast** – The verb צמתי has a direct-object suffix, so the verse should literally mean, “Did you fast Me?” However, given that the verb is intransitive and thus cannot take a direct object, Ibn Ezra interprets the suffix as an indirect object – “for Me.” Others also interpret the suffix as an indirect object – “before Me” (Jonathan), “for My sake” (Ibn Saruk, מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 71, Sáenz-Badillos 140*; Radak, Tanḥum), “in My honor” (Rashi), or “by My command” (Abarbanel). Eliezer of Beaugency appears to have interpreted צמתי as a first-person intransitive verb: “I fasted.”

⁴⁴⁹ **What are you giving Me or doing for Me, inasmuch as I have not commanded you [regarding] this matter** – Ibn Ezra is bothered by the fact that God’s question sounds tautological, as if he is asking whether they are the ones who would be eating and drinking if they eat and drink on fast days (cf. Abarbanel).

(7) Have I not commanded words exclusively through the prophets? So which one prophesied at My behest to fast?⁴⁵⁰

(8) [The word of the LORD] came [unto Zechariah] – This prophecy, too, is connected, but it is a separate prophecy⁴⁵¹ that explains the matters that the Lord proclaimed through his earlier prophets (cf. v. 7), which were: **(9) Thus [said the Lord of Hosts... (10) Do not defraud] the widow, the orphan, the stranger...**

(11) But they – your fathers – refused [to pay heed].

A rebellious shoulder is like “stiff-necked” (Exod. 32:9).⁴⁵²

[And stopped their ears, that they might not hear (משמיע)] – And they were not even willing to hear.⁴⁵³

According to Ibn Ezra, God’s actual argument is that He hardly cares whether they eat or drink, since He did not command them to fast. Joseph Kara and Eliezer of Beaugency share that fundamental interpretation. Others interpret the question in a slightly different manner: God was arguing that He does not care whether they eat or drink, since they – but not He – derive pleasure from their eating and drinking (Jonathan, Rashi). Radak appears to combine both interpretations.

⁴⁵⁰ **Have I not commanded words exclusively through the prophets? So which one prophesied at My behest to fast** – It is not clear from the verse why God is appealing to earlier prophets. Ibn Ezra interprets this appeal as part of God’s attempt to downplay the significance of these fast days: They are unimportant, because the prophets did not command them. Had God wished for everyone to fast, He would have instructed the prophets to command everyone to fast. Tanḥum shares this fundamental interpretation (although his comments seem to incorporate the theme of the alternative view below, too). Ibn Ezra’s theoretical openness to God commanding a new fast through His prophets, followed by Ibn Ezra’s insistence that fasts derive from a less authoritative source may be related to his desire to undermine Karaite perspectives regarding these fasts. I discuss this issue at length in the introduction (p. 46ff).

Many exegetes understand the significance of this verse differently: God is reminding them that the destruction – which prompted the fasts – came about due to the people’s failure to heed the earlier prophets’ admonitions (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak).

⁴⁵¹ **This prophecy, too, is connected, but it is a separate prophecy** – This verse begins a new prophecy that does not directly address the query regarding the status of the fast days. However, it is connected to the previous prophecy. According to Ibn Ezra, the previous prophecy criticized the people for being more concerned with fasting than with the laws and behaviors that God commanded via the prophets. So this new prophecy reiterates some of the most important behaviors that the people and their ancestors had neglected.

⁴⁵² **A rebellious shoulder is like “stiff-necked”** – Both are metaphors for the nation’s stubborn refusal to obey God.

⁴⁵³ **[And stopped their ears, that they might not hear] – And they were not even willing to hear** – Although the Hebrew text of Ibn Ezra does not contain an additional lemma, his comment that “they were not even

(12) [They made] their hearts like שְׁמִיר (flint) – Iron cannot make engravings in [flint].⁴⁵⁴

[Against heeding] the תּוֹרָה (instruction) – the Torah of Moses, our teacher⁴⁵⁵ – and words [that the Lord of Hosts sent to them by His spirit] through the [earlier] prophets to admonish them.⁴⁵⁶

And a terrible wrath issued [from the Lord of Hosts] against your fathers.⁴⁵⁷

(13) Even [as He called and they would not listen, “So,” said the Lord of Hosts, “let them call and I will not listen”] – He requited their conduct.⁴⁵⁸

willing to hear” appears to be his paraphrase of the concluding phrase that they “turned a deaf ear,” so I have added those words in brackets. While it is possible that he is merely elaborating on the phrases that he does cite as the lemma (“refused,” “rebellious shoulder”), I believe his choice of the same verb as the end of the verse (from the root שמע, to hear) indicates that he is seeking a unique meaning for “stopped their ears, that they might not hear,” as opposed to the expressions of their stubbornness earlier in the verse. Ibn Ezra is explaining that turning “a deaf ear” is even stronger than the previous image of turning “rebellious shoulder.” The latter implies a stubborn unwillingness to change one’s behavior despite the prophets’ exhortations, while the former implies that one is not even willing to hear the prophets’ words. Ibn Ezra thus appears to interpret the root שמע as the physical act of hearing. Although שמע can also connote obedience, Ibn Ezra’s point appears to be that they “stopped their ears” so they could not even “hear” the words.

⁴⁵⁴ שְׁמִיר (flint) – iron cannot make engravings in [flint] – Ibn Ezra appears to assume that שְׁמִיר is a hard stone, so I have translated it as “flint” (cf. מהברת מנהם, Sáenz-Badillos 383*; Schrem 43a). Radak and Tanḥum explicitly state that שְׁמִיר is a hard stone in this verse. In other contexts, Ibn Ezra interprets שְׁמִיר as a type of thistle or brier (Isa. 5:6, 7:23; cf. Isa. 32:13). Rashi interprets שְׁמִיר in our verse as a mythical worm that can cut through stone (cf. Ezek. 3:9, tSot. 15:1, bGit. 68a-b).

⁴⁵⁵ Our teacher – The words “our teacher” appear in a mere two of the nine witnesses, making it probable that a later scribe added them out of reverence for Moses. Indeed, if one searches all of Ibn Ezra’s biblical commentaries (using the texts in the HaKeter edition), Moses is only referred to twice as “Moses, our teacher” – once in Ibn Ezra’s poetic introduction to the long commentary to Genesis and once in the oral commentary to Gen. 49:3-4 (which was not written by Ibn Ezra himself).

⁴⁵⁶ The תּוֹרָה (instruction) – the Torah of Moses... and words [that the Lord of Hosts sent...] through the [earlier] prophets to admonish them – Ibn Ezra is aware that, depending on the context, the word תּוֹרָה can refer broadly to religious teaching (cf. Ibn Ezra to Mic. 4:2) or legal rulings (cf. Mal. 2:9), or it can have a more narrow meaning as the Pentateuch or Mosaic law (e.g., Ibn Ezra to Ps. 19:8), or even as specific parts of Mosaic law (cf. both commentaries to Exod. 24:12). In our verse, Ibn Ezra interprets תּוֹרָה as the Pentateuch or Mosaic Law, because the broader meaning of general religious instruction would create unnecessary repetition – “the instruction (תּוֹרָה) and words that the Lord of Hosts sent to them by His spirit through the earlier prophets” – with “the instruction” and “words” referring to the same admonition. Ibn Ezra therefore prefers to interpret תּוֹרָה in its narrow, technical sense, thereby distinguish between the “Torah of Moses” and the words of subsequent prophets. Abarbanel cites Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of תּוֹרָה in the name of “the exegetes.”

⁴⁵⁷ And a terrible wrath issued [from the Lord of Hosts] against your fathers – Ibn Ezra fills in the target of the God’s wrath, which is not explicitly stated in the verse although it is fairly obvious from context.

⁴⁵⁸ He requited their conduct – In explaining God’s conduct, Ibn Ezra is paraphrasing Obad. 1:15: “As you did, so it shall be done to you; your conduct shall be requited.”

(14) **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם (I will disperse them)** is a grammatically difficult word, because it appears to be a transitive verb. So it would be proper to say **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם**, or **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם**⁴⁵⁹ or **וְאֶסְעִירֵם** [with] heavy conjugation.⁴⁶⁰ R. Marwan [Ibn Janah] said **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם**, but this is not correct, due to **among all the nations**. But the correct [interpretation] in my view is: I will rage⁴⁶¹ (**וְאֶסְעֶרֵם**⁴⁶²) against them⁴⁶³ with a storm of (בסערת) My wind, and it will scatter them **among all the nations**.⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁵⁹ **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** – The HaKeter edition vocalizes this word **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** (with a *pataḥ* under the ס). However, the word **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** (Job 27:21) appears to be *pi'el* (Radak, השרשים 485; cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 342), in which case it indicates that there is compensatory lengthening before the ע of this root (due to the ע's degemination). Hence, the vowel under the ס should expand from a *pataḥ* to a *qamatz*.

⁴⁶⁰ **Heavy conjugation** – “Heavy” conjugation refers to verb stems with additions to the root, besides the prefixes and suffixes for tense (cf. note 741 below). In this case, **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** would be the *pi'el* conjugation, and **וְאֶסְעִירֵם** would be the *hif'il* conjugation.

⁴⁶¹ **Rage** – A more literal translation might be “shake” as an intransitive verb, in the sense of shaking with rage (cf. Muraoka and Shavitsky, based on Ibn Ezra to Hab. 3:14).

⁴⁶² **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** – I am not vocalizing this word, because Ibn Ezra's interpretation could fit a *qal* or *nif'al* verb (**וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** or **וְאֶסְעִירֵם**, respectively), although I subsequently argue that Ibn Ezra considers the verb to be *qal*. When Ibn Ezra cites Ibn Janah earlier in the verse, MS Oxford 33 vocalizes the word as **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם**, which does not correspond to either verbal stem's vocalization but rather appears to be the scribe's attempt to preserve the irregular vocalization of **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** after removing the object suffix.

⁴⁶³ **I will rage (וְאֶסְעֶרֵם) against them** – Ibn Ezra's phrase **אֶסְעֶרֵם עֲלֵיהֶם** (verb from the root סער + preposition על) might be intended to parallel Jon. 1:13: “for the sea was growing more and more stormy about them” (הוֹלֵךְ נִסְעַר (עַלֵיהֶם)).

⁴⁶⁴ **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם is a grammatically difficult word, because it appears to be a transitive verb... R. Marwan [Ibn Janah] said וְאֶסְעֶרֵם... But the correct [interpretation] in my view is: I will rage against them with a storm of My wind, and it will scatter them among all the nations** – The word **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** poses two related difficulties: 1) Which verbal stem is it? Its vowels do not fit any known verbal stem. 2) Is its meaning transitive or intransitive? Ordinarily, *nif'al* verbs are intransitive, while *hif'il* and *pi'el* are transitive. *Qal* can be transitive or intransitive, although the root סער tends to be intransitive in *qal* (cf. Ibn Ezra to Hab. 3:14). These two difficulties led to a range of interpretations among medieval grammarians and exegetes. Saadiyah (Ratzhabi, 232 מפירושי רס"ג) interprets **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** as transitive, without addressing the word's verbal stem (cf. the oral commentary). Jonathan's translation also employs a transitive verb (וְאֶסְעֶרֵם, "I will scatter them"). Hayyuj (כתאב אלנתרף, Maman and Ben Porat 318) interprets **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** as transitive, too, but he adds that it is nevertheless *nif'al*.

Ibn Janah – the target of Ibn Ezra's criticism here – contradicts himself regarding how to resolve these difficulties. In ספר הרקמה (344-345), he argues that **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** is *qal* despite its irregular vocalization (but he does not address its transitivity). In ספר השרשים, however, Ibn Janah presents **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** as a transitive *nif'al* verb, while acknowledging that this contradicts what he wrote in ספר הרקמה regarding its verbal stem. In order to understand the nature of Ibn Ezra's critique of Ibn Janah, one must first determine whether Ibn Ezra is criticizing his view from הרקמה or from השרשים. Unfortunately, Ibn Ezra's cryptic citation of Ibn Janah is limited to the Hebrew word **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם**, which could be vocalized as *qal* or *nif'al* (cf. note 462) and thus could fit either of Ibn Janah's interpretations. Nor does Ibn Ezra fully articulate his criticism, simply asserting that the phrase “among all the nations” disproves Ibn Janah but failing to explain how it disproves him. Hence, Ibn Ezra's super-commentators to struggle to distinguish between Ibn Ezra's own view and his citation of Ibn Janah (cf. Kaputa 156, Filvarg 13b, Schrem 43a).

Ibn Ezra's own view appears to be that **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** is *qal* but intransitive, because his commentary to Hab. 3:14 equates **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** with the *qal* verb **יִסְעֶרוּ**, which he interprets as intransitive. In our passage, Ibn Ezra replaces the direct object suffix ם in **וְאֶסְעֶרֵם** with the preposition עליהם (“upon/against them”), further indicating

And he mentions **the land was desolate** as the opposite of “when the Negeb and the Shephelah were peopled” (v. 7).⁴⁶⁵

Chapter 8

(1) [The word of the Lord of Hosts] came – Since He mentioned the land’s desolation, He [then] comforted them.⁴⁶⁶

(2) Thus [said the Lord of Hosts]: I am very jealous for Zion, like “The Lord was jealous for His land” (Joel 2:18).⁴⁶⁷

that he considers וַאֲסַעַר to be intransitive (cf. note 463) and hence deems the suffix ם incapable of representing a direct object. In light of his own view, Ibn Ezra might be objecting to Ibn Janah’s claim (in ספר השרשים) that the verb is transitive, but it is unclear how the subsequent phrase “among all the nations” would disprove that claim. If one assumes instead that Ibn Ezra was criticizing one of Ibn Janah’s claims regarding the verbal stem (*qal* in ספר הרקמה, *nif’al* in ספר השרשים), then is it even harder to see how the phrase “among all the nations” would disprove the verb being either *qal* or *nif’al*.

It therefore seems that Ibn Ezra does not intend to fundamentally disagree with Ibn Janah regarding the verbal stem or transitivity of וַאֲסַעַרָם. Rather, he is assuming that when Ibn Janah (in הרקמה) writes that וַאֲסַעַרָם is *qal*, then it is also intransitive (=Ibn Ezra’s own view in Hab. 3:14). Ibn Ezra therefore cites the prepositional phrase “among all the nations” to challenge Ibn Janah’s (and his own) position, because that phrase can modify a transitive verb – “I will scatter them among all the nations” – more easily than an intransitive verb: “I will rage against them among all the nations.” When Ibn Ezra adds the “correct” interpretation, he stands by his fundamental position that וַאֲסַעַרָם is an intransitive *qal* verb, but he adds an implied transitive verb in order to render the verse coherent: “I will rage against them and scatter them among all the nations” (cf. Tanḥum).

Radak cites Ibn Ezra by name but does not add any comments to elucidate his view. Tanḥum cites Ibn Ezra’s view anonymously, but he criticizes it because it requires one to assume the presence of an implied word that is missing in the text. For a summary and analysis of medieval grammarians’ views of וַאֲסַעַרָם, see Maman and Ben Porat (Ḥayyuj, כתאב אלגתף, 319 n. 966).

⁴⁶⁵ **He mentions the land was desolate as the opposite of “when the Negeb and the Shephelah were peopled”** – The prophet’s depiction of the desolation that resulted from God’s wrath contrasts with his depiction in v. 7 of the prosperity before the First Temple’s destruction. Radak cites this comment in Ibn Ezra’s name.

⁴⁶⁶ **Since He mentioned the land’s desolation, He [then] comforted them** – Verses 1-17 contain a series of prophecies of consolation, which might seem out of place. Following the query in 7:3 regarding the future of the fast days, Ibn Ezra understands the rest of Chapter 7 as God’s immediate reply, which consists of rebuking the petitioners for attributing so much significance to the fasts (7:4-7), followed by a prophecy to reorient them toward the Torah’s true essence (7:8-10) and a reminder that failure to follow the Torah led to the exile (7:11-14). In Chapter 8, vv. 18-19 contain God’s direct answer to whether they should still fast. Ibn Ezra is therefore explaining the role of 8:1-17, which seems to interrupt the flow of the text. He explains that before God answers their query, He offers them words of consolation since He just described their land’s desolation. Tanḥum adopts Ibn Ezra’s explanation.

⁴⁶⁷ **I am very jealous for Zion, like “The Lord was jealous for His land”** – “Jealousy” in our verse and in the proof-text from Joel connotes zeal “on behalf of” something – as opposed to jealousy “of” something. Ibn Ezra discussed this point in greater detail above (1:14). Rashi and Joseph Kara also comment that God is jealous “on behalf of” Zion in our verse.

(3) Thus [said the Lord]: I have returned to Zion conditionally, as I have mentioned (2:14).⁴⁶⁸

(4-5) Thus [said the Lord of Hosts: There shall yet be old men and women in the squares of Jerusalem each with staff in hand because of their great age. And the squares of the city shall be crowded with boys and girls] – The meaning is that the city will be full, with many **old men and boys** there. So the meaning is that all those who reside in **Jerusalem and the squares of the city** will live to an advanced age.⁴⁶⁹

(6) Thus [said the Lord of Hosts... shall it also be wondrous (יִפְלֵא) in My eyes] – R.

Judah Halevi said that the interrogative ה is missing, as if it were written: “Shall it **also (הֲגַם) be wondrous in My eyes?**”⁴⁷⁰ [This] is like, “You (הָאֵל) [now] reign over Israel?” (I Kings 21:7), which is missing the interrogative ה, as if it [read], “Do you (הֲאֵתָהּ) [now reign over Israel]?”⁴⁷¹ But in my opinion, this is not necessary, because Scripture does not intend that it

⁴⁶⁸ **Conditionally, as I have mentioned** – Ibn Ezra maintains that this prophecy of consolation was meant to be fulfilled in Zechariah’s time, rather than being intended for a future messianic era. This view raises the difficulty that not every word in the prophecy was actually fulfilled in Zechariah’s time. Ibn Ezra resolves this difficulty by asserting that its fulfillment was contingent upon the people’s fulfillment of God’s will. Ibn Ezra already mentioned the idea of a conditional prophecy in 2:14 (see note 243) regarding the declaration that God “will dwell in your midst,” which closely resembles our verse’s assertion, “I will dwell in Jerusalem.” Ibn Ezra attributes the same notion of conditional prophecy to Ibn Chiquitilia in Hag. 2:9.

Radak disagrees and claims that our prophecy foretells Jerusalem’s future messianic redemption. Eliezer of Beaugency, too, comments on several verses in this chapter (7, 21, 23) that they must be intended for the messianic era, because they were not fulfilled during the Second Temple Period. On the other hand, Abarbanel appears to agree with Ibn Ezra’s view; he observes that v. 7 was not fulfilled in Zechariah’s time, but he explains (presumably based on Ibn Ezra) that it was intended for then conditionally.

⁴⁶⁹ **Will live to an advanced age** – The Hebrew phrase שִׂיֵּאֲרִיכּוּ יָמִים is an idiom that literally means, “They will have long days,” similar to the expression in v. 4 for reaching an advanced age (רַב יָמִים), which literally means “an abundance of days.”

⁴⁷⁰ **R. Judah Halevi said that the interrogative ה is missing, as if it were written: “Shall it also (הֲגַם) be wondrous in My eyes?”** – See note 472 below. The oral commentary presents this interpretation as Ibn Ezra’s own view.

⁴⁷¹ **“You [now] reign over Israel”... “Do you [now reign over Israel]”** – Several exegetes to Kings *ad loc.* also interpret that phrase as interrogative despite its lack of an interrogative prefix ה (Joseph Kara, Radak, Ralbag, Ibn Caspi).

will be [too] **wondrous**⁴⁷² for Him – in which case astonishment⁴⁷³ would be warranted⁴⁷⁴ – like, “Is [anything] too wondrous (אִלֵּף) for Me” (Jer. 32:27).⁴⁷⁵ Rather, here it is written: **It shall also be wondrous in My eyes.** Just as what I do **will be wondrous in the eyes of [the remnant of] this people, it shall also be thus in My eyes,** for I will have performed a great wonder. But **in My eyes** is like, “[This is the Lord's doing:] it is wonderful (נִפְלְאוֹת) in our eyes” (Ps. 118:23): The meaning is that I will perform a wonder, which I have never done [anything] like or – figuratively⁴⁷⁶ – seen [anything like].⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷² **Wondrous** – The Hebrew root אִלֵּף can be used to describe something as miraculous, but also in the sense of being beyond someone’s capability or comprehension. For example of the latter meaning, see Deuteronomy’s discussion of legal queries that are too difficult for the local court to adjudicate: “If a case is too baffling (אִלֵּף) for you to decide” (Deut. 17:8). Judah Halevi likely assumed this latter meaning in our verse, which results in a theologically problematic reading: “It shall also be impossible/baffling (אִלֵּף) in My eyes,” implying that God either cannot fulfill the prophecy or – at a minimum – cannot fathom its fulfilment. Hence, Halevi reads the verse as a rhetorical question, “Shall it also be impossible/baffling in My eyes,” to which the obvious answer would be, “No!”

⁴⁷³ **Astonishment** – The Hebrew word תִּימָה is the same word as “interrogative” earlier in this passage.

⁴⁷⁴ **Would be warranted** – Literally, “would be seen” (יֵרָא), meaning that one could recognize the interrogative nature of the verse even without the presence of an interrogative ה, since it would be irrational to assert in a declarative sentence that something is beyond God’s capabilities.

⁴⁷⁵ **Is [anything] too wondrous for Me** – Others translate the word אִלֵּף as “too hard” (KJV, JPS 1917) or “too difficult” (NASV); see note 472 above. Although the verse in Jeremiah contains an interrogative prefix ה, the context would have prevented it from being declarative even had it lacked the interrogative ה, because it discusses whether something was “too wondrous/difficult” for God. Thus, if Zech. 8:6 were similarly discussing whether the repopulation of Jerusalem fell within God’s capabilities, as Halevi claims, then it would also necessarily be a rhetorical question.

⁴⁷⁶ **Figuratively** – Ibn Ezra is sensitive to the concern that God does not have eyes or see, so nothing can literally be wondrous in His eyes.

⁴⁷⁷ **The meaning is that I will perform a wonder, which I have never done... or seen [anything like]** – According to Ibn Ezra, being “wondrous” in God’s “eyes” is a figurative expression that highlights the magnitude of this miracle; it is as if God has never seen anything like it, so He marvels at it, just as people will marvel at the wonders in Ps. 118:23.

Rashi and Eliezer of Beaugency also interpret this phrase as declarative. Radak cites the view that the phrase is a rhetorical question anonymously, but he names Ibn Ezra as the source of the view that the verse is declarative, which Radak considers to be the plain meaning (כַּמְשַׁמְעוֹ) of the verse. Tanḥum cites both views anonymously, but clearly from Ibn Ezra’s commentary (since he cites the same proof-texts for both opinions), and he prefers Halevi’s view that the phrase is a rhetorical question. Abarbanel, too, cites both views anonymously, but he rejects Halevi’s view and adopts Ibn Ezra’s own view.

(7) Thus [said the Lord of Hosts: I will rescue My people from the lands of] the east –
Babylonia and Persia – **and [from the lands of] the west –** Egypt and Assyria.⁴⁷⁸

(8) And I will bring [them home to dwell in Jerusalem] – This prophecy, too, is
connected.⁴⁷⁹

(9) From the mouth of the prophets, who were Haggai and Zechariah.

The House (בַּיִת) of the Lord is the Temple (הַהֵיכָל).⁴⁸⁰

(10) For before that time – before [the Temple] was rebuilt – hired laborers could not find
what to do.⁴⁸¹

[And profits from beasts were nothing (אֵינָהּ)] – The word אֵינָהּ refers to שָׂכָר (profits), for
many words can be found in both masculine and feminine forms.⁴⁸² But R. Moses [Ibn

⁴⁷⁸ **The [lands of] the west – Egypt and Assyria** – Egypt is southwest of Jerusalem. Ibn Ezra appears to believe that Assyria is northwest of Jerusalem. He is clearly aware that it is north of Jerusalem (Zeph. 2:13; cf. Isa. 14:31), but he also indicates that it is west of Jerusalem (Isa. 43:5, 49:12). Radak simply interprets the phrase “from the lands of the east and from the lands of the west” as indicating that God will redeem Jews who are dispersed throughout the world, without the phrase alluding to specific countries of exile.

⁴⁷⁹ **This prophecy, too, is connected** – Ibn Ezra stresses that these prophecies are connected to one another because Zechariah will not answer the query regarding whether people should continue to fast (7:3) until 8:18-19. So Ibn Ezra stresses that this prophecy about the ingathering of exiles (vv. 6-8) is part of the same sequence of prophecies of consolation whose purpose he explained in 8:1 (cf. note 466).

⁴⁸⁰ **The House of the Lord is the Temple** – Following the Hebrew word order, the end of verse literally means, “The foundations were laid for the House of the Lord of Hosts, the Temple to be rebuilt.” Ibn Ezra is clarifying that “House of the Lord of Hosts” and “the Temple” are synonymous, so the foundations of the Temple were laid on that day. Tanḥum debates whether these two terms are indeed synonymous, or “the Temple” refers to the sanctuary within “the House of God.”

⁴⁸¹ **Hired laborers could not find what to do** – Ibn Ezra is paraphrasing the verse: “The earnings of men were nil, and profits from beasts were nothing.”

⁴⁸² **The word אֵינָהּ refers to שָׂכָר, for many words can be found in both masculine and feminine forms** – The Hebrew noun שָׂכָר is normally masculine, so the feminine suffix in אֵינָהּ appears to disagree with it. Ibn Ezra therefore argues that many words in the Bible are actually both masculine and feminine, so they might take a feminine adjective or verb in one place despite taking masculine adjectives or verbs in many other places.

Ibn Janah (הַרְקָמָה 321) agrees that the feminine suffix of אֵינָהּ refers to the masculine noun שָׂכָר. Ibn Janah considers this phrase to be an example of attraction, in which the juxtaposition of אֵינָהּ to the feminine noun בְּהֵמָה causes it to employ a feminine suffix even though the suffix refers to the earlier masculine noun שָׂכָר (cf. I Sam 2:4 - קֶשֶׁת גְּבוּרִים חֲתִים). Tanḥum adopts Ibn Janah’s explanation.

Chiquitilia] said that **אֵינְנָהּ** refers to **הַבְּהֵמָה (the beasts)**.⁴⁸³ There are no **profits from beasts**, because **there are none (אֵינְנָהּ)**.⁴⁸⁴

[On account of] enemies who assail.⁴⁸⁵

And I sent [all men against one another (אֶשְׁבְּרְעֵהוּ)] to generate quarreling.⁴⁸⁶ **(11) But now** I will not send men against one another, but rather there will be peace.

(12) For the seed of peace – Its meaning is: Everyone will sow and reap in peace.⁴⁸⁷

(13) And just as you were a curse [among the nations] – “Humiliated [before the nations] because of famine” (Ezek. 36:30). The meaning is: If a **curse** would befall them, they would say that it happened due to you.

⁴⁸³ **But R. Moses [Ibn Chiquitilia] said that אֵינְנָהּ refers to הַבְּהֵמָה (the beasts)** – הַבְּהֵמָה is a feminine singular noun (literally, “the beast”) although it translates as plural into English. Therefore, in Hebrew, it is the referent of the feminine singular suffix of אֵינְנָהּ (see note 484). This dispute between Ibn Ezra and Ibn Chiquitilia resembles a dispute regarding Isa. 33:9 (אֶבֶל אֶמְלֵלָה, אֶרֶץ), “The land is wilted and withered”). Ibn Ezra (*ad loc.*) claims that the noun אֶרֶץ is the subject of a masculine verb (אֶבֶל) in addition to being the subject of the subsequent feminine verb אֶמְלֵלָה. He thus concludes that although אֶרֶץ is normally feminine, it can occasionally be the subject of masculine verbs. However, Ibn Ezra cites Ibn Chiquitilia as claiming that once a noun is the subject of a masculine verb, that noun cannot then also be the subject of a feminine noun. In our case Ibn Ezra maintains that the first appearance of the noun שָׂכַר (in the construct הַשָּׂכָר הָאֵדָם) is the subject of a masculine verb (נִהְיָה), while the second appearance of שָׂכַר (in the construct הַשָּׂכָר הַבְּהֵמָה) is the referent of a feminine pronoun (the suffix of אֵינְנָהּ). Ibn Chiquitilia apparently could not accept that שָׂכַר would be masculine and then feminine in the same verse.

Radak accepts Ibn Chiquitilia’s claim that אֵינְנָהּ refers to הַבְּהֵמָה. Tanḥum rejects that position and instead adopts Ibn Ezra’s fundamental view that אֵינְנָהּ refers to שָׂכַר, which he explains in the same manner as Ibn Janah (note 482).

⁴⁸⁴ **There are no profits from beasts, because there are none (אֵינְנָהּ)** – In other words, before the Temple was rebuilt, there were no beasts available to generate profits.

⁴⁸⁵ **Enemies who assail** – The complete phrase “enemies who assail” comes from Num. 10:9. In Hebrew, it consists of two words with the same etymology (הִצַּר הַצּוֹרֵר).

⁴⁸⁶ **And I sent [all men against one another (אֶשְׁבְּרְעֵהוּ)] – to generate quarreling** – The Hebrew prefix ב is a preposition that can have multiple meanings. Ibn Ezra is therefore clarifying that in the phrase אֵישׁ בְּרֵעֵהוּ, God is setting people “against” each other (cf. Jonathan), rather than sending them “to” one another for some other purpose. Indeed, Radak notes that the preposition ב normally means “against” when modifying verbs from the root שלח (to send).

⁴⁸⁷ **For the seed of peace – Its meaning is: Everyone will sow and reap in peace** – Ibn Ezra is explaining the enigmatic noun construct “the seed of peace” – which lacks any verb – as meaning that peace will facilitate the sowing of seeds, which will grow, leading to prosperity (cf. Radak and Tanḥum). The oral commentary offers the same interpretation. Jonathan renders the verse: “The seed will be at peace” (זרעא יהי שלם).

(14) [For] thus [said the Lord of Hosts] – This prophecy, too, is connected.⁴⁸⁸

And **planned (זממו)** regarding the Lord refers to the [divine] decrees.⁴⁸⁹

(15) So... [I have turned and planned to do good to Jerusalem and to the House of Judah] – He mentions **the House of Judah** because they were the majority⁴⁹⁰ and also on account of the kingship.⁴⁹¹

(16) These are [the things you are to do]: Speak the truth in private and render [true and perfect] justice in public.⁴⁹² **(17) [And do not contrive evil against] one [another]** – Indeed, it is forbidden to think evil in [one's] heart, and also to swear **falsely**.

(18) And [the word of the Lord of Hosts] came [to me] – Now he gives the answer to the question about the fast (7:3).

(19) He mentions the fast of the fourth month, which was on the ninth of the month, because the city was breached then.⁴⁹³

The fast of the fifth month – As I have mentioned (7:3), [it is] on the tenth of the month.

⁴⁸⁸ **This prophecy, too, is connected** – See notes 466 and 479 above.

⁴⁸⁹ **And planned regarding the Lord is the [divine] decrees** – For theological reasons, Ibn Ezra cannot accept that regarding God, the root זממ mean that He literally “planned” events. He instead interprets it as God “decreeing” what will happen in the world (cf. notes 171 and 396 above).

⁴⁹⁰ **He mentions the House of Judah because they were the majority** – Ibn Ezra was aware that although the early Second-Temple prophets frequently speak of “Israel,” most of their countrymen at that time descended from Judah; see the standard commentary to Mal. 1:1.

⁴⁹¹ **And also on account of the kingship** – The Davidic dynasty descended from Judah, which is another reason why Judah can represent the entire nation.

⁴⁹² **Speak the truth in private and render [true and perfect] justice in public** – Ibn Ezra is stressing that the two halves of the prophet's directive are not synonymous: “Speak the truth to one another” refers to private speech, so it differs from rendering “true and perfect justice *in your gates*” (i.e., in public).

⁴⁹³ **The ninth of the month, because the city was breached then** – See II Kings 25:3-4 (=Jer. 52:6-7). Ibn Ezra might have felt a need to stress this date because Rabbanite Jews in his own time fasted on the seventeenth of the fourth month (Tammuz), which was the traditional date that the city was breached during the Second Temple's destruction (mTan. 4:6). His Karaite contemporary Judah Hadassi contrasts this custom with the Karaite belief that Jews should continue to fast on the date that Jerusalem was breached before the First Temple's destruction (אשכל הכפר alph. 243).

The fast of the seventh month – No number is written for the day of the month. The heretics said that it is the day that they fasted at the end of the Feast of Booths, which is written in Ezra.⁴⁹⁴ But they err, because [the nation] fasted then due to “the trespass of those who had returned from exile” (Ezra 9:4), but it is not written that any evil befell Israel in the seventh month except for the matter of Gedaliah. [Regarding Gedaliah, it] is written “in the seventh month” (II Kings 25:25, Jer. 41:1).⁴⁹⁵

Since it does not mention the day of the month, it is possible that [Gedaliah’s assassination] happened at the start of the month, when the moon is new (חידוש), like “new moon (חג) and Sabbath” (Isa. 1:13) [and], “On the third new moon (חג) after the Israelites had gone forth [from the land of Egypt, on that very day, they entered the wilderness of Sinai]” (Exod. 19:1).⁴⁹⁶ As for when Scripture states “on the first of the month” (באחד לחג),⁴⁹⁷ it is said for

⁴⁹⁴ **Which is written in Ezra** – Ibn Ezra is objecting to a Karaite view that the “fast of the seventh month” is the fast that appears in Neh. 9:1, which took place on the 24th of the seventh month, Tishrei. (Ibn Ezra cites “Ezra” because medieval exegetes considered Nehemiah to be part of the Book of Ezra.) Judah Hadassi adopts this interpretation, arguing that the incident in Neh. 9:1 reflects a tradition to fast annually on the 24th of Tishrei, to mourn the destruction of the First Temple (אשכול הכפר) (alph. 246). Hadassi wavers regarding the connection between the First Temple’s destruction and that precise date, suggesting that the date might mark Gedaliah’s assassination (see the continuation of Ibn Ezra’s comments) but adding that the fast might also have been instituted on that date to mourn the end of the holidays of Tishrei (which end on the 22nd of the month). The Karaites’ identification of Neh. 9:1 with Zechariah’s “fast of the seventh month” is briefly discussed by Levi b. Yefet (הפר המצוות, al-Jamil II:453,458) and Jacob b. Reuben and also appears in a Genizah fragment discussed by Mann (466-467). I am grateful to Kees De Vreugd for bringing this last source to my attention.

⁴⁹⁵ **But they err... it is not written that any evil befell Israel in the seventh month except for the matter of Gedaliah... “in the seventh month”** – Ibn Ezra dismisses any connection between this “fast of the seventh month” and the fast in Neh. 9:1, because our verse describes an annual fast, whereas Neh. 9:1 recounts a one-time event. Rabbanite exegetes are united in their view that “the fast of the seventh month” is the Fast of Gedaliah (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Student of Trani, and Ibn Caspi to 7:5).

⁴⁹⁶ **It is possible that [Gedaliah’s assassination] happened at the start of the month, when the moon is new (חידוש), like “new חג and Sabbath” [and], “On the third חג... they entered the wilderness of Sinai]”** – In these verses, the word חג, which is commonly translated as “month,” can in fact mean “new moon.” The word חג derives from the root חדש (new), and Hebrew months begin with the new moon, so the connection between months and new moons is clear. Ibn Saruk simply writes that חג means month (מהברת מנחם), Philipowski 86, Sáenz-Badillos 170*). Some medieval grammarians therefore concluded that חג can refer to either the entire month or the first day of the month (Ibn Janah, השרים 144; Ibn Balaam, Abramson, שלשה ספרים 44). In Hag. 1:1, Ibn Ezra shares their view. But Ibn Ezra is claiming here that the word חג exclusively means the first day of the month and not the rest of the month. His commentary to Hag. 1:1 cites Moses Ibn Chiquitilia as limiting the meaning of חג exclusively to the first day of the month but dismisses his view.

emphasis, that the listener should not entertain the thought that it is not the first day. Indeed, Scripture [states]: “Your new moons (חַדְשֵׁי־כָּהֵן) and your appointed feasts” (Isa. 1:14). And there can be no objection from the word “in the beginnings of your new moons” (וּבְרֵאשֵׁי־חַדְשֵׁי־כָּהֵן; Num. 28:11), because they are the new moons of Nisan, and it is [further] written there: “[That shall be] the monthly (חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדֶשׁוֹ) burnt offering [for each new moon of the year]” (Num. 28:14).⁴⁹⁸ But we will accept the meaning of “in the day of your gladness, and in your set feasts, and in the beginnings of your months” (וּבְרֵאשֵׁי־חַדְשֵׁי־כָּהֵן; Num. 10:10) from the oral tradition.⁴⁹⁹

Hence, Gedaliah was killed on Rosh Hashanah;⁵⁰⁰ therefore they established [the fast] on the third day.⁵⁰¹ Alternatively, we received thus from the mouths of our holy fathers.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁷ **On the first of the month (בְּאֵת לַחֹדֶשׁ)** – This phrase appears seventeen times in the Bible, and Ibn Ezra does not appear to be singling out any particular example. In comments to Exod. 12:2 which closely parallel this passage, Ibn Ezra specifically cites Lev. 23:24.

This phrase implies that the word חֹדֶשׁ simply means “month,” so the text must therefore specify “the first of the חֹדֶשׁ” when referring to the first of the month. Ibn Ezra’s standard commentary to Hag. 1:1 implies that this objection caused him to reject Ibn Chiquitilia’s interpretation, yet here Ibn Ezra defends this interpretation from that objection.

⁴⁹⁸ **And there can be no objection from... “in the beginnings of your new moons,” because they are Nisan, and it is [further] written there: “[That shall be] the monthly burnt offering [for each new moon of the year]”** – According to this rendering of Num. 28:11-14, which Ibn Ezra (*ad loc.*) cites from Ibn Chiquitilia, the word חֹדֶשׁ means “new moon” throughout the passage. The text initially legislates the burnt offering for “beginnings of your new moons,” meaning the first new moon of the biblical year (i.e., the first of Nisan). However, the text adds in 28:14 that this same offering must be offered for each and every new moon. The conventional understanding of Num. 28:11 is that חַדְשֵׁי־כָּהֵן refers to the beginnings of “months” (i.e., *all* months) and not just to the first of Nisan. Num. 28:14 would then mean that the offering is the same for each “month” at its beginning (חֹדֶשׁ בְּחֹדֶשׁוֹ).

⁴⁹⁹ **But we will accept the meaning of... וּבְרֵאשֵׁי־חַדְשֵׁי־כָּהֵן from the oral tradition** – Ibn Ezra is referring to the rabbinic tradition (literally, “the words of the received tradition”), which applies the law under discussion in Num. 10:10 (sounding the trumpets while offering the sacrifices) to the first day of *every* month and not just the first of Nisan (bSuk. 55a). That tradition thus belies the claims that חַדְשֵׁי־כָּהֵן means “the beginnings of your new moons” (i.e., the first day of the first month). Ibn Ezra cites this tradition in Exod. 12:2 as evidence against Ibn Chiquitilia’s claim that חֹדֶשׁ always means the first of the month (also cf. Ibn Ezra to Ps. 81:4).

⁵⁰⁰ **Rosh Hashanah** – This is the festival of the new Jewish year, which falls out on the first day of the seventh month (Lev. 23:24 and Num. 29:1). By medieval times, Rosh Hashanah had already become a two-day festival for Diaspora Jewry, so Ibn Ezra assumes in this passage that the Fast of Gedaliah could not be observed on the first or second of the month.

⁵⁰¹ **Hence, Gedaliah was killed on Rosh Hashanah; therefore they established [the fast] on the third day** – Rabbanite Jews observed the Fast of Gedaliah on the third of the month. Ibn Ezra thus suggests that Gedaliah’s murder took place on the first of the month (in accordance with his argument in the previous paragraph that the

The fast of the tenth month is written in Ezekiel (24:1-2): “[On the tenth day of the tenth month, the word of the Lord came to me: ‘O mortal,] record this date, [this exact day; for this very day the king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem.]”,⁵⁰³

Thus, our sages of blessed memory left the fasts of the seventh and tenth months as they were in the past. But since the priests were killed in the Temple on the seventeenth of Tammuz,⁵⁰⁴ and it has five events that befell us,⁵⁰⁵ they established [the seventeenth] as a fast and did not

word חֵדָּשׁ means “new moon”), but the fast is observed on the third of the month since that is the first day after Rosh Hashanah. Radak (7:5) adopts this interpretation. Judah Hadassi cites this interpretation as the position of the Rabbanites (אשכול הכפר. 246).

⁵⁰² **Alternatively, we received thus from the mouths our holy fathers** – This second interpretation posits that the Fast of Gedaliah is observed on the third of the month because of an oral tradition that Gedaliah was indeed murdered on the third of the month. Indeed, a tradition that Gedaliah died on the third of Tishrei does appear in rabbinic literature (tSot. 6:7, bR.H. 18b, yTan. 4:5) and is adopted here by Rashi and Abarbanel. This view would presumably reject the assertion that the word חֵדָּשׁ always means “new moon” and would instead interpret חֵדָּשׁ as “month” in the Gedaliah narrative. Therefore, the Bible tells us that he died in the seventh “month,” without specifying an exact date, but Jews fast on the third of the month due to an oral tradition that he died on that date. Tanḥum, too, cites both possible explanations for the date of the Fast of Gedaliah. First he suggests that tradition established Gedaliah’s death on the third of the month. He then anonymously cites a view that Gedaliah died on the first of the month, because בַּחֲדָשׁ means that he died on the first of the month, but the fast was delayed until the third of the month due to Rosh Hashanah. Interestingly, however, in Tanḥum’s presentation, this latter view does not maintain that the word חֵדָּשׁ *always* means the first of the month but merely that חֵדָּשׁ has that meaning when the verse does not specify a day of the month.

⁵⁰³ **The fast of the tenth month is written in Ezekiel: “[On the tenth day of the tenth month]... record this date... [the king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem]”** – Ibn Ezra assumes that the fast of the tenth month was always on the *tenth* day of Tebeth, when the Babylonians sieged Jerusalem. The Talmud cites a debate regarding whether the fast was originally on the tenth of Tebeth, due to the siege, or on the *fifth* of Tebeth, to commemorate when Ezekiel (33:21) recounts that the Babylonian Diaspora learned of Jerusalem’s destruction (yTan 4:5, bR.H. 18b). Other exegetes also appear to follow the view that the fast was always on the tenth of Tebeth (Radak, Tanḥum).

⁵⁰⁴ **But since the priests were killed in the Temple on the seventeenth of Tammuz** – It is not clear from where Ibn Ezra derived that “priests were killed in the Temple on the seventeenth of Tammuz.” This event does not appear in traditional rabbinic list of five tragedies that occurred on the seventeenth of Tammuz (mTan. 4:6), which Ibn Ezra cites in the next phrase. In his commentary to Lamentations (2:20), Ibn Ezra writes that priests were killed in the Temple during the destruction of Jerusalem. However, he does not link their deaths to the seventeenth of Tammuz, which is not known to have been a meaningful date during the destruction of the First Temple that is described in Lamentations.

⁵⁰⁵ **It has five events that befell us** – The “five events” are a rabbinic tradition of tragedies that occurred on the seventeenth of Tammuz (mTan. 4:6). The word קראנו could be vocalized קְרָאנוּ, in which case this comment would mean, “We read about five events [that occurred] on it.” However, some manuscripts have the plene spelling קראנו which unambiguously means “befell us” rather than “we read.” The meaning of “befell us” is compelling as a paraphrase of the aforementioned teaching of the Mishnah: “Five events befell (ארעו) our forefathers on the seventeenth of Tammuz” (I am indebted to Dr. Sid Z. Leiman for this observation). Hence, if the scribes who wrote קראנו intended קְרָאנוּ, then they erred. In the Hebrew text, I vocalized the word קְרָאנוּ which is the equivalent of the plene spelling קראנו that appears in two manuscripts and is clearly the meaning that Ibn Ezra intended.

impose upon the congregation to [also] fast on the ninth.⁵⁰⁶ And Jerusalem was conquered the second time on the ninth day of Ab, and the First Temple was also burning on [the ninth, so] they established it.⁵⁰⁷

But Scripture does not mention the Fast of Esther – although the time of Ahasuerus had already passed⁵⁰⁸ – because the establishment of the fast is not written in the Scroll [of Esther], since all of Israel fasted for three days in Nisan.⁵⁰⁹

As for the words of Scripture “the obligation of the fasts with their lamentations” (Est. 9:31), its explanation is not as many people think, but [rather] this is its explanation: The Jews undertook and accepted the days of Purim upon themselves (cf. Est. 9:27,30), to rejoice on them, even though the prophets did not command them [to do so]. Rather, they – the children – are obligated to do what their fathers accepted, “just as they have accepted for themselves the obligation of the fasts” (cf. Est. 9:31) – these four aforementioned [fasts] – which were not from the word of a prophet.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁶ **They established [the seventeenth] as a fast and did not impose upon the congregation to [also] fast on the ninth** – See Ibn Ezra’s comments above (7:3) regarding the fact that the original fast of Tammuz (the fourth month) was on the ninth of the month, based on when Jerusalem was breached by Nebuchadnezzar’s army.

⁵⁰⁷ **Jerusalem was conquered the second time on the ninth day of Ab, and the First Temple was also burning on [the ninth, so] they established it** – Ibn Ezra is explaining why Rabbanite Jews in his time fast on the ninth of Ab, rather than the tenth. He offers two justifications: 1) The ninth of Ab was chosen following the *Second* Temple’s destruction on that date. 2) According to Ibn Ezra (above 7:3), the First Temple’s edges were burned on the seventh of Ab, and it continued to burn through the tenth. Thus, the ninth of Ab was a day in which the First Temple, too, was burning.

⁵⁰⁸ **Although the time of Ahasuerus had already passed** – Ibn Ezra believed that Ahasuerus was Darius’ father (cf. Hag. 1:1 and the oral commentary to 9:9), so he needs to explain why Zechariah – who lived in Darius’ time – does not mention the Fast of Esther. This difficulty does not arise according to the chronology accepted by modern scholarship, which dates Darius before Xerxes (=Ahasuerus).

⁵⁰⁹ **But Scripture does not mention the Fast of Esther... since all of Israel fasted for three days in Nisan** – Esther requests a three day fast in response to Haman’s edict, which was sent out on the thirteenth of Nisan (Est. 3:12). Therefore, that fast took place in Nisan and thus is not the source of the later custom to fast on the thirteenth of Adar. Regarding the historical origins of this later fast, see First, “Ta’anit Esther.”

⁵¹⁰ **As for the words of Scripture “the obligation of the fasts with their lamentations”... this is its explanation: The Jews undertook and accepted the days of Purim upon themselves... “just as they have accepted for themselves the obligation of the fasts”... which were not from the word of a prophet** – Ibn Ezra is responding to two other interpretations of the phrase “the obligation of the fasts with their lamentations”

So the answer is that they should make these days on which they have been crying and lamenting into days of **joy and gladness**, and they should [also] observe the Lord's commands according to the prophets' words, namely: **You must love honesty and integrity**, as it was written, "Render true and perfect justice in your gates" (8:16). This answer that the prophet replied is directed at those who asked, "Shall I weep in the fifth month?" (7:3) who were not observing the Torah that God commanded but were asking whether they should observe what [their] fathers had accepted upon themselves. So the prophet responded, "You would do better to obey the Lord's words and desist from the words of your fathers,"⁵¹¹ rather than observing the words of [your] fathers who were wholly righteous.⁵¹²

– 1) Some medieval rabbinic authorities consider that phrase to be a biblical source for the Fast of Esther (observed on the thirteenth of Adar, the day before Purim). According to them, the Jews adopted the festival of Purim to commemorate their rescue and also adopted the Fast of Esther to commemorate the fact that they fasted before Esther approached the king (Abraham b. David of Posquières, cited by Ritva, bTan. 10a s.v. אכל דעת הראב"ד; cf. Maimonides, *Laws of Fasts* 5:5; Isaiah of Trani, Est. *ad loc.*). 2) Some other exegetes suggest a different connection between this phrase and the three-day fast that Esther requested in Nisan (see note 509). According to their approach, the verse is stating that the salvation from Haman's plot enabled the Jews to adopt the joyous holiday of Purim *in place of* the days of fasting and lamentation that they observed in Nisan during the year of the Purim story (Yefet, Joseph Kara). Ibn Ezra also rejects these interpretations in both his commentaries to Esther (*ad loc.*), where he especially attacks Karaites who suggested that Esther's three-day fast serves as a precedent for adopting a three-day fast nowadays (cf. Wechsler, *Yefet... on the Book of Esther* 311 n. 721). For other Karaite customs regarding how to commemorate Esther's fast, see Levi b. Yefet (ספר המצוות, al-Jamil 463-468), First ("Ta'anit Esther" 310 n. 4) and Wechsler (*ibid.*).

Ralbag (*ad loc.*) and Tanhum (Wechsler, *Strangers in the Land* 317-318) adopt Ibn Ezra's interpretation of "the obligation of the fasts with their lamentations" as referring to the four fasts in our verse. Ibn Ezra reiterates this interpretation in יסוד מורה (5:3, Cohen and Simon 127). For criticism of Ibn Ezra's interpretation of Est. 9:31, see First ("Ta'anit Esther" 310 n. 5).

⁵¹¹ **You would do better to obey the Lord's words and desist from the words of your fathers** – According to Ibn Ezra, Zechariah essentially nullified the fasts from the First Temple's destruction in addition to urging the people to instead focus on properly observing the commandments. He is rejecting the Karaite position that Zechariah was promising that the fasts would someday become days of joy but left them intact for the Second Temple Period, and that the fasts must therefore continue to be observed on their original First-Temple dates (Hadassi, אשכול הכפר, alph. 243; cf. my introduction, p. 46ff).

⁵¹² **Who were wholly righteous** – Ibn Ezra presumably adds that their fathers "were wholly righteous" in order to explain why additional religious customs – such as the four fast days – befit their fathers, who were already fulfilling the Torah's laws, but do not befit people who are lax in their observance of Torah law.

(20) Thus [said the Lord of Hosts: Peoples and the inhabitants of many cities shall] yet [come] – This prophecy, too, is connected.⁵¹³

(21) The inhabitants of one city – Everyone will say, **“I will go, too,”** and they will come to pray toward the Temple.⁵¹⁴

(23) Thus... ten [men] is a round number,⁵¹⁵ and its meaning is: many, like, “[Am I not more devoted to you] than ten sons?” (I Sam. 1:8).⁵¹⁶

Yefet said that this prophecy is [intended] for the future, but the correct [interpretation] is that it is connected.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹³ **This prophecy, too, is connected** – It is still part of the prophet’s response to the inquiry about the fast days even though it does not appear to be directly related to the issue of fasting.

⁵¹⁴ **Pray toward the Temple** – This phrase is a paraphrase of Solomon’s prayer (I Kings 8:42, II Chron. 6:32), in which Solomon describes the Temple’s potential as a place to which all humans will pray. Ibn Ezra is alluding to it here because this prophecy describes Gentiles coming “to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem” (v. 22).

⁵¹⁵ **Thus... ten [men] is a round number** – Ibn Ezra maintains that the verse does not intend that exactly ten men “will take hold of every Jew,” but rather that a group of men will. He frequently remarks that a verse uses the number ten as a round number (literally, “a number of sum”; Gen. 31:7, Lev. 26:26, Isa. 5:10, Amos 6:9, Job 19:3, Dan. 1:20), sometimes adding that ten serves in this role because it is the first double-digit number (Num. 14:22, Ecc. 7:19; cf. Gen. 27:44; צחות, Lippmann 41b, Valle Rodriguez 104; יסוד מספר, Pinsker 166). Regarding our verse, Ibn Ezra is rejecting a midrashic interpretation that treats the number ten as a precise number and thus concludes that 2,800 men “will take hold of every Jew”; 10 men from each of the 70 nations will grab each of the 4 corners of the Jew’s garment (bShab. 32b). Rashi and Joseph Kara adopt this midrashic view, while Radak and Ibn Caspi agree with Ibn Ezra that “ten” is not literal (although Radak does also cite the midrashic view; cf. Radak, השרשים 565).

⁵¹⁶ **[Am I not more devoted to you] than ten sons** – When Elkanah attempted to console Hannah with this comment, he did not intend that he is better than precisely ten sons, as opposed to eleven or twelve, but rather that he is a devoted husband, more devoted than a group of sons. Ibn Ezra rejects a midrashic interpretation of this proof-text, that Elkanah’s other wife, Peninnah, had exactly ten children. According to that view, Elkanah was asserting that he loves Hannah more than he loves his ten sons from Peninnah (cf. Rashi and Radak *ad loc.*). Radak’s commentary to I Sam. 1:8 also accepts that the plain sense of “ten sons” there is “many sons” rather than precisely ten.

⁵¹⁷ **Yefet said that this prophecy is [intended] for the future, but the correct [interpretation] is that it is connected** – Yefet writes about 8:14-23, “Here end the ten verses with glad tidings, where in each of them he (the prophet) says ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ These are the tidings containing the great things which Israel is awaiting in the time to come” (trans. Kees De Vreugd). Regarding the relevance of this dispute to Karaite-Rabbanite polemics, see my introduction (p. 56 above).

Chapter 9

(1) A pronouncement... the land of Hadrach – A name of the kingdom of Aram⁵¹⁸ or the name of a king.⁵¹⁹

And **the resting place** of the **pronouncement** will be in **Damascus**, for it will be fulfilled there.⁵²⁰

This prophecy, too, is connected to the Second Temple.⁵²¹ The meaning of **for all men's eyes will turn to the Lord** is that many people of **Damascus** will return to serving the Lord and to obeying the bidding (cf. I Sam. 22:14) of Israelites who were in Jerusalem – namely, Jews and Benjaminites and those who returned from Assyria – as is written in Ezra (6:22):

⁵¹⁸ **Aram** – The Hebrew is difficult to decipher. One manuscript reads אדום (Edom), which makes little sense (although Schrem, 43b, endorses it). Most manuscripts read either אדם (which could be vocalized אדם, Edom, or אדם, human) or ארם (Aram). Due to the strong resemblance between א and א, it is not always possible to establish which reading is intended by a particular manuscript. If אדם is the correct reading, Ibn Ezra might be arguing that Hadrach was a kingdom ruled by ordinary humans as opposed to an aggadic view that Hadrach is the name of the Messiah (*Sifrei*, Deut. 1 s.v. כיוצא בו; Cant. R. to Cant. 7:4, *Pesiqta De-R. K.* 20:7). However, “Aram” seems to be the more logical reading, since the verse juxtaposes Hadrach to Damascus, which is in Aram (cf. Eliezer of Beaugency). Tanḥum’s anonymous citation of this interpretation also implies that his text of Ibn Ezra read “the kingdom of Aram.” One can easily understand how scribes confused Aram with אדם given the resemblance between א and א and especially given that the next lemma in Ibn Ezra’s commentary contains the word אדם from later in the verse.

⁵¹⁹ **The land of Hadrach – A name of the kingdom of Aram or the name of a king** – In aggadic literature, sages debate whether Hadrach is a place near Damascus or an allusion to the Messiah or Jerusalem (*Sifrei* and *Mid. Tannaim* to Deut. 1:1, Cant. R. to 7:5, *Pesiqta De-R. K.* 20:7; cited by Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Radak). Not surprisingly, Ibn Ezra does not accept the possibility that Hadrach could be another name for Jerusalem or the Messiah but instead posits that it is a name of a place or a king. Eliezer of Beaugency also considers Hadrach to be a place north of Israel, and al-Qumisi identifies it with Syria (שארם).

⁵²⁰ **And the resting place of the pronouncement will be in Damascus, for it will be fulfilled there** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting “the resting place” (מנוחה) as the place where the prophecy will be fulfilled, as opposed to a place where prophecy can be received (cf. Radak, Abarbanel). The oral commentary maintains that the pronoun “it” in “its resting place” refers to Hadrach rather than the pronouncement – “Damascus will be the resting place of Hadrach.”

⁵²¹ **This prophecy, too, is connected to the Second Temple** – Ibn Ezra is again arguing that Zechariah’s prophecy is intended for his own generation or generations shortly after him, rather than being a messianic prophecy. He made the same argument about several verses in the previous chapter (vv. 14, 20, 23), in accordance with his general tendency to interpret prophecies as relevant to the prophets’ own times (cf. notes 160 and 466 above, my supercommentary to Hag. 2:9, and lengthier discussion in my introduction, Ch. VI).

The phrase “is connected to the Second Temple” is somewhat awkward; Ibn Ezra presumably intends that it is “connected” to the immediate previous prophecies in that it, too, applies “to the Second Temple” (cf. his remark that 8:23 “is connected”).

“For the Lord had given them cause for joy by inclining the heart of the Assyrian king [toward them].”⁵²²

Hence, the ל of לַיְי (to the Lord) serves for another [word], like the מ of “from the God (מֵאֵל) of your father who helps you,” which also serves for another מ: “and (וְאֵת) the Almighty [who blesses you]” (Gen. 49:25), meaning “and from (וּמֵאֵת) the Almighty who blesses you.” So, too, is this [verse]: “**And to (לְ) all the tribes of Israel**” – their eyes are **to the Lord**, to worship Him, and to whatever **Israel** will instruct them.⁵²³

(2) And also Hamath herself shall place her border (תִּגְבֹּל) in it, [i.e.,] in Israel;⁵²⁴ so, too, **Tyre and Sidon.**

(3) [Tyre] has built [herself a fortress] – Its meaning is: After it was built,⁵²⁵ **(4) behold, the Lord will cause Israel to possess it.**⁵²⁶

⁵²² **And those who returned from Assyria – as is written in Ezra... “By inclining the heart of the Assyrian king [toward them]”** – According to Ibn Ezra the Israelite/Jewish community in Zechariah’s time included Israelites who returned from the Assyrian exile. He is stressing this point in order to set the stage for the appearance of Ephraim later in this prophecy (v. 10; cf. note 549)

⁵²³ **The meaning of for all men’s eyes will turn to the Lord is that many people of Damascus will return to serving the Lord and to obeying the bidding of Israelites ... “And to (לְ) all the tribes of Israel” – their eyes are to the Lord, to worship Him, and to whatever Israel will instruct them** – According to Ibn Ezra, the phrase “all the tribes of Israel” is part of the indirect object: All mankind will turn its eyes “to the Lord and [to] all the tribes of Israel” (cf. al-Qumisi). In order to justify his interpretation, Ibn Ezra argues that the preposition “to” is implied before “all the tribes of Israel.” Rashi and Joseph Kara view “all the tribes of Israel” as part of the subject (cf. Mekhilta to Exod. 19:21, Lam. R. to Lam. 1:16): All mankind and “all the tribes of Israel” will turn their eyes “to the Lord.” The oral commentary might share their view. Radak present both views anonymously.

⁵²⁴ **And also Hamath herself shall place her border in it, [i.e.,] in Israel** – Ibn Ezra is apparently interpreting the verb תִּגְבֹּל (“shall border”; cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 83; Radak, השרשים 106) as a metaphor for the developments that he describes in the previous verse, in which Gentile nations will become obedient “to all the tribes of Israel.” Muraoka and Shavitsky suggest translating the root גבל according to Ibn Ezra as “to set a limit,” but Ibn Ezra provides relatively little lexical information in his interpretation. Tanḥum cites this interpretation anonymously, but Ibn Ezra appears to be his source (Shy *ad loc.*). This interpretation assumes that the referent of “it” is Israel, which contradicts the oral commentary’s interpretation – Hamath will form one region (גבול) with *Hadrach*.

Other exegetes interpret “shall border” as promising that the borders of Jerusalem will expand so vastly that Hamath will literally border her (Joseph Kara) or will be included in her municipal boundaries (Rashi).

(5) [Ashkelon] shall see it [and be frightened, Gaza shall tremble violently, and Ekron, at the collapse] of her hopes (מִבֵּט), where she was looking (מִבֵּטָה) to save her.⁵²⁷

These cities⁵²⁸ surround Jerusalem; therefore, Scripture mentions them. Its meaning is that Jerusalem shall live in security.⁵²⁹

(6) And a מִמְזֵר shall dwell [in Ashdod] – R. Judah b. Balaam said that [מִמְזֵר] is the name of a nation.⁵³⁰ But according to my opinion, [מִמְזֵר] is a **bastard** from illicit sexual relations,⁵³¹ and they were isolated, near Jerusalem. The meaning is: The lowly and disgraced of Israel will live in isolation in the **Philistines'** cities, such that they will not be considered

⁵²⁵ **After it was built** – Heb. שִׁבְנוּתָהּ. Some manuscripts read “after she built” (שִׁבְנוּתָהּ), in which case the end of the passage would mean that God “will cause Israel to possess *her*,” meaning Tyre, rather than “it” (=the fortress).

⁵²⁶ **The Lord will cause Israel to possess it** – Heb. יוֹרֵשׁוּקָהּ אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל. Regarding the correct translation of this phrase, see my supercommentary to the oral commentary.

⁵²⁷ **מִבֵּט, where she was looking (מִבֵּטָה) to save her** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting the noun מִבֵּט based on the *hif'il* verb לִהְבִּיט (“to look”) of the same root (נִבֵּט). However, Ibn Ezra does not identify the object of the Philistines’ “hope,” i.e., to what or to whom they were looking. Tanḥum – who agrees with Ibn Ezra’s lexical interpretation of מִבֵּט – suggests that their “hope” refers to either their king or deity.

⁵²⁸ **These cities** – Ashkelon, Gaza, and Ekron.

⁵²⁹ **These cities surround Jerusalem... Its meaning is that Jerusalem shall live in security** – Ibn Ezra views this prophecy as a triumph of Jerusalem over her neighbors, in accordance with his subsequent claim that it alludes to the Hasmoneans’ victory and not to redemption from the final exile (cf. Rashi).

⁵³⁰ **R. Judah b. Balaam said that מִמְזֵר is the name of a nation** – Ibn Ezra also cites this view anonymously in his commentary to Deut. 23:3, implying that Ibn Balaam interpreted מִמְזֵר as the name of a nation in that verse, “No מִמְזֵר shall be admitted into the congregation of the Lord,” and not just in our verse. The attribution of this view to Ibn Balaam appears to be an error. His comments to this verse have not survived in the fragments of his commentary that Poznanski published. However, based on his other writings, Ibn Balaam appears to interpret מִמְזֵר in our verse as a euphemism for certain Jews (cf. below, note 532), while he adopts the rabbinic interpretation of Deut. 23:3 as prohibiting the offspring of certain illicit relationships (Abramson, שלשה ספרים, 56; cf. Ibn Balaam to Deut. 23:3 and Perez *ad loc.* n. 48). The correct source of the interpretation of מִמְזֵר as the name of a nation is likely a Karaite exegete (cf. Abramson *ibid.* n. 5; Poznanski, “Ibn Balaam” n. 12; and the views cited here by Jacob b. Reuben).

⁵³¹ **But according to my opinion, [מִמְזֵר] is a bastard from illicit sexual relations** – Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of מִמְזֵר is based on its meaning in Deut. 23:3. Tanḥum cites Ibn Ezra’s view anonymously, but he rejects it and instead interprets מִמְזֵר as “foreigners.” One aggadic view also assumes that מִמְזֵר refers to the bastard of Deut. 23:3 (*Avot de-R. Nathan* I:12, Schechter 27a; bKid. 72b; yKid. 3:13).

legitimate,⁵³² and the **Philistines’ grandeur** shall be uprooted from them; for they are from the nation⁵³³ of Israel.⁵³⁴

(7) But I will clean out the blood [from its mouth], since [the Philistines] used to eat the blood of the killed⁵³⁵ [but] will return to worship of the Lord.

And the detestable things from between its teeth, [means] the impurity that the Philistine nation would eat; or it alludes to idolatry.⁵³⁶

Its survivors, too, shall belong to our God – Its meaning: None will remain of the Philistines except those who openly worship the Lord.

They shall become like a chief in Judah [means] like the elite⁵³⁷ of Judah in the worship of the Lord.

And Ekron shall be tributaries like the Jebusites who were in Jerusalem in the time of David and after him, who paid tribute to the kings of Judah.⁵³⁸

⁵³² **The meaning is: The lowly and disgraced of Israel will live in isolation in the Philistines’ cities, such that they will not be considered legitimate** – According to Ibn Ezra, מְמִזְרֵי refers to bastards who would be forced to live in isolation in Philistine cities. Rashi and Joseph Kara claim that מְמִזְרֵי is a euphemism for Jews who had Gentiles intermixed with them (cf. Jonathan). Eliezer of Beaugency suggests that the verse is describing the Ashdodites, who will live in their own city “like strangers” because they will be subservient to the Jews.

⁵³³ **From the nation of** – I am assuming that the Hebrew word מֵעַם is vocalized מִעַם. It could also be vocalized מֵעַם (“from among”).

⁵³⁴ **For they are from the nation of Israel** – This phrase does not seem to flow naturally with the rest of the sentence. Filvarg (14a) suggests that “they” refers to the bastards – rather than the Philistines – and Ibn Ezra is stressing that the bastards are indeed Israelites (as opposed to the previous view that Ibn Ezra cited from Ibn Balaam). Moreover, Filvarg adds that Ibn Ezra might be further emphasizing that God will remove the Philistines’ dominion from “them” – i.e., the bastards – because the bastards are Israelites (cf. Schrem 43b).

⁵³⁵ **But I will clean out the blood [from its mouth], since [the Philistines] used to eat the blood of the killed** – Ibn Ezra interprets the word “blood” literally, referring to actual blood that Philistines drink. Others view it as representing blood of animal sacrifices (cf. Rashi) or as a metaphor for wickedness (cf. Rashi, Radak), murder (Joseph Kara), or inappropriate speech (Joseph Kimhi, cited by Radak). Tanḥum anonymously cites both Ibn Ezra’s interpretation and the view that “blood” is a metaphor.

⁵³⁶ **The impurity that the Philistine nation would eat; or it alludes to idolatry** – Joseph Kara maintains that “the detestable things” are a metaphor for idolatry (cf. Tanḥum).

⁵³⁷ **The elite** – Literally, “the chosen” (מְבֹרָחִים).

(8) And I will encamp... מַצְבָּה (against armies) [is spelled] with a ה instead of an א.⁵³⁹ Its meaning is: I will encamp and rest from armies that would come or **pass through**. Its meaning is that there shall be no one who would come and harm Jerusalem, for all of her surroundings will be worshipers (עֹבְדֵי) of the Lord and servants (עַבְדֵי) of Israel.

As for the meaning of **for [I have] now [seen with my own eyes]**, it is the prophet's words,⁵⁴⁰ who **now** saw in visions, with **eyes** of prophecy.⁵⁴¹

(9) Rejoice – This is the beginning of a passage, and the exegetes disagreed about it. Some say that this king is the Messiah son of David,⁵⁴² while others say [that he is] the Messiah son of Joseph.⁵⁴³ And R. Moses the Priest [Ibn Chiquitilia] said that he is Nehemiah the

⁵³⁸ **They shall become like a chief in Judah... in the worship of the Lord. And Ekron shall be tributaries like the Jebusites... who paid tribute to the kings of Judah** – According to Ibn Ezra, there are two aspects to the subjugation of the Philistines, alluded to by two phrases in the verse: They will worship the true God (“like a chief in Judah”) and will be politically subservient to the Jews (“like the Jebusites”). Radak and Tanḥum list the same two aspects (cf. Abarbanel).

⁵³⁹ **מַצְבָּה [is spelled] with a ה instead of an א** – The Hebrew word for “army” is normally spelled צבא, with an א as its final letter. Ibn Ezra argues that מַצְבָּה in our verse is a prefix מ followed by a variant spelling of צבא with a ה instead of the א (cf. Student of Trani). This view is one of two possibilities suggested by Ḥayyuj (כתאב אלנתרף), Maman and Ben Porat 320) and is adopted by several additional exegetes (Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Student of Trani, Tanḥum; but cf. Rashi), as well as the oral commentary. Abarbanel cites Ibn Ezra as one possible interpretation.

⁵⁴⁰ **As for the meaning of for [I have] now [seen with my own eyes], it is the prophet's words** – According to Ibn Ezra, Zechariah is describing what he saw with his own eyes. Rashi claims that this verse is citing God, who had previously ignored the Jews' suffering but will now pay attention to the suffering with His “eyes.” Radak and Tanḥum cite both views, with Radak identifying Ibn Ezra as his source for the former view.

⁵⁴¹ **With eyes of prophecy** – In the Hebrew בעיני הנבואה, I am assuming that the first word is vocalized בעיני (“with eyes of”). It could also be vocalized בעיני (“with my eyes”), in which case Ibn Ezra would be citing the verse verbatim and then adding a comment: “**With my eyes** – prophecy.”

⁵⁴² **Some say that this king is the Messiah son of David** – The messianic interpretation is proposed by the Talmud (bSan. 98a-99a), al-Qumisi, Radak, Eliezer of Beaugency, and Abarbanel. It is implied by Maimonides (based on his citation of Zech. 9:9-10 in *Laws of Kings* 11:1 and *Epistle to Yemen* Ch. 3, Halkin xv, Shailat 152) and is partially adopted by Rashi (see note 546). It is also widespread in early Christian exegesis (cf. Conțac 181-205), because the New Testament applies our verse to Jesus (Matthew 21:9-10, John 12:14-15). One need not view Ibn Ezra's rejection of the messianic interpretation as an anti-Christian polemic, because he frequently avoids messianic interpretations when he can instead apply a prophecy to events that were close to the prophet's own era (e.g., 3:8 above).

Ibn Ezra paraphrases v. 9 in his poem אמר לצפון תן חילי (Levin, שירים 149, שירי הקודש I:255) to describe the Messiah, despite the fact that he does not interpret our verse messianically in either commentary.

⁵⁴³ **Others say [that he is] the Messiah son of Joseph** – Ibn Ezra addresses this figure in his commentary to Ch. 12 (cf. note 658). I have not found a source among Ibn Ezra's predecessors for interpreting this verse as a reference to Messiah son of Joseph.

Tirshatha,⁵⁴⁴ about whom it is written in Ezra (Neh. 6:7), “There is a king in Judah!”⁵⁴⁵ Therefore, he said, “[Taking] no other beast than the one [on which I was riding]” (Neh. 2:12), but he did not mention [having] a horse, due to a lack of means, because he was **poor**. But [Ibn Chiquitilia] did not speak the truth (cf. Job 42:7-8), because [Nehemiah] was a governor, and he did not request “the governor’s food allowance” (Neh. 5:17) from Israel, yet many people ate at his table every day (Neh. 5:17-18). So how could he not have a horse? Furthermore, what would be the meaning of “[I will arouse your sons, O Zion,] against your sons, O Greece” (v. 13)? In Nehemiah’s time, Greeks did not rule over Jerusalem!

In my opinion, this king is Judah the Hasmonean,⁵⁴⁶ who was a warrior, as is written: “I will make you like a warrior’s sword” (v. 13), [and] whose hand triumphed over the Greeks. When [Judah] began, he did not have wealth or a horse. [Also,] the matter of the menorah is written in the words of our ancient [sages], that it was done in poverty until [the Hasmoneans] became wealthy.⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴⁴ **Tirshatha** – This is an honorific title that the Bible confers upon Nehemiah as the Judean governor during the Persian Period (Neh. 8:9; cf. BDB 1077).

⁵⁴⁵ **Nehemiah the Tirshatha, about whom it is written in Ezra, “There is a king in Judah!”** – Ibn Chiquitilia apparently derives from this declaration that Nehemiah had the status of a king. Ibn Balaam cites Ibn Chiquitilia’s interpretation, but he rejects it by noting that in context, this declaration is a false accusation made by Nehemiah’s enemies. They alleged that Nehemiah was declaring independence from Persia when Nehemiah himself denied doing so. Ibn Balaam observes that in fact the Bible normally refers to Nehemiah as a governor rather than a king, just as Ibn Ezra subsequently remarks here.

⁵⁴⁶ **In my opinion, this king is Judah the Hasmonean** – Rashi argues that vv. 9-10 allude to the Messiah (since no earlier king ruled over the expansive borders of v. 9), but Rashi does consider the rest of the chapter to allude to the Hasmoneans. Tanḥum cites all three views regarding the king’s identity (Nehemiah, Judah Maccabee, the Messiah). He rejects the possibility that the king is Nehemiah but considers both other views plausible. Abarbanel also cites all three views, but he vigorously attacks Ibn Ezra and insists that the prophecy must be messianic.

⁵⁴⁷ **[Also,] the matter of the menorah... was done in poverty until [the Hasmoneans] became wealthy** – Ibn Ezra is alluding to an aggadic story according to which the Hasmoneans initially made a menorah of iron rods coated with wood. As the Hasmoneans amassed more wealth, they replaced the iron menorah with silver, and then later with gold (bR.H. 24b). Ibn Ezra seeks to demonstrate from this story the plausibility of Judah “riding on an ass” (v. 9) because he could not afford a horse at the start of his revolt.

(10) I shall banish [chariots from Ephraim], that they did not have [chariots]⁵⁴⁸ when they were under the Greek Empire.

And the meaning of **from Ephraim** is those who returned from Assyria,⁵⁴⁹ as I explained.⁵⁵⁰

It says about this king that in the end he will speak **peace unto the nations, and his rule** – his dominion – **shall extend from the Sea of Reeds to the Sea of Philistia** (cf. Exod. 23:31) **and from the Euphrates River to land’s end.** He shall be the one who speaks **peace unto the nations,** and these are the boundaries of the land of Israel.⁵⁵¹ It also said at the beginning about this king that he is “righteous;” therefore, he is “saved” (v. 9).

(11) It then turns and says to Israel: **You, too, [I have released your prisoners]** for the sake of **“the blood** of the covenant that the Lord made with” those who left Egypt (cf. Exod.

⁵⁴⁸ **They did not have [chariots]** – I filled in “chariots” as the object based on the verse, “I shall banish chariots from Ephraim.” Some manuscripts read, “They did not have horses,” which fits the continuation of the verse: “I shall banish chariots from Ephraim and horses from Jerusalem.” Ibn Ezra’s subsequent lemma “from Ephraim” implies that this comment is still focusing on the phrase “chariots from Ephraim,” even though Ibn Ezra’s previous comment that Judah the Hasmonean had no horse might support “horse” being the implied object.

⁵⁴⁹ **And the meaning of from Ephraim is those who returned from Assyria** – Ibn Ezra is alluding to the fact that during the Second Temple Period, the Jewish community was mostly comprised of former inhabitants of Judah who returned from the Babylonian exile. Accordingly, Ibn Ezra’s insistence that this prophecy addresses the Second Temple Period forces him to explain the presence of Ephraim. He suggests that some former members of northern kingdom of Israel did return from their exile in Assyria.

⁵⁵⁰ **As I explained** – Ibn Ezra already alluded to the return of Israelite exiles from Assyria in 8:7 and 9:1, and he raises it again in 10:6 in order to explain a reference to Ephraim in that verse.

⁵⁵¹ **From the Sea of Reeds to the Sea of Philistia and from the Euphrates River to land’s end... these are the boundaries of the land of Israel** – Radak cites this interpretation in Ibn Ezra’s name. Several of the exegetes who subscribe to the messianic interpretation of this passage suggest that “from sea to sea and from the river to land’s end” alludes to dominion over the entire world. Ibn Ezra cannot accept such an interpretation, because he knows that the Hasmoneans only enjoyed sovereignty over the land of Israel (cf. Tanḥum). Indeed, when commenting on Ps. 72:8, which similarly predicts that a king will rule “from sea to sea,” Ibn Ezra comments that if the king in question is Solomon (cf. Ps. 72:1), then the phrase refers to the borders of Israel “from the Sea of Reeds to the Sea of Philistia”; however, if the king in question is the Messiah, then “the ‘sea’ refers to the Southern Sea that is known as the Red Sea... to the North Sea, that is, the ocean” (i.e., the Atlantic Ocean; trans. H. Norman Strickman, *Psalms, ad loc.*). Thus, Ibn Ezra understood that the correct interpretation of the phrase “from sea to sea” depends on whether one interprets its context as messianic or as referring to the reign of a historical king who ruled the Land of Israel.

24:8). But some say that **[I have released your prisoners]** for the sake of the commandment of circumcision.⁵⁵²

The meaning is that the prisoners left every location to join the Hasmoneans in their triumph over Greece.

(12) Return – The prophet is saying: **Return to Jerusalem, which is a stronghold (בְּצֻרִין)** because the Hasmoneans are there.⁵⁵³

Even today, an announcer – After [the first] announcer. That is [what is meant by] a **second (מְשִׁנֶּה) [announcer] I will reply to you**, meaning: like a messenger who comes to see what⁵⁵⁴ the [first] announcer will say.⁵⁵⁵

(13) For I have drawn [Judah taut, and I have applied Ephraim] to a bow – The meaning is double.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵² **“The blood of the covenant that the Lord made with” those who left Egypt. But some say... the commandment of circumcision** – Ibn Ezra’s own interpretation, that Zechariah is alluding to the covenant of Exod. 24:8, first appears in Lev. R. (6:5) and is shared by Rashi. Regarding his second interpretation, that Zechariah is alluding to the blood of circumcision, *Mekhilta* to Exod. 12:6 interprets Zech. 9:11 as referring to the blood of circumcision and the blood of the paschal sacrifice. Radak also cites Rashi and Ibn Ezra’s view (anonymously), but he prefers the latter interpretation, that the “blood of your covenant” alludes to circumcision. Tanḥum cites both interpretations without expressing a preference for either one.

⁵⁵³ **Return to Jerusalem, which is a stronghold (בְּצֻרִין) because the Hasmoneans are there** – According to Ibn Ezra, בְּצֻרִין means “stronghold” and alludes to Jerusalem. The interpretation of בְּצֻרִין as “stronghold” appears in Ibn Janaḥ (72 הַשְּׂרִישִׁים) and is adopted by Tanḥum (who does limit it to Jerusalem). Rashi interprets בְּצֻרִין as “strength” and “glory” rather than alluding to a specific physical location (cf. Joseph Kara). Radak cites Joseph Kimḥi as interpreting בְּצֻרִין as a metaphor for God.

⁵⁵⁴ **What** – Most manuscripts have a demonstrative pronoun (זה or זוה) following the Hebrew word מה (what), so this phrase is difficult to translate literally (“What is this that the announcer will say”).

⁵⁵⁵ **Like a messenger who comes to see what the [first] announcer will say** – According to Ibn Ezra, this verse is introducing the next verse. God sent one message, “Return to the stronghold you prisoners of hope!” and is now sending a second message – “For I have drawn Judah taut, and applied Ephraim as to a bow” – to those who came to hear the first message (cf. Tanḥum).

⁵⁵⁶ **The meaning is double** – Ibn Ezra is identifying a parallelism, whereby the two halves of the verse express the same fundamental idea in different words – “For I have drawn Judah taut” parallels “I have applied Ephraim to a bow.” Tanḥum similarly writes that the Hebrew verbs for “drawn taut” and “applied” are synonymous

And I will arouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and make you – you whom I have aroused – **like a warrior’s sword.**⁵⁵⁷

(14) And the Lord – the glory of the Lord⁵⁵⁸ – **shall be seen over** Judah and Ephraim.

And the meaning of **His arrows [shall flash] like lightning** is that it mentioned, “I have applied Ephraim to a bow” (v. 13).

And the meaning of **the ram’s horn** is that this shall be heard, so Israel shall gather (יקבץ) to the Hasmoneans.⁵⁵⁹

Whirlwinds of תימן (the south) – A southern (דרומית) wind.⁵⁶⁰

The Lord shall be seen over them – Over the Hasmoneans.

(15) They shall conquer fortresses, so **sling-stones** will not be useful for the enemies in their fortresses.⁵⁶¹

⁵⁵⁷ **I will arouse your sons, O Zion... and make you – you whom I have aroused – like a warrior’s sword** – Ibn Ezra is clarifying a reference ambiguity by stressing that the “you” who will be made into a warrior’s sword is Judah and Israel rather than Greece.

⁵⁵⁸ **The glory of the Lord** – Ibn Ezra inserts this phrase due to the theological concern that God cannot be seen (cf. my supercommentary to Mal. 3:1).

⁵⁵⁹ **Israel shall gather (יקבץ) to the Hasmoneans** – I have translated the verb יקבץ as an intransitive *nif'al* verb (יקבֹץ). It could also be vocalized as a transitive *pi'el* verb (יקבֹץ), in which case this phrase would mean that the horn “shall gather Israel to the Hasmoneans.” However, the transitive meaning appears unlikely, since one would expect the direct object marker את to appear before “Israel” if “Israel” were the object rather than the subject.

⁵⁶⁰ **Whirlwinds of תימן – A southern wind** – Ibn Ezra is clarifying that תימן refers to the direction of the wind rather than being the name of a specific geographical location (cf. al-Qumisi and the rabbinic views cited by Rashi). Jonathan and Tanḥum also interpret תימן as “southern” in this verse (cf. Radak).

⁵⁶¹ **They shall conquer fortresses, so sling-stones will not be useful for the enemies in their fortresses** – Ibn Ezra is addressing an ambiguity in the Hebrew phrase וְקָבְצוּ אֲבָנֵי קֶלַע (“Sling-stones shall conquer”) or the object (“They [=Jews/Hasmoneans] shall conquer sling-stones”). Ibn Ezra considers “sling-stones” to be the object, so he explains the verse as meaning that the Hasmoneans will conquer the Greeks and render their sling-stones useless. Other exegetes share Ibn Ezra’s view that “sling-stones” are the direct object but differ regarding the precise symbolism of the sling-stones (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak, Tanḥum). Ibn Janah (211 השרשים) considers “sling-stones” to be a metaphor for the speed with which the Jews will conquer their enemies: “They shall conquer [them speedily, (with the speed of)] sling-stones.” Yet another group of exegetes considers “sling-

And the meaning of **sling-stones** is the Greek commanders.⁵⁶²

And the meaning of **they shall drink** is that the blood of those who sling [the stones] shall be spilled in a **dashing bowl** in which blood is sprinkled upon the **altar**.⁵⁶³

[Like a dashing bowl,] like the trimmed⁵⁶⁴ **corners** (cf. Ps. 144:12) **[of an altar]** – And the meaning is double.⁵⁶⁵

(16) [And the Lord their God] shall save them [in that day] as the flock of His people [were saved] through Moses as he stood at the sea (see Exod. 14).⁵⁶⁶

Since it mentioned “sling-stones” (v. 15), it said that these Hasmoneans are **crown jewels** of splendor **displaying themselves** (**מתנוקסות**) – that can be seen like a flag (**נס**) **over** the Lord’s **soil**.⁵⁶⁷

stones” to be an indirect object (“They shall conquer [with] sling-stones”) that serves to highlight the ease with which the Jews will conquer their enemies (Eliezer of Beaugency, Student of Trani).

⁵⁶² **And the meaning of sling-stones is the Greek commander** – After providing a literal interpretation of sling-stones, Ibn Ezra adds that “sling-stones” are also a metaphor for the Greek commanders. Rashi also interprets “sling-stones” as alluding to Greek commanders.

⁵⁶³ **The blood... shall be spilled in a dashing bowl in which blood is sprinkled upon the altar** – Ibn Ezra clearly intends this metaphorically, not that their blood would actually be sprinkled upon the altar.

⁵⁶⁴ **Trimmed** – The Hebrew word *מהטבורות* is difficult to translate. It comes from Ps. 144:12, where it is used as an adjective describing corners. Ibn Ezra *ad loc.* refers to the word *הטבורות* Prov. 7:16, but he does not explain the meaning in either verse. Ibn Ezra might have believed that *הטבורות* means “elevated” in Prov. 7:16. That interpretation is widespread among subsequent medieval exegetes to that verse (Joseph Kimḥi, Moses Kimḥi, Radak, and Isaiah of Trani; cf. Meiri) and the image of an altar with “elevated stones” (i.e., at its corners) is plausible. However, translating the word *מהטבורות* as “elevated” in Ps. 144:12 does not fit the context well (cf. Meiri *ad loc.*). Indeed, both Radak and Isaiah of Trani – who interpret *הטבורות* as “elevated” in Prov. 7:16 – maintain that it means “trimmed” in Ps. 144:12. Hence, since Ibn Ezra to Ps. 144:12 indicates that the root *הטב* has the same meaning in Psalms and in Proverbs, he likely interpreted it as “trimmed” in both places.

⁵⁶⁵ **And the meaning is double** – The noun phrases “a dashing bowl” and “the corners of an altar” are parallel, as both convey the same image of sprinkling blood upon the altar’s corners; see note 556 above.

⁵⁶⁶ **As the flock of His people [were saved] through Moses as he stood at the sea** – Rashi also understands the phrase “as the flock of His people” as alluding to the Israelites’ redemption from Egypt, and Radak and Tanḥum cite this interpretation anonymously. Rashi and Ibn Ezra might have been led to this interpretation by Ps. 78:52, which presents the Exodus narrative by recounting how God “set His people moving like a flock” (*כצאן עמו*), a nearly identical Hebrew phrase to *כצאן עמו* (“as the flock of His people”) in our verse.

⁵⁶⁷ **Displaying themselves** (**מתנוקסות**) – that can be seen like a flag (**נס**) **over** the Lord’s **soil** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting the verb *מתנוקסות* based on the word *נס* (flag). Ibn Janah (*ההשגה*, Tene 81) interprets *מתנוקסות* as connoting “height and elevation” like the elevation of a flag (*השרשים* 105; cf. Tanḥum).

It is also correct [for **crown jewels**] to be “sacred gems” (cf. Lam. 4:1), an allusion to [the Hasmoneans] being high priests.⁵⁶⁸

(17) For then the young men and maidens shall rejoice to sing and drink wine after their dinners. This is [the meaning of] **for how great is its goodness**, referring to “that day” mentioned above (v. 16).⁵⁶⁹

New grain and new wine יְנוּבָב (shall make fruitful) young men and young women –

[יְנוּבָב] is from the same derivation as “In old age they still produce fruit” (יְנוּבֹון; Ps. 92:15);

but [more] correct is from the derivation of “[I create] the fruit (נִיב) of the lips” (Isa.

57:19),⁵⁷⁰ and it is a transitive verb.⁵⁷¹ [It is] like “He restores (יְשׁוּבָב) [my life]” (Ps. 23:3),

and, “[My people] have arisen (יְקוּמָם) [as an enemy]” (Mic. 2:8).⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁸ **It is also correct [for crown jewels] to be “sacred gems,” an allusion to [the Hasmoneans] being high priests –** See the oral commentary.

⁵⁶⁹ **This is [the meaning of] for how great is its goodness, referring to “that day” mentioned above –** According to Ibn Ezra, Zechariah is referring to the “goodness” and “beauty” of the day of salvation that the previous verse describes, rather than the “goodness” and “beauty” of the young men and women in this verse. By contrast, several exegetes maintain that our verse is depicting the “goodness” and “beauty” of the young men and women (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak).

⁵⁷⁰ **יְנוּבָב... is from the same derivation as... יְנוּבֹון; but [more] correct is from the derivation of... נִיב –** Ibn Ezra offers two possible proof-texts for the meaning of יְנוּבָב and seemingly prefers the second proof-text, in which the noun נִיב means “fruit” (cf. Ibn Ezra to Mal. 1:12, Muraoka and Shavitsky). The oral commentary cites the second proof-text alone. However, it is difficult to identify what Ibn Ezra intends by preferring the proof-text of נִיב to יְנוּבֹון, when both words share the same root (cf. Ibn Ezra to Exod. 7:1). In order to explain Ibn Ezra’s comment, we must provide background regarding how earlier medieval grammarians understood the verses in question.

Ibn Saruk (מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 121, Sáenz-Badillos 251*) asserts that נִיב in Isa. 57:19 denotes a verbal utterance (מבטא) and argues that it is etymologically related to prophesying (which also derives from the two-letter root נב according to Ibn Saruk’s grammatical system). Ibn Saruk maintains that יְנוּבָב in our verse and יְנוּבֹון in Ps. 92:15 have a shared meaning (to flourish? to bear fruit?), which differs from the meaning of נִיב. Several French exegetes adopt Ibn Saruk’s view regarding the meaning of נִיב (Rashi, Exod. 7:1, Jud. 5:28, Prov. 10:31; Pseudo-Rashi, Neh. 6:7; Joseph Kara, I Sam. 9:9; Joseph Bekhor Shor, Exod. 7:1). However, Ibn Saruk’s approach is incompatible with the system of trilateral roots that subsequent Spanish grammarians adopt. In that system, the verb “prophesy” derives from the root נבא, while נִיב derives from the hollow root נוּב.

While later grammarians agreed that נִיב and יְנוּבֹון both derive from the same hollow root, a dispute arose regarding the precise connotations of this root. Hayyuj indicates that יְנוּבֹון in Ps. 92:15 and the similar verb יְנוּב in Ps. 62:11 have a broad connotation of “increase” or “prosper,” while the noun נִיב (in Mal. 1:12) has a narrower connotation of “food” or “fruit” (שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק, Wated and Sivan 148-149). Ibn Janah similarly writes that the root נוּב can have two meanings as a verb – “to increase” or “to bear fruit” (290; השרשים);

Chapter 10

(1) Ask... **הַחַיִּים** (thunder), like “for the thunderstorms” (לְחַיִּי קָלוֹת); Job 28:26, 38:25).⁵⁷³

[And He will provide rainstorms for them, grass in the fields for everyone] – The

meaning is: When the Hasmoneans’ hand triumphs, they will have great abundance (cf. Gen. 41:29).⁵⁷⁴

cf. ההשגה, Tene 80). According to Ibn Janah, the verb יְגַבֵּב in our verse has the former connotation – the wine will cause the women to prosper.

In light of that background, it is possible to understand Ibn Ezra’s choice of proof-texts here. He rejects Ibn Saruk’s view (cf. Ibn Ezra to Exod. 7:1) and believes that all of the words under discussion share the same root (גִּבַּב). Ibn Ezra initially cites Ps. 92:15 to explain that יְגַבֵּב has the same meaning as יְגַבֵּב in that verse (“to prosper”), in accordance with Ibn Janah’s view. He then adds that גִּבַּב in Isa. 57:19 is a better proof-text, since it means “fruit” as a metaphor for speech. Here, too, Ibn Ezra concludes that יְגַבֵּב is a similar metaphor: The wine will cause the maidens to “bear fruit [of their lips],” meaning that the women will sing praise (cf. Schrem 44a). Tanhum also cites both proof-texts but appears to favor Ibn Janah’s view that יְגַבֵּב in our verse has the broader connotation of “increase” or “prosper” and is not being used as a specific metaphor for singing praise. Commenting on our verse, Radak interprets יְגַבֵּב as meaning that the abundant grain and wine will cause the maidens to grow strong and beautiful. However, elsewhere Radak attributes that interpretation to his father, Joseph Kimhi (cf. הגלוי 120), while Radak himself appears to adopt Ibn Ezra’s view that the wine will prompt them to sing (השרשים 420).

⁵⁷¹ **And it is a transitive verb** – Ibn Ezra likely intends that the verb takes two direct objects (cf. note 249). According to the HaKeter edition’s punctuation, the phrase “it is a transitive verb” begins the next sentence, meaning that יְגַבֵּב and יְקַוֵּם are examples of transitive verbs. Schrem also interprets Ibn Ezra in that manner (44a). However, יְקַוֵּם does not appear to be transitive in Mic. 2:8 (cf. Ibn Ezra *ad loc.*). So unless יְקַוֵּם – which appears in all manuscripts – is an erroneous gloss, it would seem that Ibn Ezra is making two separate comments – a) יְגַבֵּב is transitive, and b) it follows the same pattern as יְשׁוּבֵב and יְקַוֵּם: the pattern of *polet* imperfect verbs.

⁵⁷² **Like “He restores (יְשׁוּבֵב) [my life]” and, “[My people] have arisen (יְקַוֵּם) [as an enemy]”** – See note 571.

⁵⁷³ **הַחַיִּים** – like “for the thunderstorms” (לְחַיִּי קָלוֹת) – This is a lexical comment addressing the meaning of the rare word חַיִּי. The contexts of both our verse and the proof-text in Job indicate that the word has something to do with rainstorms, but its precise meaning is unclear. There are three widespread interpretations of the word חַיִּי: 1) Cloud (yTan. 3:3, Gen. R. to Gen. 2:6, Targum Job 38:25, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Student of Trani; Rashbam and Isaiah of Trani, Job 28:26 and 38:25; cf. bTan. 9b), 2) Thunder (al-Qumisi; Ibn Janah, השרשים 148; Tanhum), and 3) Lightning (Radak *ad loc.* and השרשים 197-198; Moses Kimhi and Ralbag, Job 28:26 and 38:25; cf. Ramban, Job 28:26 and 38:25). Additional interpretations include Jonathan, who translates חַיִּי as רוּחַ (wind), and Eliezer of Beaugency, who claims that they are pools of water. Regarding Ibn Ezra’s own view, he does not explain himself here beyond citing a proof-text, but his commentary to Job 38:25 interprets חַיִּי in Job as loud thunder and cites our verse as a proof-text (cf. the oral commentary, which appears to interpret it as lightning, and Schrem 44a).

⁵⁷⁴ **When the Hasmoneans’ hand triumphs, they will have great abundance** – Ibn Ezra is assuming that Zechariah is prophesying about the Hasmoneans, as he explained in the previous chapter.

(2) For [the teraphim spoke delusion, the augurs predicted falsely; and dreamers speak lies], those who said that a savior will not arrive for Israel. They console Israel’s foes with illusions.⁵⁷⁵

That is why Israel has strayed [like a flock] and fled Jerusalem before the Hasmoneans’ battles.

And **they reply**,⁵⁷⁶ “Israel has no Israelite **shepherd**,” to those who ask them, “Why do you flee?”

(3) [My anger is roused] against [the shepherds] – This passage is connected,⁵⁷⁷ and **the shepherds** are the emperors of Greece who ruled over Israel.⁵⁷⁸

[Like the horse of its majesty in battle means:] like a known⁵⁷⁹ **horse whose majesty is seen [in battle].**⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁵ **Those who said that a savior will not arrive for Israel. They console Israel’s foes with illusions** – Ibn Ezra believes that the augurs and dreamers predicted Israel’s demise. Hence, they “console” Israel’s *foes*. Tanḥum and Abarbanel also maintain that this verse is describing false predictions of Israel’s demise, while several other exegetes view the augurs and dreamers as false prophets who emboldened Israel to sin by “consoling” them with the promise that they would not be punished for their sins (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak).

⁵⁷⁶ **They reply** – I have bolded these words (as has the HaKeter edition) on the assumption that they represent Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of the Hebrew verb יַעֲנוּ from the verse. However, the overwhelming majority of exegetes interpret יַעֲנוּ as “they were afflicted” or “subjugated” (Jonathan, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Student of Trani). Even Tanḥum, who appears to paraphrase Ibn Ezra’s comment (that people attributed their need to flee to their leaders’ absence), immediately adds that יַעֲנוּ has been interpreted as “they were afflicted,” without indicating that this interpretation of יַעֲנוּ conflicts with his previous comment. Moreover, in Tanḥum’s paraphrase of Ibn Ezra, he employs the Arabic word ויגיבון for Ibn Ezra’s ויענו, whereas he likely would have preserved the original Hebrew if he considered himself to be citing the biblical text (יַעֲנוּ). Hence, Tanḥum likely understood the resemblance between Ibn Ezra’s word ויענו (“they reply”) and the word יַעֲנוּ (“they were afflicted”) in our verse to be a coincidence.

⁵⁷⁷ **This passage is connected** – Verse 3 begins a new paragraph in the Masoretic text, but Ibn Ezra maintains that the new passage continues to address the Hasmonean period (cf. Ibn Ezra to 9:1).

⁵⁷⁸ **The shepherds are the emperors of Greece who ruled over Israel** – Rashi and Radak also suggest that “the shepherds” represent the Greek rulers. For other views, see Ibn Caspi and Abarbanel.

⁵⁷⁹ **Known** – Heb. נודע. Ibn Ezra might intend נודע as a technical term for “definite” (cf. Ibn Ezra to Gen. 2:9), or he might simply intend it as “known.” Either way, he appears to be arguing that the noun construct סוס הודו is definite (“the horse of its majesty” rather than “a horse of its majesty”) and refers to a specific majestic horse that was known at that time. For similar uses of נודע by Ibn Ezra, see Ibn Ezra to Exod. 3:2, 4:13, and 17:4; Num. 11:27; and second commentary to Est. 6:8.

(4) From it – [The verse] compares Judah to a strong tree, **from which cornerstones, tent pegs and bows shall come**. Its meaning is that a foreigner shall not rule over them.⁵⁸¹

(5) And they shall be like warriors... [And they shall put] horsemen [to shame] – For they were not accustomed to ride on horses, as it mentioned [above] that horses would be banished from Jerusalem (9:10).

(6) I will give victory to [the House of] Judah, and [triumph to the House of] Joseph – They are the ones who returned from Assyria to the Second Temple.⁵⁸²

וְהוֹשִׁיבוֹתֵימָם (I will restore them) is a composite word from וְהוֹשִׁיבוֹתֵימָם (I will return them) and וְהוֹשִׁבְתֵימָם (I will settle them),⁵⁸³ like “שָׁבָעוֹת” (Ezek. 45:21), from שָׁבָע (week) and שִׁבְעָה (seven),⁵⁸⁴ and there are many [composite words] like this.⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸⁰ **Like a known horse whose majesty is seen [in battle]** – I have added the end of the verse in brackets (“in battle”), because Ibn Ezra appear to be interpreting the full phrase “like a horse of its majesty in battle” by explaining that the horse’s majesty becomes evident in battle (cf. the oral commentary).

⁵⁸¹ **Its meaning is that a foreigner shall not rule over them** – The oral commentary explains “bows” as a metaphor for kings and warriors who utilize archery in battle. In addition to the imagery of “cornerstones, tent pegs and bows,” Ibn Ezra presumably has the end of the verse in mind (“And every captain shall also arise from them”) when he asserts that this verse foretells Jewish sovereignty (cf. Tanḥum, whose comments parallel Ibn Ezra’s with the addition of the end of the verse). Regarding this interpretation of the verse as a depiction of Jewish sovereignty, cf. *Sifrei* and *Mid. Tannaim* to Deut. 32:6, bHul. 56b, and Rashi.

⁵⁸² **The House of] Joseph... the ones who returned from Assyria to the Second Temple** – This comment is intended to explain the presence of Joseph alongside Judah, just as Ibn Ezra remarked regarding the appearance of Ephraim in 9:10. Indeed vv. 10-11 explicitly mention Assyria as one of the places from which exiles will be gathered. Since most Israelites in Jerusalem during this period descended from the First-Temple kingdom of Judah, Ibn Ezra feels compelled to point out that some members of the tribes who comprised the northern kingdom of Israel also returned from the Assyrian exile. Abarbanel, who fundamentally objects to Ibn Ezra’s view that this prophecy applies to the Hasmoneans, dismisses Ibn Ezra’s explanation of these verses by challenging the historical veracity of Ibn Ezra’s claim that Israelites returned from Assyria to the Second Temple.

⁵⁸³ **וְהוֹשִׁבוֹתֵימָם is a composite word from וְהוֹשִׁיבוֹתֵימָם and וְהוֹשִׁבְתֵימָם** – The vocalization of וְהוֹשִׁבוֹתֵימָם shows some features of the hollow root שׁוּב in *hif’il* while also showing features of the initial-weak root יָשַׁב in *hif’il*. The implication of Ibn Ezra’s observation is that this word seeks to convey both meanings – God will “return” Judah and Joseph to their land and will “settle” them there. This presentation of וְהוֹשִׁבוֹתֵימָם already appears in Ibn Janah (הַרְקָמָה 348). Radak and Tanḥum also note the word’s composite nature, and both explicitly remark that the composite word may intend to convey both meanings. Ḥayyuj (כְּתָאב אֵלֶנְתָרָה, Maman and Ben Porat 320) and Rashi understand וְהוֹשִׁבוֹתֵימָם as simply being an irregular form of וְהוֹשִׁבְתֵימָם from the root יָשַׁב, and this appears to be the view of al-Qumisi, too.

(7) **And they shall be** – The sons of **Ephraim** shall be **like a warrior**.⁵⁸⁶

[**And they shall exult as**] **wine** (יין) is like “**as through wine**” (ביין), but the [prefix] ב is missing,⁵⁸⁷ like, “For six (שש) days [the Lord made heaven and earth and sea]” (Exod. 20:11).⁵⁸⁸

(8) **I will whistle** to those who remain in Assyria and Egypt.

They shall increase in their exile in a foreign land **just as they increased** in earlier times, in their land.⁵⁸⁹ So this is like: “[For the Lord has restored the Pride of Jacob] as the Pride of Israel” (Nah. 2:3).⁵⁹⁰

⁵⁸⁴ **Like “שבעות days” from שבוע (week) and שבעה (seven)** – The phrase שבעות ימים conveys the meaning of “one week/seven days” by using one Hebrew word that incorporates some features of the vocalization of the word for “week” (שבוע) together with features of the vocalization of the word for “seven” (שבעה in construct). Some super-commentators claim that Ibn Ezra’s proof-text was the phrase שבעים ימים in Dan. 10:2 (Kaputa 156, Schrem 44a), but this is not supported by any textual witnesses. On the contrary, Ibn Ezra also cites the word שבעות from Ezek. 45:21 as a compound word in יסוד מספר (Pinsker 163), confirming that it is his intended proof-text.

⁵⁸⁵ **There are many [composite words] like this** – Indeed, Ibn Ezra observed this phenomenon above, in 5:11 (cf. note 390 above).

⁵⁸⁶ **The sons of Ephraim shall be like a warrior** – The Hebrew word order literally translates as, “And they shall be like a warrior, Ephraim,” so Ibn Ezra is stressing that “Ephraim” is the subject of “shall be.” Radak interprets the syntax in the same manner.

⁵⁸⁷ **As wine (יין) is like “as through wine,” but the [prefix] ב is missing** – According to Ibn Ezra, rejoicing “as wine” means rejoicing as one rejoices “through wine,” with an implied preposition. In a similar vein (but without suggesting an implied preposition), several exegetes write that the people will rejoice “as [those who drink] wine” (Jonathan, Joseph Kara, Radak). Tanhum presents both possibilities.

⁵⁸⁸ **For six (שש) days [the Lord made heaven and earth and sea]** – The word שש should have a prefix ב, representing the preposition “in,” since the verse intends that God created the universe “in six days.” Ibn Ezra does not comment about that phrase’s syntax in either of his commentaries to Exodus, but he does cite it in many places as proof that the Bible contains phrases with an implied prefix ב that is omitted (Gen. 3:15 [long commentary], 14:4; Lev. 26:21; Isa. 5:24, 24:6, 26:18, 27:4, 43:24; Hos. 6:3; Ps. 3:8, 45:5, 66:17, 109:3; Lam. 1:7; Est. 1:9). Abarbanel adopts Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of “as through wine” and cites the same proof-text.

⁵⁸⁹ **Just as they increased in earlier times, in their land** – Tanhum also interprets “as they increased” as referring to their earlier prosperity in Israel (cf. Student of Trani), while others interpret it as alluding to the manner in which the nation multiplied as slaves in Egypt (Rashi, Radak, Abarbanel; cf. Exod. 1:7,12).

⁵⁹⁰ **Just as they increased in earlier times... like “[For the Lord has restored the Pride of Jacob] as the Pride of Israel”** – Ibn Ezra to Nah. *ad loc.* explains that God will restore “the Pride of Jacob” to what “the Pride of Israel” had been in earlier times. In our verse, too, Ibn Ezra explains that they will multiply just as they did in earlier times of prosperity.

And the phrase **כְּמִן־רָבוּ** (**just as they increased**) is irregular, because the proper [syntax] is **כַּאֲשֶׁר רָבוּ**.⁵⁹¹

(9) **וְאָזְרַעֵם** (**I will sow them**) – I will multiply their progeny (זרעם).⁵⁹²

[**They shall live**] **אֶת** **their children** [means] “with” (עם) [their children].⁵⁹³

And they shall return to their land.

(10) **I will bring them back... and place shall not be found (יִמְצָא) for them** – The settlement shall not suffice for them,⁵⁹⁴ for they [will be] many.

(11) **A wind of affliction shall pass [over the sea]**⁵⁹⁵ – Its meaning is that **the sea** shall dry up,⁵⁹⁶ as [shall] the Egyptian Nile, to be a path for the redeemed to pass through from

⁵⁹¹ **And the phrase כְּמִן־רָבוּ (just as they increased) is irregular, because the proper [syntax] is כַּאֲשֶׁר רָבוּ** – Ibn Janah (הרקמה 46) writes that כמו cannot precede a perfect verb. Although Ibn Ezra writes that this use of כמו is irregular he does not consider it impossible for כמו to precede a perfect verb. Indeed, Charlap (תורת הלשון 181) observes that elsewhere Ibn Ezra cites our verse as proof that כמו can precede a perfect verb (Gen. 19:15; *Moznayim*, Jiménez Patón 32*; צחות, Lippmann 27b, Valle Rodriguez 68-69).

⁵⁹² **I will multiply their progeny (זרעם)** – The root זרע normally means “to plant” as a verb, but the noun זרע (“seed”) is routinely used as a metaphor for offspring. Ibn Ezra is interpreting the verb in our verse according to the same metaphor. Ibn Saruk similarly observes that the root זרע is used metaphorically in this verse (מהברת מנהם, Philipowski 84, Sáenz-Badillos 163*).

⁵⁹³ **אֶת their children [means] “with” (עם) [their children]** – The word אֶת normally serves as a direct object marker, but it can also mean “with,” so Ibn Ezra is clarifying that it has this less frequent meaning here. Most other exegetes interpret it the same way (Jonathan, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak).

A minority of textual witnesses include the bracketed noun phrase “[their children],” which is implied according to the majority of witnesses.

⁵⁹⁴ **And place shall not be found (יִמְצָא) for them – The settlement shall not suffice for them** – The oral commentary offers the same interpretation and adds a proof-text. The interpretation of יִמְצָא as “suffice” is shared by Jonathan, Ibn Saruk (מהברת מנהם, Philipowski 119, Sáenz-Badillos 244*), Ibn Janah (השרשים 270), Rashi, Radak, Ibn Caspi, and Abarbanel. Tanhum cites this view along with a view that interprets יִמְצָא literally, meaning that they shall not be found by the enemy.

⁵⁹⁵ **A wind of affliction shall pass [over the sea]** – Had Ibn Ezra not added the word “wind,” the verse would seem to state that “affliction shall pass over the sea.” Ibn Ezra might simply be seeking to clarify that the affliction shall come in the form of wind (cf. the oral commentary’s metaphorical interpretation of the sea’s “affliction”). However, it seems likely that he added the word “wind” to resolve a gender disagreement between noun and verb (cf. Tanhum, Schrem 44a). The noun צָרָה (affliction) is feminine, but the verb “shall pass” is in masculine form (וְעָבַר), so Ibn Ezra might be explaining the need for a masculine verb by asserting that the implied subject is “wind” (רוּחַ), which can be masculine or feminine. A midrashic reading of the verse does consider צָרָה to be the subject of וְעָבַר, alluding to an idol that crossed the Red Sea (bSan. 103b, Mekhilta to Exod. 12:41 and 14:15). Several exegetes consider צָרָה to be the subject of וְעָבַר without addressing the gender

Assyria, for they shall come via **the sea to the Nile to Egypt**, and from there to the land of Israel.⁵⁹⁷ Isaiah (11:15) said it thus: “The Lord will dry up the tongue of the Egyptian sea. He will raise His hand over the river” – which is the Egyptian Nile.⁵⁹⁸ And it is [further] written there (Isa. 11:16): “Thus there shall be a highway for the other part of His people out of Assyria, [such as there was for Israel when it left the land of Egypt].”

Down shall come the pride of Assyria, such that they will no longer rule Israel, because fear of the Hasmoneans’ shall overtake them (cf. Est. 8:17, 9:3), and **Egypt**, as well.⁵⁹⁹

(12) I will make them mighty – He will give might to those who come, and they will be blessed by His name without fear.

Chapter 11

(1) Throw open⁶⁰⁰ – This is the beginning of a passage that laments the Hasmoneans, for their kingdom shall perish.⁶⁰¹

disagreement (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Student of Trani), while Radak attempts to insert a different masculine noun as the subject (דברן הצרה), “[the matter of] affliction”).

⁵⁹⁶ **Shall dry up** – The tense of the Hebrew word יבש depends on its vocalization. I am assuming that it is an imperfect *qal* verb, vocalized יִבֵּשׁ, based on context and based on the plene spelling יִיבֵשׁ in MS Leeuwarden 21.

⁵⁹⁷ **The sea shall dry up, as [shall] the Egyptian Nile, to be a path for the redeemed to pass from Assyria... to the land of Israel** – Ibn Ezra understands this storm imagery literally, alluding to the miraculous drying of bodies of water to enable Jews and Israelites to easily return to Israel on foot. Radak (10:12) alludes to Ibn Ezra’s interpretation anonymously but prefers the view that this imagery is a metaphor for the divine power that will vanquish Israel’s enemies (cf. Jonathan, Rashi, Joseph Kara, and the oral commentary). Tanḥum and Abarbanel also cite both views.

⁵⁹⁸ **“The river” – which is the Egyptian Nile** – Ibn Ezra to Isa. *ad loc.* interprets “the river” in that verse as the Nile, but many exegetes maintain that “the river” is the Euphrates due to the context of that prophecy, which implies that “the river” stood between Assyria and Israel, which would be to the northeast of Israel (Jonathan, Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Radak *ad loc.*; Saadiah, *Beliefs and Opinions* 8:8, Rosenblatt 312-319; cf. Kaputa 156 and note 478 above).

⁵⁹⁹ **Down shall come the pride of Assyria... because fear of the Hasmoneans’ shall overtake them, and Egypt, as well** – Ibn Ezra’s description of the Hasmoneans’ triumph might be influenced by Josippon’s presentation of the wars of John Hyrcanus I (Flusser, ספר יוסיפון 118-119; cf. Ibn Caspi).

⁶⁰⁰ **Throw open** – I have included this lemma due to its presence in the base manuscript. However, the Hebrew word פתח resembles the last word of Ibn Ezra’s commentary to the previous chapter (פחד, fear). In the base manuscript, פחד is missing, which is an obvious error (since the previous sentence would be incomprehensible without it). Of the remaining eight witnesses, two witnesses have both פחד and פתח while the other six omit פתח.

The meaning [of **let fire consume your cedars**] is that the Hasmoneans are [compared to] cedars.

(2) Howl, cypresses – princes of Israel⁶⁰² – **for the cedars** – Hasmonean kings – **have fallen**.

[**Howl,**] **you Oaks of Bashan**, which bear fruit,⁶⁰³ **for the forest of the vintage** – which is grander than [the oaks] – **is laid low**.⁶⁰⁴

(3) Hark, the wailing of the shepherds, namely, the kings. And **their glory**⁶⁰⁵ [represents] the Hasmoneans.

Hark, the roaring of the lions, because the lion is the king of the beasts.

And the word **lions** serves for another,⁶⁰⁶ like, “Your throne, God” (Ps. 45:7), which [means], “Your throne, the throne of God.” Hence, this [verse means]: **For the lion in which the**

It seems likely that the original text read פתח פתח, and different scribes mistakenly dropped one word or the other. But it is also possible that the original text read פתח alone, and subsequent scribes either inserted the lemma פתח or replaced פתח with פתח based on their familiarity with the first word of 11:1.

⁶⁰¹ **This is the beginning of a passage that laments the Hasmoneans, for their kingdom shall perish** – According to Ibn Ezra, v. 1 begins a new unit, because Ibn Ezra interprets the previous prophecy as depicting the Hasmoneans’ triumphs, whereas this verse shifts to their downfall. This interpretation of the current prophecy differs from the oral commentary, which asserts that this prophecy alludes to the destruction of the Second Temple (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Jonathan interprets this passage as messianic, with “Lebanon” representing “the nations” (עממיה) that will be vanquished (cf. Rashi, Student of Trani). Radak and Tanhum cite all three aforementioned views and prefer Jonathan’s view. In order to support Jonathan’s view, Radak and Tanhum implicitly reject Ibn Ezra’s premise that “this is the beginning of a passage” and instead claim that vv. 1-3 continue the previous prophecy of redemption (which Radak – unlike Ibn Ezra – interprets as messianic). Abarbanel explicitly rejects Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of vv. 1-3 and insists that this passage is messianic.

⁶⁰² **Cypresses – princes of Israel** – Jonathan translates “cypresses” as “kings” (מלכיה), but he intends *Gentile* kings.

⁶⁰³ **Oaks of Bashan, which bear fruit** – Ibn is stressing that these trees bear fruit, in order to facilitate a comparison between them and the “forest of the vintage.”

⁶⁰⁴ [**Howl,**] **you Oaks of Bashan... for the forest of the vintage** – which is grander... **is laid low** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting the two halves of this verse in a parallel fashion. In the first half, the cypresses (symbolizing princes) howl to mourn the loss of the cedars, which are grander than the cypresses (and therefore symbolize kings). Similarly, the fruit-bearing oak trees howl to mourn the destruction of the forest of the vintage. Ibn Ezra is interpreting the word כְּצִיר as vintage fruit (cf. Lev. 26:5, Jud. 8:2), while others interpret it as a type of fortification (Jonathan, Rashi, Joseph Kara; cf. Num. 32:17). Radak appears to adopt Ibn Ezra’s interpretation.

⁶⁰⁵ **Their glory** – Regarding the translation of the Hebrew word אֶזְרָתָם as “their glory” (cf. NJPS: “their rich pastures”), see my supercommentary to the oral commentary.

Jordan took pride⁶⁰⁷ – since nobody could cross **the Jordan** due to fear of it – [**is ravaged**].⁶⁰⁸ But if we were to explain [**for the Jordan is ravaged**] that **the Jordan** will dry up, then it would not make sense.⁶⁰⁹ But Yefet explained **for the Jordan is ravaged** [as referring to] Israelites who were beyond the Jordan [River]; he, too, is correct in my view.

(4) Thus – Now it begins a new passage, to recount how Israel will be after the rise of the Hasmoneans.⁶¹⁰

[Zechariah] said **my God** since he saw in prophetic visions that he will be the shepherd.

And he explained that the meaning of **the sheep of slaughter (5)** is: [sheep] **whose [buyers will slaughter them] with impunity** – according to [the buyers’] own thoughts.⁶¹¹

וְאֶעְשֶׂר (I’ll get rich) – The vowel under the א shifted to the ו; therefore, [the א] became silent, like the silence⁶¹² of the א of “I will chastise (וְאֶעְשֶׂר) David’s descendants” (I Kings 11:39).⁶¹³

⁶⁰⁶ **And the word lions serves for another** – Ibn Ezra often resolves syntactical problems by arguing that a word or letter that appears once in a verse also distributes to a second place in the verse (e.g., his comments to 9:2, 11:13, and 14:6,9,18).

⁶⁰⁷ **Took pride** – Ibn Ezra’s Hebrew word מִתְגַּאֵה is a participle derived from the same root as the noun “pride” (גָּאֵה) in the verse.

⁶⁰⁸ **Hence, this [verse means]: For the lion in which the Jordan took pride... [is ravaged]** – Ibn Ezra interprets “the pride of the Jordan” as a description of a lion. Tanḥum cites this interpretation but dismisses it as unnecessary.

⁶⁰⁹ **But if we were to explain [for the Jordan is ravaged] that the Jordan will dry up, then it would not make sense** – The Hebrew phrase אֵין לוֹ טֵעַם could be translated more literally as, “It would have no meaning.” The view that “for the Jordan is ravaged” alludes to the Jordan drying up appears in Jonathan.

⁶¹⁰ **Now it begins a new passage, to recount how Israel will be after the rise of the Hasmoneans** – According to Ibn Ezra, v. 4 begins a new prophecy that addresses several events from the Second-Temple Period. Abraham Ibn Daud (Vehlow, *Dorot ‘Olam*, 348-357; cited by Radak), Joseph Kimḥi (cited by Radak), and Abarbanel also interprets this prophecy based on events from the same historical era, but they differ from one another and from Ibn Ezra regarding the symbolism of specific verses. Many medieval Jewish exegetes devote considerable attention to demonstrating that this prophecy was largely fulfilled before Jesus’ time (whether before or after Zechariah’s time), presumably to counter the New Testament’s application of Zech. 11 to Jesus’ life (Matthew 26:15, 27:3-10).

⁶¹¹ **With impunity – according to [the buyers’] own thoughts** – According to Ibn Ezra, the prophet is not promising that God will not punish these aggressors. Rather, he is stating that the aggressors wrongly believe themselves to be acting with impunity.

⁶¹² **Became silent, like the silence** – Hebrew: וְעֵלְמָה כְּהַתְעֵלֵם. The root עלם literally means “to become concealed.” Ibn Ezra frequently uses it as a technical term for situations in which a letter such as א lacks any

And their shepherds – namely, the kings of [Gentile] nations – [will not pity them].⁶¹⁴ (6)

For⁶¹⁵ – The correct [interpretation] in my view is that (5) **their shepherds** is the Lord. The proof is: (6) **I will pity the inhabitants of the land no more—[declares the Lord]**.⁶¹⁶ Do not be surprised by **their shepherds** being plural; [it is] like, “Let Israel rejoice in its makers” (Ps. 149:2); “If its owners were with it” (Exod. 22:14).⁶¹⁷

מְמַצֵּיא ([But I will] deliver) is like “[The sons of Aaron] brought” (וַיִּמְצְאוּ; Lev. 9:12).⁶¹⁸

vocalization and therefore serves no consonantal function, instead elongating the previous vowel (cf. Charlap, תורת הלשון 59-61).

⁶¹³ **וְאֶעֱשֶׂה** – The vowel under the **א** shifted to the **ו**... like the silence of the **א** of “וְאֶעֱשֶׂה” – According to standard rules of vocalization, the word **וְאֶעֱשֶׂה** should be vocalized **וְאֶעֱשֶׂה** (the pattern for a conjunctive **ו** followed by a *hif'il* imperfect verb). Ibn Ezra thus comments that in the actual vocalization **וְאֶעֱשֶׂה**, the *pataḥ* that belongs under the **א** has moved under the **ו**, leaving the **א** without vocalization. Similarly, **וְאֶעֱנֶה** should logically be vocalized **וְאֶעֱנֶה** (a conjunctive **ו** followed by a *pi'el* imperfect verb). So the vocalization **וְאֶעֱנֶה** leaves the **א** without vocalization. Ibn Janah (הרקמה 284; cf. Angeles Gallego 121-122) and Ḥayyuj (כתאב אלגתרי) Maman and Ben Porat 320; שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק, Wated and Sivan 48-51) make the same observation about both words (cf. Radak, Tanḥum). Ibn Ezra also discusses the vocalization of **וְאֶעֱנֶה** and **וְאֶעֱשֶׂה** in צחות (Lippmann 62a, Valle Rodriguez 160).

⁶¹⁴ **And their shepherds** – namely, the kings of [Gentile] nations – [will not pity them] – According to this first interpretation, the “shepherds” are similar to the “buyers” and “sellers” earlier in the verse, as all of these nouns allude to Gentile oppressors. Joseph Kara also interprets “shepherds” as Gentile kings.

⁶¹⁵ **For** – This word seems somewhat out of place. Rather than “for the correct interpretation” (כי הנכון), one would have expected “but the correct interpretation” (והנכון) in order to contrast this comment with the previous interpretation. Presumably, “for” appears here as a lemma, to indicate that Ibn Ezra is commenting on v. 6, but it still seems somewhat out of place, since Ibn Ezra immediately proceeds to return to v. 5. The word is missing in MS Leeuwarden 21, which frequently omits lemmas.

⁶¹⁶ **The correct [interpretation] in my view is that their shepherds is the Lord. The proof is: I will pity the inhabitants of the land no more—[declares the Lord]** – According to this second interpretation, the “buyers” and “sellers” may have been Gentile enemies, but the verse then turns its focus to God – a shift that continues in the next verse, in which God speaks in first person. Ibn Ezra bases this argument on the shared verb – “to pity” (המל) – in both verses: “Whose shepherd will not pity them. For I will pity the inhabitants of the land no more.”

⁶¹⁷ **“Let Israel rejoice in its makers”; “If its owners were with it”** – In both of these verses, the plural forms are misleading, since, in fact, Israel has one Creator, and the item in Exodus presumably has only one owner. Hence, Zechariah can be alluding to God even though “shepherds” is plural. Radak and Tanḥum adopt this position, with Radak adding an additional proof-text (Job 35:10).

⁶¹⁸ **מְמַצֵּיא is like “[The sons of Aaron] brought” (וַיִּמְצְאוּ)** – The root **מצא** appears less frequently in *hif'il* than in *qal* (where it means “to find”), so Ibn Ezra deems it necessary to clarify its meaning in *hif'il*. His commentary to the proof-text (Lev. 9:12) interprets **וַיִּמְצְאוּ** as finding an item when necessary, by which he presumably intends that Aaron’s sons made the item available to Aaron when he would need it (cf. Krinsky, מחוקקי יהודה *ad loc.*). I have therefore translated **מְמַצֵּיא** as “deliver” here, in the sense of making the people available to conquest by others (cf. Ibn Saruk, מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 119, Sáenz-Badillos 244*, who groups **מְמַצֵּיא** and **וַיִּמְצְאוּ** separately). Radak cites a proof-text from the same passage as Ibn Ezra (Lev. 9:13) and employs the Hebrew word **מזמין** (“preparing”) as a synonym of **מְמַצֵּיא**. Jonathan interprets **מְמַצֵּיא** as “incite” (מגרי).

They shall break (וּכְתְרוּ) the country to bits – running away – **and I will not rescue from their hands.** Alternatively, the enemies **shall break the country's inhabitants to bits.**⁶¹⁹

(7) So I tended [the sheep of slaughter] – Its meaning is that the Lord will tend them for now, before the time of the Hasmoneans' rise arrives. And now it will recount [the story] by way of an allegory. It is also correct that it called them **the sheep of slaughter** because they were so during their exile in Babylonia.⁶²⁰ Therefore, it recounts the evils that befell them. But now, with their return to Jerusalem, [the Lord] will tend them.

As for the meaning of **therefore, O afflicted of the sheep (לִּכְן נִעַנְי יְהִצְאֵן), [I got two staffs]** – Since there are afflicted ones among the sheep, I needed to take **two staffs.**⁶²¹

These [**two staffs**] are Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, and Nehemiah the Tirshatha.⁶²² It is written about Nehemiah after Zerubbabel's death, "Also... He appointed me to be their governor in the land of Judah" (cf. Neh. 5:14).⁶²³

⁶¹⁹ **They shall break the country to bits – running away... Alternatively, the enemies shall break the country's inhabitants to bits** – According to the first interpretation, the antecedent of "they" is the victims who "shall break" the ground as they flee. According to the second interpretation, "they" refers to the aggressors, who "shall break" the victims. Jonathan understands that the antecedent of "they" is the aggressors, who shall plunder (ויבזוּן) the land.

⁶²⁰ **The sheep of slaughter – its meaning is that the Lord will tend them for now, until the time of the Hasmoneans' rise arrives... It is also correct because they were so during their exile in Babylonia** – Ibn Ezra presents two possibilities for the identity of the period in which God tended "the sheep of slaughter" – the Greek persecution that preceded the Hasmoneans or the exile after the First Temple's destruction. The continuation of Ibn Ezra's comments to vv. 7-8 assumes the latter possibility.

⁶²¹ **לִּכְן נִעַנְי יְהִצְאֵן... Since there are afflicted ones among the sheep, I needed to take two staffs** – Ibn Ezra is explaining role of the phrase לִּכְן נִעַנְי יְהִצְאֵן within the syntax of the verse. If one divides the verse according to the cantillation notes, this phrase concludes the first half of the verse – "So I tended the sheep of slaughter, therefore, O afflicted of the sheep" – but the word "therefore" seems inappropriate, because the concluding noun phrase does not state any new consequence. Hence, many translations translate לִּכְן as "verily" (ASV, JPS 1917; cf. Radak). Ibn Ezra prefers to connect this phrase to the second half of the verse: Because the sheep include poor, afflicted ones, therefore, God took two staffs.

⁶²² **Tirshatha** – Regarding this title, see note 544.

⁶²³ **Also... He appointed me to be their governor in the land of Judah** – Ibn Ezra's Hebrew differs slightly from the exact words of the Masoretic text of Neh. 5:14 in ways that have no impact on the translation (cf. Lippmann, שפה ברורה, 8ב n. 92).

It calls him **No'am** (נעם) from same derivation as “pleasant” (נעים; Ps. 81:3),⁶²⁴ and **Hovlim** (הבליים) like “wise counsel” (תקבלות; Prov. 1:5).⁶²⁵ They were called **staffs** and not “shepherds” because they were not kings.⁶²⁶

So **I proceeded to tend the sheep** at first, for Israel returned with Zerubbabel.

And the meaning of **I proceeded to tend the sheep** is until a certain time, **(8)** when three **shepherds** died.

But I lost [the three shepherds] – It is customary for the shepherd to have junior shepherds under his supervision.⁶²⁷

Perhaps these **three shepherds** who died **in one month** are an allusion to the high priest – who was Joshua – the priest who was anointed for war,⁶²⁸ and the deputy high priest. Or that

⁶²⁴ **No'am** from same derivation as “pleasant” (נעים) – In v. 10, Ibn Ezra explains why this name befits Zerubbabel.

⁶²⁵ **Hovlim** like “wise counsel” (תקבלות) – Ibn Ezra maintains that *Hovlim* has a positive connotation. He thus disagrees with those who claim that the name *Hovlim* has a negative connotation of destruction (Ibn Saruk, מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 84, Sáenz-Badillos 166*; Maimonides, *Guide* 2:43; cf. Radak, Abarbanel), based on Cant. 2:15, where מְהַבֵּלִים appears to mean “ruin” or “destroy” – a meaning of the root הבל that is attested in the Bible but more common in Mishnaic Hebrew and Aramaic (cf. BDB 287; Jastrow 420).

⁶²⁶ **These [two staffs] are Zerubbabel... and Nehemiah... They were called staffs and not “shepherds” because they were not kings** – Some exegetes maintain that the two staffs symbolize the kingdoms of Judah and Israel in the days of the First Temple (Jonathan, Rashi, cf. Radak), and the oral commentary follows their view. Among those who agree with Ibn Ezra that this prophecy addresses the Second Temple Period, Ibn Daud suggests that *No'am* alludes to both Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, while *Hovlim* alludes to the Hasmonean kings (Vehlow 348-350). Joseph Kimḥi interprets *No'am* as an allegory for high priests, while *Hovlim* is an allegory for kings. Abarbanel views *No'am* as symbolizing the first generation of Hasmonean leaders and *Hovlim* as symbolizing their descendants who took the title “king.” For additional allegorical interpretations of the two staffs, cf. bSan. 24a, al-Qumisi, and Maimonides (*Guide* 2:43).

⁶²⁷ **But I lost [the three shepherds] – It is customary for the shepherd to have junior shepherds under his supervision** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the presence of three additional shepherds, after the text initially presented just one shepherd, by explaining that these three shepherds were the senior shepherd’s subordinates. Abarbanel adopts the same suggestion.

⁶²⁸ **The priest who was anointed for war** – Regarding this role, cf. Deut. 20:1-9 and mSot. 8:1.

Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi died and prophecy ceased, since a prophet is like a shepherd.⁶²⁹

Then I loathed the sheep, from saving them.⁶³⁰

[And they in turn abhorred (בְּהִלָּה) Me] – The word בְּהִלָּה has no peer,⁶³¹ but its meaning is like “loathed” (קִצְרָה), parallel to the word וְתִקְצַר (**loathed**),⁶³² and the proof is the word וְגַם (**in turn**).⁶³³

(9) So I declared – to myself⁶³⁴ – **I am not going to tend you** after the death of the prophets or the pious priests.

⁶²⁹ Perhaps these three shepherds... are an allusion to the high priest... the priest who was anointed for war, and the deputy high priest. Or that Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi died... since a prophet is like a shepherd – Ibn Ezra is seeking a symbolism for these three shepherds that would be relevant to the early Second Temple Period, since he just explained that the two staffs symbolize Zerubbabel and Nehemiah. Joseph Kimḥi (cited by Radak) also considers the three shepherds to be the final three prophets. Ibn Daud (Vehlow 350) suggests that the three shepherds represent three periods of Second-Temple leadership – the governors (Zerubbabel and Nehemiah), the Hasmonean kings and high priests, and the reigns of Herod and Agrippa (whom Ibn Daud portrays as Hasmonean slaves). Abarbanel maintains that the three shepherds symbolize the three Hasmonean brothers who served as leaders (Judah, Jonathan, and Simon). Among those who interpret this prophecy as reflecting upon the First Temple Period, Rashi claims that the death of three shepherds alludes to a political assassination in the northern kingdom (cf. the gloss in the HaKeter edition), while Radak argues that the shepherds symbolize Josiah’s three sons. A widespread midrashic tradition maintains that the “three shepherds” are Moses, Aaron, and Miriam (tSot. 11:4; Sed. Ol. R., Ch. 10; *Sifrei* to Deut. 31:14; *Mid. Tannaim* to Deut. 34:8; bTan. 9a; Cant. R. to 4:5).

⁶³⁰ **From saving them** – My critical text reads להושיע' - “to save...” with an apostrophe indicating an unspecified object suffix. However, it is clear that the suffix was a final ם (them). In addition to context requiring the object suffix to be “them,” several manuscripts write out the entire word להושיעם.

⁶³¹ **Has no peer** – This expression means that the word is a *hapax legomenon*, appearing nowhere else in the Bible.

⁶³² **The word בְּהִלָּה has no peer, but its meaning is... parallel to the word וְתִקְצַר** – The oral commentary also interprets בְּהִלָּה as a synonym of וְתִקְצַר. Some interpret בְּהִלָּה as “became disgusted” (Jonathan; Ibn Janah, השרשים 60; Maimonides, *Guide* 2:43; Radak, *ad loc.* and השרשים 75; Tanḥum; Student of Trani) or “became ill” (Ibn Saruk, מהברת מנחם, Philipowski 44, Sáenz-Badillos 82*; cf. Rashi). Since Ibn Ezra does not provide a lexical definition of בְּהִלָּה, it is difficult to know whether he agrees or disagrees with these suggestions (cf. Muraoka and Shavitsky, whose lexicon leaves בהל untranslated). However, Ibn Ezra’s equation of בְּהִלָּה with וְתִקְצַר makes it possible to surmise his interpretation of בְּהִלָּה. While the phrase וְתִקְצַר נִפְשִׁי (literally, “My self became shortened”) is frequently translated as a metaphor for weariness (cf. NJPS, NASV), Ibn Ezra appears to interpret a similar phrase as a metaphor for divine anguish or revulsion (Jud. 10:16 as interpreted by Ibn Ezra, Lev. 20:23 and Isa. 63:9), so he likely agrees with those who interpret בְּהִלָּה as “became disgusted” (cf. Tanḥum’s comment that appears to be based on Ibn Ezra).

⁶³³ **The proof is the word וְגַם (in turn)** – Because the description of their dissatisfaction begins with וְגַם (“in turn” or “also”), the text implies that their attitude toward the shepherd parallels his sentiments toward them. Therefore, without any other evidence for the meaning of בְּהִלָּה, one can conclude that it must be synonymous with וְתִקְצַר (cf. Kaputa 156).

(10) Taking My staff [No‘am, I cleft it in two] – Then Zerubbabel – who is **No‘am**, because he had a treaty with all the nations surrounding Jerusalem, a treaty of peace – died; this is [the meaning of] **I cleft it in two**.

And the meaning of My treaty is that the land where the nations swore to Zerubbabel is the Lord’s land.⁶³⁵

(11) When the treaty was annulled – with Zerubbabel’s death – then **the afflicted of the sheep [who watched me]... realized [that it was a message from the Lord]**; these are the prophet’s words.⁶³⁶

[The afflicted of the sheep] who watched him, meaning [to see] if his word would be fulfilled.

(12) Then I said – Indeed, we see that when Nehemiah immigrated⁶³⁷ to Jerusalem, it was in a disgraceful state (cf. Neh. 1:3), along the lines of: “Let the one that is to die die” (v. 9). So now, he seeks wages, and he will tend them with the second staff.

Perhaps these **thirty shekels of silver** were **thirty** righteous individuals who came with him,⁶³⁸ or [perhaps] **thirty** priests served in Nehemiah’s time,⁶³⁹ between high priests, priests anointed for war, and deputies.

⁶³⁴ **To myself** – Literally, “in my heart.”

⁶³⁵ **And the meaning of My treaty is that the land... is the Lord’s land** – Therefore, although the people did not pledge allegiance to God, He can nevertheless refer to their treaty with Zerubbabel as a treaty that “I had made with all the peoples,” because it was made in His land.

⁶³⁶ **These are the prophet’s words** – According to Ibn Ezra, this phrase represents Zechariah’s own words and not his presentation of God speaking in the first person.

⁶³⁷ **Immigrated** – In Hebrew, this verb (עלה) literally means “went up,” but it frequently connotes immigration from the Diaspora to Israel.

⁶³⁸ **Perhaps these thirty shekels of silver were thirty righteous individuals who came with him** – The claim that thirty people accompanied Nehemiah does not appear to be based on any known list of immigrants from elsewhere in the Bible. Perhaps Ibn Ezra intends thirty total immigrants, combined from multiple waves of

(13) Therefore, it is written: **Deposit it – the silver – in the [House of] the Creator**

(הַיִּצֵר);⁶⁴⁰ and it is written that **the glory of the splendor (אֶדְרֵהִיקָר)** is a name of the

Temple of the Lord.⁶⁴¹ יָקָר is an adjective, like חָכָם (wise), נְבוֹן (discerning). יָקָר is a noun,

[as in] “happiness and honor” (יָקָר; Est. 8:16).⁶⁴² And the word **to (אֶל)** serves for another – to

the glory of the splendor (הַיִּקָר).⁶⁴³

immigration (cf. the oral commentary's claim that eleven men accompanied Ezra and nineteen accompanied Zerubbabel), although the phrase “who came with him” implies that Ibn Ezra is speaking only of those who immigrated with Nehemiah.

⁶³⁹ **Perhaps these thirty shekels of silver were thirty righteous individuals... or [perhaps] thirty priests served in Nehemiah's time** – I added the word “perhaps” before Ibn Ezra's suggestion, since it appears that this suggestion, too, is based on conjecture regarding the number of deputy priests and not based on any known list of priests who served in Nehemiah's time. For other suggestions of the thirty shekels' symbolism, see Jonathan, Rashi, and Radak.

⁶⁴⁰ **The [House of] the Creator (הַיִּצֵר)** – The Hebrew word הַיִּצֵר is commonly translated as “the potter” in Christian translations (e.g., KJV, NASV) in accordance with Matthew's interpretation of our prophecy (Matt. 27:10). In this interpretation, Zechariah's vision parallels Jer. 18:1-6. Jewish translations prefer to translate הַיִּצֵר in our verse as “the treasury” (JPS 1917, NJPS), based on a widespread interpretation of הַיִּצֵר in our verse as equivalent to האוצר (“the treasury”) with a י replacing an א (Dunash, #148, Schroeter 50, citing Ibn Quraysh; Ibn Janah, הרקמה 311; Rashi; Joseph Kara; Tanhum; cf. Jonathan; Radak, השרשים 293; BHQ 144*-145*; and Kennicott regarding possible variants of the Masoretic text). Others interpret הַיִּצֵר here as “the Creator” – an allusion to God (Student of Trani, Abarbanel). Ibn Ezra does not address this issue in his commentary, but elsewhere he rejects claim that the י in הַיִּצֵר is equivalent to an א (ההגנה, Oshri 93; cf. Oshri 189) and appears to interpret הַיִּצֵר as referring to God. Ibn Ezra argues that the word בַּיִת (“house”) in the construct “the House of the Lord” later in the verse is implied before הַיִּצֵר, too: “Deposit it in [the House of] הַיִּצֵר... I deposited it in the House (בַּיִת) of the Lord, in [the House of] הַיִּצֵר. I have therefore translated הַיִּצֵר as “the Creator.”

⁶⁴¹ **It is written that the glory of the splendor (אֶדְרֵהִיקָר) is a name of the Temple of the Lord** – This translation assumes that the Hebrew word שֵׁם is vocalized שָׁם (a name). If vocalized שָׁם (there) instead, then this sentence would mean, “It is written that the Temple of the Lord – which is the glory of the splendor (אֶדְרֵהִיקָר) – is there” (שָׁם). Either way, Ibn Ezra is asserting that אֶדְרֵהִיקָר is synonymous with the Temple.

⁶⁴² **יָקָר is an adjective, like חָכָם, יָקָר is a noun, [as in] “happiness and honor” (יָקָר)** – When vocalized with an initial *qamatz*, יָקָר has an adjectival vowel pattern, whereas the vowel pattern in our word יָקָר indicates that it is a noun. The words יָקָר and יָקָר are vocalized correctly in MS Roma-Biblioteca Angelica Or. 80. Ḥayyuj (שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק), Wated and Sivan 84-85), Ibn Janah (השרשים 203) and Radak (השרשים 296) similarly observe that יָקָר is an adjective while יָקָר is a noun.

⁶⁴³ **אֶדְרֵהִיקָר is a name of the Temple of the Lord... יָקָר is a noun... And the word אֶל serves for another – to the glory of the יָקָר** – The verse literally states that God asked for the money to be deposited “in the Creator, the glory of the יָקָר.” In order to make sense of this phrase, Ibn Ezra already explained that הַיִּצֵר (the Creator) refers to “the House of the Creator” (see note 640). He now adds that: a) יָקָר is a noun (splendor), b) “The glory of the splendor” refers to the Temple, and c) The preposition “in” serves twice (see note 606). Therefore, the verse intends that the money should be deposited “in [the House of] the Creator, [in] the glory of the splendor,” i.e., in the Temple.

And the meaning of **which I valued (יִקְרָתִי) from them** is: the precious (יָקָר) Temple in which My glory originally resided. And this is [the meaning of] **which I valued from them (מֵעֲלֵיהֶם)** – that My glory turned away **from them** in the Second Temple.⁶⁴⁴

(14) Then I cleft in two my [second] staff, which is Nehemiah. [Then] Israel was corrupted and returned to fighting with one another and doing evil, for they had no governor. That is [the meaning of] **to annul the brotherhood (הֶאֱחָוָה) between Judah [and Israel].**⁶⁴⁵

אֶחָוָה (brotherhood) is a noun from the same derivation as “brother” (אָח), like שְׁלוֹמָה (peace; Ps. 122:7).⁶⁴⁶

(15) [The Lord] said [to me further] is the beginning of a [new] passage. For the king of Jerusalem is Artaxerxes⁶⁴⁷ of Nehemiah, who was called Darius in the Persian language; he

⁶⁴⁴ **And this is [the meaning of] which I valued from them (מֵעֲלֵיהֶם) – that My glory turned away from them in the Second Temple** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the word מֵעֲלֵיהֶם, whose prefix מ implies that it means “from over them” (or “than over them”). That meaning does not fit smoothly into this verse. The relative clause מֵעֲלֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָתִי would need to be translated as “that I was prized from/than over them” (cf. JPS 1917), which does not form a coherent clause. Jonathan renders מֵעֲלֵיהֶם as “in their eyes” (בעיניהוּן), perhaps interpreting מֵעֲלֵיהֶם as if the prefix מ is meaningless (cf. Wilensky, *הרקמה* 74 n. 11). Rashi derives from the prefix מ that God removed His glory “from” Israel (alluding to the first Temple’s destruction), so he interprets the verb יִקְרָתִי as connoting the removal of divine glory (cf. Joseph Kara). Ibn Ezra appears to interpret יִקְרָתִי as “I valued [Myself]” and thus explains that God valued Himself “from over them” (i.e., from His position above them), but He was not valued in their midst, because His glory did not reside in the Second Temple (cf. Radak, *ad loc.* and *השרשים* 295).

⁶⁴⁵ **Then I cleft in two my [second] staff, which is Nehemiah. [Then] Israel was corrupted and returned to fighting with one another and doing evil, for they had no governor... to annul the brotherhood (הֶאֱחָוָה) between Judah [and Israel]** – According to Ibn Ezra, the second staff’s destruction alludes to Nehemiah’s death, which triggered Jewish infighting. When citing the verse, Ibn Ezra leaves off the words “and Israel” (which I added in brackets). Presumably, he sufficed with citing that the brotherhood was annulled “between Judah” because he believes that this prophecy alludes to a period in which there were no longer two separate kingdoms. By contrast, exegetes who interpret this prophecy as alluding to the First Temple Period interpret “the brotherhood between Judah and Israel” in light of the relationship between the two kingdoms (cf. Rashi, Joseph Kara, and the oral commentary).

⁶⁴⁶ **אֶחָוָה (brotherhood) is a noun from the same derivation as “brother” (אָח), like שְׁלוֹמָה (peace)** – Ibn Ezra is observing that the vowel pattern of אֶחָוָה parallels the pattern of the noun שְׁלוֹמָה. This comment does not imply any relationship between the lexical meanings of אֶחָוָה and שְׁלוֹמָה.

⁶⁴⁷ **Artaxerxes** – The Hebrew spelling of Artaxerxes’ name varies greatly between manuscripts. This word appears twice with two different spellings in MS Leeuwarden 21, because a new scribe begins copying the commentary in the middle of this verse and repeats several words from the end of the previous scribe’s text.

is the one whom Alexander killed.⁶⁴⁸ Now begins the Greek Empire, which has continued until today, as I explained in the Book of Daniel (2:39), because Greece exiled Jerusalem, not Edom.⁶⁴⁹

And this⁶⁵⁰ is **the gear of a רֵעַ הָאֵוִיל (foolish shepherd)** – Like a רֵעַ הָאֵוִיל (**shepherd** who is a fool); אֵוִיל is like אֶקְרִי (“cruel”; Isa. 13:9).⁶⁵¹

Since kingdom ceased and came upon the Greek Empire,⁶⁵² therefore it is written **(16) [I am going to raise up a shepherd] in the land**⁶⁵³ – referring to the land of Israel – [who will

⁶⁴⁸ **Artaxerxes of Nehemiah, who was called Darius... the one whom Alexander killed** – Ibn Ezra offers all of this identifying information because he maintains – unlike many rabbinic exegetes – that there was more than one Persian king named Artaxerxes (cf. 5:9 and note 383; the oral commentary to 9:9; Milikowsky, סדר עולם, 455-456; First, *Jewish History* 188-190).

⁶⁴⁹ **Now begins the Greek Empire, which has continued until today... because Greece exiled Jerusalem, not Edom** – Ibn Ezra to Dan. 2:39 claims that the Roman Empire – which exiled Jerusalem – was a continuation of the Greek Empire, as opposed to the prevalent rabbinic view that equates the Roman Empire with Edom (e.g., Gen. R. to Gen. 14:1). Regarding Ibn Ezra’s reservations about the typological connection between the biblical Edom and the Roman Empire, see Lifschitz, הגישה הפרשנית של ראב"ע ור"י אברבנאל, and Lifschitz, “The Greek Empire and the Roman Empire: A Typological Connection?”

⁶⁵⁰ **And this** – Heb. וזהו. The referent of “this” is not entirely clear. Perhaps Ibn Ezra intends that the aforementioned Greco-Roman empire is symbolized by the foolish shepherd’s gear.

⁶⁵¹ **The gear of a רֵעַ הָאֵוִיל – like a רֵעַ הָאֵוִיל; אֵוִיל is like אֶקְרִי** – The purpose of this comment is to dismiss the significance of the final י in the word אֵוִיל by comparing it to the final י of the word אֶקְרִי. Ibn Ezra (Isa. 13:9) asserts that the final י of the word אֶקְרִי is superfluous. Indeed, Ibn Ezra frequently cites the word אֶקְרִי as an example of a superfluous final י (Gen. 15:2; Exod. 15:6, 21:2; Isa. 38:12). Moses Kimḥi similarly describes the final י of אֶקְרִי as superfluous (Prov. 11:17). Radak writes that the final י of both אֶקְרִי and אֵוִיל is attributive (ליחש), to attribute the character traits of cruelty and foolishness, respectively (cf. Radak to Isa. 13:9 and מכלול 155b). Schrem (44b) equates the views of Ibn Ezra and Radak, but Ibn Ezra’s writings distinguish between the attributive suffix י and the י of אֶקְרִי, implying that he viewed the י of אֶקְרִי as completely meaningless (*Moznayim*, Jimenez Patón 23*; שפה ברורה, Lippmann 29b, Gonzalez and Saenz-Badillos 36*)

⁶⁵² **And came upon the Greek Empire** – The Hebrew phrase ובאה על מלכות יון is difficult. Some have suggested emending the text to read ובאה עליה מלכות יון (“And the Greek Empire came upon her”; Filvarg 14a, HaKeter) or ובא עול מלכות יון (“And the burden of the Greek Empire arrived”; Levine, ע”ק 249), although no textual witness contains either suggested reading.

⁶⁵³ **Since kingdom ceased... therefore it is written [I am going to raise up a shepherd] in the land** – The intent of “kingdom” (מלכות) is unclear. A minority of witnesses read “Hasmonean kingdom” (מלכות החשמונאים), in which case Ibn Ezra is arguing that the downfall of the Hasmoneans led to the rise of the Romans (whom he equates with Greeks in his comments to the previous verse) and began an ongoing era of exile. Alternatively, since Ibn Ezra just described Alexander’s conquest and the downfall of the Persian Empire, he might have intended: “Since [the Persian] empire (מלכות) ceased and came upon the Greek Empire...” meaning that Alexander’s conquest led to the rise of the Greek Empire that is responsible for the ongoing exile. Tanḥum cites Ibn Ezra’s comment anonymously, but Tanḥum’s paraphrase does not resolve this ambiguity.

Rashi and Joseph Kara interpret this wicked shepherd as alluding to the Roman Empire, while Radak suggests that the shepherd is Herod or Agrippa.

neither miss the lost, nor seek the young ones, nor heal the injured, nor sustain] the frail that cannot graze.⁶⁵⁴ Indeed, this [refers to] the entire period of exile, through today.

He will not seek the young ones (הַנְּעָרִים), [i.e.] small, lost sheep (cf. Ps. 119:176).⁶⁵⁵

(17) Oh – The exile will last a long time and remain until this empire – the empire of evil – until its end arrives – **a sword upon his arm and upon his right eye!**

The meaning of **arm** is the power that shall wane, and **eye** is the eye of wisdom and counsel. So its warriors and sages shall perish.⁶⁵⁶

Chapter 12

(1) A pronouncement – This passage is connected. Since it mentioned “a sword upon his arm” (11:17), it [now] explains when it will happen and where it will happen.⁶⁵⁷ Now it explains that this prophecy will happen when Israel returns with the Messiah son of Joseph⁶⁵⁸ to Jerusalem.

⁶⁵⁴ **That cannot graze** – Many manuscripts read: “that cannot walk to graze;” cf. the oral commentary.

⁶⁵⁵ **He will not seek the young ones (הַנְּעָרִים) – small, lost sheep** – Some commentators believe that הַנְּעָרִים means “strayed” or “lost” in this context (cf. Rashi, citing Jonathan). Ibn Ezra is rejecting that lexical interpretation, since the lexical meaning of הַנְּעָרִים is “a young lad.” But he explains that young sheep get lost, such that it makes sense for a shepherd to seek them. Tanḥum also adopts this interpretation. Regarding Ibn Ezra’s tendency to minimize the number of lexical meanings that one word may have, cf. Steiner (“Saadia vs. Rashi” 251-252).

⁶⁵⁶ **The meaning of arm is the power that shall wane, and eye is the eye of wisdom and counsel. So its warriors and sages shall perish** – Ibn Ezra is seeking distinct symbolisms for “arm” and “eye,” so he associates the former with physical might and the latter with wisdom. Radak cites this interpretation from Ibn Ezra, and Tanḥum cites it anonymously.

⁶⁵⁷ **This passage is connected. Since it mentioned “a sword upon his arm” (11:17), it [now] explains... where it will happen** – Ibn Ezra argued above that although most of Ch. 11 related to the Second-Temple Period, 11:17 turned toward the future redemption. So he now asserts that Ch. 12 is connected to the previous chapter, since this chapter offers further details regarding the redemption. Rashi also remarks that this prophecy is a continuation of the previous one.

⁶⁵⁸ **Now it explains that this prophecy will happen when Israel returns with the Messiah son of Joseph** – This messianic figure is alluded to briefly in the Talmud (bSuk. 52a-b) and other early sources (e.g., Pseudo-Jonathan, Exod. 40:11; Targum Cant. 4:5 and 7:4). The Talmud offers scant information about him but does indicate that he will die shortly before the rise of Messiah son of David and suggests (according to one view) that the mourning ceremony in vv. 10-14 alludes to his funeral. Several obscure sources interpret 12:10 (“And they shall look unto Him whom they have pierced”) as describing how the Messiah son of Joseph will die in the

Now, this prophecy is concerning Israel.⁶⁵⁹ So the reason for now mentioning [the Lord]

Who stretched out the skies and made firm the earth is that [the skies and earth] would not have been created if not for Israel.⁶⁶⁰

And the meaning of **and created man's breath within him** is that [man] is a small world, paralleling **the skies and the earth**.⁶⁶¹ This matter requires a lengthy explanation.⁶⁶²

war of Gog and Magog, but they offer little background regarding the events leading up to his death (fragmentary Targum cited by Sperber, *מדרש ויושע*, Jellinek, *בית המדרש* I:56). The apocalyptic, pseudo-epigraphic book of Zerubbabel (cf. note 310 above) presents greater detail regarding the Messiah son of Joseph, as does a short aggadic text known as *אותות המשיח* (Jellinek, *בית המדרש* II:58-63). Although Ibn Ezra (Exod. 2:22) expresses reservations about the book of Zerubbabel, he does view the Messiah son of Joseph as a significant figure, mentioning him not only in our passage but also in Mal. 3:1, Ps. 80:18, and both commentaries to Cant. 7:6. His position was likely informed not just by the allusions to the Messiah son of Joseph in early rabbinic texts but also by the fact that Saadiah (*Beliefs and Opinions* 8:6, Rosenblatt 304-312; cf. Wertheimer, *גנוזי ירושלים*, 198-200, Saadiah's excursus to Dan. 2:43, and Pseudo-Saadiah to Cant. 7:11-8:4) and Hayya Gaon (Even-Shmuel, *מדרשי גאלה*, 133-142; cf. Lewin, *אוצר הגאונים*, Suk. 72-75) appear to adopt much of the book of Zerubbabel's narrative, although Saadiah considers this narrative to be merely one possible way that the redemption might unfold (cf. Sysling, "Saadya's Portrayal of the Messiah ben Joseph," and Schlossberg, *הויקה בין החזרה בתשובה לבין הגאולה במשנת רס"ג*). Indeed, Ibn Ezra's commentary to Malachi appears to be basing himself on Saadiah and Hayya when he suggests that Mal. 3:1 possibly alludes to the Messiah son of Joseph. Thus, although Ibn Ezra did not accept book of Zerubbabel as a reliable source, Saadiah and Hayya apparently adopted some of its material, and they, in turn, were held in high regard by Ibn Ezra (cf. Himmelfarb 120-138).

Maimonides omits the figure of Messiah son of Joseph from his eschatological discussions (cf. Kraemer, "Maimonides' Messianic Posture" 131). Radak (12:10) – despite connecting this prophecy to the war of Gog and Magog and adopting Ibn Ezra's interpretations of several phrases in it – rejects Ibn Ezra's claim that this prophecy alludes to the Messiah son of Joseph, arguing that the prophecy never mentions this specific character explicitly.

⁶⁵⁹ **Now, this prophecy is concerning Israel** – 12:1 begins with the phrase "A pronouncement (מְשָׁא): The word of the Lord concerning Israel," which resembles 9:1 ("A pronouncement: The word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach"), except that this pronouncement focuses on Israel rather than Hadrach.

⁶⁶⁰ **[The skies and earth] would not have been created if not for Israel** – The HaKeter edition cites bShab. 88a as Ibn Ezra's source, since that passage of Talmud teaches that God conditioned the world's creation on Israel's willingness to accept the Torah. However, several other sources state much more explicitly that "the world was only created for the sake of Israel" (Minor Tractates, *Geirim* 1:1; Cant. R. to 5:1; cf. Lev. R. to 26:42; *Eliyahu Zuta* Ch. 20, Ish Shalom 31). For an alternative approach to why this prophecy opens with God's role as Creator, see Abarbanel.

⁶⁶¹ **[Man] is a small world, paralleling the skies and the earth** – Radak cites this comment and elaborates:

וּכְתַב הַחֶכֶם רַבִּי אַבְרָהָם אֲבֵן עֲזָרָא, כִּי סִמַּךְ וַיּוֹצֵר רוּחַ אָדָם בְּקִרְבּוֹ לְנוֹטָה שָׁמַיִם וַיּוֹסֵד אֶרֶץ - לְפִי שֶׁהָאָדָם עוֹלָם
קָטָן כְּנֶגֶד שָׁמַיִם וְאֶרֶץ שֶׁהוּא עוֹלָם גָּדוֹל.

The sage, R. Abraham Ibn Ezra, wrote that it juxtaposed "and created man's breath within him" to "stretched out the skies and made firm the earth," because man is a small world, paralleling the skies and the earth, which are a large world.

⁶⁶² **This matter requires a lengthy explanation** – Ibn Ezra never fully explains his belief that man's body is a microcosm of the universe, but he alludes to it in *יסוד מורא* (12:3, Cohen and Simon 208), *Sefer Ha'ibbur* (Goodman 115), and his long commentaries to Gen. 1:26 and Exod. 26:1. Ibn Ezra appears to view man as a microcosm of the universe because the manner in which man's soul fills his body parallels the way in which God fills the universe (cf. Friedlander, *Essays* 24-34). Ibn Ezra further maintains that this parallel enables man

(2) **Behold**, when Israel returns⁶⁶³ to Jerusalem, the Greeks will arise to wage war against her.

כַּף (a bowl) is like “some of the blood that is in the basin” (בַּכֶּף; Exod. 12:22), “couches and basins” (וְנִסְפוֹת; II Sam. 17:28).⁶⁶⁴

Also Judah [shall be caught up in the siege], since the nations will compel Israelites who reside in their territory – who are distant from Jerusalem and who have not been redeemed⁶⁶⁵ – to come with them to lay a siege **upon Jerusalem**.⁶⁶⁶ But trouble will befall them when they come.

to better understand God: “God shaped a body for man’s rational soul in the form of the world, so that man may enter His temple and meditate there day and night, until he knows the God who created him” (*Sefer Ha’ibbur*, *ibid.*; cf. Cohen and Simon, מורא יסוד *ad. loc.*).

Ibn Ezra was not the first Jewish thinker to describe man as a microcosm. Many medieval Jewish philosophers discuss the notion of man as a microcosm at great length; for a survey of their views, cf. Almog (65-88). Goodman (*Sefer Ha’ibbur ad loc.*) notes that the concept of man’s body paralleling the world also appears in *Avot de-R. Nathan* (1:31, Schechter 46a-b), but the relevant passage does not explain the significance of this parallel.

Ibn Ezra’s belief that 12:1 alludes to a profound philosophical truth might have been inspired by Saadiah, who cites 12:1 three times in his discussion of the human soul’s creation and afterlife in *Beliefs and Opinions*: to demonstrate that man’s soul is not eternal (6:3, Rosenblatt 241) but rather is created at the same time as the body (6:1, 235), and to demonstrate that the universe was created for mankind (6:4, 248).

⁶⁶³ **Returns** – Literally, “connects to” (בהתחבר).

⁶⁶⁴ כַּף (a bowl) is like “some of the blood that is in the basin” (בַּכֶּף), “couches and basins” (וְנִסְפוֹת) – These verses confirm the meaning of כַּף as a bowl or basin. Ibn Saruk (מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 128, Sáenz-Badillos 269*), Ibn Janah (השרשים 342), and Tanhum cite the same two proof-texts alongside our verse to confirm this meaning of כַּף. Several exegetes agree that כַּף is a type of bowl or basin (Jonathan, Rashi, Radak, Student of Trani, Abarbanel), and Ibn Ezra offers the same interpretation in the oral commentary. Joseph Kara, however, claims that it is a threshold (cf. Jud. 19:27, Ezek. 40:6) – an interpretation which also appears in the Septuagint and Peshitta *ad loc.*

⁶⁶⁵ **Who have not been redeemed** – Literally, “whose redemption has not come.”

⁶⁶⁶ **The nations will compel Israelites who reside in their territory... to come with them to lay a siege upon Jerusalem** – The phrase “Judah shall be caught up in the siege upon Jerusalem” can be interpreted to imply that Judah is part of the sieging army. The original Hebrew text has a preposition before Judah (עַל יְהוּדָה), “upon” or “against” Judah), so the verse could also potentially be read such that Judah and Jerusalem will be under a siege from Gentile enemies (cf. KJV). Ibn Ezra opts for the former possibility and explains the presence of Judah alongside the sieging enemies as a result of coercion. In this reading, which is shared by many exegetes (cf. Jonathan, Rashi), “Judah” refers to Diaspora Jews who were drafted into the service of their countries of residence (Joseph Kara) or Jews who were captured as the Gentiles marched through Judea on their way to Jerusalem (Radak).

(3) And [in that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone] – This allegory is well-known, that one harms oneself by lifting⁶⁶⁷ **a heavy stone** under which one will fall.⁶⁶⁸

(4) In that day... I will strike every horse of the [Gentile] nations of the world.

But the House of Judah – who went with [the Gentiles] against their will – **I will watch over to protect and rescue them. And every horse of the peoples** – but not of the Jews who are in [their] encampment – **I will strike with blindness** – so the horse will immediately falter.

(5) And the chiefs (אֲלֵי) of Judah – their prominent figures who are in the enemy’s encampment – **will say:**

The prayer of Jerusalem is my strength, for they prayed powerful prayers on our behalf.

Indeed, each one [of the leaders]⁶⁶⁹ will say [**Jerusalem is** **my (לי) strength** – [לי means] on my behalf,⁶⁷⁰ like: “Say there of me (לי): ‘He is my brother’” (Gen. 20:13).⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶⁷ **Lifting** – Literally, “one takes” (יקח).

⁶⁶⁸ **This allegory is well-known, that one harms oneself by lifting a heavy stone under which one will fall** – The meaning of the “heavy stone” as something that can crush those who lift it is straightforward and thus shared by several exegetes (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak, Tanḥum, Abarbanel). Some exegetes elaborate on the context in which people would lift such a stone: as a punishment from the government (Rashi) or in a competition between men to prove who is strongest (Radak; cf. Tanḥum). Regarding my translation of the Hebrew phrase אֶבֶן מְעִמָּסָה as “a heavy stone,” cf. the oral commentary and my supercommentary *ad loc.*

⁶⁶⁹ **Each one [of the leaders]** – Ibn Ezra’s emphasis on how “each one” will utter this verse is in response to the number disagreement between the verb and the possessive pronouns: “They will say (יאמרו)... my (לי) strength.” Ibn Ezra resolves this discrepancy by rendering the verse: “[Each of] them will say... my strength” (Schrem 44b).

⁶⁷⁰ **On my behalf** – Ibn Ezra comments on the preposition לי, because one might be tempted to interpret it as “against me,” as if the Jewish leaders in the Gentile camp viewed the Jews in Jerusalem as a hostile enemy who was overpowering them. Ibn Ezra therefore stresses that – on the contrary – those Jewish leaders celebrated the success of the Jerusalemites. Abarbanel also argues that לי means “on my behalf” in our verse (cf. Radak).

⁶⁷¹ **Like: “Say there of me (לי): ‘He is my brother’”** – Cf. Ibn Ezra’s commentary *ad loc.*, where he explains that Abraham asked Sarah to say “on my behalf” (בשבילי) that she is his sister. Ibn Ezra presumably considers that verse to be a compelling proof-text, because it would make no sense for לי to have its more common meaning of “to me,” since Sarah clearly did not need to say “to” Abraham that she was his sister. Indeed many

(6) In [that] day – “A sword upon his arm and upon his right eye” (11:17) will then be fulfilled. Hence, he will be blind and his horse will be blind (v. 4). Therefore, he will devour them like fire.

Like a כַּיּוֹר of fire – like a stove (כִּירָה) of fire.⁶⁷²

And [Jerusalem] shall dwell – Its meaning is: Her inhabitants shall dwell.⁶⁷³

(7) [The Lord] shall save the tents of Judah, who came with the enemy,⁶⁷⁴ for such is the way of encampments: They dwell in tents surrounding the city.

The House of David [exists] even nowadays in the city of Baghdad, a city in the kingdom of Ishmael, and they are the exilarchs – a large and great family that has a “genealogical register” (Neh. 7:5) from ancient times.⁶⁷⁵

So this is explanation [of the verse]: **First** before the salvation of the Jerusalemites, the Lord shall save **the tents of Judah** who are outside the city, in the enemy’s encampments, as it

exegetes to Gen. 20:13 observe that לִי must mean “regarding me” or “on behalf of me” in that verse (Onkelos, Rashi, Rashbam, Joseph Bekhor Shor, Radak).

⁶⁷² **Like a כַּיּוֹר of fire** – like a stove (כִּירָה) of fire – Some modern translations translate כַּיּוֹר as some sort of pan or pot (e.g., JPS 1917, NASV; cf. Schrem 44b), but the standard commentary interprets it as a stove (Muraoka and Shavitsky), similar to the word כִּירָה, which is rare in Biblical Hebrew (cf. Lev. 11:35) but is the standard Mishnaic Hebrew name for a type of stove (described in detail in mKeil. 8:1). This view is shared by many medieval exegetes (Ibn Saruk, מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 109-110, Sáenz-Badillos 222*; Rashi, Joseph Kara, Student of Trani; cf. Tanḥum, Abarbanel). Ibn Janah interprets כַּיּוֹר in our verse as a firebrand (קבס in Judeo-Arabic, אוד in Judah Ibn Tibbon’s translation), based on the second half of the synonymous parallelism: “like a כַּיּוֹר of fire among sticks and like a torch of fire among sheaves” (השרשים 221; cf. Radak, השרשים 324, and Tanḥum). The oral commentary is terse, but appears to interpret כַּיּוֹר as either a pan or a firebrand.

⁶⁷³ **And [Jerusalem] shall dwell** – Its meaning is: Her inhabitants shall dwell – Ibn Ezra is addressing the seeming tautology in the literal meaning of the verse: “And Jerusalem shall dwell again in her own place, in Jerusalem.” Tanḥum makes the same comment as Ibn Ezra, and Joseph Kara similarly renders the verse: “The [returnees to] Jerusalem shall dwell... in Jerusalem.” Others resolve the apparent tautology by explaining that despite Gentile attacks, Jerusalem will still remain (=“dwell”) in the future in the same location as Zechariah’s time (Radak; cf. Jonathan, Rashi).

⁶⁷⁴ **The tents of Judah, who came with the enemy** – See note 676.

⁶⁷⁵ **The House of David [exists] even nowadays in the city of Baghdad... a large family which has a “genealogical register” from ancient times** – Ibn Ezra is stressing the plausibility of “the House of David” still existing as a distinct family in a messianic prophecy that would be fulfilled in the distant future. Regarding his claim that a specific family in his own time could trace its lineage to David, cf. Abarbanel.

said above: “I will watch over the House of Judah while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness” (v. 4). And why will I save **the tents of Judah first? So that [the glory...] not be too great** – so that **the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem** who are inside the city, with the Messiah son of Joseph, shall not be able to boast, and their glory shall **not be too great** over **Judah**, [saying]: “Our hand saved you” (cf. Jud. 7:2).⁶⁷⁶

(8) In [that] day... the feeblest of them [shall be] mighty like David,⁶⁷⁷ [and the House of David] כְּאַלְהִים (like divine beings), angels.⁶⁷⁸ So this is its interpretation: **like an angel of the Lord at their head** in battle.⁶⁷⁹

(9) In that day when⁶⁸⁰ I will seek to annihilate all the nations.

(10) וַיִּשְׂפַקְתִּי – I will fill (אִשְׁפֹּךְ)⁶⁸¹ – the House of David and the inhabitants⁶⁸² of Jerusalem with a spirit of pity and compassion.

⁶⁷⁶ **The Lord shall save the tents of Judah who are outside the city, in the enemy’s encampments... so that the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem who are in the city... shall not be able to boast... “Our hand saved you”** – According to Ibn Ezra, “the tents of Judah” are the Jews who camp outside the city, while “the House of David” is inside the city (cf. vv. 4-5). Many other exegetes make this same distinction between the two groups (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak; cf. Tanḥum, Abarbanel).

⁶⁷⁷ **Mighty like David** – Ibn Ezra adds an adjective, because the verse states that they shall be “like David” without specifying the nature of the comparison. The Hebrew word גִּבּוֹר, which I have translated as “mighty,” can also be a noun, so this phrase could be translated as “a warrior like David.”

⁶⁷⁸ **כְּאַלְהִים, like angels** – Like many exegetes (cf. Jonathan, Rashi, Radak, Student of Trani, Tanḥum), Ibn Ezra is rejecting the possibility of אֱלֹהִים being a proper noun, the name of God, lest the verse imply that a human royal family could be “like God.”

⁶⁷⁹ **So this is its interpretation: like an angel of the Lord – at their head – in battle** – In order to defend his interpretation of כְּאַלְהִים as “like angels,” Ibn Ezra turns to the end of the verse. The text asserts that the House of David shall be for Jerusalemites “like divine beings (כְּאַלְהִים), like an angel of the Lord at their head,” which might imply that כְּאַלְהִים and “like an angel of the Lord” are two separate metaphors – one comparing the House of David to God Himself and another comparing it to an angel. Ibn Ezra counters that the concluding phrase is actually in apposition to the previous phrase, explicating the ambiguity in כְּאַלְהִים: the House of David will be like divine beings—[i.e.,] like an angel of the Lord at their head” in battle.

⁶⁸⁰ **When** – The purpose of this one-word comment is to turn the rest of the verse into a temporal clause. According to Ibn Ezra, God is not asserting that He will seek to destroy the nations, but rather that He will fulfill the statements in v. 10 *when* He seeks to destroy them.

⁶⁸¹ **וַיִּשְׂפַקְתִּי – I will fill (אִשְׁפֹּךְ)** – Ibn Ezra uses an imperfect verb in order to clarify that the verb in the verse (perfect with a prefix *vav*) is future tense. He might have deemed this clarification to be necessary because, depending on the context and the syllable stress, וַיִּשְׂפַקְתִּי could also be interpreted as a conjunction followed by a past-tense verb (“And I filled/poured”).

Before this [verse's fulfillment], tribulations shall initially befall them, because the Messiah son of Joseph will be killed. Then the Lord will become angry and **(9)** will annihilate **all the nations that came up against Jerusalem**. Such is [the meaning] of **(10) and they shall look unto Him**⁶⁸³ – Then all the nations shall look unto Me to see what I shall do to those **who pierced** the Messiah son of Joseph.⁶⁸⁴

And they – [the Messiah's] people – **shall wail (11) as the wailing at Hadadrimmon** – the wailing of a prominent person [who lived] in ancient times **in the plain of Megiddo**,⁶⁸⁵ [although] we do not know the entire history. It is the manner of *derash* for **[Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddon]** to be an allusion to Ahab and Josiah.⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸² **The inhabitants** – The Hebrew noun in the verse is singular (יֹשֵׁב), so Ibn Ezra explains that the verse nevertheless intends plural “inhabitants” (יֹשְׁבֵי).

⁶⁸³ **Unto Him** – Some manuscripts read “unto Me,” which matches the Hebrew word אֵלַי in all major witnesses of the Masoretic text (cited in BHQ *ad loc.*). However, several manuscripts of Ibn Ezra, including the base manuscript, read אֵלָיו (“unto him”), which is widely attested in Kennicott's variants of the Masoretic text. In the oral commentary, all witnesses read אֵלָיו, and the oral commentary interprets the phrase וְהִבִּיטוּ אֵלָיו] as, “They shall look at [the Messiah son of Ephraim]” – clearly confirming the reading of אֵלָיו. Here, in the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra explains that the Gentiles shall look at God, so it is less clear whether he is assuming that the verse reads וְהִבִּיטוּ אֵלַי, or he is trying to offer a creative interpretation of וְהִבִּיטוּ אֵלָיו. If the former, then the manuscripts of the standard commentary that read אֵלַי are the product of later scribes who “corrected” אֵלָיו to אֵלַי in order to match what they saw in their texts of the Bible.

⁶⁸⁴ **The Messiah son of Joseph** – According to Ibn Ezra, this verse describes the trauma of losing the Messiah son of Joseph. As mentioned above (v. 1, note 658), the application of this verse to this Messiah son of Joseph appears in several earlier Jewish sources. Tanḥum cites Ibn Ezra's interpretation of this verse anonymously but does not clearly endorse it. Interestingly, however, although Rashi cites this interpretation from the sages of the Talmud, both he and Joseph Kara suggest that rather than lamenting one “pierced” messianic figure, our verse is alluding to the many “pierced” Jews who were martyred while in exile. Radak, too, dismisses any connection between the Messiah son of Joseph and this prophecy (cf. note 658 above). In a similar vein to Rashi and Joseph Kara, Radak argues that Zechariah is alluding to the distress that Jews will feel when any one of them is killed, since they will fear that any such death foretells their defeat. Perhaps the fact that the New Testament interprets our verse as foretelling Jesus' crucifixion (John 19:34-37, Revelation 1:7) prompted Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Radak to shy away from interpreting it as alluding to the death of any messianic figure – even one mentioned in the Talmud – lest they lend credibility to the Christian interpretation.

⁶⁸⁵ **Megiddo** – Most manuscripts of Ibn Ezra's commentary spell this word Megiddo, according to its standard orthography. That spelling appears in some of Kennicott's variants of the Masoretic text, but standard editions of the Masoretic text spell it מְגִדּוֹן (Megiddon) in this verse, with an enclitic ן (cf. Ibn Janah, הרקמה 144), as do a minority of manuscripts of Ibn Ezra's commentary.

⁶⁸⁶ **It is the manner of derash for [Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddon] to be an allusion to Ahab and Josiah** – Ibn Ezra is arguing that Jonathan's interpretation of the phrase “Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddon” does not constitute the straightforward meaning of the verse. In order to address the fact that no incident is known to have occurred in the plain of Megiddon with a character named Hadad-rimmon, Jonathan

(12) [The land] shall wail – He mentions the honored **family of the House of David**, and **the family of the House of Nathan**. He knew through prophecy that this [House of Nathan], too, would be well-known at that time. But for it to be **the House of Nathan**, Solomon’s brother, is unnecessary, because **the House of David** is a name that includes both of them.⁶⁸⁷

(13) Accordingly, **the family of the House of the Shimeites** is not from the Levites,⁶⁸⁸ unless part of those who are from **the House of Levi** was inside and part was outside, like “the House of David” (v. 12) and Judah, where they are inside and outside.⁶⁸⁹

(as explained by R. Joseph in the Talmud, bMeg. 3a and bM.K. 28b) suggests that the phrase must therefore allude to two separate events: 1) Ahab’s death at the hands of Ben-Hadad (=Hadad-rimmon, cf. I Kings 15:18, 22:34-37), and 2) Josiah’s death in Megiddo (II Chron. 35:22-25; cf. II Kings 23:29). The death of the Messiah son of Joseph parallels both of those incidents; in all three cases, a national leader’s death on the battlefield causes the public to wail or mourn. The oral commentary adopts Jonathan’s interpretation, as do several other exegetes (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Student of Trani, Tanḥum). Radak cites Jonathan’s interpretation but appears to prefer Ibn Ezra’s view that the verse is alluding to an unknown historical event. Ibn Caspi also adopts Ibn Ezra’s view.

⁶⁸⁷ **But for it to be the House of Nathan, Solomon’s brother, is unnecessary, because the House of David... includes both of them** – King David had a son named Nathan (II Sam. 5:14), and Rashi and Jacob b. Reuben cite a view that Nathan in our verse refers to him. However, Ibn Ezra rejects this view, because it would not make sense for the verse to list the families of David and Nathan as two separate groups if the latter is simply a subset of the former. Ibn Ezra’s position conforms to his tendency to view unfamiliar facts in prophecies as details that were familiar in the prophets’ own times or would be familiar at the time of the prophecies’ fulfillment rather than identifying them with similar characters and events from elsewhere in the Bible (cf. note 158 above). Radak agrees with Ibn Ezra’s view of “the House of Nathan.” A third view claims that “the House of Nathan” alludes to the descendants of the prophet Nathan (cf. Rashi, Jacob b. Reuben, Student of Trani).

⁶⁸⁸ **Accordingly, the family of the House of the Shimeites is not from the Levites** – Ibn Ezra’s previous sentence rejected the possibility that Nathan in v. 12 is David’s son, because one subset of David’s descendants would not be singled out after the verse just mentioned the entire house of David. Based on the same logic, he initially rejects the possibility that “the House of the Shimeites” could be a subset of Levites (descendants of Levi’s grandson Shimei; cf. Exod. 6:17), since v. 13 just mentioned “the House of Levi.” This interpretation of “the House of the Shimeites” as descendants of Levi’s grandson is not found among Ibn Ezra’s rabbinic predecessors, but it is suggested by the Karaite Jacob b. Reuben. Earlier rabbinic exegetes suggested that Shimei in our verse refers to Mordecai’s grandfather Shimei (additional Palestinian Targum, Sperber *ad loc.*; cf. Est. 2:5) or David’s son Shammua/Shimea (Rashi; cf. I Sam. 5:14, I Chron. 3:5). Radak considers “the House of the Shimeites” to be a family that will be famous at the time of the prophecy’s fulfillment (just as Ibn Ezra asserted definitively regarding “the House of Nathan” in v. 12).

⁶⁸⁹ **Unless part... was inside and part was outside, like “the House of David”... where they are inside and outside** – In this sentence, Ibn Ezra qualifies his initial position and raises the possibility that “the House of the Shimeites” are indeed descendants of Levi’s grandson Shimei. By “inside and outside,” Ibn Ezra presumably intends inside and outside of Jerusalem (Schrem 44b). Hence, he suggests that at the same time that Levi had descendants in Jerusalem, other Levites might have been outside Jerusalem, just as this prophecy describes a group of Diaspora Jews who are forced to encamp with the Gentile enemies of Judah. If, indeed, a distinct group of Diaspora Levites existed, then perhaps one of the groups of Levites were specifically the descendants of Shimei.

Chapter 13

(1) In [that] day – This verse, too, is an indication that the prophecy is for the future,⁶⁹⁰ and **a fountain shall be open** is literal. But R. Moses the Priest [Ibn Chiquitilia] said that it is allegorical,⁶⁹¹ like “I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean” (Ezek. 36:25). Therefore, [the verse] after it is **(2) And it shall come to pass [on that day, too—declares the Lord of Hosts—I will erase the very names of the idols from the land; they shall not be uttered any more. And I will also make the “prophets” and the unclean spirit vanish from the land]**⁶⁹²

And **the unclean spirit** is the opposite of the holy spirit.⁶⁹³

⁶⁹⁰ **This verse, too, is an indication that the prophecy is for the future** – Ibn Ezra’s assertion that this verse demonstrates that this prophecy is “for the future” appears to hinge upon his subsequent claim: “‘A fountain shall be open’ is literal.” By interpreting that verse literally, the present absence of such a fountain in Jerusalem demonstrates that this prophecy has not yet been fulfilled. Ibn Ezra similarly remarks in 14:4, regarding the splitting of the Mount of Olives, “None of this has happened until today,” and he concludes his commentary to Zechariah: “All of these passages at the end of this book are for the future. As for the one who said that they already passed, let him show us the fresh waters flowing out of Jerusalem in the summer and winter.” Abarbanel (14:4) rejects Ibn Ezra’s belief that the Mount of Olives will literally split in half and argues instead for an allegorical interpretation.

⁶⁹¹ **A fountain shall be open is literal. But R. Moses the Priest [Ibn Chiquitilia] said that it is allegorical** – Both sides of this debate precede Ibn Ezra and Ibn Chiquitilia. The assumption that our verse refers to a literal spring is widespread in earlier aggadic sources (tSuk. 3:3, bYom. 77b-78a, yShek. 6:2), yet Jonathan interprets the flow of water from the “fountain” as an allegory for the spreading of Torah study and the forgiveness of sins. Rashi and Joseph Kara appear to adopt Jonathan’s view, while Radak cites both the literal and allegorical interpretations.

In the introductions to both of Ibn Ezra’s commentaries to Genesis, he criticizes those who unnecessarily interpret verses allegorically, insisting that one should only employ allegorical exegesis when the literal meaning contradicts reason. His criticism of those who unnecessarily allegorize verses is overtly directed at Christians (“the uncircumcised,” in the words of his introduction to the long commentary) but is also likely directed at Geonic-Andalusian predecessors whose philosophical orientation led them to interpret verses allegorically (cf. Lancaster 158-162). Evidently, Ibn Ezra did not believe that a literal interpretation of our verse and 14:8 (which also depicts a new flow of fresh water in Jerusalem) contradicted reason, so he does not adopt Ibn Chiquitilia’s view. Also see note 772 below.

⁶⁹² **Therefore, [the verse] after it is (2) And it shall come to pass... [I will also make the “prophets” and the unclean spirit vanish from the land]** – According to Ibn Chiquitilia, v. 2 addresses spiritual purification and could thus indicate that the “fountain” of v. 1 also alludes to spiritual purification rather than a literal source of water.

⁶⁹³ **And the unclean spirit is the opposite of the holy spirit** – The Hebrew phrase רוח הקדש (“holy spirit”) is commonly used to describe God’s presence as He reveals Himself to prophets and divinely inspired men (cf. note 151 above; Ibn Ezra to Exod. 34:35, Isa. 63:10-11, Hab. 3:1, Ps. 51:13, and the introduction of his long commentary to Psalms). Ibn Ezra thus interprets “the unclean spirit” as the means through which false prophets

(3) If [anyone “prophesies” thereafter, his own father and mother... will say to him, “You shall die, for you have lied in the name of the Lord”; and... will pierce him through] – Its meaning is: They will love the Lord so much so that fathers will pierce through [their] sons⁶⁹⁴ out of love for Him.

(4) [He will not wear] a hairy mantle⁶⁹⁵ in order to demonstrate that the man is a worshiper of the Lord and mourns his iniquity, and he girds himself with sackcloth so that they will not recognize him.⁶⁹⁶

receive their prophecy (cf. Joseph Kara). The implication of Ibn Ezra’s interpretation is that false prophets receive some form of prophecy or inspiration from this unclean spirit (cf. Ibn Caspi), perhaps comparable to prophesying through teraphim (cf. Student of Trani). Ramban (Lev. 16:8; cf. Num. 19:2) also appears to interpret “the unclean spirit” in our verse as an unholy entity that God is promising to expunge. By contrast, Rashi and Radak interpret “the unclean spirit” as the desire to sin (יצר הרע), implying that these false prophets received no prophecy or divine inspiration of any kind but rather spoke falsely purely due to their own sinful desires.

⁶⁹⁴ **Fathers will pierce through [their] sons** – See note 698 regarding whether Ibn Ezra intends this phrase literally or figuratively.

⁶⁹⁵ **A hairy mantle** – These false prophets dressed in hairy mantles, which apparently were the clothes of distinguished prophets (e.g., II Kings 1:8; cf. my supercommentary to the oral commentary to 11:3).

⁶⁹⁶ **[He will not wear] a hairy mantle... he will gird himself with sackcloth so that they will not recognize him** – The syntax of this sentence is ambiguous (cf. Schrem 44b). Ibn Ezra could intend:

- A) *[He will not wear] a hairy mantle in order to demonstrate that the man is a worshiper of the Lord and mourns his iniquity; [rather] he will gird himself with sackcloth so that they will not recognize him* – According to this punctuation, the false prophet has until now worn a hairy mantle and publicly mourned his sins as an act of false piety, so that people would accept him as a prophet. In the future, however, he will disguise himself in sackcloth so that people will not realize that he is the same person as the false prophet.
- B) *[He will not wear] a hairy mantle in order to demonstrate that the man is a worshiper of the Lord and mourns his iniquity, and he girds himself with sackcloth so that they do not recognize him.* According to this punctuation, both the hairy mantle and the sackcloth were garments of false piety that the false prophet wore in order to lead people to believe that he was a saintly prophet and not recognize that he is an ordinary individual and not a true prophet. In the future, the false prophet will no longer engage in any of these behaviors.
- C) *[He will not wear] a hairy mantle in order to demonstrate that the man is a worshiper of the Lord, mourns his iniquity, and girds himself with sackcloth. [Why not?] So that they will not recognize him.* This punctuation agrees with B) that both the mantle and the sackcloth were garments that the false prophet used to convey an image of piety. However, it understands “so that they will not recognize him” as the explanation for his new behavior (and not as a rationale for his past behavior): He will cease to wear any mantle or sackcloth so that people will no longer recognize that he is the same person who used to wear those items.

The weakness in A) is that the sackcloth replaces the clothing of mourning, when in fact one would expect sackcloth to be a garment of mourning. Moreover, the fact that Ibn Ezra uses the verb “to gird” as a participle (חוגר) like the “worshiper” (עובד) and “mourns” (מתאבל) likely means that girding sackcloth is part of the original behavior. B) and C) both seem plausible, since they agree regarding the purpose of the sackcloth and

(5) And he will declare to those who ask him, “What is your occupation?” (Jon. 1:8), **“I am not a ‘prophet’; I am a tiller of the soil.**

For a man הַקִּנְיָ – bequeathed (הַנְּחִילָנִי) – **soil to me,**⁶⁹⁷ and I have been **tilling it from my youth.**”

(6) And if they will ask him what [those] wounds are, which his father and mother pierced him through,⁶⁹⁸ then he will say, **“In the homes of my friends,** I was playing, or **was beaten** there playfully.”

(7) O sword – He is further prophesying the many wars that will occur throughout the land when the Messiah son of Joseph dies.

And the meaning of **[rouse yourself against] My shepherd** is any Gentile king to whom the Lord granted dominion over the land,⁶⁹⁹ so [the king] considers himself to be like a god.

merely differ regarding the syntactic function of the phrase “so that they will not recognize him.” In that phrase, Ibn Ezra appears to be paraphrasing לְמַעַן כֹּהֵשׁ (“in order to deceive”). Most exegetes interpret that phrase as the purpose of initially wearing the mantle (Jonathan, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak), but Abarbanel maintains that it is the purpose of removing the mantle (“in order to deny that he is a prophet”).

⁶⁹⁷ הַקִּנְיָ – **bequeathed (הַנְּחִילָנִי) – soil to me** – Ibn Ezra uses a synonym in order to interpret the word הַקִּנְיָ (cf. Muraoka & Shavitsky). The root קנה is commonly used in *qal* with the meaning of “acquire” or “purchase,” but this is the only biblical verse in which the root occurs in *hif'il* (cf. BDB 888-889). Ibn Ezra interprets the *hif'il* as the causative of the *qal*. Ibn Ezra further interprets the object suffix נִי (“me”) as an indirect object, with the verb also having an implied direct object – soil – that appeared earlier in the verse: “A man bequeathed [soil] to me.” Pronominal object suffixes are normally used for *direct* objects (cf. NASV: “I am a tiller of the ground, for a man sold me as a slave in my youth”), but Ibn Ezra does occasionally interpret them as indirect objects, as he did with the suffixes of צִמְתָּנִי in 7:5 and וְאֶסְפְּרָם in 7:14 (cf. note 448). It is perhaps more significant that he is interpreting the suffix of הַקִּנְיָ as an indirect object, because the earlier two examples are verbs that Ibn Ezra believes to be intransitive, so he deemed them incapable of taking a direct object. In the case of הַקִּנְיָ, by contrast, Ibn Ezra considers it transitive but nonetheless interprets נִי as “to me” rather than a direct object suffix.

Ibn Saruk (מחברת מנחם, Philipowski, Sáenz-Badillos 330*) and Ḥayyuj (שלושת היבורי הדקדוק, Wated and Sivan 282-283) interpret הַקִּנְיָ as “appointed me over the flock” (=מקנה), which appears to be the interpretation adopted by Rashi and Joseph Kara. Radak interprets הַקִּנְיָ as “taught me to shepherd” (commentary to Zech. *ad loc.*) or “taught me to acquire” livestock (השרשים 658) and to till the land. Abarbanel cites Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of הַקִּנְיָ by name but also presents the view that it derives from מקנה.

⁶⁹⁸ **Which his father and mother pierced him through** – Ibn Ezra’s use of the verb “pierced him through” (דקרוהו) is based on v. 3 above: “And his father and mother who gave birth to him will pierce him through when he prophesies.” By employing the same verb here, Ibn Ezra may be implying that v. 3 did not intend that the parents will actually stab their child to death (cf. Tanḥum). Indeed, Jonathan interprets the verb in v. 3 that the parents will “seize” (יִחְדוּן) their child who prophesies falsely.

Hence, **a man that is My fellow** – The meaning is double.⁷⁰⁰ For [the king] considers himself to be **a man that is My fellow**.⁷⁰¹

Strike down the shepherd – The Lord will destroy every king, so his flock will **scatter**.

Thus, it is written in another passage, which is adjacent to this: “And the Lord shall be king over all the earth” (14:9).⁷⁰²

Yefet said that **הַצִּעָרִים (the little ones)** is the opposite of the “shepherds,” meaning the young sheep.⁷⁰³

צִעָרִים is an adjective, like **אוֹבְדִים** (“lost [ones]”; cf. Isa. 27:13).⁷⁰⁴ “His sons suffer (יִצְעָרוּ) and he does not know it.”⁷⁰⁵

⁶⁹⁹ **Any Gentile king to whom the Lord granted dominion over the land** – Uncensored editions of Rashi single out the king of Edom (symbolizing Rome and Christianity) as the king in this prophecy, but Ibn Ezra applies the prophecy more broadly to all Gentile kings, as does Joseph Kara. Radak cites the views of both Rashi and Ibn Ezra by name (cf. Tanḥum).

⁷⁰⁰ **The meaning is double** – “My shepherd” and “a Man who is My fellow” are parallel phrases (cf. note 556), both referring to Gentile kings. Regarding the translation of the Hebrew word עִמִּיתִי as “My fellow,” see the oral commentary.

⁷⁰¹ **For [the king] considers himself to be a man that is My fellow** – Ibn Ezra is explaining that God refers to Gentile kings as His peers – despite the fact that they cannot be true peers of God – because these kings erroneously believe themselves to be His peers. Tanḥum explains “My fellow” in the same manner.

⁷⁰² **The Lord will destroy every king... Thus, it is written... And the Lord shall be king over all the earth** – The fact that the next chapter presents God as the sole master of the universe supports the claim that the “shepherds” who are losing their “flocks” in this verse are kings whom God will vanquish.

⁷⁰³ **Yefet said that הַצִּעָרִים is the opposite of the “shepherds,” meaning the young sheep** – This interpretation of צִעָרִים is based on the Hebrew adjective צעיר (small, young). Several other exegetes agree that this is the etymology of צִעָרִים, but they interpret צִעָרִים as younger or lower-ranking assistants to the shepherds, rather than younger sheep (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak). Ibn Ezra does not explain how Yefet understands the allegory. Those who interpret צִעָרִים as deputy shepherds or as tormenters (cf. the oral commentary) consider them to be part of the same group as the “shepherds” at the beginning of the verse – an allegory for the Gentile leaders whom God will vanquish. According to Yefet, the “young sheep” would seem more likely to be an allegory for ordinary people of the world (i.e., the “flock” of the Gentile kings who are compared to shepherds), similar to the two-thirds who perish in v. 8.

⁷⁰⁴ **צִעָרִים is an adjective, like אוֹבְדִים** – Both צִעָרִים and אוֹבְדִים follow the vocalization of *qal* active participles. The active participle can function as an adjective, but – like any Hebrew adjective – it can also appear without a noun (cf. Muraoka & Shavitsky). Radak (השרשים 631) adopts this comment that אוֹבְדִים and צִעָרִים are adjectives of the same vowel pattern even though Radak disagrees with Ibn Ezra regarding the meaning of צִעָרִים.

⁷⁰⁵ **His sons suffer (יִצְעָרוּ) and he does not know it** – This precise quote does not exist, so it seems Ibn Ezra is imprecisely citing Job 14:21, “His sons attain honor and he does not know it; יִצְעָרוּ (they suffer) and he is not aware of it.” Elsewhere (Job *ad loc.* and Isa. 66:5), Ibn Ezra asserts that the word יִצְעָרוּ is an antonym of the

(8) It shall come to pass – Two thirds of the world shall be destroyed;⁷⁰⁶ also the **one** [surviving] **third** shall be tested. And [everyone] who escapes will be a worshiper of the Lord, who will come “year by year” (14:16).⁷⁰⁷

And now it explains how **two parts shall perish throughout the land**.

Chapter 14

(1) Lo – When the **day** arrives that **all the nations** gather in **Jerusalem**, after the aforementioned “pierced” individual dies (cf. 12:10), then **[your spoil] shall be divided [in**

first verb in the verse, “attains honor.” But he does not offer a precise definition of יִצְעֲרוּ (cf. Goodman, Job *ad loc.*), which has alternately been translated as, “They are brought low” (KJV, JPS 1917), “They are humbled” (NJPS), or, “They become insignificant” (NASV). All of those English translations assume that the verb יִצְעֲרוּ has a similar meaning to the adjective צַעִיר (small, young), which is consistent with the interpretation of צַעֲרִים in our verse that Ibn Ezra cites from Yefet. However, it is unclear whether Ibn Ezra shares that interpretation of צַעֲרִים in our verse or יִצְעֲרוּ in Job. When Tanḥum anonymously cites Ibn Ezra to our verse, he writes that according to Ibn Ezra, the verb יִצְעֲרוּ in Job means “suffer,” which contrasts with “attain honor” in the same verse. Hence, Tanḥum understands that Ibn Ezra interprets צַעֲרִים in our verse as “tormenters” (i.e., those who inflict צַעַר, suffering). The oral commentary employs the *pi’el* verb צָעַרוּ (“They caused pain”) to explain the word צַעֲרִים, which would support Tanḥum’s interpretation of Ibn Ezra (but cf. Schrem 44b). For other possible interpretations of צַעֲרִים, see my supercommentary to the oral commentary.

⁷⁰⁶ **Two thirds of the world shall be destroyed** – Ibn Ezra interprets this verse to mean that two thirds of mankind shall perish. In midrashic literature, R. Johanan adopts this view (b. San. 111a), but others expand the number of people who shall perish, by suggesting that two thirds of *Shem’s descendants* (in addition to the rest of mankind) shall perish (R. Simon b. Laqish, *ibid.*), or that all pagans shall perish (R. Judah b. Simon, Deut. R. to Deut. 6:4; Num. R. and Mid. Tan. to Num. 10:2). In other midrashic sources, the school of Shammai appears to interpret the thirds as different groups of Jews, although textual problems make it difficult to confirm their precise interpretation (cf. tSan. 13:1; bR.H. 17a; *Avot de-R. Nathan* I:41, Schechter 67a-b).

Like Ibn Ezra, Rashi also assumes that in our verse, two thirds of “all the land” means two thirds of humans throughout the earth. Radak anonymously cites this view, but Radak himself maintains that it only addresses Jews in the land of Israel, two thirds of whom shall perish (cf. Radak to Isa. 60:21, Mic. 5:6, Zeph. 3:11, Ps. 66:10 and 69:33). Tanḥum cites both interpretations, as well as a third possibility: The verse might be addressing Gentiles in “the land [of Israel]” – i.e., the Gentiles who sieged Jerusalem – two thirds of whom will be destroyed when God saves Jerusalem.

⁷⁰⁷ **And [everyone] who escapes will be a worshiper of the Lord, who will come “year by year”** – Rashi maintains that two thirds shall perish, while the surviving third of Gentiles shall convert. Here, Ibn Ezra does not explicitly state whether the Gentiles will convert or will serve God as monotheistic Gentiles, although a straightforward reading of the verse implies that the Gentiles will join the Jewish people: “They will invoke Me by name, and I will respond to them. I will declare, ‘You are My people,’ and they will declare, ‘The Lord is our God’” (cf. Student of Trani).

your very midst] – He is speaking to Jerusalem.⁷⁰⁸ As for the one who explains that the enemy’s spoil shall be divided⁷⁰⁹ – if it is so, then why is **(2) a part of the city shall go into exile** [written] afterward? Moreover, [what about] **the houses shall be plundered (נָ שָׁפוּ)?**

נָ שָׁפוּ is from a geminate root, like, “All the host of heaven shall molder” (וְנִמְקוּ; Isa. 34:4), [and] like נָסְבוּ (“gathered about”; Gen. 19:4) from סָבַב.⁷¹⁰

ה תִּשְׁכַּבְהָ (shall be lain with) is euphemistic, because **תִּשְׁגַּלְנָה (shall be ravished)** [connotes] the [sexual] act;⁷¹¹ similarly: שָׁגַל (“the consort”; Ps. 45:10) is one who is designated for intercourse.⁷¹²

⁷⁰⁸ **[Your spoil] shall be divided [in your very midst] – He is speaking to Jerusalem** – According to Ibn Ezra, “your spoil” refers to the possessions of Jerusalem which Jerusalem’s enemies shall plunder. As Ibn Ezra proceeds to explain, he believes that vv. 1-2 describe the devastation of Jerusalem, unlike subsequent verses that describe Jerusalem’s salvation. Joseph Kara, Radak, and Student of Trani agree that this verse is describing Gentile enemies who will plunder Jerusalem.

⁷⁰⁹ **As for the one who explains that the enemy’s spoil shall be divided** – Jonathan translates שְׁלֶךְ (“your spoil”) as נְכֹסֵי עַמְמֵיָא (“the possessions of the nations”; cf. Sperber), and Rashi adopts his view. This interpretation was likely widespread among the Sages. Aside from Jonathan – whose interpretation is explicit – several midrashic passages present v. 1 as a description of redemption and thus presumably agree that the enemy’s property is being plundered by Jews (Mid. Tehil. to Ps. 118:12, Ecc. R. to 5:7; cf. Pesiq. De-R. K., Mandelbaum 453). Abarbanel also adopts this interpretation and criticizes Ibn Ezra for dismissing it.

⁷¹⁰ **נָ שָׁפוּ is from a geminate root, like... נָ מָקוּ, and like סָבַב from סָבַב** – The root of נָמְקוּ is מָקַק (cf. v. 12 below) and the root of נָסְבוּ is סָבַב. Hence, just as both of those words derive from geminate roots, the root of נָשָׁפוּ in our verse – which follows an identical vowel pattern – must be שָׁסַס. Ḥayyuj also writes that the root of נָשָׁפוּ is שָׁסַס (שְׁלוּשַׁת חִיבוּרֵי הַדְּקוּדוּקָה, Wated and Sivan 370-371) and cites Gen. 19:4 to demonstrate that נָמְקוּ shares the same pattern as נָסְבוּ and thus must derive from the geminate root מָקַק (כתאב אלנתר), Maman and Ben Porat 320-321).

⁷¹¹ **ה תִּשְׁכַּבְהָ is a euphemism, because תִּשְׁגַּלְנָה [connotes] the [sexual] act** – Ibn Ezra is explaining a discrepancy between the *qere* (the Masoretic reading tradition) and *ketiv* (what is written in Masoretic Bibles). The *qere* תִּשְׁכַּבְהָ is a euphemism for the sexually-explicit word תִּשְׁגַּלְנָה that is written as the *ketiv* (cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 498; Radak, השרשים 739-740). Earlier rabbinic sources already record a tradition that whenever a verb from the root שָׁגַל is written in the Bible, it is read as a verb from the root שָׁכַב as a euphemism (tMeg. 3:39; cf. bMeg. 28b and Minor Tractates, *Sofrim* 9:8). Ibn Ezra makes the same observation regarding the word תִּשְׁכַּבְהָ in Isa. 13:16.

⁷¹² **Similarly: שָׁגַל is one who is designated for intercourse** – Literally, “one who is designated for the bed” (המוכנת למטה). Ibn Ezra elaborates on the meaning of שָׁגַל in שְׁפָה בְרוּרָה (Lippmann 7b, González and Sáenz-Badillos 6*), where he explains that the שָׁגַל in Ps. 45:10 must be the king’s consort and employs that verse as a proof-text to reject an aggadic interpretation of שָׁגַל in Neh. 2:6 as a female dog (bR.H. 4a).

(3) [Then the Lord] will come forth – When half the city goes into exile (v. 2), then the Lord will come forth from His place – from the heavens – which is allegorical, [meaning] that He will be roused for His nation.

[As He was wont to make war] on the day of battle, when the Egyptians came after Israel to kill them in the sea;⁷¹³ it is written there: “For the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt” (Exod. 14:25).⁷¹⁴

(4) He will set His feet – The Lord will perform a sign and wonder **on that day**; none of this has happened until today.⁷¹⁵

The Mount of Olives [is] east (מזרחה) of Jerusalem.⁷¹⁶

And the mountain **shall split** to its east and west, so there will be a **גֵּיאַ (great gorge)** between [the halves],⁷¹⁷ like: “We stayed on in the gorge” (בְּגֵיאַ; Deut. 3:29).⁷¹⁸

(5) You shall flee (וַיִּסְתַּחֲבֹטוּ)...⁷¹⁹ to Azal (אַצֵּל), the name of a place.⁷²⁰

⁷¹³ **On the day of battle, when the Egyptians came after Israel to kill them in the sea** – Here, Ibn Ezra identifies “the day of battle” as God’s battle against Egypt at the Red Sea. This interpretation originates in Jonathan and in Pesiq. De-R. K. (*ibid.*) and is subsequently adopted by most exegetes (Jacob b. Reuben, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak, Tanḥum, Abarbanel). However, the oral commentary identifies “the day of battle” with God’s support of Joshua.

⁷¹⁴ **It is written there: “For the Lord is fighting for them against Egypt”** – This proof-text demonstrates that the Bible portrays Egypt’s defeat as a battle of God against the Egyptians. Joseph Kara, Radak, and Tanḥum cite the same proof-text.

⁷¹⁵ **None of this has happened until today** – See note 690.

⁷¹⁶ **The Mount of Olives [is] east (מזרחה) of Jerusalem** – Ibn Ezra is simplifying the verse’s wordier phrase that the Mount of Olives is “near Jerusalem on the east,” as well as substituting the word מזרחה for the word קדם, both of which mean east.

⁷¹⁷ **And the mountain shall split to its east and west, so there will be a great gorge between [the halves]** – Here, Ibn Ezra adopts the straightforward meaning of the verse (shared by Rashi and Radak) that the mountain will split in half once, such that a deep ravine will be created from east to west, with the northern half of the mountain shifting northward and the southern part shifting southward. The oral commentary appears to disagree with this interpretation.

⁷¹⁸ **We stayed on in the gorge (בְּגֵיאַ)** – Ibn Ezra is citing this proof-text in order to demonstrate the meaning of the word גֵּיאַ. Ibn Ezra believes that this word can refer to the deep part of gorge but also to its peak (Deut. *ad loc.* and 34:6, Num. 21:19).

But Jonathan translated **ונסתם** as “shall be stopped up” (ואסתתם);⁷²¹ indeed, all the people of the East read **ונסתם**,⁷²² like, “The land **נַעְתָּם** (is darkened; Isa. 9:18).⁷²³

So there shall be a great **earthquake**.⁷²⁴

⁷¹⁹ **You shall flee (ונסתם)** – As becomes clear from the dissenting view that Ibn Ezra cites next, Ibn Ezra’s initial comments follows the tradition of the Tiberian Masoretes, who vocalize the word **ונסתם** as *qal* verb from the hollow root נוס, with a second-person masculine plural suffix. The oral commentary assumes that **ונסתם** is the correct vocalization, without mentioning the alternative tradition that the standard commentary proceeds to cite.

⁷²⁰ **Azal (אצל) – the name of a place** – Ibn Ezra makes the same comment in the oral commentary. He is rejecting Ibn Saruk’s suggestion that **אצל** in our verse means a “lofty” or “elevated” location (מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 32, Sáenz-Badillos 58*). Rashi cites and adopts Ibn Saruk’s suggestion. Jonathan does not translate **אצל**, implying that he – like Ibn Ezra – believed that **אצל** is the name of a place. Radak, too, agrees with Ibn Ezra (השרשים 51; cf. Radak to v. 5). Tanḥum cites Ibn Ezra and Radak’s position but appears to prefer his own suggestion that **אצל** refers to the “edge” or “peak” of the mountain (טרף אלגבל; cf. Blau, מילון 399). Eliezer of Beaugency appears to interpret **אצל** as if it were vocalized **אצל**, a preposition indicating proximity (cf. BHQ).

⁷²¹ **ואסתתם** – This spelling follows witnesses of Ibn Ezra’s commentary and is also the spelling in Radak’s citation of Jonathan. Sperber’s edition of Jonathan spells the word **ויסתתם** (cf. Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Sperber’s variants).

⁷²² **But Jonathan translated ונסתם as “shall be stopped up” (ואסתתם); indeed, all the people of the East read ונסתם** – According to the tradition of Babylonian Masoretes, the word is vocalized **ונסתם**, a passive *nif’al* verb from the root סתם. Hence, the Tiberian reading of **ונסתם גיא הרי** means, “You will flee (ונסתם) [to] the gorge in the Hills,” while the Babylonian reading means, “The gorge in the Hills shall be stopped up” (ונסתם). Regarding the phenomenon of Jonathan’s translation corresponding to the Babylonian reading tradition, cf. Komlosh (המקרא באור התרגום 63).

Other exegetes were also aware of the divergent reading traditions. Rashi and Eliezer of Beaugency appear to adopt Jonathan’s reading, Joseph Kara and Radak offer interpretations according to both traditions, and Tanḥum appears to prefer the Tiberian reading. Interestingly, while Ibn Ezra indicates in this comment that Jonathan’s translation reflects the plain meaning of the text according to one reading tradition, he writes in **שפה ברורה** that Jonathan’s translation of **ונסתם** is *derash*, a deliberately non-literal interpretation, which he suggests that Jonathan adopted due to the seemingly meaningless repetition of the word **ונסתם** a second time in the same verse and due to the verse’s choice of the word **ונסתם** rather than its synonym **וברחתם** (Lippmann 11a-b, González and Sáenz-Badillos 9*).

⁷²³ **The land נַעְתָּם (is darkened)** – Ibn Ezra’s primary motivation in citing this proof-text is to defend the plausibility of the feminine noun **גיא** (“gorge”) being the subject of **נַעְתָּם** – a *nif’al* a masculine verb – according to Jonathan. In the proof-text, the masculine verb **נַעְתָּם** is the subject of the noun **אֶרֶץ** (“land”), which is normally feminine. Ibn Ezra frequently points to this proof-text as evidence that **אֶרֶץ** can agree with masculine verbs and pronouns (Lev. 18:28, Num. 32:5, Deut. 31:16, Isa. 33:9, Ps. 63:2 and 105:10; צהור, Lippmann 34b, Valle Rodriguez 86). Accordingly, **גיא** can similarly agree with a masculine noun despite being modified by a feminine adjective (**גְּדוּלָהּ**) in the previous verse.

Ibn Ezra’s citation of the *nif’al* verb **נַעְתָּם** might also serve a secondary purpose, stressing that according to the Eastern vocalization of **נַעְתָּם**, the latter is also a *nif’al* perfect verb (cf. Schrem 45a). Interestingly, MS Oxford 33 puts a *pataḥ* under the **נ** of **נַעְתָּם**, perhaps because the scribe believed that the function of **נַעְתָּם** as a proof-text was to indicate that the Eastern Masoretes understood **נַעְתָּם** as a *nif’al* perfect verb (cf. Ibn Ezra to Isa. 9:18, where he harshly criticizes a view that **נַעְתָּם** is *hitpa’el*).

Regarding the correct translation of **נַעְתָּם**, cf. Ibn Ezra to Isa. *ad loc.* and **ההגנה** (Oshri 99).

⁷²⁴ **So there shall be a great earthquake** – The word “earthquake” (**רעש**) appears in the verse in reference to an earlier earthquake during the reign of King Uzziah (cf. Amos 1:1). Ibn Ezra’s assertion that there will be a

As for the meaning of [the Lord my God, with all the holy beings,] will come [to you] – Then the divine presence and the holy beings – namely, the angels⁷²⁵ – will come and dwell in Jerusalem. This is the explanation of עִמָּךְ (to you): to Jerusalem, for the beginning of the passage (v. 1) speaks to [Jerusalem].⁷²⁶

(6) There shall not be serves for another.⁷²⁷

The word יְקָרוֹת (heavy) is an adjective,⁷²⁸ and the modified nouns are clouds.⁷²⁹ So [the meaning] is thus: **There shall be neither light nor heavy (יְקָרוֹת) clouds.**

future earthquake stems from the prophecy's comparison between the future panic and the panic during Uzziah's earthquake and from his belief that the Mount of Olives will literally split in half (cf. notes 691-692). He might also be basing himself on Ezekiel's vision of "the day when Gog sets foot on the soil of Israel" (38:18) – which the oral commentary to v. 1 equates with our chapter's prophecy – since Ezekiel depicts a powerful earthquake that will strike on that day (38:19-20). Tanḥum explicitly links that passage in Ezekiel to the earthquake that our verse implies.

⁷²⁵ **And the holy beings – namely, the angels** – The Hebrew phrase כָּל קְדוּשִׁים ("all the holy beings") lacks a conjunction or preposition that is necessary for the syntax to be coherent: "The Lord my God will come _____ all the holy beings." The manner in which exegetes supply the missing word can affect whom they identify as "the holy beings." According to Ibn Ezra, "the holy beings" are angels, so the verse intends: "The Lord my God – [and] all the holy beings – will come." Indeed, when Ibn Ezra cites or paraphrases this verse elsewhere in his writings, he puts a prefix ו in front of כָּל קְדוּשִׁים (oral commentary to Joel 4:11; ההגנה, Oshri 95). Most likely, he does so to support his interpretation of the verse, although it is not impossible that his text of the Bible actually read וכל, since Kennicott does cite that reading from many witnesses.

Many exegetes agree with Ibn Ezra that "the holy beings" are angels who will accompany God (Jacob b. Reuben, Rashi, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Tanḥum). However, Maimonides argues that the "holy beings" are prophets, so he renders the phrase: "[The word of] the Lord my God [via] all the holy beings (=prophets) will come true" (*Guide* 1:22, cited by Radak and Abarbanel).

⁷²⁶ **This is the explanation of עִמָּךְ (to you): to Jerusalem, for the beginning of the passage speaks to [Jerusalem]** – Ibn Ezra is bothered by the word עִמָּךְ because it literally means "with you." Since this phrase depicts angels accompanying God, one would expect the preposition to have a third-person suffix – עִמּוֹ – meaning that all the angels will come "with Him." Indeed, Jonathan translates the preposition as עִמֵּיהּ ("with Him"), perhaps as exegesis (cf. Radak), but more likely because his biblical text read עִמּוֹ (cf. Student of Trani, Kennicott). Dunash assumes that the text reads עִמָּךְ but argues that it should nevertheless be interpreted as "with Him" in our verse (ג' רס"ג #150a, Schroeter 50).

Ibn Ezra rejects Dunash's attempt to interpret עִמָּךְ as "with Him" (ההגנה, Oshri 96) and therefore explains that the preposition עִמְ is specifying the angels' destination, not their travel companion: God and the angels will come "with you" (=Jerusalem), meaning they will come to Jerusalem. Eliezer of Beaugency and Radak interpret the verse in the same manner (cf. Maimonides, *Guide* 1:22; Radak, השרשים 737).

⁷²⁷ **There shall not be serves for another** – The verse is not simply stating that "there shall not be light" but also that there shall not be any of the later nouns in the verse, as Ibn Ezra explains in the continuation of this paragraph.

⁷²⁸ **יְקָרוֹת is an adjective** – See Ibn Ezra to 11:13, where he discusses the difference between the noun יְקָר and the adjective יְקָרָה.

And קפאון is something thick, in the sense of (7) **neither day nor night**.⁷³⁰

But [there shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, of neither day nor night]

– When the **day** of the Lord arrives, humans will not know if⁷³¹ it is **day** or **night**, but close to **eventide** this shall become clear.⁷³²

Those who explain [this verse] as an allegory for exile and salvation are incorrect;⁷³³ rather, it is literal.

⁷²⁹ **The word יקריות is an adjective, and the modified nouns are clouds** – יקריות is a feminine plural adjective (cf. 9:13 above), but the adjacent noun, אור (light), is singular and is normally masculine (cf. BDB 21; Ibn Ezra to Job 36:32 appears to disagree with BDB's claim that אור is feminine in that verse). Since יקריות cannot be modifying the adjacent noun אור (cf. Joseph Kara), Ibn Ezra thus suggests that יקריות modifies an implied noun עבות (clouds), the plural of עב, which can be masculine or feminine (BDB 728). His explanation of יקריות comes from Ibn Janah (השרשים 204) and is subsequently adopted by Tanḥum. Jonathan also recognized that יקריות could not modify “light,” so he added the word אלהיך (“but rather”) after “light”: “There shall be no light [but rather] יקריות.” If one were to consider יקריות to be a plural noun, rather than an adjective, then it could be connected to אור as the second component of a construct – “light of יקריות” – without concern for number disagreement. However, such an interpretation requires one to offer a different lexical interpretation of יקריות, such as “preciousness” or “clarity” (cf. bPes. 50a, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, and Abarbanel).

⁷³⁰ **And קפאון is something thick, in the sense of (7) neither day nor night** – “Something thick” (Muraoka and Shavitsky) is vague, but Ibn Ezra appears to be interpreting קפאון as a heavy fog or thick layer of clouds, based on his proof from v. 7, which describes a time when people cannot easily determine whether it is day or night. This interpretation of קפאון is also adopted by Tanḥum, but it appears to disagree with the oral commentary, which interprets קפאון as hailstones. If Ibn Ezra is basing his interpretation on Ibn Janah, then it is possible that the two commentaries intend to complement rather than contradict one another. Ibn Janah writes that קפאון is “water that has become solid (נקפא) in the clouds; that is to say, hailstones. And the meaning of this matter [is that] there will be no light, but rather there will be there will be a fog of rising (מתאבכות; cf. השרשים 10) clouds that are heavy with water and hail (קפאון)” (השרשים 204; cf. *ibid.* 451).

Jonathan translates קפאון as גליד (frost or ice), which also appears to be Eliezer of Beaugency's interpretation of קפאון. Rashi adopts Jonathan's literal translation but adds that it is a metaphor for thick darkness that will obscure light.

⁷³¹ **If** – Most manuscripts read או, while a minority read אם. The HaKeter edition adopts the minority reading of אם, which can be translated more smoothly as “if.” However, given that manuscripts from all three manuscript families – including my edition's base manuscript – read או (“or”) I felt compelled to leave it in the body of my critical text despite the fact that the reading of אם is smoother.

⁷³² **When the day of the Lord arrives, humans will not know if it is day or night, but close to eventide this shall become clear** – According to Ibn Ezra, “neither day nor night” means that the heavy clouds will make it difficult to discern whether it is day or night. Ḥayyuj appears to understand the phrase differently, that God will miraculously create an entity that is a mix of day and night (כתאב אלנתר, Basal 164; cf. Jonathan, Radak, and Gen. R. to Gen. 8:22). Tanḥum cites both views anonymously, while Abarbanel adopts Ibn Ezra's view.

⁷³³ **Those who explain [this verse] as an allegory for exile and salvation are incorrect** – Rashi and Joseph Kara explain “light” in this verse as a metaphor for the world to come or redemption and “darkness” as a metaphor for exile and subjugation (cf. *Pesiqta R.* 8, Ish Shalom 30a, which implies a different allegory). Radak also adopts an allegorical reading.

(8) And it shall come to pass – This is a sign for the future.⁷³⁴ The mountain split in half for the sake of this; because the mountain split in half (v. 4), **fresh water shall flow** through the gorge, and the mountain will no longer impede them, for it will be split.

(9) King serves for another word. [The verse] is thus: [**and the Lord shall be king over all the earth;] in that day the Lord shall be one king⁷³⁵ with one name**, which is the glorious name that was made known to Moses, His servant, and it will be pronounced by all as it is written.⁷³⁶

⁷³⁴ **And it shall come to pass – This is a sign for the future** – The wondrous flow of fresh water in Jerusalem is “a sign for the future.” This phrase (Hebrew: זֶה אֵימָר לְעַתִּיד) could be interpreted in one of two ways: 1) This wonder is “a sign” (i.e., a miracle) *which is* “for the future,” in which case Ibn Ezra is simply stating that this miracle has not yet occurred. 2) This wonder is “a sign” (i.e., a proof) *that this entire prophecy* is intended “for the future.” According to the latter interpretation, Ibn Ezra is extrapolating from the fact that this miracle has not yet occurred that this entire chapter is a messianic prophecy. The second interpretation seems more likely, since it is consistent with Ibn Ezra’s closing comments: “As for the one who said that [the prophecies] already passed, let him show us the fresh waters flowing out of Jerusalem in the summer and winter” (cf. note 690).

⁷³⁵ **King serves for another word. [The verse] is thus: [and the Lord shall be king over all the earth;] in that day the Lord shall be one king** – Ibn Ezra is addressing a theological difficulty that the Talmud raises with our verse: “*In that day*, the Lord shall be one’: Is He then not one now?” (bPes. 50a). By adding the word “king” from earlier in the verse, Ibn Ezra interprets the verse as claiming that on that day, God will be the one and only king, whereas other human kings currently reign. Ibn Ezra interprets our verse the same way in his commentary to Deut. 6:4. Other exegetes explain that God becoming “one” means that then all of mankind will acknowledge that He is the only God (Jonathan, Rashi, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak; cf. Maimonides, *Guide* 1:61).

⁷³⁶ **It will be pronounced by all as it is written** – According to rabbinic law, the Tetragrammaton may not be uttered except in the Temple, under specific circumstances (cf. *Mekhilta* to Exod. 20:21, *Sifrei* to Num. 6:23-27, bYom. 69b). Therefore, God’s name is not currently “pronounced as it is written” but rather as *Adonai*. Ibn Ezra appears to indicate that after the redemption, all mankind will pronounce the Tetragrammaton as it is written. Radak cites Ibn Ezra’s comment nearly verbatim and observes that Maimonides (*Guide* 1:61-62) appears to share Ibn Ezra’s view, based on Maimonides’ assertion that all other divine names – including *Adonai* – describe particular divine attributes or behaviors, so for God to be “one, with one name” requires that He be known by His proper name (i.e., the Tetragrammaton) rather than a descriptive name.

Interestingly, when Ibn Ezra comments on parallel verses about God’s oneness, Ibn Ezra ignores the question of whether the Tetragrammaton will be pronounced *Adonai* or *Yahweh* and merely asserts that all mankind will address God by His proper Hebrew name (Deut. 6:4, Zeph.3:9), whereas Gentiles currently do not know His Hebrew name (cf. Ibn Ezra to Amos 8:7).

Ibn Ezra elaborates on his understanding of the mathematical and theological significance of the Tetragrammaton in several places in his biblical commentaries (Gen. 17:1, Exod. 3:13-15, 20:2, 23:21, 34:7; Deut. 6:4, 14:22; Ps. 72:19, 80:20; short commentary to Exod. 23:21 and 32:5), as well as other writings (ההגנה, Oshri 98; יסוד מורא Ch. 11, Cohen and Simon 180-198), including in a separate treatise about God’s name, ספר השם (cf. Sela, *Medieval Hebrew Science* 317-319).

(10) The settlement shall encompass (יָסוּב) [the whole country like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem].⁷³⁷

The ך of **וְרָאָמָה** (**she shall be lifted up**) is superfluous.⁷³⁸ We find a superfluous ך in the middle of a word: “וְהִקְדִּיחוּ (they shall turn away from) the rivers” (Isa. 19:6).⁷³⁹ Or [the ך] is instead of the doubled letter, like “whose land the rivers בָּזְאוּ” (have spoiled; Isa. 18:2).⁷⁴⁰

(11) They shall dwell... secure, with the divine presence. Then the Messiah son of David shall come, as it explains.

⁷³⁷ **The settlement shall encompass (יָסוּב) [the whole country like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem]** – This comment is extremely cryptic. Our translation follows Tanḥum who presents Ibn Ezra’s view anonymously. In Tanḥum’s presentation, Ibn Ezra is offering “the settlement” (הַיְשׁוּב) as the implied subject of the masculine singular verb יָסוּב (cf. Schrem 45a) and thus determining that “the whole country” is the object. According to this interpretation, the verse’s message is that “the whole country” shall be inhabited, including areas that are presently wilderness or desert, “like the Arabah.” By contrast, many exegetes believe that “the whole country” is the subject of יָסוּב, and they therefore interpret יָסוּב as an intransitive verb: “The whole country shall turn into” flat lands, “like the plains” (=the Arabah; Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Abarbanel). In their view, the verse’s message is that the hills surrounding Jerusalem will be flattened, which will cause Jerusalem to “be lifted up” (וְרָאָמָה), i.e., to tower over her environs. Tanḥum suggests that according to Ibn Ezra’s interpretation, Jerusalem “shall be lifted up” metaphorically, meaning an increase in her stature.

Tanḥum’s interpretation assumes that יָסוּב is a transitive verb. In Ibn Ezra’s own grammatical writings, he contradicts himself regarding whether יָסוּב is *qal* (*Moẓnayim*, Jiménez Patón 117*) or *nif’al* (שְׁפָה בְרוּרָה), Lippmann 33b, González and Saenz-Badillos 41*; cf. Lippmann’s supercommentary *ad loc.* n. 28), with both possibilities already having been raised by Hayyuj regarding the word יָסוּב in I Sam. 5:8 (שְׁלוּשַׁת חִיבּוּרֵי הַדְּקוּקָה) in Wated and Sivan 352-353). If יָסוּב is *qal* in our verse, then it might be easier to posit that it is transitive, but being *nif’al* does not preclude it from being transitive (cf. Ibn Ezra to Gen. 19:4).

⁷³⁸ **The ך of וְרָאָמָה is superfluous** – According to this interpretation, רָאָמָה derives from the hollow root רוּם. Ordinarily, the ך of a hollow root elides in the perfect tense, but in this case an ך appears in its stead. Hence, Ibn Ezra deems this ך superfluous.

⁷³⁹ **We find a superfluous ך in the middle of a word: “וְהִקְדִּיחוּ the rivers”** – The ך in וְהִקְדִּיחוּ is superfluous; ordinarily, the word would be written וְהִקְדִּיחוּ, a *hif’il* verb from the root קָדַח (cf. Ibn Ezra *ad loc.*). Ibn Ezra is fond of citing this word as proof that there can be a meaningless ך in the middle of a word (Exod. 3:15, Num. 32:24, Ecc. 12:5, Ps. 19:5; שְׁפָה בְרוּרָה, Lippmann 28a, González and Saenz-Badillos 36*; צָחוּת, Lippmann 12b and 48a, Valle Rodríguez 34 and 120).

⁷⁴⁰ **Or [the ך] is instead of the doubled letter, like... בָּזְאוּ** – As Ibn Ezra explains in his commentary to Isaiah (*ad loc.*), בָּזְאוּ is equivalent to בָּזְאוּ from the geminate root בָּזַח (Ibn Janah, הַשְׂרִשִּׁים 60). Here, too, he therefore suggests that the root of רָאָמָה could be רָמַם, as opposed to his initial suggestion of רוּם. Both of his suggestions are rejecting Ibn Janah’s claim that רָאָמָה derives from a root רָאָם (הַשְׂרִשִּׁים 463-464). Radak (*ad loc.* and הַשְׂרִשִּׁים 693) agrees with this first suggestion of Ibn Ezra (cf. Joseph Kimḥi, הַגְּלוּי 60). Tanḥum cites both of Ibn Ezra’s suggestions, but he also adds Ibn Janah’s view (all cited anonymously). Tanḥum stresses that the disagreement regarding the root does not appear to affect meaning, since רוּם, רָמַם, and Ibn Janah’s proposed root רָאָם would all share the same meaning.

(12) **This [plague]** – It returns to explaining what the war is that the Lord wages (v. 3) against the nations who sent half of the city into exile (v. 2).

המק (shall rot) is an infinitive from the heavy form. “Heavy form” (בניין כבד) [refers to] all words that appear in *hif’il* form, while those that appear in the form of דבר, שבר are called “the form of the *dageish [forte]*” (בניין הדגוש).⁷⁴¹

התמק (shall rot) is in the *nif’al* form, and both [המק and תמקנה] are geminate verbs.⁷⁴² The proof is ימקו (“They shall pine away”; Lev. 26:39), which is like “the bonds melted” (וימסו; Jud. 15:14).⁷⁴³

(13) **And it shall come to pass... and [his hand] shall rise up (ועלתה)** is literal,⁷⁴⁴ or it is like “shall be cut off.”⁷⁴⁵ So, too, “My couch עלה” (went up; Gen. 49:4) [means that] it was cut off and ceased.⁷⁴⁶

⁷⁴¹ “Heavy form” [refers to] all words that appear in *hif’il* form, while... שבר, דבר are called בניין הדגוש – The term “form of the *dageish*” refers to *pi’el*, due to the *dageish forte* that appears in the second consonant of *pi’el* verbs, such as דבר and שבר.

Melammed (מפרשי המקרא) 536) and the HaKeter edition treat this explanatory sentence as a gloss. Although it does appear in all manuscripts, it does seem to be an explanatory gloss, with the original comment reading: “המק is an infinitive from the heavy form, תמקנה is in the *nif’al* form, and both are geminate verbs.”⁷⁴² **המק (shall rot) is an infinitive from the heavy form... התמק is in the *nif’al* form, and both [המק and תמקנה] are geminate verbs** – Both verbs derive from the root מקק even though their verbal stems differ, with the former being *hif’il* but the latter being *nif’al*. Ibn Ezra might be emphasizing that תמקנה is *nif’al* because its vowel pattern is identical to that of a *qal* verb with נ as its initial consonant (Filvarg 14b). Hayyuj cites both words in his discussion of מקק and emphasizes that תמקנה derives from מקק despite the lack of a *dageish forte* in the ק to represent the second ק of the root (שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק), Wated and Sivan 346-347; cf. כתאב אלנתר, Maman and Ben Porat 320-321).

⁷⁴³ **The proof is ימקו, which is like וימסו** – ימקו and וימסו are vocalized in an identical manner. In both words, the *dageish forte* in the final consonant serves as evidence that the root contains two of that consonant (cf. Schrem 45a). Therefore, just as וימסו is from the geminate root מסס (Hayyuj, שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק, Wated and Sivan 346-347), so, too, must ימקו derive from the geminate root מקק. While Ibn Ezra’s comments primarily address the shared vowel pattern between ימקו and וימסו, Ibn Ezra might have chosen וימסו because of the lexical similarity between pining away and melting away; cf. Ibn Saruk, מהברת מנחם, Philipowski 118-119, Sáenz-Badillos 242*-244*), who uses each of these verbs to define the other.

⁷⁴⁴ **And [his hand] shall rise up (ועלתה) is literal** – It is not entirely clear what Ibn Ezra intends by a literal interpretation of one’s hand “rising up.” The most likely meaning would be that people will reach out to others and thus their hands will “go up” into their peers’ hands. However, it is unclear how an image of people holding the hands of those who reach out to them would fit the chaotic context of “a great panic from the Lord.” It is therefore possible that Ibn Ezra merely intends a “literal” interpretation in the sense of a metaphor in which

(14) Also Judah – “the rest of the nation” (v. 2) that remained – shall wage war in **Jerusalem** with the enemy, to eradicate its memory.⁷⁴⁷ The people of Jerusalem will then find **gold, silver, and clothing** gathered. Hence, the meaning of: “I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem” (v. 2).

(15) The same plague shall strike the horses – “Their flesh and eyes shall rot” (cf. v. 12).

(16) All who survive – This is “the third” that he mentioned (13:8).

Since it said **לְמֶלֶךְ (to the King)** with a *sheva* under the ל, and the ל does not have a *patah*, it appears that it is in construct form.⁷⁴⁸ [Its] meaning is **the King of the Lord**, namely, the

the “literal” image of a raised hand is a metaphor for killing and aggression. By contrast, his subsequent “non-literal” interpretation maintains that the image is not of a raised hand at all but rather of a severed hand. If Ibn Ezra indeed intended that the metaphor depicts a “literal” raised hand, then this first interpretation corresponds to the oral commentary’s remark that people will raise their hands against one another and kill each other. For another example of Ibn Ezra arguing in favor of a “literal” interpretation (כמשמעו) of an image that is nevertheless a metaphor, cf. his view that the cloud metaphor in Ecc. 12:2 is “literal.”

⁷⁴⁵ **Or it is like “shall be cut off”** – He appears to be referring to the view of Jonathan, who translates וְעֵלְתָהּ as וְתִתְלַל, meaning that the person’s hand “will be torn off” when he extends it to another for assistance (cf. Radak).

⁷⁴⁶ **So, too, “My couch עלה” [means that] it was cut off and ceased** – According to יסוד מורה (7:11) Ibn Ezra interprets the incident involving Reuben and Bilhah (Gen. 35:22) such “that after Bilhah was defiled, Jacob never again had sexual relations with a woman” (trans. Strickman, *The Secret of the Torah* 106-108). The same interpretation also appears in the oral commentary to Gen. 35:22. Hence, according to In Ezra, Jacob’s bed “went up” means that it “ceased.” Ibn Ezra also cites this same proof-text elsewhere as evidence that the root עלה can be a metaphor for cessation (Exod. 16:14). For further discussion of Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of the incident of Reuben and Bilhah, cf. Mondschein (שיטה שלישיית) 174-175)

⁷⁴⁷ **Also Judah – the rest of the nation that remained – shall wage war in Jerusalem with the enemy, to eradicate its memory** – The oral commentary appears to cite a dispute regarding whether “Judah” in this verse refers to Jews who entered the war in order to defend Jerusalem or Jews who were initially coerced to fight alongside Jerusalem’s enemies (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Although the standard commentary’s phrase “shall wage war... with (עם) the enemy” could be interpreted as “against the enemy” or “alongside the enemy” if read in isolation, the fact that these Jews are fighting “with the enemy to eradicate its memory” clarifies that Ibn Ezra is adopting the first view in the oral commentary, that these Jews were not fighting alongside the Gentile enemies but rather were Jerusalemites defending their city. Ibn Ezra refers to them as “the rest of the nation” because v. 2 asserted that many Jerusalemites will be exiled during this war. So v. 14 speaks of the surviving Jerusalemites from the battle in v. 2.

⁷⁴⁸ **Since it said לְמֶלֶךְ with a sheva under the ל... it appears that it is in construct form** – Normally, “to the king” would be vocalized לְמֶלֶךְ, with the *patah* under the prefix ל representing the definite article. In its absolute state, the word לְמֶלֶךְ – with a *sheva* under the prefix ל – is indefinite (“to a king”). Ibn Ezra assumes that the word must be definite in our verse, since the prophet is clearly referring to a specific king. He therefore suggests that the word לְמֶלֶךְ begins a construct chain (“the king of the Lord of Hosts”), because the definite article can only appear before the last noun of a construct chain even if the earlier nouns are also definite. Hence, “the kings of...” is vocalized לְמֶלֶךְ, with a *sheva*, just like “a king” in the absolute state.

Messiah, in the sense of: “I have installed My king” (Ps. 2:6).⁷⁴⁹ And, “All nations bow to him,”⁷⁵⁰ was written about Solomon or the Messiah,⁷⁵¹ his descendant.⁷⁵²

(17) [Any of the earth’s communities that does not make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem to bow low to the King Lord of Hosts] – The ׀ of ׀לֵא (not) upon them shall there be rain is like a soft *fa* (ف) in the language of Ishmael;⁷⁵³ likewise, “On the third day, (׀) Abraham looked up and saw the place from afar” (Gen. 22:4), “[But those who paid no regard to the word of the Lord], (׀) they left their slaves... [in the open]” (Exod. 9:21),⁷⁵⁴ [and,] “Then (׀) this stone, [which I have set up as a pillar, shall be God’s abode]” (Gen. 28:22).⁷⁵⁵ One lacks

Ibn Ezra’s claim that our verse contains a construct chain referring to the Messiah (“the king of the Lord of Hosts”) is also suggested by Jacob b. Reuben. Ibn Ezra is rejecting the view of some of his predecessors that ׀לֵא should be interpreted as a definite noun in absolute state despite the lack of a *pataḥ* under the ׀ (cf. my supercommentary to the oral commentary). According to them, “the King” refers to God, with the next phrase (“the Lord of Hosts”) in apposition to it: “the King, the Lord of Hosts.” Abarbanel endorses Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of ׀לֵא. The oral commentary cites both interpretations without expressing a preference for either one. Tanḥum also cites both views, but he appears to prefer the view that ׀לֵא is a definite, absolute noun referring to God.

⁷⁴⁹ **In the sense of “I have installed My king”** – This proof-text demonstrates that God refers to a Davidic king as His king. Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Psalms *ad loc.* cites our verse as another example of a Davidic king being referred to as God’s king.

⁷⁵⁰ **All nations bow to him** – This exact verse does not appear in the Bible; Ibn Ezra presumably intends Ps. 72:11, “Let all kings bow to him and all nations serve him.”

⁷⁵¹ **“All nations bow to him” was written about Solomon or the Messiah** – This proof-text demonstrates that the Gentile nations and their leaders bow before Davidic kings, further supporting Ibn Ezra’s argument that Zechariah can be describing a Davidic king rather than God as “the king” in our verse. Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Ps. 72:11 similarly writes that this verse could be describing Solomon or the Messiah.

⁷⁵² **Solomon or the Messiah his descendant** – Roth (מבשר עזרא 121, 148) observes that this is one of several instances in which Ibn Ezra implies that the Messiah will descend from Solomon rather than a different son of David (cf. both introductions to Psalms, Ps. 72:1, both commentaries to Cant. 8:12). This belief was shared by Maimonides, whose twelfth principle of faith requires believing in a Messiah who descends from Solomon (Introduction to mSan. 10:1; *Epistle to Yemen* Ch. 3, Halkin xv, Shailat 151; *Book of Commandments*, prohibition #362; cf. Chajes, אגרת בקרת 25a and 28a). For a comparison of this belief (focusing on Maimonides) to other rabbinic sources, see Warhaftig, משיח בן דוד ושלמה.

⁷⁵³ **The ׀ of ׀לֵא (not) upon them shall there be rain is like a soft *fa* in the language of Ishmael** – See notes 294 and 295 above. Tanḥum also notes the superfluous nature of the ׀, but he does not add this explanation.

⁷⁵⁴ **[But those who paid no regard to the word of the Lord], (׀) they left their slaves... [in the open]** – In this verse, the ׀ introduces the main clause in a *casus pendens* construction.

⁷⁵⁵ **Then (׀) this stone, [which I have set up as a pillar, shall be God’s abode]** – See note 296 above.

the ability to explain this in a different language, for this linguistic [phenomenon] is only found in the holy language and the language of Ishmael.⁷⁵⁶

The meaning of **rain** on [the Feast of] Booths (cf. v. 16) is as our sages transmitted to mention “the power of [God bringing] rain” (mTan. 1:1) and to beg for mercy regarding it.⁷⁵⁷

(18) If [the community of Egypt does not make this pilgrimage] – It mentions the community of Egypt since rain never falls there, because the Nile waters their fields. So they are not concerned if rain does not fall upon them.⁷⁵⁸ Even though they are not concerned about a stoppage of rain, due to the Nile, the plague of “all of the peoples” (v. 12) shall befall them.

Upon them there shall be **no** rain: the punishment [that] shall befall those who “do not make the pilgrimage” (v. 17).⁷⁵⁹

And the word **upon them** (**עֲלֵיהֶם**) serves for another – **The plague shall be upon them:**⁷⁶⁰ “Their flesh shall rot” (v. 12).⁷⁶¹

⁷⁵⁶ **The holy language and the language of Ishmael** – These phrases allude to Hebrew and Arabic, respectively.

⁷⁵⁷ **To mention “the power of [God bringing] rain” and to beg for mercy regarding it** – Starting on the Feast of Booths, the Mishnah mandates that prayers mention God’s power to bring rain, since the rainy season in Israel begins at that time (cf. bTan. 2a). Ibn Ezra points to this law in order to highlight the seasonal connection between rain and the Feast of Booths, which arises in this verse.

⁷⁵⁸ **It mentions the community of Egypt since rain never falls there... So they are not concerned if rain does not fall upon them** – Many exegetes make the same observation regarding why the prophet singles out Egypt (Al-Qumisi, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Tanhum, Abarbanel), although al-Qumisi notes that the Egyptians do need rain to fall in neighboring countries in order to fill the Nile.

⁷⁵⁹ **Upon them there shall be no rain: the punishment [that] shall befall those who “do not make the pilgrimage”** – For an explanation of this cryptic comment, see my supercommentary to the oral commentary.

⁷⁶⁰ **עֲלֵיהֶם serves for another – The plague shall be upon them:** – The word עֲלֵיהֶם appears once in the verse, but it both concludes the preceding phrase and begins this phrase: Rain “shall not be upon them; [upon them] shall be the plague...” Hence, not only will Egypt not receive rain (which hardly affects Egypt, due to the Nile), but Egypt will also be struck by the plague of rotting eyes and flesh.

⁷⁶¹ **Their flesh shall rot** – Ibn Ezra interprets “the plague” in this verse as the aforementioned plague of rotting eyes (v. 12). Eliezer of Beaugency and Radak interpret “the plague” in the same manner, but others interpret

(19) And **such**⁷⁶² shall be the **הַטָּאָה** – the punishment⁷⁶³ – like “than the punishment (פְּהַטָּאָה) of Sodom” (Lam. 4:6).⁷⁶⁴

The punishment of all nations who have rivers that water their land:⁷⁶⁵ They will not be spared from the plague. I myself have also seen countries like this.

(20) In [that] day... on the **מְצִלּוֹת** (bells) [is] from the same derivation as **תְּצַלְקָה**⁷⁶⁶ (“will tingle”; II Kings 21:12),⁷⁶⁷ bells (צִלְצִלִּים) that hang from the necks of horses that make the pilgrimage.

“The plague” of this verse as more closely related to the lack of rain, meaning that Egypt will experience famine and drought just like those nations that depend on rainfall (cf. Rashi, Joseph Kara, Student of Trani, Abarbanel).⁷⁶² **And such** – Ibn Ezra writes the Hebrew word **וְזֹאת**, with a Hebrew prefix **ו** (“and”) that does not appear in standard editions of the Masoretic text. Most likely, he was citing imprecisely from memory (cf. v. 12, which contains the word **וְזֹאת** with the prefix **ו**), but the variant **וְזֹאת** does appear in several of Kennicott’s witnesses to our verse. So it is not impossible that Ibn Ezra saw a Bible with the word **וְזֹאת** in our verse.

⁷⁶³ **The הַטָּאָה – the punishment** – The word **הַטָּאָה** frequently connotes sin or guilt, so Ibn Ezra stresses that in this verse it connotes punishment. Jonathan translates **הַטָּאָה** as **פּוֹרְעֵנוּת** (punishment; but cf. Sperber’s variants), and Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, and Tanḥum share this interpretation.

⁷⁶⁴ **Like “than the punishment (מְהַטָּאָה) of Sodom”** – This proof-text only constitutes a compelling proof if one interprets it as Ibn Ezra does. NJPS translates it: “The guilt (עוֹן) of my poor people exceeded the iniquity (הַטָּאָה) of Sodom, which was overthrown in a moment, without a hand striking it.” Similarly, the Aramaic Targum of Lamentations translates both **עוֹן** and **הַטָּאָה** in 4:6 as **חֻרְבַּת** (“the sin/guilt of”). However, according to Ibn Ezra (Lam. *ad loc.*, Gen. 4:13), the context of the end of the verse – which describes Sodom’s destruction – proves that the words **עוֹן** and **הַטָּאָה** both connote punishment in that verse (cf. Joseph Kara and Ibn Caspi *ad loc.*; Ramban, Job 42:8). Commenting on other verses (Job 14:16, Dan. 9:24), Ralbag also cites Lam. 4:6 as a proof-text for the meaning of **הַטָּאָה** in our verse, so he apparently adopts Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of Lam. 4:6.

⁷⁶⁵ **The punishment of all nations who have rivers that water their land** – The verse warns: “Such shall be the punishment of Egypt and of all other nations that do not come up to observe the Feast of Booths,” implying that “all other nations” includes all of mankind. However, that would be redundant, since v. 17 already threatened a drought in “any of the earth’s communities that does not make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.” Ibn Ezra therefore limits the phrase “all other nations” in our verse to other nations that – like Egypt – do not depend on local rainfall due to their large rivers.

⁷⁶⁶ **הַ תְּצַלְקָה** – The HaKeter edition cites I Sam. 3:11 (which contains the *qal* verb **תְּצַלְקָה**) but notes that Ibn Ezra is adopting a defective spelling (**תְּצַלְקָה**), as opposed to the plene spelling in the Masoretic text. Given that the consonants **תְּצַלְקָה** in Ibn Ezra’s text can easily be vocalized as **תְּצַלְקָה** and correspond perfectly to the Masoretic spelling of the *nif'al* verb in II Kings 21:12, I have preferred to cite that source. Either verse would serve Ibn Ezra’s purpose, which is to cite a verb from the root **צלל** (cf. Ibn Janah, *ההשגה*, Tene 197).

⁷⁶⁷ **מְצִלּוֹת [is] from the same derivation as הַ תְּצַלְקָה** – Ibn Ezra interprets **מְצִלּוֹת** as “bells that hang on horses’ necks and make noise” (oral commentary). The interpretation of **מְצִלּוֹת** as bells is shared by many exegetes (Rashi, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Student of Trani) and one interpretation in the Talmud (bPes. 50a), although exegetes differ regarding whether these bells were placed on the animal’s forehead or neck. Many medieval grammarians indicate that the root **צלל** in the case of **מְצִלּוֹת** shares the meaning of the noun **צל** (“shade”), cognate with the Arabic root **ظلل** (Ḥayyuj, *שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק*, Wated and Sivan 358-359, and *כתאב* חתאב, Maman and Ben Porat 320-323, Basal 256-257; Ibn Janah, *השרשים* 429; cf. *ההשגה*, Tene 197-198).

[The bells on the horses shall be inscribed “Holy to the Lord”] – The priests will make metal pots for cooking out of [the bells].⁷⁶⁸ And [the pots] shall be abundant like the basins (כַּמְזַרְקִים) before the altar for sprinkling (לְזָרוֹק) blood.⁷⁶⁹

(21) And it shall come to pass... A Canaanite (כְּנַעֲנִי) [is] a trader; its meaning is that nobody will sell⁷⁷⁰ any of the pots. As for the one who explained [that it is] an actual Canaanite, that has no sense, for that tribe is not known nowadays.⁷⁷¹

However, the Hebrew root צלל is a homonym, and Ibn Ezra appears to disagree with those who derive it from צלל in the case of מְצִלוֹת, because he compares מְצִלוֹת to the verb “to make a sound” (e.g., ring, tinkle) in his choice of proof-text (cognate with the Arabic root جَلَلَ). Radak agrees with Ibn Ezra’s view (624). Al-Qumisi indicates that מְצִלוֹת are saddles, which might also be Jonathan’s view (cf. Jastrow 664). For a summary of all medieval interpretations of מְצִלוֹת, see Tanḥum, as well as Maman and Ben Porat (Ḥayyuj, כתאב אלנתר, 322 n. 979).

⁷⁶⁸ The priests will make metal pots... out of [the bells] – The verse could be interpreted as making two unrelated statements (cf. Abarbanel): A) “The bells on the horses shall be inscribed ‘Holy to the Lord.’” B) “The metal pots in the House of the Lord” – which are distinct from the bells – “shall be like the basins before the altar.” According to Ibn Ezra, however, “the bells” are synonymous with “the metal pots”; the bells shall be “holy to the Lord,” meaning that they shall be made into metal pots for priests to use in the Temple. Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Radak share Ibn Ezra’s view that the bells will be made into pots (cf. Tanḥum).

⁷⁶⁹ כְּמִזְרָקִים... for sprinkling (לְזָרוֹק) blood – Ibn Saruk (מחברת מנחם, Sáenz-Badillos 163*) interprets noun מִזְרָק in a similar manner, as a vessel for “sprinkling” (המזה), or in Philipowski’s edition (84) as a vessel of “the altar” (המזבח). This meaning is apparent from other verses, too (e.g., Num. 7:13).

⁷⁷⁰ Will sell – This translation assumes that Ibn Ezra’s Hebrew word ימכר is vocalized יִמְכַר, in *qal*. The word could also be vocalized as a *nif'al* verb (יִמְכַר), in which case it would be passive, meaning that no pots “will be sold.” One manuscript employs the plene spelling ימכור which unambiguously considers the word a *qal* verb (MS Leeuwarden 21).

⁷⁷¹ A Canaanite [is] a trader... As for the one who explained [that it is] an actual Canaanite, that has no sense, for that tribe is not known nowadays – The oral commentary cites both possible interpretation of Canaanite without expressing a preference for either view. Jonathan translates “Canaanite” as a trader (עבִיד תגרא); this interpretation also appears in the Talmud (bPes. 50a) and is widespread among subsequent exegetes (al-Qumisi, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Student of Trani, Tanḥum; cf. Abarbanel). Some of these exegetes point to other verses where Canaan is associated with commerce (Isa. 23:8, Hos. 12:8; cf. Prov. 31:24). Indeed, Ibn Ezra to Hos. 12:9 cites our verse as evidence that “Canaanite” can refer to a trader.

The view that “Canaanite” means an ethnic Canaanite is cited by Radak (*ad loc.* and השרשים 330) in the name of his father, Joseph Kimḥi, who interprets our verse as alluding to the Gibeonites of Jos. 9. Although Joseph Kimḥi is the only known Jewish exegete to offer this interpretation, it is doubtful that Ibn Ezra is referring to him when citing this view. Joseph Kimḥi was a younger contemporary of Ibn Ezra and would have been approximately 50 years old when Ibn Ezra completed the standard commentary in December 1156. Although it is thus theoretically possible that he and Ibn Ezra crossed paths when Ibn Ezra was in Narbonne between 1148 and 1154, there is no concrete evidence that the two ever met, and Ibn Ezra never mentions Joseph Kimḥi in any of his writings (cf. Lipshitz, עיון במשנת הראב"ע, 1-17, and Simon’s supercommentary to Ibn Ezra, Hos. 14:3). Moreover, even if Ibn Ezra met Joseph Kimḥi in Narbonne, such an encounter would not explain how he knew Joseph’s interpretation of “Canaanite” early enough for it to be mentioned in the oral commentary, which was composed earlier in Italy. Hence, while Ibn Ezra could have met Joseph Kimḥi or

All of these passages at the end of this book are for the future. As for the one who said that they already passed, let him show us the fresh water flowing out of Jerusalem in the summer and winter (cf. v. 8)!⁷⁷²

heard of his interpretations through a second-hand oral report, Ibn Ezra likely intends someone else as his source for interpreting “Canaanite” literally.

The Talmud (*ibid.*) presents an additional view that interprets, “And there will no longer be a כְּנַעֲנִי,” as a wordplay for a promise that there will be no poor people (אִין כְּאִין עֲנִי). That view is cited by Rashi and Joseph Kara, but Ibn Ezra presumably deemed it too fanciful to even mention.

⁷⁷² **As for the one who said that they already passed, let him show us the fresh water flowing out of Jerusalem in the summer and winter** – Like Saadiah before him (*Beliefs and Opinions* 8:8, Rosenblatt 315-319), Ibn Ezra considered Zech. 13-14 to be messianic prophecies. Saadiah and Ibn Ezra object to allegorizing these prophecies, which would enable the claim that they were already fulfilled (in their metaphoric sense) during the Second Temple. See notes 690 and 691 above.

Ibn Ezra to Malachi – Standard Commentary

The Book of Malachi: Some say that he is Ezra, but in my opinion [Malachi] is his name, just as it is written.⁷⁷³ He is the last of the prophets, and due to this, he warned, “Be mindful of the Teaching of My servant Moses” (3:22), because prophecy ceased from Israel with his death.⁷⁷⁴

Chapter 1

(1) A מִשָּׂא (pronouncement) is a prophecy.⁷⁷⁵

Regarding the one who said that [Malachi] prophesied about Israel before they were exiled to Assyria, and that [Malachi] did not [live] during the Second Temple, he did not speak the

⁷⁷³ **Some say that he is Ezra, but in my opinion [Malachi] is his name, just as it is written** – Malachi literally means “my messenger,” so it could potentially be interpreted as a title or description rather than a proper name (cf. 3:1, Isa. 42:19, Hag. 1:13). The Talmud thus cites a debate regarding whether Malachi is a proper name or the title of Ezra or Mordecai (bMeg. 15a). The identification of Malachi with Ezra is adopted by the Tosefta Targum (<http://cal.huc.edu/> *ad loc.*; Kasher, תוספתות תרגום 225) and is cited by Jacob b. Reuben. Some medieval rabbis understood that the Talmud endorses that view despite presenting it as the minority view (*Tosafot* bYeb. 86b s.v. מפני מה, bKet. 26a s.v. בתר דקנסיהו; cf. Rashi to 2:11, Pseudo-Rashi to Ezra 7:6). However, Ibn Ezra argues in favor of Malachi being a proper name, because it is written in our verse as the prophet’s name: “through Malachi.” Radak and Abarbanel also reject the identification of Malachi with Ezra, noting that Ezra is referred to as a scribe but not as a prophet. Maimonides, too, implies that Mordecai, Ezra, and Malachi are distinct individuals by listing them separately as members of the Great Assembly (Introduction to Mishnah).

⁷⁷⁴ **He warned, “Be mindful of the Teaching of My servant Moses” because prophecy ceased... with his death** – Joseph Kara (3:22) also observes that the Malachi issues his admonition to obey Moses’ teachings because prophecy would cease after him. Ibn Ezra cites this verse now in order to support his view that Malachi was the final prophet and to reject the dissenting view that he will subsequently cite.

⁷⁷⁵ **A מִשָּׂא is a prophecy** – The word מִשָּׂא literally means “a burden,” so Ibn Ezra is stressing that in this context it refers to a prophecy (cf. Ibn Balaam, Abramson, שלשה ספרים 63). He might also be objecting to Judeo-Arabic translations that translated מִשָּׂא as a “tale” (קצה; cf. Schlossberg, לתרגומו של יפת 135 n. 31).

truth (cf. Job 42:7).⁷⁷⁶ For [it is written] in Ezra: “The children of Israel made,”⁷⁷⁷ yet most of them were from Judah and Benjamin. Furthermore, it is written: “For Judah has profaned what is holy to the Lord... and married a daughter of alien gods” (Mal. 2:11), and that [refers to] the matter of “foreign women” that is written in Ezra (10:2). Moreover, [Malachi] said about Edom, “I have made his hills a desolation” (1:3), and that happened after Jerusalem’s destruction.⁷⁷⁸

(2) I have shown love – The meaning is: **Esau** and **Jacob** were the sons of one father,⁷⁷⁹ and I swore that “I will maintain My covenant with Isaac” (Gen. 17:21). And I loved **Jacob**, so I gave him the land of Canaan that I swore to his fathers to give to his offspring (cf. Deut. 10:11 and 34:4). **(3-4)** But I expelled **Esau** from the Lord’s land; I gave him Mount Seir out of respect for his father, but due to [Esau’s] wickedness I made **his hills a desolation**, and so,

⁷⁷⁶ **Regarding the one who said that [Malachi] prophesied about Israel before they were exiled to Assyria, and that [Malachi] did not [live] during the Second Temple, he did not speak the truth** – I have not found a source for this view, which seems extremely problematic for the reasons that Ibn Ezra proceeds to explain.

⁷⁷⁷ **[It is written] in Ezra: “The children of Israel made”** – The Hebrew “verse” בני ישראל does not appear anywhere in Ezra or Nehemiah, although several verses in these books describe the residents of early Second-Temple Judea as “the children of Israel” (Ezra 3:1, 6:16,21, and 7:7; Neh. 1:6, 2:10, 7:72, 9:1, and 10:40). Any of these verses could prove Ibn Ezra’s point – that the Judeans of Ezra and Nehemiah’s time are described as “the children of Israel” despite overwhelmingly descending from the southern kingdom of Judah. Ibn Ezra likely intended Ezra 6:16 (נַעֲבֹדוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), which is the Aramaic equivalent of the Hebrew ויעשו בני ישראל (cf. Schrem 45a), unless he named the wrong book and intended a verse in II Chronicles that employs the complete Hebrew phrase וַיַּעֲשׂוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל in reference to the residents of Judah during the late First Temple Period, after the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel (II Chron. 30:21 or 35:17).

⁷⁷⁸ **Regarding the one who said that [Malachi] prophesied about Israel before they were exiled... [Malachi] said about Edom, “I have made his hills a desolation” (1:3), and that happened after Jerusalem’s destruction** – Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Obad. 1:10 cites a slew of verses to prove that Edom was destroyed after Jerusalem. Tanḥum anonymously adopts Ibn Ezra’s opening comments, citing the same anonymous view that dates Malachi before the exile of Israel and then presenting most of the same arguments to dismiss that view.

⁷⁷⁹ **Esau and Jacob were the sons of one father** – The HaKeter edition reads בני אב אחד, [אחים] היו עשו ויעקב (“Esau and Jacob were the sons of one father, [brothers]”). However, the only witness that contains the entire phrase בני אב אחד אחים היו is Venice 1524, which is an eclectic print edition. More likely, the word אחים (brothers) is a corruption of the word אחד (one), due to a scribal error resulting from the visual resemblance of אחד and אחים as well as the scribe’s awareness that Jacob and Esau were brothers. Three manuscripts contain the phrase עשו ויעקב היו עשו ויעקב, which is unintelligible (literally, “Esau and Jacob were the father of brothers”) and presumably indicates an erroneous replacement of אחד with אחים.

too, called⁷⁸⁰ him **the region of wickedness**. Yet, you – sons of Jacob – you have returned to the land of the covenant.⁷⁸¹

(3) For beasts (לְתַנִּים) of the desert. תַּנּוֹת are females, while [תַּנִּים] are males.⁷⁸²

(4) Whereas [Edom says:] רָשָׁנוּ (We have been impoverished) is from the same

derivation as “[Give me neither] poverty (רָש) ⁷⁸³ nor riches” (Prov. 30:8).⁷⁸⁴

And they – those who call – shall call them.⁷⁸⁵

⁷⁸⁰ **Called** – This Hebrew verb appears in most witnesses in the third person (either קראוהו or קראהו). The third-person verb is a paraphrase of v. 4, “They shall call them ‘the region of wickedness.’” Regarding the antecedent of “they,” cf. note 785 below.

⁷⁸¹ **And I loved Jacob, so I gave him the land of Canaan... But I expelled Esau... I gave him Mount Seir... but due to [Esau’s] wickedness I made his hills a desolation... Yet, you... have returned to the land of the covenant** – According to Ibn Ezra, God expressed His hatred toward Esau by expelling him from the Promised Land and subsequently destroying his new territory. God expressed His love for Jacob by granting Jacob the Promised Land and returning Jacob’s descendants there to rebuild it after its destruction. Radak describes God’s hatred and love in a similar manner. Rashi also explains God’s love as granting the Promised Land to Jacob while expelling Esau from it, but he does not focus on the return to that land after its earlier destruction.

⁷⁸² **תַּנּוֹת are females, while תַּנִּים are males** – The word תַּנִּים means “jackals” (masc. pl.), so Ibn Ezra is explaining our verse’s noun תַּנּוֹת (fem. pl.) as female jackals. No singular noun תַּנּוֹת or תַּנּוֹת appears in the Bible for one male or female jackal (cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 545). Ibn Ezra might be emphasizing that the word תַּנּוֹת is the feminine equivalent of תַּנִּים, lest one associate תַּנּוֹת with the noun תַּנִּים (serpents; cf. the oral commentary, which appears to interpret תַּנּוֹת as female serpents). Although Ibn Ezra does not elaborate on the meaning of תַּנִּים here, his descriptions of them in Deut. 32:10, Isa. 43:20, and Job 30:29 indicate that he interpreted תַּנִּים as jackals.

⁷⁸³ **Poverty (רָש)** – Ibn Ezra spells this word as רָש in Hebrew characters, while standard editions of the Masoretic text of Proverbs have the unusual plene spelling רָאש (cf. Kennicott and BHS, Prov. *ad loc.*).

⁷⁸⁴ **רָשָׁנוּ is from the same derivation as “[Give me neither] poverty (רָש) nor riches”** – In both commentaries, Ibn Ezra’s interprets רָשָׁנוּ as, “We became impoverished.” This interpretation agrees with Jonathan’s translation (אתמסכנא) and Yefet’s translation (אפתקנא; Schlossberg, לתרגומו של יפת 136) and is shared by many medieval exegetes (Ibn Saruk, מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 166, Sáenz-Badillos 346*; Jacob b. Reuben, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak, Student of Trani; but cf. al-Qumisi), although modern scholars do not necessarily accept it (cf. BDB 958).

While medieval exegetes largely agree regarding the meaning of רָשָׁנוּ, its etymology was less clear to them. Hayyuj (שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק, Wated and Sivan 366; cf. כתאב אלנתף, Maman and Ben Porat 322-323), Ibn Janah (השרשים 487,531), and Radak (השרשים 720) maintain that רָשָׁנוּ derives from the geminate root רָשָׁ. However, they acknowledge that the hollow root רוּש or רִיש can also denote poverty, and they derive the word רָאש in Ibn Ezra’s proof-text from the hollow root (Hayyuj, *ibid.* 176; Ibn Janah, השרשים 475; Radak, השרשים 698). Ibn Ezra does not identify the root of רָשָׁנוּ, but by citing Prov. 30:8 as a proof-text, he implies that רָשָׁנוּ and רָאש share the same root (unless he merely intends that two different roots – רוּש and רִיש – share the same meaning; cf. note 814 below). Indeed, Tanḥum appears to understand that Ibn Ezra derived רָשָׁנוּ from a hollow root, since he presents the view that equates רָשָׁנוּ with רָאש in Proverbs as disagreeing with those who derive רָשָׁנוּ from רוּש.

⁷⁸⁵ **And they – those who call – shall call them** – Ibn Ezra is responding to the lack of an antecedent for the plural subject “they.” Many translations opt to translate the verb as passive (e.g., JPS 1917: “And they shall be

(5) **Your eyes** behold this, so it would be appropriate for you to acknowledge God and to **declare, “Great is the Lord!”** It is possible that **above the borders of Israel** is connected to **and you**, so [the verse] is thus: **“You – who dwell above the borders of Israel – you will declare, ‘Great is the Lord!’”**⁷⁸⁶

(6) After explaining how God loved Jacob, he begins to admonish the honored ones from among them, namely, teachers of the Torah, who were priests.

A son honors [his] father – It is known in the heart’s intuition that a son is obligated to honor [his] father, and a **slave** must fear **his master**.⁷⁸⁷

And the answer to, **“How have we scorned [Your name],”** is: (7) **Offer**, [i.e.,] that you **offer [defiled food on My altar]**

called”), but Ibn Ezra interprets the verb as active, referring to anonymous people who will call Edom “the region of wickedness, the people damned forever of the Lord.” Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, and Radak similarly interpret the verb as referring to “the nations” who will call Edom thus.

⁷⁸⁶ **It is possible that above the borders of Israel is connected...** **“You – who dwell above the borders of Israel – you will declare, ‘Great is the Lord!’”** – Ibn Ezra is addressing an ambiguity regarding the phrase “above/beyond (מֵעַל) the borders of Israel”: According to a narrow-scope reading, it describes God’s future greatness (“You shall declare, ‘Great is the Lord beyond the borders of Israel!’”), while Ibn Ezra is suggesting a wide-scope reading in which the phrase instead describes the people who will issue their declaration while they are “above the borders of Israel.” The narrow-scope reading posed exegetes with a theological challenge, since – depending on how one translates מֵעַל – it could implicitly confine God’s greatness to a specific location or circumstance (either within – i.e., “above” – Israel, or outside – i.e., “beyond” – Israel). Jonathan favors the narrow-scope reading, so he renders the verse: “You shall declare, ‘The Lord’s glory shall be great, *who will expand* (דֹּאפְתִי) the borders of Israel” (cf. Student of Trani). For other interpretations based on the narrow-scope reading, see Rashi and Eliezer of Beaugency. Like Ibn Ezra, Jacob b. Reuben and Radak also favor the same wide-scope reading. It is clear from their commentaries that according to the wide-scope reading, מֵעַל should be understood as “above” the borders, because the people who would be praising God are those who returned to Israel and did not remain in exile, beyond Israel’s borders. Tanḥum and Abarbanel present both views, although Tanḥum appears to favor the narrow-scope reading.

⁷⁸⁷ **A son honors [his] father – It is known... that a son is obligated to honor [his] father, and a slave must fear his master** – Ibn Ezra interprets this phrase as describing a widely-accepted norm that the Jews violated by failing to honor their “father” and “master.” The oral commentary similarly writes: “The way of the world is that the son honors the father.” In his grammatical writings, Ibn Ezra calls attention to the fact that “son” is the subject and “father” is the object of this phrase despite the absence of the Hebrew direct object marker אַתּ before “father” (cf. *Moznayim*, Jimenez Patón 94*; צחור, Lippmann 34a, Valle Rodriguez 84).

And why do you say, “**How have we defiled You?**” This is the defilement, and this is what you have done because **My altar is contemptible** in your eyes.⁷⁸⁸

And [**My altar**] is **the table [of the Lord]**.⁷⁸⁹ It is written about the altar, in Ezekiel: [“A wooden altar... And he said to me,] ‘This is the table that stands before the Lord’” (41:22).⁷⁹⁰

(8) When [you present a blind animal for sacrifice there is no] evil in your eyes.⁷⁹¹

לְפָנֶיךָ (to your governor) is like “the governor (פֶּהָה) of Judah” (Hag. 1:1).⁷⁹²

Will he accept you to love you in his heart? **Will he show you favor** to fulfill your request?⁷⁹³

(9) And now [implore the favor of God] – The custom⁷⁹⁴ of righteous priests was to pray on behalf of Israel, as is written in the Book of Joel: “Let the priests weep [and say: ‘Oh,

⁷⁸⁸ **This is the defilement, and this is what you have done because My altar is contemptible in your eyes** – “This” refers to the next verse, which elaborates regarding the manner in which the Jews offered inferior animals as sacrifices.

⁷⁸⁹ **And [My altar] is the table [of the Lord]** – Ibn Ezra is stressing that God’s “table” in this verse is the altar upon which sacrifices were offered because in the context of the Temple, “the table” typically refers to the table upon which the showbread was placed (Exod. 25:23-30, I Kings 7:48). In vv. 12-13, Ibn Ezra does indeed interpret “the table” as the table of the showbread.

⁷⁹⁰ **This is the table that stands before the Lord** – This verse in Ezekiel describes the altar and thus proves that the Bible can refer to the altar as a “table.” Ibn Ezra assumes that the altar and the table in Ezek. 41:22 are one and the same, as do later *peshat* exegetes to that verse (Radak, Menahem b. Simeon), with Menahem b. Simeon citing our verse as a proof-text. They are rejecting earlier rabbinic interpretations that distinguished between the altar and the table in Ezek. 41:22 (Jonathan *ad loc.*, bBer. 55a, bHag. 27a).

⁷⁹¹ **[There is no] evil in your eyes** – Ibn Ezra adds the phrase “in your eyes” lest one interpret the verse as an endorsement of offering a blind or blemished animal as a sacrifice. Joseph Kara, Radak, and Tanḥum similarly interpret, “There is no evil,” as the people’s erroneous claim (cf. Yefet’s translation, Schlossberg, עיבוד... לתרגומו 138). Jonathan and Rashi render the verse a rhetorical question: “*Is it not* evil when you present a blind animal for sacrifice!”

⁷⁹² **לְפָנֶיךָ is like “the governor of Judah”** – Ibn Ezra offers the proof-text from Haggai to prove that the word פֶּהָה means “governor.” Regarding the different forms of this word in Hebrew, cf. my supercommentary to Hag. 1:14.

⁷⁹³ **Will he accept you to love you in his heart? Will he show you favor to fulfill your request** – These comments constitute an example of Ibn Ezra’s belief that roughly synonymous phrases must differ in meaning unless there is a literary or rhetorical need for repeating the same idea in different words (as I discuss in the analytic introduction). He is thus distinguishing between “accept” and “show favor.”

⁷⁹⁴ **Custom** – The Hebrew word מִשְׁפֵּט could also be translated as “law,” but Ibn Ezra appears to be describing an accepted norm rather than an absolute obligation of religious law.

spare Your people, Lord!']” (2:17), and it is written there: “Then the Lord was roused on behalf of His land” (2:18).⁷⁹⁵

And now⁷⁹⁶ **implore the favor of God** regarding the curse by which we are cursed – as is written subsequently⁷⁹⁷ – **that He may be gracious unto us**, for this evil has befallen us on your account; that is [the meaning of] **this has been of your doing** to yourselves.⁷⁹⁸

(10) If only⁷⁹⁹ others, or one of you – if only it would be so, that others, or one of you, **would lock** the Temple court’s doors.

So you will **not תאירו** [means] kindle fire (תבעירו),⁸⁰⁰ from the same derivation as “I have seen the fire” (אור; Isa. 44:16). They all derive from אור.⁸⁰¹

(11) For from where the sun rises [to where it sets], i.e., from one end of the earth to the other end; such is the entire inhabited world. **And everywhere**, had I commanded, they would have offered;⁸⁰² something **burned (מקטר)** would have been **offered** before Me **and**

⁷⁹⁵ **It is written there: “Then the Lord was roused on behalf of His land”** – While the initial citation of Joel 2:17 suffices to demonstrate that the priests would pray on behalf of the nation, perhaps Ibn Ezra also cites 2:18 to prove that God endorsed this practice by accepting their prayers.

⁷⁹⁶ **And now** – Some witnesses read “and the meaning of” (וטעם) instead of “and now” (ועתה). Either reading could be plausible.

⁷⁹⁷ **The curse by which we are cursed, as is written subsequently** – Ibn Ezra is paraphrasing Mal. 3:9, and the curse is also mentioned in 2:2.

⁷⁹⁸ **To yourselves** – The additional word לכם (to yourselves) could be part of Ibn Ezra’s exegesis – stressing that the people brought harm upon themselves – but it does appear in a small number of witnesses cited by Kennicott and could thus be part of the verse in a biblical text that Ibn Ezra saw.

⁷⁹⁹ **If only** – Literally, “who would give” (מי יתן) – a Hebrew idiom equivalent to the English “if only.”

⁸⁰⁰ **So you will not תאירו – kindle fire (תבעירו)** – Ibn Ezra uses a more familiar synonym to explain the rarer verb תאירו (see note 801). Eliezer of Beaugency and Radak employ the same synonym.

⁸⁰¹ **From the same derivation as “I have seen the fire.” They all derive from אור** – Ibn Ezra uses this proof-text from Isaiah to demonstrate that the noun אור means “fire.” The word אור means “light,” so Ibn Ezra is stressing that the *hif’il* verb להאיר does not have its more common meaning “to illuminate/shine” (e.g., Num. 6:25) in our verse, but rather is a denominative verb from the noun אור (cf. Ibn Balaam, Abramson, שלשה ספרים, 146), and hence means “to kindle fire” (cf. Hayyuj, שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק, Wated and Sivan 126-127; Ibn Janah, 17 השרשים and ההשגה, Tene 53; Schlossberg, לתרגומו של יפת, 139 n. 48). Ibn Ezra also discusses the meaning of תאירו in ההגנה (Oshri 61).

⁸⁰² **Offered** – Many manuscripts read “offered to Me.”

pure oblation. Alternatively, **מְקַטֵּר** is a noun, like **קטרת** (incense).⁸⁰³ And they would have listened to My voice, to exalt **My great name**.⁸⁰⁴

Later, the rabbi and sage told me a very sound interpretation of this verse⁸⁰⁵ – and it connects to the context⁸⁰⁶ – that the prophet is rebuking the scorn and defilement that they desecrated God’s name. Therefore, he says that throughout the inhabited world, **from where the sun rises to where it sets, My name is great among the nations** and honored, so throughout the world this matter – that they honor and exalt **My name** – is deemed in My eyes as if **everywhere** they were bringing to Me – **to My name** – every sanctified⁸⁰⁷ and **offered** item that befits My honor, **and pure oblation**. Not like you do, to offer “defiled food” (1:7) and

⁸⁰³ **Alternatively, מְקַטֵּר is a noun, like קטרת (incense)** – This sentence is a parenthetical remark, before Ibn Ezra returns to his argument that Malachi is describing the hypothetical behavior of Gentiles rather than their actual behavior in his time. This parenthetical remark addresses the word **מְקַטֵּר**, which has the vowel pattern of a *hof'al* participle. Ibn Ezra initially interpreted it as an adjective, and – due to the lack of a modified noun – he added an implied noun – “[something] burned” (דברן מְקַטֵּר). He now presents an alternative: **מְקַטֵּר** is a noun (incense). This latter suggestion represents the view of Ibn Janah (השרשים 360 and 447), which Tanḥum cites approvingly.

⁸⁰⁴ **Had I commanded, they would have offered... they would have listened to My voice, to exalt My great name** – Ibn Ezra – like most exegetes – is troubled by the plain meaning of this verse, which seemingly asserts that Gentiles throughout the world glorify the Lord with their offerings. That assertion runs counter to the reality that Gentiles in Malachi’s time were predominantly pagan (cf. bMen. 110a, Num. R. to Num. 7:12). Ibn Ezra therefore claims that God merely intends that Gentiles *would have* served Him better than the Jews do had He commanded them as He commanded Jews. His interpretation is shared by Eliezer of Beaugency. Other exegetes suggest different resolutions to the same difficulty. Ibn Janah claims that when the verse cites the Gentiles’ “pure oblation,” it refers to oblations which the Gentiles *mistakenly believe* to be pure (הרקמה 329). Rashi (based on one view in bMen. 110a) suggests that even pagans who believe in multiple divine being acknowledge the Lord as “the God of gods” (cf. Radak). Joseph Kara suggests that although Gentiles normally worshipped other gods, *when* they chose to offer a sacrifice to the Lord, they would ensure that it was “pure.” Radak and Tanḥum anonymously cite Ibn Ezra’s explanation alongside other views, although Tanḥum rejects it. Abarbanel criticizes Ibn Ezra’s view on the grounds that the message of this verse loses its potency if it depends on a condition that was not actually fulfilled (God commanding the Gentiles to bring Him sacrifices).

⁸⁰⁵ **Later, the rabbi and sage told me a very sound interpretation of this verse** – This paragraph appears in all manuscripts, but its content indicates that it must be a gloss from a student of Ibn Ezra (cf. Filvarg 14b and Melammed, מפרשי המקרא 536), and it is therefore presented as a gloss in the HaKeter edition. The beginning of the next paragraph, which repeats “but you” immediately after, “But you profane it,” marks the end of the gloss.

⁸⁰⁶ **Connects to the context** – The Hebrew phrase **דבק אל העניין** is difficult to translate, but it appears to mean that this interpretation fits the context of the previous verses (cf. Ibn Ezra to Exod. 9:30).

⁸⁰⁷ **Sanctified** – Hebrew: **מקדש**. Some manuscripts read **מוקטט** (“burned”), like the Biblical text.

blind, lame, and sick [animals], which is not evil in your eyes (cf. 1:8).⁸⁰⁸ So why do you not take heart **that My name is great among the nations, (12) but you profane it?**

But you [profane it when you say, “The table of the Lord] is defiled” – [Its] meaning:

“Why should we be careful to stay holy [in order] to eat the showbread when it will not suffice for us? Better that it should be **defiled!**”

[The table of the Lord is defiled;] and the fruit (נִיבּוֹ), one who eats it⁸⁰⁹ can be treated with scorn – The meaning is double.⁸¹⁰

נִיבּוֹ refers to [God’s table’s] food, from the same derivation as “fruit” (תְּנוּבָה; Isa. 27:6). So, too, “the נִיבּ of the lips” (Isa. 57:19), which is “the fruit of the lips,” for everything has its “fruit” according to its character.⁸¹¹

You say, מִתְּלָאָה (Oh, what exhaustion!) is missing the letter ה,⁸¹² like “מִנְּהָ (what is that) in your hand” (Exod. 4:2).⁸¹³ **[You say,]** “What is this exhaustion? Due to the curse, there is no bread to put on the table.”

⁸⁰⁸ **Later, the rabbi and sage told me a very sound interpretation... this matter – that they honor and exalt My name – is deemed in My eyes as if everywhere they were bringing to Me... every sanctified and offered item that befits My honor... Not like you do, to offer “defiled food”... which is not evil in your eyes** – Ibn Ezra’s original interpretation addressed the reality that Gentiles were not offering sacrifices to God by explaining that they *would have* brought Him offerings had he commanded them to do so, as He commanded Israel. This gloss addresses the same issue in a different manner: Gentiles do not offer sacrifices to God, but they do honor and exalt Him, which God appreciates *as if* they brought him sacrifices. This latter interpretation also appears in the oral commentary.

⁸⁰⁹ **One who eats it** – Regarding my translation of the Hebrew word אֲכָלוּ, as “one who eats it,” see the oral commentary.

⁸¹⁰ **The meaning is double** – Ibn Ezra is identifying a parallelism, whereby the two halves of the verse express the same fundamental idea in different words – “The table of the Lord is defiled,” parallels, “And its fruit, one who eats it can be treated with scorn.”

⁸¹¹ **“The נִיבּ of the lips”... is “the fruit of the lips,” for everything has its “fruit” according to its character** – Ibn Ezra is citing this proof-text as evidence of the meaning of נִיבּוֹ. Ḥayyuj (שְׁלוּשַׁת חִיבּוּרֵי הַדְּקוּקָה) Wated and Sivan 148-149) and Ibn Janah (הַשְּׂרָשִׁים 290) also interpret נִיבּ as fruit in both our verse and the same proof-text. However, al-Qumisi draw a deeper connection between our verse and this proof-text, arguing that in our verse, too, נִיבּוֹ is a metaphor for God’s commands (=the “fruit of his” lips), rather than the “fruit” (=literal food) that is brought on the altar. Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Radak also interpret נִיבּוֹ as a metaphor for speech. However, Rashi and Joseph Kara – unlike Ibn Ezra – believe that the word נִיבּ is etymologically related to the word נִבֵּא (prophet); cf. Ibn Ezra to Exod. 7:1 and my supercommentary to Zech. 9:17.

וְהִפְחִתֶם (and so you puff) at it, that it is like soot (פִּיחַ)⁸¹⁴ and is inadequate.⁸¹⁵

And you bring [the stolen, the lame, and the sick; and you offer such as an oblation] –

So the table is empty, and there is an offering on the altar, [but] it is not as I desire.

(14) And cursed be a נוֹכֵל who has [a male] in his flock – [נוֹכֵל] means] one who thinks

(חושב), from the same derivation as “by their trickery” (בְּנִקְלֵיהֶם; Num. 25:18), in a manner of deception.⁸¹⁶

A male who is unblemished.⁸¹⁷

⁸¹² **מְתִלְאָה is missing the letter ה** – Ibn Ezra interprets the prefix מ as a shorter version of מה (“what”) and therefore interprets מְתִלְאָה as a rhetorical question: “What תִּלְאָה (exhaustion)!” (Ibn Ezra elaborates on the meaning of the word תִּלְאָה in Exod. 18:8.) Al-Qumisi interprets the prefix מ as short for מִן (“from/due to”) and renders the verse: “You say, ‘[We acted] due to inability (עגו) [due to our poverty].”

⁸¹³ **Like “מָזָה in your hand”** – Ibn Ezra cites מָזָה as another case in which the word מה (“what”) is written as a prefix מ without the subsequent letter ה. Tanḥum cites the same proof-text to support the same interpretation.

⁸¹⁴ **וְהִפְחִתֶם (and so you puff) at it, that it is like soot (פִּיחַ)** – Exegetes debate the meaning of וְהִפְחִתֶם. Ibn Janah (310-311), Rashi and Joseph Kara interpret it as: “You cause agony” (cf. Job 11:20 and 31:39). Radak interprets it as: “You knock it down to the ground.” Ibn Saruk claims that וְהִפְחִתֶם derives from the same etymology as the noun פַּח (“trap”; מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 141, Sáenz-Badillos 299*), although he does not elaborate on how that meaning fits the context of our verse. Ibn Saruk’s view was not accepted by later exegetes, because according to the system of trilateral roots that was developed subsequent to him, וְהִפְחִתֶם derives from נִפַח, while פַּח derives from either פָּחַח (BDB 808-809) or פָּוַח (Ḥayyuj, שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק, Wated and Sivan 158, and כתאב אלנחף, Basal 272-273; Radak, השרשים 576-577; cf. Joseph Kimḥi, הגלוי 138).

Regarding Ibn Ezra’s own view, Muraoka and Shavitsky (נפח) suggest that a literal translation of the verb would be “to turn into soot,” but the oral commentary clearly interprets וְהִפְחִתֶם as, “You blow, “or, “You puff.” So Ibn Ezra likely intends here that they would “puff” scornfully at the altar (cf. Tanḥum) as if it were soot. Although the word פִּיחַ derives from a hollow root, whereas וְהִפְחִתֶם derives from נִפַח, Ibn Ezra writes elsewhere that those two roots share the same meaning (Isa. 42:22). Indeed it is not uncommon for Ibn Ezra to see a lexical connection between weak roots that share the same two strong letters (e.g., Gen. 25:29 regarding זֶד and נֶז).

⁸¹⁵ **And is inadequate** – Ibn Ezra is repeating the priests’ allegation that the showbread was insufficient, which he cited in the previous verse as the priests claiming, “Why should we be careful to stay holy [in order] to eat the showbread when it will not suffice for us?”

⁸¹⁶ **[נוֹכֵל means] one who thinks... in a manner of deception** – Many exegetes share the interpretation of נוֹכֵל as one who acts deceitfully (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Tanḥum; cf. Saadiah, האגרון, Aloni 334). Ibn Janah offers the same interpretation based on the same proof-text (304). The oral commentary adopts the same interpretation but with a different proof-text.

⁸¹⁷ **A male who is unblemished** – The deception lies in the fact that the people who were sacrificing blemished animals possessed *unblemished* male animals in their flocks which they withheld for themselves. Many exegetes also remark that the verse’s “male” specifically refers to an unblemished male, as is apparent from the contrast with the subsequent phrase “but... sacrifices a *blemished* animal to the Lord” (al-Qumisi, Rashi, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Student of Trani, Abarbanel; cf. Jacob b. Reuben and Tanḥum, who argue that offering an unblemished female when one possesses a male would also insult God).

And מושלך (blemished) is like מושלך.⁸¹⁸

Chapter 2

(1) And now, [O priests,] I have spoken to you.⁸¹⁹

(2) Unless... I will turn their blessings into curses is in the same manner as, “[My God] lights up my darkness” (Ps. 18:29).⁸²⁰

Indeed, אָרוֹתֶיךָ (I have turned them into curses) is from a geminate verb,⁸²¹ and its meaning [refers to] the blessings, [meaning] that until now, too (גַּם), I have behaved thus: I have turned the blessings into curses, because you have not taken it to heart.⁸²²

⁸¹⁸ מושלך is like מושלך – Ibn Ezra is explaining that the word מְשֻׁלָּךְ is the *hof'al* participle of the root שחח, just as the word מְשֻׁלָּךְ (thrown or cast) is the *hof'al* participle of שלח (Filvarg 14b, Kaputa 157), despite the two words having different vowels under the prefix מ (cf. Tanḥum). He explains the etymology of מְשֻׁלָּךְ more explicitly in his commentary to Lev. 22:25 (cf. Ibn Janah, ההשגה, Tene 33). Tanḥum also uses equates מְשֻׁלָּךְ with מושלך for the same purpose. Regarding the meaning of מְשֻׁלָּךְ, cf. the oral commentary.

⁸¹⁹ And now... I have spoken to you – The phrase אֲלֵיכֶם הַמְצִינָה הַזֹּאת reads like a Hebrew nominal sentence: “This commandment [is] for you.” Ibn Ezra is instead presenting it as a sentence with an implied subject and verb: “[I have spoken] this commandment to you.”

⁸²⁰ I will turn their blessings into curses is in the same manner as, “[My God] lights up my darkness” – Although Ibn Ezra does not identify the common feature of these verses, he appears to be referring to the fact that in both verses, the verb changes its object to an opposite state – cursing a blessing and illuminating darkness. Just as the addition of light *replaces* darkness, rather than adding an element of light to darkness, “cursing” a blessing similarly means changing the blessing into a curse rather than adding an element of curse into a blessing (Kaputa 157). In his commentary to Isa. 2:11, Ibn Ezra similarly remarks that, “And the pride of mortals shall be humbled,” is “in the opposite manner, like “[my God] lights up my darkness.” For other possible ways to understand the relationship between our verse and the proof-text, see Schrem (45b).

⁸²¹ אָרוֹתֶיךָ is from a geminate verb – The verb אָרוֹתֶיךָ derives from the geminate root ארר.

⁸²² Until now, too (גַּם)... I have turned the blessings into curses, because you have not laid it to heart – Ibn Ezra is interpreting the verb אָרוֹתֶיךָ in the latter part of the verse as past tense. He is addressing a seemingly unnecessary repetition: Early in the verse, God threatens to turn blessings into curses (אָרוֹתֶיךָ), and the verse then adds – using the same verb – that He “indeed turns it into a curse” (וְגַם אָרוֹתֶיךָ). According to Ibn Ezra, this repetition of the same verb is not redundant, because the first verb warns about the future (אָרוֹתֶיךָ), with a conversive ו, but the second verb אָרוֹתֶיךָ (without a conversive ו) adds that indeed that God has already turned blessings into curses (cf. Schrem 45b). This explanation is also adopted by Eliezer of Beaugency and Radak.

Other exegetes explain both verbs as future tense (cf. Jonathan), so they must explain the apparent redundancy differently. Rashi and Joseph Kara suggest that initially God threatened to turn the blessings into curses if – and only if – the people did not heed His admonitions. Subsequently, however, He asserted that this condition was unnecessary; He knew that the Jews would undoubtedly sin, so He reissued his threat unconditionally. Tanḥum explains the redundancy as repetition for the purpose of emphasis.

(3) I will put⁸²³ **your seed under a ban**, so it will not sprout, on account of my table being empty.

And the word **הַגִּיפֶה** (**your festal sacrifices**) is like, “Bind the festal offering (תג) with cords” (Ps. 118:27). So I will strew **the dung**⁸²⁴ **of הַגִּיפֶה** – your sacrifices (קרבנותיכם)⁸²⁵ – **upon your faces**, meaning: I will distance you from My face, so that I will not see you.

And one shall take you away (נִשָּׂא) – The one who takes away, namely, the enemy [**shall take you away**] **to him.**⁸²⁶

(4) You shall know – Then you will know, if you don’t listen to Me.⁸²⁷

[The prophet] is now speaking to Israelites, that they must honor the priests – God’s servants – and do as they instruct you, and you should not bring a blemished offering.⁸²⁸

⁸²³ **I will put** – Ibn Ezra substitutes an imperfect verb (אגער) for the verse’s active participle of the same root (גער).

⁸²⁴ **The dung** – Most manuscripts contain some spelling of פירוש (explanation) instead of פרוש (dung). According to their reading, this phrase means: “So the explanation of הַגִּיפֶה is ‘your sacrifices’; I will strew upon your faces.”

⁸²⁵ **הַגִּיפֶה – your sacrifices (קרבנותיכם)** – Here, Ibn Ezra’s uses the word קרבן – the more common Hebrew word for sacrifices – because תג could refer to a festival rather than a festal sacrifice (cf. Tanḥum). The proof-text from Ps. 118:27 also serves to demonstrate that תג sometimes refers to a festal sacrifice as opposed to a festival (cf. Schlossberg, עיבוד... לתרגומו של יפת, 142 n. 61).

⁸²⁶ **The one who takes away, namely, the enemy [shall take you away] to him** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the fact that the verb נִשָּׂא (“He/it shall lift/take away”) has no apparent subject in the verse. He therefore argues that there is an implied subject – an unnamed enemy that will carry the nation away. Tanḥum cites Ibn Ezra’s interpretation anonymously and appears to agree with it (cf. Ibn Janaḥ השרשים 322). The oral commentary appears to interpret this verse such that God is the subject of נִשָּׂא (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

Other exegetes similarly struggle to identify the subject: Al-Qumisi proposes that God is the subject (“He will bring you to [the dung],” i.e., He will treat you as if you offered Him dung). Most exegetes presumably reject the possibility of God being the subject, because God speaks in first person for most of the verse, while נִשָּׂא is a third-person verb. Rashi argues that the dung is the subject, while Radak claims that sin is the subject.

⁸²⁷ **Then you will know, if you don’t listen to Me** – Ibn Ezra is connecting this new passage – which highlights the unique role which God assigned to the priests – to the previous passage’s threats of punishment, which v. 1 addressed to the priests. If their objectionable behaviors persist, then God will punish them, and then they will realize the special responsibilities that God demands of them.

⁸²⁸ **[The prophet] is now speaking to Israelites, that they must honor the priests... and not bring a blemished offering** – According to Ibn Ezra, v. 4 is addressed to the entire nation, commanding them to respect

(5) My covenant [was with him of life and well-being] – I made a covenant with [Levi] that on his account – inasmuch as he brings My sacrifices – Israel will have **life and well-being**.⁸²⁹

And the meaning of **I gave them to him** refers to Israelites, that God gave them **to** [Levi] so that they should revere him,⁸³⁰ while [Levi] reveres God.⁸³¹

נָחַת (trembled) is from the *nif'al* form, while the strong form [would be] נָחַתָּה⁸³² – like “a contrite (נִשְׁבָּר) and crushed (נִדְקָה) heart” (Ps. 51:19)⁸³³ – from the same derivation as, “You see a terror” (תַּתָּת; Job 6:21),⁸³⁴ and the meaning is double.⁸³⁵

God’s special covenant with Levi. Tanḥum cites this interpretation anonymously but adds that the verse might exclusively address the priests, urging them to uphold their special covenant with God.

⁸²⁹ **Israel will have life and well-being** – According to Ibn Ezra, the “life and well-being” of this covenant are blessings which the priests can bring upon the entire nation of Israel, rather than blessings that only the priests themselves receive through the covenant. Ibn Ezra’s interpretation is consistent with his subsequent assertion that in the next phrase, “I gave them to [Levi],” the pronoun “them” refers to Israel and not to the aforementioned “life and peace.”

⁸³⁰ **I gave them to him refers to Israelites, that God gave them to [Levi] so that they should revere him** – Translated literally, the first half of this verse reads: “My covenant was with him, life and well-being, and I gave them to him reverence.” According many exegetes, the referent of “them” is “life and well-being,” meaning that God gave life and well-being to Levi (Rashi, Joseph, Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Student of Trani). However, the final word, “reverence” (מִוְרָא), does not fit coherently into their reading of the sentence (cf. Jacob Anatoli, מלמד התלמידים 149b, inserted by MS Oxford 33 as a gloss into Ibn Ezra’s commentary). Ibn Ezra thus suggests that the referent of “them” is the Israelites, who must treat Levi’s priestly descendants with reverence: “I gave [the Israelites] to him [so that they will] revere [him].”

⁸³¹ **While [Levi] reveres God** – This last phrase is paraphrasing the continuation of the verse – “And he revered Me.” Ibn Ezra thus interprets the two halves of the verse as alluding to two instances of reverence – “I gave [the Israelites] to [Levi], for reverence, and [also, Levi] revered Me.”

⁸³² **נָחַת is from the *nif'al* form, while the strong form [would be] נָחַתָּה** – According to Ibn Ezra, נָחַת is a *nif'al* verb from the geminate root נָחַת, which means “to fear/revere.” Among his predecessors, Ḥayyuj, too, writes that the *nif'al* perfect form of נָחַת is נָחַת instead of נָחַתָּה, although he does not cite our verse as a proof-text (שלושת חיבורי הדקדוק, Wated and Sivan 340). By contrast, Ibn Janah (השרשים 300; cf. ההשגה, Tene 183) expresses uncertainty regarding whether the root of נָחַת is נָחַת or נָחַת.

⁸³³ **Like “a contrite (נִשְׁבָּר) and crushed (נִדְקָה) heart”** – Ibn Ezra does not explain what this verse proves. Since both of its adjectives are *nif'al* participles, Schrem (45b) understands that Ibn Ezra is citing the verse in order to demonstrate that the *nif'al* participle of נָחַת would have been נָחַת if it were not a geminate root. Alternatively, Ibn Ezra could be citing this verse to compare the “awe” of God in our verse to having “a contrite and crushed heart” (cf. Radak, who cites this same proof-text in order to prove the lexical definition of נָחַת).

⁸³⁴ **You see a terror (תַּתָּת)** – The oral commentary cites a different proof-text for the same interpretation. In his commentary to Ecc. 12:5, Ibn Ezra uses the root פָּחַד (fear/terror/dread) as a synonym for the root נָחַת.

⁸³⁵ **The meaning is double** – The verse contains a parallelism in which the phrase, “He stood in awe of My name,” parallels the previous phrase, “He reveres Me.”

But some say that **I gave them to him** refers to commandments and laws,⁸³⁶ namely, the priestly laws.⁸³⁷

(6) [Proper] rulings [were in his mouth] – Yefet says that [the prophet] said this about Aaron,⁸³⁸ while R. Jeshuah says: about Phineas. The correct interpretation is that [the prophet] said this about both of them and all of their holy children,⁸³⁹ because every high priest should be so:⁸⁴⁰

[Proper rulings] were in his mouth – that he does not receive bribes – **and nothing perverse [was on his lips]** – to show favor [toward one litigant] – **he served Me through peace** – with Israel – **and uprightness** – to fulfill my commandments.⁸⁴¹

⁸³⁶ **But some say that I gave them to him refers to commandments and laws** – Ibn Ezra now cites a second opinion regarding the referent of “them” (cf. note 830). According to this view, the referent is the laws that God gave to the priests. This view is alluded to in multiple rabbinic sources (Jonathan, *Sifra* to Lev. 10:4, Lev. R. to Lev. 2:3; cf. al-Qumisi).

⁸³⁷ **The priestly laws** – The Hebrew phrase תורת כהנים can refer to Leviticus specifically, due to the large number of laws in Leviticus that apply specifically to priests.

⁸³⁸ **[The prophet] said this about Aaron** – Many manuscripts read נאמר instead of אמר for this verb. According to them, the verb would be passive: “This *was said* about Aaron.”

⁸³⁹ **Yefet says... about Aaron, while R. Jeshuah says... about Phineas. The correct interpretation is... about both of them and all of their holy children** – In rabbinic sources, Phineas is frequently linked to v. 5, due to the covenant that God makes with him in Num. 25:12-13. Other midrashic sources associate these verses with Aaron (*Sifra* to Lev. 16:34, *Sifrei* to Deut. 31:24, Lev. R. to Lev. 16:1, bSan. 6b; cf. Ratzhabi, מפירושי רס"ג 236). Most exegetes do not specify that v. 6 refers to a specific priest, such as Aaron or Phineas. It is not clear if Yefet would in fact disagree with Ibn Ezra’s comment that this verse refers to all priests, since Yefet writes that it describes Aaron “and his sons” (cf. Schlossberg, עיבוד... לתרגומו של יפת 143 n. 67). Tanḥum and Abarbanel adopt Ibn Ezra’s entire comment (without attribution), first citing views that the verse refers to Aaron or Phineas but concluding that it refers to them and their descendants, since it represents the ideal behavior which every priest should emulate.

⁸⁴⁰ **Because every high priest should be so** – In the oral commentary, Ibn Ezra further stresses that this verse characterizes how a priest *should* behave by rewriting the verse with imperfect verbs in place of the verse’s perfect verbs.

⁸⁴¹ **[Proper rulings] were in his mouth – that he does not receive bribes – and nothing perverse [was on his lips] – to show favor [toward one litigant] – he served Me through peace – with Israel – and uprightness – to fulfill my commandments** – Ibn Ezra seeks a unique meaning for each phrase in this verse, rather than viewing, “Proper rulings were in his mouth,” and, “Nothing perverse was on his lips,” as a synonymous parallelism, or viewing “peace” and “uprightness” as synonyms.

(7) For [the lips of a priest guard knowledge] is connected [to the previous verse], for when the **priest** is upright, the number of upright individuals will multiply.⁸⁴² And **the lips of a priest [guard knowledge]** connects with the [verse] above.⁸⁴³

For he is a מַלְאָךְ (messenger) – an agent (שליח) – **of the Lord** between Him and Israel.⁸⁴⁴

(8) But you – He rebukes the Israelites who do not listen to them, by bringing stolen [animals] (see 1:13),⁸⁴⁵ and **you** – teachers of **the Torah**⁸⁴⁶ – have further [sinned],⁸⁴⁷ and

⁸⁴² **For [the lips of a priest guard knowledge] is connected... for when the priest is upright, the number of upright individuals will multiply** – Ibn Ezra is stressing that this verse continues to describe the ideal priest from the previous verse. Perhaps he stresses this point because the verse switches to imperfect verbs after the previous verse used perfect verbs, so the reader might think that a new idea is being introduced. Schrem (45b) further understands that Ibn Ezra is interpreting this verse as the cause for the previous verse: The priest's role as "a messenger of the Lord" is the reason that he "held the many back from iniquity."

⁸⁴³ **Is connected [to the previous verse]... the lips of a priest [guard knowledge] connects with the previous verse** – The phrase, "And the lips of a priest guard knowledge, and men seek rulings from his mouth" – which describes what a priest *does* say – parallels the previous verse's description of what the priest does *not* say: "Proper rulings were in his mouth, and nothing perverse was on his lips."

⁸⁴⁴ **A מַלְאָךְ – an agent – of the Lord between Him and Israel** – Regarding the use of מַלְאָךְ in reference to prophets, see note 773 above, Ibn Ezra to Hag. 1:13, and my supercommentary *ad loc.* In our case, Ibn Ezra presumably stresses that מַלְאָךְ means "agent" in order to dismiss midrashic readings of this verse that interpret מַלְאָךְ as a literal angel (e.g., bM.K. 17a, bHag. 15b, Sifrei to Num. 18:20).

⁸⁴⁵ **He rebukes the Israelites who do not listen to them, by bringing stolen [animals]** – Manuscripts vary regarding this sentence. Our translation follows most manuscripts, which read (sometimes with minor, meaningless variations) יוֹכִיחַ יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׂלֵא יִשְׁמְעוּ אֵלֵיהֶם לְהַבְיֵא הַגְּזוּל. This reading seems problematic, because it implies that v. 8 is addressing all Israelites when – in fact – the context clearly indicates that Malachi is addressing the priests. MS Leeuwarden 21 contains two additional phrases (underlined): יוֹכִיחַ הַכֹּהֲנִים עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל – "He rebukes the priests regarding the Israelites, since it would be proper to not listen to them to bring stolen [animals]." According to this latter reading, the pronoun "them" refers to the Israelites, whom the priests should ignore; the blame lies with the priests for obeying the Israelites' requests to offer stolen animals.

The HaKeter edition adds only the first phrase from MS Leeuwarden 21, creating a reading that is not supported by any witness: יוֹכִיחַ הַכֹּהֲנִים עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׂלֵא יִשְׁמְעוּ אֵלֵיהֶם. However, in light of the fact that the overwhelming majority of manuscripts support the first reading, it seems likely that the extra phrases in MS Leeuwarden 21 are glosses, added by a scribe who was bothered by the aforementioned problem with the majority reading. In order to make sense of the majority reading, this opening sentence of Ibn Ezra's comments to v. 8 should be viewed as an introductory remark rather than an interpretation of v. 8. Ibn Ezra is explaining that Malachi has *previously* rebuked the Israelites for bringing stolen offerings (1:13), so now Malachi is adding that not only are the Israelites blameworthy, but the priests, too, have scorned the altar. The opening phrase "but you" of Ibn Ezra's comment does not imply that the pronoun "you" in this verse refers to Israelites. Rather, the comment opens with "but you" because Ibn Ezra frequently begins his comments with the verse's opening word, even when the substance of his comment addresses a subsequent part of the verse. In this case, he begins the comment with "but you," proceeds to provide background from Ch. 1 regarding the Israelites' transgressions, and then returns to explain that this pronoun refers to the priests in our verse: "You – teachers of the Torah – have further [sinned]."

you, too, have scorned me, saying that my altar is defiled (cf. 1:12). **(9)** Now he is rebuking the priests that they **show partiality [in rulings]** on behalf of prominent individuals.

(10) Have we not [all one father begins] a separate section,⁸⁴⁸ to mention a separate transgression: They would divorce their wives – while [the wives] were crying – on account of foreign women, as is written in the Book of Ezra.⁸⁴⁹ They should have paid heed, saying, **“Have [we] not all one father,”** namely, Jacob?⁸⁵⁰ Hence, since our father is one and our Creator is one, why⁸⁵¹ **do we deal treacherously every man against his brother** or sister? For due to [the behaviors described in] this passage, [the outcome is] **profaning the covenant of our ancestors**, who received the Torah.⁸⁵²

⁸⁴⁶ **Torah** – This word could also be translated as “rulings” (alluding to the priests’ role in ruling on matters of religious law), which is how I translate in in v. 9, where the context (favoritism) clearly alludes to legal rulings. Regarding the different possible meanings of “Torah,” see my supercommentary to Zech. 7:12.

⁸⁴⁷ **Have further [sinned]** – The Hebrew verb ושבחתם literally means, “You have returned,” but it does not connote returning in this context. Several manuscripts read הכשלתם (“You have made the many stumble”) instead of ושבחתם, but the reading of הכשלתם appears to be an error, resulting from a scribe copying that word from the verse.

⁸⁴⁸ **Have we not [all one father begins] a separate section** – According to Ibn Ezra’s view (which Radak adopts without attribution), this verse shifts away from priestly corruption and focuses instead on intermarriage. Eliezer of Beaugency disagrees with their position, because he interprets Malachi’s appeal to everyone’s shared father as an argument against favoring wealthy litigants, which was the focus of the previous verse (“You disregard My ways and show partiality in rulings”).

⁸⁴⁹ **They would divorce their wives – while [the wives] were crying – on account of foreign women, as is written in the Book of Ezra** – The precise image of women crying as their husbands leave them for foreign women does not appear in Ezra-Nehemiah, but the general phenomenon of Jewish men marrying foreign women appears in Ezra 9-10 and Neh. 13:23-30.

⁸⁵⁰ **One father... Jacob** – Al-Qumisi, Jacob b. Reuben, Radak, Tanḥum, and Abarbanel also name Jacob as the common father.

⁸⁵¹ **Why** – I have not printed this word in bold because Ibn Ezra substitutes the word למה for the verse’s מדוע; both words mean “why.”

⁸⁵² **For due to [the behaviors described in] this passage, [the outcome is] profaning the covenant of our ancestors, who received the Torah** – The need to insert words in brackets stems from the fact that Ibn Ezra wove the verse’s words into his own sentence such that the sentence contains no independent clause: “For due to this passage, **so as to profane the covenant of our ancestors**, who received the Torah.” If not for his desire to copy the verse’s exact words, he presumably would have conjugated “profane” and written: “For due to this passage, they profaned the covenant of our ancestors, who received the Torah.”

(11) [Judah] has broken faith... what is holy to the Lord [refers] to Israelites [who were called⁸⁵³ His] sons and daughters,⁸⁵⁴ as is written, “[The Lord saw and was vexed] and spurned His sons and His daughters” (Deut. 32:19).

וּבַעַל (and married) is from the same derivation as “as a youth marries (יִבְעַל) a maiden” (Isa. 62:5).

A daughter of alien gods [means] a worshipper of foreign gods,⁸⁵⁵ meaning that she is not from “one father” and “one God” (v. 10).

(12) May [the Lord] cut off... עַרְוֵנָהּ (descendants) – From context, [עַרְוֵנָהּ] means sons and grandsons.⁸⁵⁶ But Yefet said that when one’s soul rests,⁸⁵⁷ his son will be עַרְוֵנָהּ that his family has not been cut off.⁸⁵⁸

⁸⁵³ **Who were called** – The word נִקְרְאוּ (were called) appears explicitly in one manuscript but is likely a gloss.

⁸⁵⁴ **What is holy to the Lord [refers] to Israelites [who were called His] sons and daughters** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting the phrase “what is holy to the Lord” as referring to the Israelites, so when the verse laments that “Judah has profaned what is holy to the Lord,” it is essentially asserting that the Jews who took Gentile women have profaned themselves. For similar interpretations, see Jonathan and Rashi. Abarbanel interprets Ibn Ezra’s comment as focusing on the Gentile wives’ sons and daughters; “Judah has profaned what is holy to the Lord” by producing Gentile offspring (as opposed to Jewish children, who are “holy to the Lord”).

Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, and Tanḥum interpret the phrase “what is holy to the Lord” as referring specifically to the Jewish wives; their husbands replaced “what is holy to the Lord” (=Jewish wives) with the “daughter of alien gods” (=a Gentile woman). Radak adopts a similar approach but adds that marriage itself can also be described as “holy to the Lord” (cf. Abarbanel).

⁸⁵⁵ **Foreign gods** – The Hebrew phrase עֲבוֹדַת זָרָה literally means “foreign worship” but is commonly used specifically for pagan or idolatrous worship.

⁸⁵⁶ **From context, [עַרְוֵנָהּ] means sons and grandsons** – Based on context, Ibn Ezra interprets the enigmatic phrase עַרְוֵנָהּ as referring to the descendants of the man who takes a Gentile wife. The verse is warning that God will cut off the sinner’s family line (cf. al-Qumisi; Ibn Saruk, מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 137, Sáenz-Badillos 291*; Ḥayyuj, כתאב אלנתר, Basal 274-275; Jacob b. Reuben; and Radak). Ibn Ezra’s “sons and grandsons” (בְּנֵי וְנָכְדֵי) is a translation back into Hebrew of Jonathan’s Aramaic translation of עַרְוֵנָהּ as בר ובר בר (“a son or grandson”; cf. Gen. 21:23 – וּלְיִצְחָק וְלְנָכְדָיו – translated by Onkelos and Pseudo-Jonathan as ובברי ובבר ברי). The Hebrew and Aramaic phrases are singular (literally, “son and grandson”).

Tanḥum cites Jonathan’s translation and characterizes it as non-literal (תּוֹאִיל), perhaps mimicking Ibn Ezra’s comment that “sons and grandsons” is the meaning “from context.” The oral commentary interprets עַרְוֵנָהּ as “one who will rouse him and answer him” but does not necessarily disagree with the standard commentary (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

⁸⁵⁷ **When one’s soul rests** – This phrase is a euphemism for death, adapted from Ps. 25:13 (cf. Ibn Ezra *ad loc.*).

And if the one who does this “abomination” (v. 11) – i.e., **who does this**⁸⁵⁹ – is a priest, he will not have a son **presenting offerings**.⁸⁶⁰

(13) And this [you do as well] – The meaning of **as well** is that first, [you offer] the stolen and blemished, and secondly, my altar is covered **with tears, weeping, and moaning**, on account of the daughters of Israel who are crying. So I will not regard your altars **anymore**, nor do I have any more **good will** for it.

(14) But you ask – The answer is, **because the Lord** is a witness (עד)⁸⁶¹ **between you and every individual and the wife of his youth**.

(15) And not one of you has behaved properly⁸⁶² and had his **spirit remain with him!**⁸⁶³

And if you ask, **“What would that ‘one’ be seeking?” A seed given of God**, in accordance

⁸⁵⁸ **But Yefet said that when one’s soul rests, his son will be עַר וְעִנָּה that his family has not been cut off** – This cryptic comment does not fully explain how Yefet interpreted the phrase עַר וְעִנָּה. Since the phrase describes the son’s behavior, it likely means “answer” or “reply,” meaning that normally a son’s presence “answers” the concern that a family might have been cut off by attesting to the fact that the family continues to exist. It is less clear how Yefet would interpret the word עַר; perhaps it would mean that a son calls attention (“rouses”) to the family’s enduring legacy.

This citation of Yefet does not appear to fully reflect Yefet’s actual view in his own commentary (as explained by Schlossberg, לתרגומו של יפת, עיבוד... 145 n. 74), where Yefet presents an interpretation of עַר as a child (“who wakes up and cries”) and עִנָּה as a father, who answers the child’s cry. It is not unusual for Ibn Ezra to attribute views to Yefet that do not appear in Yefet’s own writings, presumably because Ibn Ezra was citing sources from memory (cf. my supercommentary to Hag. 2:9). One common feature of Yefet’s translation and Ibn Ezra’s citation of Yefet is that both focus on sons specifically, as opposed to grandsons or subsequent descendants.

⁸⁵⁹ **I.e., who does this** – This Hebrew phrase (כמו אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה) is awkward, because כמו is normally used comparatively and thus literally means “just as ‘one who does this.’” One would have expected כלומר (“that is to say”) before the Biblical quote, since the purpose of this parenthetical remark is to identify the word “abomination” (תועֵבָה) from v. 11 as the referent of “this” in v. 12. The HaKeter edition treats כמו אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה as a gloss despite its presence in all witnesses. Filvarg (15a) suggests emending the text to כמו הוא יַעֲשֶׂה, in which case Ibn Ezra would be citing Prov. 6:32 as a proof-text for the destructive nature of promiscuous behavior: “He who commits adultery is devoid of sense; only one who would destroy himself does such a thing” (הוא יַעֲשֶׂה).

⁸⁶⁰ **And if the one who does this abomination... is a priest, he will not have a son presenting offerings** – The verse threatens two punishments: “The man who does this” will be cut off from having “descendants dwelling in the tents of Jacob” and from having “a son presenting offerings to the Lord of Hosts.” Ibn Ezra explains that the first punishment applies to any Jewish man who marries a Gentile woman, while the latter is only relevant to priests, whose sons would serve in the Temple. Jonathan similarly writes that the second punishment applies only “if he is a priest” (ואם כהן הוא), as do many subsequent exegetes (Jacob b. Reuben, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak).

⁸⁶¹ **A witness (עד)** – Ibn Ezra uses the noun form (עד) in place of the verse’s *hif’il* verb for bearing witness (העיד).

with God’s command. And the meaning of “had his **spirit** remain **with him**” is to not commingle with “daughters of alien gods” (v. 11). Therefore, it is written: **Be careful of your spirit**, let your spirit **not deal treacherously against the wife of your youth.**⁸⁶⁴

(16) For God detests when a man divorces his legitimate⁸⁶⁵ wife,⁸⁶⁶ and **detests** one who covers up [lawlessness]. Alternatively, [the verse means that] God will see one’s lawlessness, which was [done] secretly.

(17) You have wearied [the Lord] – [This begins] a separate section. We know that God “never grows weary” (Isa. 40:28), so how could His creatures weary him? Rather, this is like human language,⁸⁶⁷ [meaning] that He can no longer endure [**when you say,**] “**All who do**⁸⁶⁸

⁸⁶² **And not one of you has behaved properly** – Here, Ibn Ezra interprets “one” as an individual Jew in Malachi’s time. The oral commentary interprets “one” as alluding to God, who “made” (עָשָׂה) us and is “seeking” appropriate behavior from us. Other exegetes interpret it as alluding to Adam (Rashi, cf. Abarbanel) or Abraham (Jonathan, al-Qumisi, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak) or another patriarch (cf. Jacob b. Reuben).

⁸⁶³ **And not one of you has behaved properly and had his spirit remain with him** – For criticism of Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of this phrase, see Tanḥum.

⁸⁶⁴ **Be careful of your spirit, let your spirit not deal treacherously against the wife of your youth** – By adding “your spirit,” Ibn Ezra is addressing the problem that the verb “deal treacherously” has a third-person masculine singular prefix (יִבְגֵד), while the preceding sentence addresses the people in the second-person masculine (וְנִשְׁמְרְתֶם בְּרוּחְכֶם); “Be careful of your [m.p.] spirit”). Ibn Ezra thus suggests that although the subject of “be careful” is you (m.p.), the subject of יִבְגֵד is “your spirit” – “Be careful of your spirit so that it does not deal treacherously against the wife of your youth”). Ibn Ezra suggests the same interpretation elsewhere (ההגנה, Oshri 94; Ruth 4:4), and it is shared by Rashi. The oral commentary appears to interpret יִבְגֵד differently (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

⁸⁶⁵ **Legitimate** – The Hebrew word טהורה literally means “pure,” but in the context it intends a wife whom one may marry according to religious law, as opposed to the “impure” Gentile women whose marriages to these Jewish men were deemed illegitimate.

⁸⁶⁶ **For God detests when a man divorces his pure wife** – The verse’s phrase שָׂנֵא שְׂלָהּ is ambiguous, so the Talmud (bGit. 90b, cited by Rashi) offers two possible interpretations: 1) R. Judah: A man who detests his wife should divorce her (אם שנאתה שלח), 2) R. Johanan: A man who divorces his wife is detestable (שנאוי המשלה). Ibn Ezra fundamentally agrees with R. Johanan, although he accounts for the fact that שָׂנֵא is a stative participle rather than a passive participle (שנאוי) by rendering the verse: “[God] detests a man who divorces his wife.” The oral commentary offers the same interpretation. Al-Qumisi also interprets שָׂנֵא as “God detests” but interprets the rest of the verse in a completely different way. Many exegetes adopt R. Judah’s view: Jonathan, Yefet (Schlossberg, לתרגומו של יפת, עיבוד... 146), Rashi, and Radak; cf. Eliezer of Beaugency.

⁸⁶⁷ **This is like human language** – Ibn Ezra uses this Hebrew phrase (כלשון בני אדם) or the longer Talmudic expression דברה תורה כלשון בני אדם (“The Torah speaks in human language”) over thirty times to justify anthropomorphic words and phrases in the Bible (cf. Simon’s supercommentary to Hos. 11:8). For a similar application of this principle by Ibn Ezra to a verse that implies that God can tire, see both commentaries to Exod. 31:17.

evil [are good in the sight of the Lord]! If it⁸⁶⁹ were not good in His eyes, then He would not allow him to do it.”

And if you [prophets] will say, “God may yet mete out justice.” [The people reply:] “When will that happen⁸⁷⁰ and where is He? Why is He not meting out justice?”⁸⁷¹

And this prophecy⁸⁷² is for the future; first, Elijah will come, as it is written at the end of the book (3:23).

Chapter 3

(1) Behold, I am sending My messenger – It is possible that he is the Messiah son of Joseph.⁸⁷³

Radak employs this phrase here, presumably following Ibn Ezra, since Radak, too, cites Isa. 40:28 as a proof-text. For a critique of their interpretation, see Abarbanel. Other exegetes resolve the theological difficulty of God tiring in other manners, such as adding a preposition in order to render the verb intransitive: “You become weary *before* the Lord” (Jonathan), or by treating God’s prophets as the direct object: “You have wearied *the Lord* [‘s prophets]” (Yefet, in Schlossberg, לתרגומו של יפת 147 n. 81).

⁸⁶⁸ **Do** – Ibn Ezra uses a plural participle in Hebrew (עושי), while the standard editions of the Masoretic text use a singular participle (עשה). Kennicott does cite a small number of witnesses that read עשי in the Masoretic text, but Ibn Ezra is likely paraphrasing the verse rather precisely citing a variant spelling.

⁸⁶⁹ **It** – The Hebrew word שהוּא could also be translated as “he,” referring to the person who is engaged in evil behavior.

⁸⁷⁰ **When will that happen** – Most manuscripts use a perfect verb (היה) rather than imperfect (יהיה), so their reading would typically mean, “When did that happen?” I left the majority reading of היה in the body of my Hebrew edition, but it seems based on context that Ibn Ezra intended a future verb regardless of whether he wrote היה or יהיה.

⁸⁷¹ **And if you will say, “God may yet mete out justice... Why is He not meting out justice”** – Ibn Ezra is clarifying the meaning of the verse’s concluding phrase: “or, ‘Where is the God of justice?’” He is paraphrasing it to stress that “or” is not introducing an alternate statement (i.e., people will either say, “All who do evil are good in the sight of the Lord...” or instead they will say, “Where is the God of justice?”). Rather, the concluding phrase is part of the same statement by the people: “All who do evil are good in the sight of the Lord... otherwise, where is the God of justice” (cf. Ḥayyūn, כהאב אלנתר, Basal 274-275; Ibn Janah, השרשים 15; and Tanhum). The oral commentary similarly writes, paraphrasing the verse: “‘Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and in them He delights,’ for if He did not delight in them, ‘Where is... the justice that the Holy One, Blessed Be He, should mete out against them?’”

⁸⁷² **This prophecy** – In the Masoretic text, 2:17 begins a new paragraph that flows into the next chapter, through 3:12. Hence, when Ibn Ezra refers to “this prophecy,” he is including 2:17 in the same unit as 3:1-12. This unit began by citing the people’s argument that God should mete out justice to evildoers if He disapproves of their behavior, and it then proceeds to describe the time in which God will indeed mete out justice.

⁸⁷³ **My messenger** – It is possible that he is the Messiah son of Joseph – Regarding this messianic figure, see my supercommentary to Zech. 12:1. Prior to Ibn Ezra, both Saadia (Beliefs and Opinions 8:6, Rosenblatt 304;

The lord⁸⁷⁴ [whom you seek shall] is the glory (הכבוד), who is [the same as] **the angel of the covenant [that you desire]**, for the meaning is double.⁸⁷⁵

(2) But who מְכַלְכֵּל (can endure) – [The root letters are] doubled, like יָכִיל (“it contained”; I Kings 7:26);⁸⁷⁶ [similarly,] מְטַלְטֵלךְ (“to shake you; Isa. 22:17) from נִיטְלוּ (“they cast”; Jon. 1:5).⁸⁷⁷

For he is like a smelter’s fire – This prophecy is like Zechariah’s prophecy, “That third I will put into the fire, [and I will smelt them as one smelts silver and test them as one tests gold]” (Zech. 13:9).⁸⁷⁸

Ratzhabi, 236 מפירושי רס"ג and Hayya Gaon (cited by Lewin, אוצר הגאונים, Suk. 73) interpreted Mal. 3:1 as alluding to the Messiah son of Joseph. Some Karaite exegetes identify this messenger with Elijah (cf. al-Qumisi, Jacob b. Reuben), which is also implied by Joseph Kara (3:23).

⁸⁷⁴ **Lord** – I have not capitalized “lord” because the Hebrew word הָאֱלֹהִים is not a proper divine name.

⁸⁷⁵ **The lord [whom you seek shall] is the glory, who is [the same as] the angel of the covenant [that you desire], for the meaning is double** – “The glory” is a term that Ibn Ezra frequently employs to describe the visible manifestation of the divine presence (e.g., Lev. 16:2, 26:46; Num. 1:1, 11:17, 14:14; Deut. 16:8, 31:15, 33:12; Isa. 14:25), depicted in the Bible as a cloud or fire (e.g., Exod. 16:10 and 24:15-17). This “glory” dwelled in the Tabernacle and in the First Temple but was lacking in the Second Temple – implying that God’s presence was absent from the Second Temple (cf. Ibn Ezra’s introduction to Zechariah). According to Ibn Ezra, Malachi is thus prophesying that the divine presence will return to the Temple as part of the messianic redemption.

Al-Qumisi, Yefet (Schlossberg, עיבוד... לתרגומו של יפת, 147 n. 85), and Jacob b. Reuben suggest that this “lord” is the Ark of the Covenant. Rashi and Eliezer of Beaugency imply that “the lord” is God Himself, since they argue that this verse responds to the people’s question, “Where is the God of justice?” Maimonides identifies “the lord” with the Messiah son of David (*Epistle to Yemen*, Halkin 17, Shailat 180). Radak shares Maimonides’ interpretation of “the lord” and adds that the “angel of the covenant” is either a synonym of “the lord” (also referring to the Messiah son of David), or refers instead to Elijah.

⁸⁷⁶ **מְכַלְכֵּל – [The root letters are] doubled, like יָכִיל** – Ibn Ezra is adopting the position of Ibn Janah (ההשגה, Tene 71; השרשים 214; הרקמה 167), who maintains that the word מְכַלְכֵּל derives from a hollow root, with the weak middle consonant missing and the first and third root letters doubled. Tanḥum also adopts this view. Rashi, too, uses the word יָכִיל to explain מְכַלְכֵּל, but he does not elaborate on their etymology.

⁸⁷⁷ **מְטַלְטֵלךְ from נִיטְלוּ** – Ibn Janah (ההשגה, Tene 213; הרקמה 167, 183) also cites מְטַלְטֵלךְ as an example of a hollow root with the first and third root letters doubled. Ibn Ezra frequently cites this word as the proof-text for the phenomenon of doubling root letters in both hollow roots and other types of roots (Isa. 27:8; second commentary to Est. 4:4; צחות, Lippmann 15b and 64b, Valle Rodriguez 41 and 166; *Moznayim*, Jiménez Patón 116*; יסוד דקדוק, Aloni 154).

⁸⁷⁸ **For he is like a smelter’s fire... like Zechariah’s prophecy... I will smelt them as one smelts silver and test them as one tests gold** – Ibn Ezra interprets Zech. 13 as an eschatological prophecy in which God will purge the world of sinners. Zechariah employs the image of smelting as an allegory for this purge, which Ibn Ezra equates with Malachi’s use of this image. Al-Qumisi, Radak, and Tanḥum cite the same verse from Zechariah.

And like lye – [Lye] is in construct with fuller (מְכַבְּסִים).⁸⁷⁹

(3) He shall act as a smelter⁸⁸⁰ and purger of silver from all impurities, and he shall purify the descendants of Levi – namely, the priests – so that they will not act as they are acting now.

(4) Shall be pleasing... as in the days of yore [and in the years of old], when they were in the First Temple.

(5) I will step forward... against you who will be in those days.⁸⁸¹

And I will act as a witness [means] that I will reveal to everyone what [each sinner] has done.

Those who pervert the justice due to the stranger.⁸⁸²

(6) For [I am the Lord]—I have not changed – No change can happen to Me;⁸⁸³ [שְׁנִיתִי (changed)] is like “different (שְׁנוֹת) from those of any other people” (Est. 3:8).⁸⁸⁴

⁸⁷⁹ [Lye] is in construct with fuller – Since מְכַבְּסִים is a participle form, which could be interpreted as a verb or noun depending on the context, Ibn Ezra is stressing that in this case, מְכַבְּסִים functions as a noun, such that בְּרִית מְכַבְּסִים constitutes a noun construct (“lye of fullers”). Rashi and Radak make the same point.

⁸⁸⁰ He shall act as a smelter – Ibn Ezra adds a prefix כ (“as”) before the noun מְצַרֵּף (a smelter, because without it, the verse’s phrase וַיֵּשֶׁב מְצַרֵּף could be translated, “A smelter shall act.” Already Jonathan adds a prefix כ to his translation (כגבר דמצרף), and the oral commentary similarly writes כמו מצרף.

⁸⁸¹ Against you who will be in those days – Ibn Ezra is stressing that Malachi intends this prophecy (starting in 2:17) for the future – and not for his own generation – despite presenting it in second person.

⁸⁸² Those who pervert the justice due to the stranger – Jacob b. Reuben, Radak, and Tanḥum employ the same Hebrew phrase, משפט גר, which is adapted from Deut. 27:19 – “Cursed be he that perverts the justice due to the stranger.” They insert the word משפט, since the meaning of “perverting” or “distorting” a stranger might otherwise be unclear.

⁸⁸³ I have not changed – No change can happen to Me – Ibn Ezra is interpreting “changed” as an intransitive verb and thus understands this phrase as God asserting that He never undergoes change (cf. *Mekhila* to Exod. 15:3, Ibn Ezra to Isa. 43:12). The oral commentary interprets it the same way, as do Saadiah (*Beliefs and Opinions* 2:13), Maimonides (*Guide* 1:11), and Tanḥum. Jonathan interprets “changed” as a transitive verb and adds an implied direct object: “I have not changed [My covenant]” (לא אשניתי קימי). Rashi paraphrases the verse, “My mind has not changed,” perhaps agreeing with Jonathan that a literal translation of the verse would treat שְׁנִיתִי as transitive: “I have not changed [My mind].” In a similar vein to Rashi and Jonathan, Radak interprets שְׁנִיתִי as meaning that God does not renege on His word. Another midrashic view derives the word

And you are the children of Jacob—you have not ceased to be – Because if the father dies, the son remains.

(7) לְמִיָּמָיו (from the very days) – The ל is superfluous, like the ל of “the third, לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם (Absalom) son of Maacah” (I Chr. 3:2).⁸⁸⁵

Turn back – He is addressing that generation, which was in his own time.⁸⁸⁶

And the answer⁸⁸⁷ to, “**How shall we turn back**”: **(8) Ought man to defraud [God? Yet you are defrauding Me]** – Here is [the answer]: **in tithe and contribution** – when you say, how can we give generously⁸⁸⁸ from this little amount? This is not good, that **you are defrauding Me (9)** due to **the curse** and the deficiency under which **you are suffering** and lacking.

שְׁנֵיתָי from the number two (שניים) and thus renders this phrase: “I never repeated [a blow],” meaning that God can smite His enemies with only one blow (bSot. 9a; cf. Rashi, Joseph Kara).

⁸⁸⁴ שְׁנֵיתָי is like “**different (שְׁנוּת) from those of any other people**” – Hayyuj (כתאב אלנתר), Basal 276-277) interprets שְׁנֵיתָי the same way but cites different proof-texts.

⁸⁸⁵ **The ל is superfluous, like the ל of “the third, לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם (Absalom) son of Maacah”** – See my supercommentary to Hag. 2:18. Tanḥum also writes that the ל of לְמִיָּמָיו is superfluous and cites the same proof-text. Ibn Ezra’s equation of לְמִיָּמָיו with לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם differs from Ibn Janah, who argues that the prefix ל of לְאַבְשָׁלוֹם marks the predicate of a nominal sentence (הרקמה 53; cf. Radak, מכלול 45b and Jos. 10:21, I Sam. 2:29, II Sam. 16:2, I Kings 6:16, Ps. 12:7), while the ל of לְמִיָּמָיו – which is followed by a prefix מ – serves to set the bounds of the timeframe that is under discussion (הרקמה 60; cf. Radak).

⁸⁸⁶ **He is addressing that generation, which was in his own time** – Ibn Ezra interpreted the first several verses of Chapter 3 as a prophecy for the future, so he explains that the prophet is now directing his words to a new audience – his contemporaries. Tanḥum, too, argues that this verse begins a new prophecy for Malachi’s own generation despite the lack of a paragraph break in the Masoretic text.

⁸⁸⁷ **And the answer to** – The HaKeter edition prefers the minority reading “and their answer” (ותשובתם), presumably because the subsequent phrase, “How shall we turn back?” is the people’s response to the prophet’s call for repentance. However, that reading appears in only one manuscript (albeit a manuscript that comes from the same family as my edition’s base manuscript, which is ripped in that spot). More likely, Ibn Ezra is explaining that the entirety of v. 8 – the accusation that the people defrauded God and the explanation that their guilt stemmed from withholding tithes – serves to answer their original question, “How shall we turn back” (cf. the oral commentary).

⁸⁸⁸ **Generously** – Literally, “with a good eye” (a Hebrew idiom that is applied to tithes in mTer. 4:3).

(10) Instead, do as follows: **Bring the full tithe [into the storehouse]... and I will pour down blessings on you**, and it will no longer ruin.⁸⁸⁹

(8) The explanation of **קִבְעִים (defraud)** is like [seizing] a pledge; you seize and withhold from Me what is meant for Me.⁸⁹⁰

Ought man to defraud [God?] - Here is [the answer]: **in tithe and contribution**,⁸⁹¹ which they should not give stingily.⁸⁹²

(9) You deserve to be chastened **under a curse**, so you shall no longer defraud Me.

(10) Now, **bring [the full tithe]... I will surely open the floodgates of the sky [for you] and pour down [blessings] on you**, an allegory for an abundance of blessings.

עַד קָבַל יָדֵי (that there shall be more than enough) – Not just enough but more [than enough].⁸⁹³

(11) **And I will banish the devourer** [means] that species [who bring] curse will not set upon it,⁸⁹⁴ such as locusts and crickets.⁸⁹⁵

⁸⁸⁹ **It will no longer ruin** – The lack of vocalization in the Hebrew word **יִשְׁחַת** means that it could be translated either as a *qal* verb (**יִשְׁחַת**) – “It (=the curse or the deficiency) will no longer ruin” – or a *nif'al* verb (**תִּשְׁחַת**) – “(=your produce) will no longer be ruined.”

⁸⁹⁰ **The meaning of קִבְעִים is like [seizing] a pledge; you... withhold from Me what is meant for Me** – Ibn Janah also interprets the root **קבַע** in our verse as illicitly seizing and withholding (**הַשְׂרִישִׁים** 439). The oral commentary similarly interprets this word as “rob” (**גזל**), employing the same synonym that the Talmud and *midrash* give for **קִבְעִים** (bR.H. 26b, Mid. Tan. to Exod. 26:7), while they attest to the word’s lexical difficulty. Similar interpretations are shared by Ibn Balaam (**אֵלֶבֶכֶס וְאֵלֶגְבֹן**, “fraud and deceit”) and Tanḥum (**גַּצֵּב**, “wrongfully taking”; cf. al-Qumisi). Jonathan interprets it as “angering” (**מְרַגֵּזִין**) God.

⁸⁹¹ **Ought man to defraud [God?]** - **Here is [the answer]: in tithe and contribution** – This exact comment appears several lines earlier.

⁸⁹² **Stingily** – Literally, “with a bad eye” (cf. mTer. 4:3).

⁸⁹³ **עַד קָבַל יָדֵי – Not just enough but more [than enough]** – The Hebrew word **בְּלִי** is an adverb of negation, so the verse’s Hebrew phrase could literally mean “until there is not enough” (cf. KJV: “that there shall not be room enough to receive it”). Ibn Ezra therefore suggests that **בְּלִי** negates “enough” in the sense of “more than enough” rather than “less than enough” (cf. Eliezer of Beaugency, Tanḥum, Abarbanel; Ibn Janah, **הַשְׂרִישִׁים** 108; and Ibn Caspi, Isa. 40:16). Jonathan translates the phrase as “until you say, ‘Enough’” (cf. bShab. 32b, yBer. 9:5). Radak cites his father, Joseph Kimḥi, as rendering the phrase “until you do not have enough [vessels]” to store abundant food.

(12) [And all the nations] shall account [you] happy, because I will delight (הפִּיץ) in you and your land.⁸⁹⁶

(13) You have spoken hard words – This prophecy is for the future, because, “For lo! [That] day is at hand” (v. 19), is connected to it.⁸⁹⁷

(14) You have said... קדַּרְנִית (mournfully) is like: “I was bowed with gloom” (קָדַר; Ps. 35:14), due to fear of God.⁸⁹⁸

(15) And so... [They have indeed done evil yet are built up; they have indeed dared God and escaped] – These are the words of the people of the world, who do not understand the ways of God.⁸⁹⁹

⁸⁹⁴ **It** – The antecedent of “it” is presumably “the yield of your soil,” which is the potential victim of the curse in the verse.

⁸⁹⁵ **Crickets** – The Hebrew word צלצל refers to a creature from Deut. 28:42. Ibn Ezra *ad loc.* acknowledges that it is difficult to know exactly which creature this is, because it only appears once in the Bible, but the context of that verse indicates that it is a creature which devours produce. The oral commentary also interprets “the devourer” as locusts.

⁸⁹⁶ **I will delight (הפִּיץ) in you and your land** – Ibn Ezra’s choice of verb is a paraphrase of the verse’s noun construct “a delightsome land” (אֶרֶץ תִּפְצֵץ).

⁸⁹⁷ **This prophecy is for the future, because, “For lo! That day is at hand” is connected to it** – Since vv. 13-18 flow directly into v. 19, and vv. 19-24 clearly address the future, Ibn Ezra concludes that everything in vv. 13-24 must address the future. Tanḥum, too, notes that after addressing his own generation in vv. 7-12, Malachi returns to addressing the future, as he did at the beginning of Ch. 3 (cf. note 886).

⁸⁹⁸ **קדַּרְנִית is like: “I was bowed with gloom” (קָדַר) due to fear of God** – Muraoka and Shavitsky suggest translating the word קדַּרְנִית as an “expression of awe towards God,” based on Ibn Ezra’s comment “due to fear of God.” Indeed, several exegetes interpret קדַּרְנִית as “humbly” (Rashi, Eliezer of Beaugency, Tanḥum; cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 442). However, as Zer-Kavod observes (דעת מקרא 15-16 n. 41), Ibn Ezra’s commentary to the proof-text in Psalms indicates that the word קדַּרְנִית connotes mourning, even if it is being used here as an expression of awe. The oral commentary interprets the word קדַּרְנִית literally as “in black,” meaning “in the dark” – a view shared by Joseph Kara, Student of Trani, and Rashbam (Cant. 1:6). Hence, it seems that according to Ibn Ezra, this quote does not depict the people’s reverence toward God but rather the dread or suffering that they claim to have experienced while serving Him (cf. Zer-Kavod, *ibid.*). Ramban appears to adopt a similar understanding of קדַּרְנִית (Deut. 6:16, 32:15).

⁸⁹⁹ **These are the words of the people of the world, who do not understand the ways of God** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting this verse as a continuation of what the people were saying in the previous verse, where they questioned the value of serving God. They now continue to challenge God’s fairness by complaining that the wicked prosper. Ibn Ezra is rejecting the possibility that the comments in our verse reflect the prophet’s objective assessment of divine justice. Ibn Ezra’s interpretation was previously suggested by Ibn Balaam.

(16) Then have [those who revere the Lord] – the enlightened ones – been talking to one another.

[And a scroll of remembrance] has been written – It is written in the heavens, writing that cannot be erased.⁹⁰⁰

Concerning those who revere the Lord – namely, righteous individuals⁹⁰¹ – **and concerning those who esteem His name** – namely, men with wise hearts,⁹⁰² individuals who know the secret of the glorious and awesome name.⁹⁰³

(17) They shall be – The word **treasure** is connected to **they shall be to Me**.⁹⁰⁴

On the day that I make judgment.⁹⁰⁵

⁹⁰⁰ **[And a scroll of remembrance] has been written... in the heavens, writing that cannot be erased** – Through this cryptic comment, Ibn Ezra is alluding to his astrological views. According to Ibn Ezra, when various verses mention God’s “scroll of remembrance” or “scroll of life,” the scroll is a metaphor for the celestial bodies, and one who knows how to properly practice astrology can access this information. Ibn Ezra articulates this understanding of the “scroll” most clearly in Ps. 69:29 and Exod. 32:32, and he hints at it in several other places (long commentary to Gen. 8:1, short commentary to Exod. 32:32, Isa. 4:3, Dan. 7:14). Saadiah, too, stresses that our verse’s “scroll of remembrance” is a metaphor, but Saadiah considers it a metaphor for God’s eternal memory, not for the heavens (*Beliefs and Opinions*, 5:1, Rosenblatt 207; cf. 9:7, Rosenblatt 331).

⁹⁰¹ **Those who revere the Lord – namely, righteous individuals** – Ibn Ezra does not elaborate on the nature of their righteousness. Ḥayyuj (כתאב אלנתר), Basal 278-279) depicts them as righteous individuals who were beginning to lose hope due to their suffering in exile. Ḥayyuj apparently maintains that “those who revere the Lord” are the same people who complained in vv. 13-15 about the futility of worshiping God. Ibn Ezra, however, distinguishes between the righteous individuals “who revere the Lord” in our verse and those who complained in vv. 13-15 – whom he insisted “do not understand the ways of God.”

⁹⁰² **Those who revere the Lord – namely, righteous individuals... those who esteem His name – namely, men with wise hearts** – Ibn Ezra seeks a distinct meaning for each of the seemingly synonymous phrases that describe the people who will be inscribed in the “scroll of remembrance” – “those who revere the Lord and esteem His name.”

⁹⁰³ **The secret of the glorious and awesome name** – Ibn Ezra is referring to the Tetragrammaton. Regarding the significance of this name to Ibn Ezra, see my supercommentary to Zech. 14:9. Radak cites this comment verbatim in Ibn Ezra’s name, and Tanḥum cites it anonymously as one possible interpretation.

⁹⁰⁴ **The word treasure is connected to they shall be to Me** – According to its Hebrew word order, this verse reads: “And they shall be to Me – said the Lord of Hosts, on the day that I make/prepare – a treasure.” Ibn Ezra is thus explaining that “a treasure” is not the item that God is making. Instead, Ibn Ezra adopts a wide-scope reading according to which those who revere God will be His treasure. Rashi adopts the narrow-scope reading, according to which God is preparing a treasure, while Jacob b. Reuben, Radak, Tanḥum, and Abarbanel share Ibn Ezra’s wide-scope reading.

(18) And you shall come [to see] – [This is addressing] the people of that generation, because it is the last prophecy.⁹⁰⁶

(19) Arrogant and doers of evil – The meaning is double.⁹⁰⁷

וְלִהְט (**shall burn**) is like “and the fiery (לִהְט) sword” (Gen. 3:24).

(20) [A sun of victory] shall rise – The primary [feature] of daytime is the **sun**: “As the day grew hot” (Gen. 18:1) [refers to] the sun; “The day was very far spent” (Jud. 19:11) [refers to] the sun. The same applies to “the day that is coming” (v. 19). This **sun** will not harm the men of God, but rather it will **heal**.⁹⁰⁸

The meaning of **in its wings** is the light that emanates from the sun and is spread like wings over the face of the earth.

You shall go forth by the light of the **sun**.

וּפְשָׁתֶם (**and you will spread out**) – I already explained this.⁹⁰⁹

⁹⁰⁵ **Judgment** – Ibn Ezra needs to add a word to be the object of “make,” because he believes that “treasure” is not its object (see note 904). Hence, he renders the full verse: “And they shall be a treasure to Me – said the Lord of Hosts – on the day that I make [judgment].”

⁹⁰⁶ **[This is addressing] the people of that generation, because it is the last prophecy** – By “that generation,” Ibn Ezra presumably intends the future generation when God “makes judgment” (v. 17). Malachi addresses that future generation in the second person because he is the final prophet, so there will be no future prophet in their own time to address them.

⁹⁰⁷ **The meaning is double** – See note 810 above.

⁹⁰⁸ **The same applies to “the day that is coming.” This sun will not harm the men of God, but rather it will heal** – Ibn Ezra is equating the heat of “the day” in v. 19 with the heat of the sun, and therefore arguing that “the sun of victory” in v. 20, which heals the righteous, is very the same sun that will burn evildoers.

⁹⁰⁹ **וּפְשָׁתֶם – I already explained this** – See both commentaries to Nah. 3:18, where Ibn Ezra cites our verse and explains that the root פּוּשׁ means “to spread out.” He offers the same interpretation of this verb in the oral commentary and in צְחֹת (Lippmann 13a-b, Valle Rodriguez 36), as well as Hab. 1:8, where he rejects an alternative meaning suggested by Yefet (probably “to multiply”; cf. Schlossberg, עיבוד... לתרגומו של יפת, 153-154 ns. 112-113, and Muraoka and Shavitsky).

(21) **וְעָטוּתְהֶם** (**and you shall trample**) is from the same derivation as עֵסִיט (“sweet wine”; Joel 1:5), on account of the fact that one tramples the grapes with one’s feet or with anything that can trample.⁹¹⁰

For then the righteous will prevail over **the wicked**.

On the day that I make – This is what the [previous verse] mentioned: “a sun of victory” (v. 20).⁹¹¹

(22) **Be mindful of the Teaching of My servant Moses** and observe it, for it will teach you the path to fear of God, such that you will survive when the aforementioned day arrives.

(23) **Lo, [I will send,]** is God’s words.⁹¹²

And **the [awesome, fearful] day [of the Lord]** is the aforementioned one (vv. 19-21).

(24) **He shall turn [the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers]** is in the same manner as, “[If you come peacefully to me to help me,] my heart shall be united with you” (I Chron. 12:18).⁹¹³ The opposite of [reconciling fathers with children] is: “Son spurns father” (Mic. 7:6).

⁹¹⁰ **וְעָטוּתְהֶם** is from the same derivation as עֵסִיט (“sweet wine”), on account of the fact that one tramples the grapes with... anything that can trample – Radak and Tanḥum adopt this interpretation and cite the same proof-text. Jacob b. Reuben also links the word וְעָטוּתְהֶם to trampling grapes, as did earlier Karaites (cited by Simon, supercommentary to Joel *ad loc.*)

⁹¹¹ **On the day that I make – That is what the [previous verse] mentioned: “a sun of victory”** – Ibn Ezra’s commentary to the previous verse explained that the “day” refers to the sun in this passage.

⁹¹² **Lo, [I will send,] is God’s words** – Ibn Ezra is explaining the first person as the prophet conveying a quote from God rather than expressing his personal view.

⁹¹³ **He shall turn [the heart of the fathers to the children...] is in the same manner as, “[If you come peacefully to me to help me,] my heart shall be united with you”** – Ibn Ezra does not explain the significance of this proof-text. Presumably, it teaches that returning the hearts of father and sons to one another is a metaphor for uniting fathers and sons (cf. Tanḥum).

So they will all be of one heart to return to the Lord, **fathers** and **children** before the coming of the awesome, fearful day (cf. v. 23).

Now, I will conclude the commentary to this book with the matter of Elijah. We find that he [lived] in the days of Ahaziah, Ahab's son,⁹¹⁴ and we find it written that Jehoram b. Ahab and Jehoshaphat inquired of the prophet Elisha. It is written there: "Elisha son of Shaphat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah, is here" (II Kings 3:11). This is proof that Elijah had already gone "up to heaven in a whirlwind" (II Kings 2:11), for the verse did not say "who is pouring water [on the hands of Elijah]."⁹¹⁵ Moreover, Elisha was never separated from Elijah once he [began] to serve him, until [Elijah]'s ascent. Yet we find after Jehoshaphat's death – in the days of his son Ahaziah – that it is written: "A letter from Elijah the prophet came to him" (II Chr. 21:12).⁹¹⁶ This indicates that [Elijah] wrote it then and sent it to him. If it had been written before his ascent, then the verse would have been written, "He found [a letter from Elijah]," or, "A letter that Elijah had left was brought to

⁹¹⁴ **We find that he [lived] in the days of Ahaziah, Ahab's son** – In II Kings 1, Elijah interacts with Ahaziah's agents.

⁹¹⁵ **It is written there: "Elisha... who poured water on the hands of Elijah"... the verse did not say "who is pouring water [on the hands of Elijah]"** – The past tense of the verb "poured" demonstrates that Elijah had already ascended to heaven before this incident (Filvarg 15a). Radak (II Chron. 21:12) adopts this proof.

⁹¹⁶ **This shows that Elijah had already gone "up to heaven in a whirlwind"... Yet we find after Jehoshaphat's death... "A letter from Elijah the prophet came to him"** – The Bible does not provide a date for Elijah's ascent. Moreover, the surrounding chapters of Kings (I Kings 22-II Kings 8) repeatedly deviate from chronological order by alternating between narratives that focus on the king of Judah and narratives that focus on the king of Israel. Hence, it is impossible to infer the date of Elijah's ascent based on the dates of events in adjacent chapters. Ibn Ezra therefore attempts to establish a *terminus ante quem* for Elijah's ascent based on Elijah's glaring absence from the narrative of Jehoram and Jehoshaphat's battle with Moab (and not merely from the fact that this battle is written one chapter after his ascent). In II Chr. 21:12, Elijah's letter arrives during the reign of Jehoshaphat's grandson and thus must have been sent after Elijah's ascent. Pseudo-Rashi and Radak to Chronicles (*ad loc.*) share this view. The rabbinic work *Seder Olam Rabbah* offers a more precise chronology, asserting that Elijah's letter was written seven years after his ascent (Ch. 17; regarding the underlying calculations, see Milikowski's supercommentary 277-281).

him.” And there is no doubt that he appeared to our holy sages.⁹¹⁷ May the Lord fulfill his prophecy and hasten the time⁹¹⁸ of his arrival.⁹¹⁹

⁹¹⁷ **And there is no doubt that he appeared to our holy sages** – For recent discussion of the many tales of Elijah in the Talmud and Midrash, see Karin Hedner-Zetterholm, “Elijah’s Different Roles – A Reflection of the Rabbinic Struggle for Authority” (*Jewish Studies Quarterly*, 16,2 [June 2009] 163-182) and Kristen Lindbeck, *Elijah and the Rabbis: Story and Theology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

⁹¹⁸ **Time** – The Hebrew word קץ literally means “end,” referring to the time that God has designated for the end of days (cf. Dan. 12:13).

⁹¹⁹ **We find that he [lived] in the days of Ahaziah, Ahab’s son... Yet we find after Jehoshaphat’s death – in the days of his son Ahaziah – it is written: “A letter from Elijah the prophet came to him”... And there is no doubt that he appeared to our holy sages. May God... hasten... his arrival** – Ibn Ezra does not fully explain his understanding of Elijah’s ascent and eventual return. By insisting that Elijah wrote the letter to Ahaziah b. Jehoshaphat *after* Elijah’s ascent to heaven, and that Elijah appeared to the sages of the Talmud, Ibn Ezra seems to be claiming that Elijah continued to act in this world even after his ascent in a flaming chariot. Indeed, Abarbanel understands that according to Ibn Ezra, Elijah never actually left this world (cf. bSuk. 5a) but rather was transferred to a mysterious location from which he occasionally reappears (cf. Schrem 46a).

However, some scholars have argued that in fact Ibn Ezra is alluding to a more radical view, according to which all the actions that “Elijah” supposedly performed after his ascent were in fact done by a later prophet. In the words of Friedlander (*Essays* 98-99, emphasis added):

In enumerating the various acts of the prophet Elijah, Ibn Ezra apparently intended to show the difficulty of believing that all these acts were acts of the same prophet, *and to suggest that the name of "the prophet Elijah" possibly was given to several persons, who, in their moral and religious practices, followed the example of the prophet Elijah in the days of Ahab.* It is incompatible with the view of Ibn Ezra on the present and future life of man to hold that the man of God, after having once risen "to cleave to God" should again descend and assume a mortal form.

Friedlander’s view was subsequently endorsed by Sarachek (118). Tanḥum may have also understood Ibn Ezra in this manner, since he writes that an unnamed sage maintained that the prophet in our verse is a later prophet whom the Bible is favorably comparing to Elijah. Based on Tanḥum’s description of this unnamed sage (whom he cites as identifying the “messenger” in v. 1 with the Messiah son of Joseph), the sage appears to be Ibn Ezra. (Tanḥum further argues – based on scant evidence – that Maimonides shared this view in the closing passage of *Mishneh Torah*; cf. *Laws of Kings* 12:2.)

More recently, Haas has assessed this passage within the broader context of Ibn Ezra’s view of resurrection of the dead (שליית האמונה בתחיית המתים) 24-34) and reached a similar conclusion to Abarbanel. According to Haas, Ibn Ezra believes that Elijah was “taken” by God in a manner that did not separate his soul from his body (cf. Gen. 5:22-24 regarding Enoch). Hence, Ibn Ezra maintains that Elijah never died but rather was taken to some hidden place. From that location, Elijah resurfaced to send a letter to Ahaziah b. Jehoshaphat and to sporadically interact with Talmudic sages.

If Haas is correct about Ibn Ezra’s view, then Ibn Ezra was taking one side in a longstanding dispute about whether Elijah was taken alive by God or died (and will be resurrected before returning to usher in the redemption). Several earlier rabbinic teachings indicate that Elijah never died (bSuk. 5a; bM.K. 26a; Gen. R. to Gen. 3:22; *Avot de-R. Nathan* II:38, Schechter 52a; Sed. Ol. R. Ch. 17; cf. Milikowski *ad loc.*). On the other hand, R. Phineas b. Jair’s maxim, “Resurrection leads to the coming of Elijah” (mSot. 9:15, yShek. 3:3), might imply that Elijah died and must be resurrected. According to Judah Ibn Tibbon’s version of Saadiah’s *Doctrines and Beliefs*, Saadiah maintained that Elijah died and will be resurrected, and Saadiah thus considered our verse to be a source for the traditional belief in resurrection (7:7, Rosenblatt 428-429). However, Saadiah is cited elsewhere as interpreting II Kings 2:1 such that Elijah was transported by the wind to an undisclosed location from which God continued to sustain him alive (Ratzhabi, ג"פירוש רס"ג 155; cf. Tal, דרכי פרשנותו 234 n. 19, regarding the anonymous view cited by Tanḥum’s commentary to II Kings 2:9).

Yefet and Jacob b. Reuben dismiss the view that Elijah died and must be resurrected in the future. Judah Halevi adopts the view from the Talmud that Elijah never died (*Kuzari* 1:115). Radak (II Kings 2:1)

Blessed is “He Who gives strength to the weary, fresh vigor to the spent” (Isa. 40:29).

The commentary to the Book of Minor Prophets is complete, thanks to “God, Source of the breath of all flesh” (Num. 16:22). I, Abraham son of R. Meir the Spaniard, explained it in the year 4917 at the start of the month⁹²⁰ of *Tevet* in the city of Rouen.⁹²¹

Thus said the copyist of this book:

“I, Joseph son of R. Jacob of Moudeville,⁹²² copied it from the author’s handwritten manuscript. I also added some explanation to his language, as he explained to me at the time of its composition. However, because it was my explanation, I marked the additional

maintains that Elijah’s body was incinerated during his ascent in fiery chariots, but he does also cite the view that Elijah entered Eden alive. Ramban adopts the view that Elijah never died (Lev. 18:5), although he does acknowledge that the other view would serve to prove the correctness of belief in resurrection (שער הגמול in Chavel, כתבי רמב”ן II:304).

⁹²⁰ **At the start of the month** – The Hebrew noun construct ראש חודש could refer to the first day of *Tevet* or the previous day (=the thirtieth of *Kislev*). Those two dates correspond to December 15-16, 1156. See Sela and Freudenthal (“Abraham Ibn Ezra’s Scholarly Writings” 45-46) for further discussion of this commentary’s date and its relationship to the dates of Ibn Ezra’s other works.

⁹²¹ **In the city of Rouen** – Manuscripts differ greatly regarding the Hebrew spelling of this word. Due to the similarity between the letters ט/ס and ד/ר, it is exceedingly difficult to identify the name of this city in manuscripts. The name begins with two consonants that look like ט or ד and ends with a ס or ד. At least one witness reads דרום (south), which is undoubtedly a scribal error stemming from a lack of familiarity with the city’s actual name. Several scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries identified the city with either Rhodéz in southern France (דרוז/רודוס; cf. Friedlander 168) or Dreux in northern France (דרוס; cf. Gross 184-185 and 626). The HaKeter edition also adopts the reading of דרום. More recently, Golb (*Jews in Normandy* 263-274) examined the transliteration of French cities in medieval Hebrew and strongly endorsed the reading of רודום or רודום (Rodom), which would be a shortened form of *Rodomagus*, the Latin name of Rouen, Normandy. Golb’s identification of our city with Rouen is shared by Simon (ע 11; שני פירושי ראב”ע; cf. *Four Approaches* 147) and Sela and Freudenthal (45). The two best manuscripts (MS Montefiore 34, MS Parma 2549) appear to read רדום, although they write ט and ד similarly enough that either or both manuscripts might read רדום.

⁹²² **Moudeville** – Friedlander (*Essays* 166) spells this city “Maudeville.” Ben-Menaḥem (פרקי, 81-81 מגנזי ישראל) identifies this city with Moudeville, Normandy, while Golb (51-52, תולדות היהודים) and Simon (ראב”ע - הפירוש הקצר לתורה) identify it with the English city of Morville, Shropshire. The graphic similarity between ט and ד can make it difficult to distinguish the two names in manuscripts. I have adopted the spelling of Moudeville because the only three manuscripts that contain this colophon (MS Montefiore 34, MS Parma 2549, and MS British Library 24896) all appear to read מודויל (contrary to Golb’s claim that MS Montefiore 34 reads מורויל). The HaKeter edition, too, prints this location as מודויל. For further discussion of the location and spelling of this city, see Fleischer (ע 74, ראב”ע ומלאכתו הספרותית בארץ אנגליה), N. Sarna (“Ibn Ezra as an Exegete” in Twersky and Harris, *R. Abraham Ibn Ezra* 22 n. 18), and Visi (126).

*columns with two dots at the top and bottom of the column.*⁹²³ *Anywhere where the two dots are found between words, it is an addition of my explanation from his mouth.”*

⁹²³ **I also added some explanation to his language... I marked the additional columns with two dots at the top and bottom of the column** – Regrettably, as Friedlander observes (*Essays* 166):

The existing copies both in print and manuscript are interspersed with the additions made by Joseph of Maudeville, but they do not contain those distinguishing marks, which, according to the interpolator's own words were inserted to separate the superadded passages from the original.

Indeed, even passages that clearly appear to be glosses (e.g., Hag. 1:6) bear no indication of this status in any extant manuscript.

Ibn Ezra to Haggai – Oral Commentary

Chapter 1

(1) In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, this word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest: (2)...It is not time for the coming of the time¹ for the House of the Lord to be rebuilt. – That is to say, the time has still not arrived for the House of the Lord to be rebuilt.

(4) “Is it a time for you to dwell in your houses?” – That is to say, this time has come upon you – whereby you are dwelling in **your houses, while this house is lying in ruins** – because you said thus.²

(6) You have sowed much and brought in little; you eat without being satisfied; you drink without getting your fill; you clothe yourselves but no one gets warm; and he who earns anything earns it for a leaky purse – That is to say, something which is worthless.³

¹ **Not time for the coming of the time** – The oral commentary’s subsequent paraphrase serves to elucidate the repetition of the word “time” (זמן) in the verse (cf. the standard commentary).

² **Because you said thus** – “Thus” appears to refer to v. 2, where Haggai accuses the people of saying that the time has not arrived to rebuild the Temple. Because of that attitude, they are currently sitting in their homes while the Temple lies in ruins (cf. the HaKeter edition, whose punctuation places “because you said thus” at the start of Ibn Ezra’s comments to v. 6).

³ **A leaky purse... which is worthless** – The standard commentary similarly points out the worthlessness of a leaky bag.

(7) Thus said the Lord of Hosts... (8) Go up to the hills and get timber and rebuild the house; then I will look on it with favor and I will be glorified – said the Lord. (9) But if you do not act so, know that you will expect much and get little, and even that little, when you bring it home, I will blow on it.⁴

(13) Fulfilling the Lord’s mission (במלאכות) – Its explanation is: by the Holy One, Blessed Be He’s agency (בשליחות).⁵

(14) They came and set to work on the House of the Lord of Hosts, their God, (15) on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month.⁶

Chapter 2

(1) And in the seventh month,⁷ on the twenty first day of the month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai:

(3) Is it not, by comparison – That is to say, as you see it now,⁸ it is like nothing in your eyes.

⁴ **But if you do not act so, know that... I will blow on it** – This interpretation of v. 9 views it as a warning about the consequences of *future* failure to heed Haggai’s call to action in v. 8. By contrast, the standard commentary reads v. 9 as describing what has been happening *until now* due to the people’s failure to rebuild the Temple. The verse’s ambiguity stems from the fact that the first action in the verse (“expect”) appears in infinitive form, and the other actions (“you brought” and “I blew”) are perfect verbs that are preceded by a prefix ו, which could either be conjunctive or conversive (to future tense). Joseph Kara agrees with the standard commentary that v. 9 refers to past events. Others paraphrase the verbs with participles, presumably to indicate that Haggai is describing what the people are doing right now (Jonathan; cf. Radak). Some exegetes distinguish between the different verbs (“You looked for much... and you brought home, but I will blow on it”), so that Haggai is warning that God *will blow away* what the people *have already* gathered into their homes (Rashi; cf. Tanḥum). Abarbanel interprets the entire verse as alluding to the future. The oral commentary’s interpretation of this verse as a warning about the future is consistent with Yefet’s translation, which uses imperfect verbs for, “You will bring” (ותרכילון) and, “I will blow” (ואנפך).

⁵ **במלאכות – its explanation is... בשליחות** – See standard commentary.

⁶ **The sixth month** – The verse simply says “the sixth.” Most exegetes do not deem it necessary to explain this point, since “month” is clearly implied.

⁷ **The seventh month** – see note 6.

⁸ **By comparison – that is to say, as you see it now** – This paraphrase is intended to clarify the verse’s cryptic language. The Hebrew word כְּמִהוּ, which is translated in context as “by comparison,” could be rendered literally

(6) In just a little (מְעַט) while longer – That is to say, [it] will yet arrive [in] a short (מוֹעֵט) time,⁹ **and I will shake the heavens...**

(7) And I will fill this house with כְּבוֹד (glory) – Its explanation is: “money,”¹⁰ similar to, “He has built up all this wealth (הַכְּבוֹד)” (Gen. 31:1).¹¹

(12) If a man is carrying sacrificial flesh in a fold of his garment and afterward that fold touches bread, stew, wine, oil, or any other food will these become holy just as it – the meat – is holy? **In reply, the priests said, “No.” (13) Haggai went on, “If someone defiled by a corpse touches any of these, will it be defiled?” And the priests responded, “Yes”** – Its explanation: He said¹² that the prophet was required to mention a holy item and an unclean item here, because it is like an allegory: “For as long as the Holy One, Blessed Be He – Who is holy – was within your midst, you did not sanctify yourselves. So when you did evil before Him, He went away.”¹³

as “like it,” with the referent of “it” being somewhat unclear (the First Temple or the Second Temple). So several exegetes add a brief comment or paraphrase to clarify that Haggai is addressing those who are old enough to have seen the First Temple, asking them to contemplate how the current construction site on the Temple Mount is “like nothing” when compared with the glory of the First Temple (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Abarbanel).

⁹ **That is to say, [it] will yet arrive [in] a short time** – The interpretation of the Hebrew adjective מְעַט as modifying the noun “time” matches Ibn Ezra’s second interpretation in the standard commentary - מעט ימים תהיה - (“It will happen in a short time”).

¹⁰ **כְּבוֹד – its explanation is: “money”** – This interpretation of the word כְּבוֹד is derived from the context of vv. 7-8, in which Haggai depicts Gentiles bringing their precious items to the Temple and God asserting His control over the world’s gold and silver.

¹¹ **He has built up all this wealth** – The context of Gen. 31:1 makes it obvious that כְּבוֹד refers to wealth (which Jacob amassed while working for Laban). The oral commentary uses the same proof-text to prove that כְּבוֹד refers to wealth in Nah. 2:10 (cf. Joseph Kara, *ad loc.*, for a different interpretation of כְּבוֹד in that verse).

¹² **He said** – I am assuming that the Hebrew word אָמַר is vocalized אֹמֵר (*qal* masc. sing. participle), and the referent of “he” is Ibn Ezra (described in third person by his student who wrote the oral commentary). The word could also be vocalized אֹמֵר (first-person imperfect) to mean, “I say.” For other examples of this use of אָמַר, see the oral commentary’s opening poem to Hosea and Simon’s supercommentary *ad loc.* (שְׁנֵי פִירוּשֵׁי רַאב"ע" 269).

¹³ **It is like an allegory... So when you did evil before Him, He went away** – Haggai’s legal queries reminded the priests that sacrificial flesh cannot transfer its sanctity via indirect contact with another food, yet an unclean individual can defile those foods via indirect contact. According to this interpretation, the sacrificial meat symbolizes God, Who could not sanctify the people if they did nothing themselves to become holy. But when

(16) When you came to a heap of twenty measures - Its explanation: Before you built the Temple, a curse was found in your homes, whereby you would come to a heap of wheat that you thought was twenty measures, **but it would only be ten.**¹⁴

(19) The seed is still in the barn¹⁵ – Its explanation: The seed is still in the storehouse and has not been planted,¹⁶ and **the vine, fig tree, pomegranate, and olive tree have not yet borne their**¹⁷ fruit.

From this day on, I will bless – That is to say, from the time that you begin to build the Temple,¹⁸ I will bless “all the works of your hands” (v. 17).¹⁹

The commentary to Haggai is concluded.

the people (symbolized by the unclean man) continued to act inappropriately, they were able to drive God away (parallel to defiling the foods). The standard commentary alludes to the difference between sanctifying and defiling via indirect contact, but it does not fully articulate how that distinction explains Haggai’s message.

¹⁴ **When you came to a heap... that you thought was twenty measures, but it would only be ten** – Ibn Ezra offers the same interpretation in the standard commentary.

¹⁵ **The seed is still in the barn** – I have translated this verse as a statement, unlike the many translations that consider it a question (“Is the seed yet in the barn?”), because the oral commentary appears to treat it as a statement (see note 16).

¹⁶ **Its explanation: The seed is still in the storehouse and has not been planted** – According to this interpretation, Haggai is stating that the grain has not yet been planted, but God will bless it once they commence building the Temple. The claim that the grain “has *not* been planted” differs from the standard commentary, which maintains that “the seed *was* planted in the ground” and interprets Haggai’s remark as a rhetorical question (“Is the seed yet in the barn?”) to which the answer is, “No.” In the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra asserts that Haggai must be asking a question, because the verse opens with an interrogative prefix ה. The oral commentary thus must either a) assume that the answer to this rhetorical question is actually, “Yes,” or b) believe that the prefix ה is not interrogative. The latter possibility appears more likely, because, Ibn Janah claims that the prefix ה is not interrogative (הרקמה 102). It thus seems plausible that the oral commentary reflects Ibn Janah’s view, either because Ibn Ezra himself shared this view earlier in life, or because the student who recorded the oral commentary mistook Ibn Janah’s view for Ibn Ezra’s own view. Later, when Ibn Ezra wrote the standard commentary, he interpreted the ה as an interrogative prefix, which is introducing a rhetorical question.

¹⁷ **Their** – According to some witnesses, the Hebrew text is singular (“*its* fruit”).

¹⁸ **From the time that you begin to build the Temple** – “This day” refers to the same “this day” as v. 18 (“from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day when the foundation was laid for the Lord’s Temple”). The standard commentary makes the same point.

¹⁹ **I will bless “all the works of your hands”** – Earlier, in v. 17, the phrase “all the works of your hands” refers to everything which God had cursed, so Ibn Ezra uses it here to stress that once they commence building the Temple, God will bless everything that He has been cursing until now.

Ibn Ezra to Zechariah – Oral Commentary

Chapter 1

(1) In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, this word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah... saying:

(6) But My adverse words and My decrees²⁰ with which I charged My servants the prophets to bring upon Israel overtook your fathers—did they not?

(8) And behind him were red horses – Its explanation is: angels²¹ who were riding on **red horses²²** and on **שָׁרְקִים (sorrel) horses**, like “His ass’s foal to a choice vine” (שָׁרְקָה; Gen. 11:49).²³

²⁰ **My adverse words and My decrees** - Ibn Ezra adds the word “adverse” in order to stress that the verse refers to prophecies of punishment and destruction. Otherwise, the Hebrew phrase דְּבַרֵי יְהוָה could be interpreted as referring to God’s laws or commandments. Many medieval exegetes fundamentally agree with the interpretation of this phrase as referring to prophecies of punishment and destruction (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Ibn Caspi), but others interpret it as referring to laws or commandments (see al-Qumisi, the standard commentary’s citation of Yefet, and Abarbanel). The standard commentary replaces the word דְּבַרֵי (laws or decrees) with the word “prophecy,” presumably to make the same point as the oral commentary.

²¹ **Angels** – Hebrew: מַלְאָכִים. Some manuscripts read מַלְכִים (kings), which is the reading adopted by the HaKeter edition. However, the standard commentary clearly states that the “man” who was mounted on the red horse was an angel. It thus appears that מַלְכִים is a scribal error, resulting from the fact that the two words share all but one letter and have virtually identical pronunciations.

²² **Angels who were riding on red horses** – The claim that angels rode these horses appears to contradict the standard commentary, where Ibn Ezra writes: “And behind him were [bay, sorrel, and white] horses – but no man was mounted on them.”

²³ **His ass’s foal to a choice vine** – Ibn Ezra’s commentary to Gen. *ad loc.* identifies שָׁרְקָה as a synonym of גֶּפֶן, the more common Hebrew word for a grapevine. The standard commentary cites the same proof-text.

(11-12) Thereupon the angel of the Lord exclaimed, “O Lord of Hosts! How long will You withhold pardon from Jerusalem – That is to say, as long as the earth is dwelling in tranquility, we cannot rebuild Jerusalem.”²⁴

(15) For I was only angry a little at you,²⁵ **but they helped for evil.**

(17) My towns shall yet overflow with prosperity – Its explanation is: from an abundance of prosperity.²⁶

Chapter 2

(8) Jerusalem shall be inhabited without walls – Its explanation is: **Due to the multitude of men and cattle** who will be in **Jerusalem** and will not be able to settle **therein**, they will settle outside the [city’s] wall. So **Jerusalem** will appear to be **without walls**. **(9) But the Holy One, blessed be He, will be a wall of fire all around it.**

(10) Ho! Ho! Flee from the land of the north – Its explanation is that he is addressing Israel, for they are in exile in **the north**.²⁷ That is to say, **“Ho, O Israel, flee from the land of the north.**

(12) For thus said the Lord of Hosts—He who sent me after glory – Its explanation is:

The prophet said that **after (אחרי) His glory**, the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself

²⁴ **As long as the earth is dwelling in tranquility, we cannot rebuild Jerusalem –** The standard commentary similarly asserts: “When wars erupt, then the Lord’s Temple will be built by Zerubbabel.”

²⁵ **For I was only angry a little at you –** Ibn Ezra adds “at you” in order to clarify that God initially directed His anger “at Israel” (standard commentary), which the verse does not state explicitly.

²⁶ **From an abundance of prosperity –** Ibn Ezra might be stressing the “abundance” because the Hebrew word תפוצתה derives from the root פוץ, which can have also have a negative connotation of dispersion into exile (e.g., Deut. 4:27 and 28:64). The standard commentary similarly writes: “The settlement will expand due to the abundance of prosperity.”

²⁷ **Israel, for they are in exile in the north –** “Israel” can be used narrowly – as the title of the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel – or broadly, as the title for all descendants of both kingdoms (Israel and Judah). Ibn Ezra presumably intends the latter usage, because this prophecy is directly primarily at the Babylonian Diaspora, which came from Judah (cf. the standard commentary).

to him,²⁸ so that he would go **unto the nations that have taken Israel as spoil**. It is like He said to Moses, “And you will see My back (אַחֲרַי)” (Ex. 33:23).²⁹

(15) Many nations will attach themselves (וַיִּלְוּ) is like, “They may be attached (וַיִּלְוּ) to you, and minister to you” (Num. 18:2).³⁰

(16) And the Lord shall inherit (וְיָרַשׁ) Judah his portion – Its explanation: Some explain that **the Lord** shall cause **Judah** to inherit (הַנְּחִיל) **his³¹ portion**. But [others] explain that **the Lord shall inherit (וְיָרַשׁ) Judah – Judah’s portion in the Holy Land.**³²

²⁸ **The prophet said that after (אַחֲרַי) His glory, the Holy One, blessed be He, revealed Himself to him** – The verse’s phrase “after glory” (אַחֲרַי כְבוֹד) does not identify whose glory. Some exegetes interpret it that God sent Zechariah “after [your (=Israel’s)] glory,” meaning that Zechariah was sent with a prophecy that would restore Israel’s glory (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak; cf. Jonathan). But Ibn Ezra maintains that the verse is referring to God’s glory.

²⁹ **It is like He said to Moses, “And you will see My back (אַחֲרַי)”** – According to this comment, Zechariah saw the “back” of God’s glory followed by this prophecy, just as Moses prophesied after seeing God’s “back” in Exod. 33:23. Regarding Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of the divine “back” that Moses saw, see his lengthy comments to Exod. 33:21, as well as briefer comments to Exod. 33:10 and the short commentary to Exod. 33:18.

³⁰ **וַיִּלְוּ is like, “They may be attached (וַיִּלְוּ)... to you”** – For further discussion of this verb’s meaning, cf. Ibn Ezra to Num. *ad loc.*

³¹ **His** – Whether “his” should be capitalized depends upon the possibilities that I discuss below regarding its antecedent.

³² **Its explanation: Some explain that the Lord shall cause Judah to inherit his portion. But others explain that the Lord shall inherit Judah – Judah’s portion in the Holy Land** – Instead of “Judah’s portion in the Holy Land” (in MS Paris 217), other manuscripts read, “His portion in the Holy Land – that is to say that Judah’s portion will be on the holy mountain.” The concluding phrase of this longer text (“that is to say...”) might be a gloss (cf. the HaKeter edition, which puts it in brackets), but it also might be part of the original comment, which MS Paris 217 erroneously omitted due to repetition of the words חֵלְקוֹ (“his portion”) and קֹדֶשׁ (“holy”) twice in the same sentence. Since the text of MS Paris 217 cannot be assumed without question to be a blatant error, the body of my critical text follows MS Paris 217, but I will argue below that the longer text of the other manuscripts yields a more plausible interpretation of the verse.

The oral commentary’s presentation of two interpretations of v. 16 presents a difficulty, as the distinction between the two interpretations is unclear. This verse contains two ambiguities (cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary): 1) Does the verb וַיִּרְשׁ in our verse take one direct object (“X will inherit Y) or two (“X will cause Y to inherit Z”)? 2) Who is the antecedent of “his” in the word חֵלְקוֹ (“his portion”), God or Judah? As the following chart illustrates, these two ambiguities lead to four theoretical readings, three of which are plausible:

| | 1) “His” portion = God’s portion | 2) “His” portion = Judah’s portion |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| A) נָחַל is causative | Reading A1: God will cause Judah to inherit God’s portion | Reading A2: God will cause Judah to inherit Judah’s portion |
| B) נָחַל is NOT causative | Reading B1: God will inherit Judah [as God]’s portion | Reading B2: God will inherit Judah [as Judah]’s portion |

Of these four theoretical readings, the standard commentary initially suggests Reading B1, which is also adopted by several other exegetes (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). The standard commentary adds that the verb נָחַל might instead be causative – without addressing the antecedent of חָלַקוּ – so the standard commentary’s additional suggestion could be Reading A1 or A2 (more likely A2; otherwise Ibn Ezra would have needed to explain how Judah could inherit “God’s portion”). Reading B2 appears to be the only reading that is completely untenable, for it does not express a coherent idea. Indeed, none of Ibn Ezra’s predecessors suggest Reading B2.

The first view presented here by the oral commentary replaces נָחַל with the *hif’il* verb הִנְחִיל, which would indicate a causative action, but this view does not address the antecedent of חָלַקוּ. Hence, it could be adopting Reading A1 or A2 above. The oral commentary’s second view is problematic (assuming the text of MS Paris 217), as it seemingly endorses the implausible Reading B2. It explicitly defines חָלַקוּ as “Judah’s portion” (חֶלְקוֹ שֶׁל־יְהוּדָה), and its use of the *qal* verb נָחַל – on the heels of the first view’s use of הִנְחִיל – presumably indicates that נָחַל is not causative. Given the implausibility of Reading B2, one wonders whether Ibn Ezra intended to distinguish between Readings A2 and B1 – the two widespread medieval interpretations that he cites in the standard commentary – but the author of the oral commentary misunderstood this distinction.

If one assumes that the author of the oral commentary did correctly present two distinct readings, then perhaps his use of the *qal* verb נָחַל in the second view simply followed the exact language of v. 16 and was not intended to reject the possibility of נָחַל being causative. In that case, both views in the oral commentary consider נָחַל to be causative in our verse and disagree only regarding the antecedent of חָלַקוּ. This suggestion could fit the aforementioned longer text of the second view in two manuscripts. Whereas the first view maintains Reading A2, the latter view – according to this longer text – maintains Reading A1:

ויש מפרשים כי נחל יי' את יהודה חלקו באדמת הקודש כלומר שיהיה חלקו של יהודה בהר הקודש

But [others] explain that the Lord shall [cause] Judah [to] inherit (נָחַל) His portion in the Holy Land – that is to say that Judah’s portion will be on the holy mountain.

According to this variant text, God is the antecedent of חָלַקוּ. Despite the use of the *qal* verb נָחַל, this comment clearly interprets נָחַל as causative, since it is describing the “portion” as a parcel of land that Judah – rather than God – shall inherit. It identifies that parcel of land as the Temple Mount in order to explain why the verse labels it “His portion” (i.e., *God’s* portion) even though it is located in the territory of Judah and thus could have been labeled as “Judah’s portion.”

My presentation of this variant text stands in contrast to the HaKeter edition’s presentation of it. The HaKeter edition adds some of the variant text as a gloss in brackets, producing a text that is not supported by any individual witness (italics added):

ויש מפרשים כי נחל יי' את יהודה חלקו של יהודה באדמת הקודש

ויש מפרשים כי נחל יי' את יהודה חלקו באדמת הקודש כלומר שיהיה חלקו של יהודה בהר הקודש

ויש מפרשים (ראה רש"י,) כי נחל יי' את יהודה חלקו של יהודה באדמת הקודש [כלומר: שיהיה חלקו של יהודה בהר הקודש]

The HaKeter text thus contains the word של יהודה (“Judah’s” twice). In fact, the manuscripts with the longer text presumably omit של יהודה from the start of the sentence, since writing it there implies that Judah – rather than God – is the antecedent of “his portion,” while the longer text of this view seeks to establish God as the antecedent. The HaKeter edition’s citation of Rashi as the source of this view is also problematic. Rashi adopts Reading B1, but the long version of this view appears to adopt Reading A1.

(17) Hush (הִשָּׁט), all flesh, before the Lord – Its explanation is: **all flesh** will be silent (ישתוק) **before the Lord.**³³

For He has become awake³⁴ – Some explain that the ך is not part of the root, so the word's interpretation is thus: “for He is roused” (יַעֲזֹר), like, “Awake, awake, (עֹרֵי עֹרֵי) [O Zion]! Clothe yourself in splendor” (Isa. 52:1).³⁵ But others explain that the ך is not a prefix,³⁶ so its interpretation is that God is roaring **from His holy habitation**, similar to, “They growl (נִעְרֹו) like lion cubs” (Jer. 51:38).³⁷

Chapter 3

(1) The adversary (הַשָּׂטָן) standing at his right hand – Some explain that this **adversary** was an angel. Others explain that this **adversary** was a human, like Solomon's “adversary,” as was said: “So the Lord raised up an adversary (שָׂטָן) against Solomon” (I Kings 11:14).³⁸ [Still] others explain that [the adversary] was nothing more than the sin of [Joshua]'s son, since we find that his son – who was the High Priest – married the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite.³⁹

³³ **Hush (הִשָּׁט)... all flesh will be silent (ישתוק) before the Lord** – Ibn Ezra is explaining the interjection הִשָּׁט with an imperfect verb from the more common root שִׁתַּק.

³⁴ **For He has become awake** – Regarding my decision to translate the root עֹרַר as “to become awake,” see the standard commentary to 4:1).

³⁵ **Awake, awake, (עֹרֵי יַעֲזֹר) [O Zion]! Clothe yourself in splendor** – Hayyuj cites the same proof-text (כתאב אלנתר, Maman and Ben Porat 318; cited by Ibn Janah, השרשים 310, and Ibn Balaam).

³⁶ **Is not a prefix** – Literally, “is not insignificant,” meaning that ך is the first letter of the root.

³⁷ **Some explain that the ך is not part of the root... But others explain that the nun is not a prefix... similar to, “They growl (נִעְרֹו) like lion cubs”** – Both interpretations of this word also appear in the standard commentary, where Ibn Ezra appears to prefer the first opinion's etymology; cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*

³⁸ **Some explain that this adversary was an angel. Others explain that this adversary was a human, like Solomon's “adversary”** – The standard commentary also discusses the identity of this שָׂטָן; cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*

³⁹ **[Joshua]'s son... was the High Priest – married the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite** – See Neh. 13:28 regarding Joiada, the priest who married Sanballat's daughter, and 12:10 to trace Joiada's lineage to Joshua. Also see Ezra 10:18 for a general statement that Joshua had descendants who married Gentile women.

It appears that [**the adversary**] was a sin, as was said: **(3) Joshua was clothed in filthy garments**, and when the filthy garments were removed from him, it was said to him, **(4) “See, I have removed your guilt from you.”**⁴⁰

(2) May the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem **rebuke you!**⁴¹

For this is a brand plucked from the fire – That is to say, he returned from the exile.⁴²

(5) And I said: “Let them place a [pure] diadem” – Its explanation is that I said to myself,⁴³ “Perhaps there is someone who can **place a pure diadem upon his head,**” and **they placed [it].**⁴⁴

(6) וַיַּעַד (charged) – Its explanation is, **the angel of the Lord charged (העיד) Joshua as follows.**⁴⁵

(7) Thus said the Lord of Hosts: If you walk in My paths and keep My charge, and if **you will rule My House and if you will guard My courts,**⁴⁶ **then I will permit you to**

⁴⁰ **It appears that there was a sin... I have removed your guilt from you** – Although the oral commentary appears to favor the final view, that *טָוֶשׁ* refers to Joshua’s sin, Ibn Ezra rejects this view in his standard commentary, where he prefers the view that *טָוֶשׁ* refers to human enemies.

⁴¹ **May the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you** – Rather than citing the verse verbatim, Ibn Ezra rearranges the order of the Hebrew words in order to disambiguate. The Hebrew word order puts the relative clause “who has chosen Jerusalem” at the end of the verse and thus allows it to modify “you” (i.e., the adversary) – “May the Lord rebuke you who have chosen Jerusalem.” Such a reading would be illogical, since the adversary is an enemy, whereas Zechariah just stated that *God* “will choose Jerusalem once more” (2:16).

⁴² **For this is a brand plucked from the fire – that is to say, he returned from the exile** – The brand plucked from fire symbolizes the return from exile. The standard commentary offers two different ways to understand the precise meaning of this metaphor.

⁴³ **To myself** – Literally, “in my heart”

⁴⁴ **I said to myself... and they placed [it]** – Ibn Ezra is addressing the fact that the verse says, “I (=Zechariah) said,” when it would have made more sense for the angel to utter these words. The standard commentary discusses this difficulty in greater detail.

⁴⁵ **וַיַּעַד... the angel of the Lord charged (העיד) Joshua as follows** – Ibn Ezra substitutes the perfect verb *העיד* for the imperfect *יַעַד*. Both words share the same root (*עוד*), both are *hif'il*, and both translate as the same tense (due to the vav-consecutive at the start of *יַעַד*). Nevertheless, Ibn Ezra substitutes one word for the other because *יַעַד* is difficult to recognize as *hif'il*, due to its anomalous vocalization (see the standard commentary).

⁴⁶ **If you will rule My House and if you will guard My courts** – Ibn Ezra replaces the verse’s “and also” (*וְגַם*) with “and if” (*וְאִם*) twice, in order to stress that these phrases are part of the protasis rather than beginning the

move about (מְהַלְכִים) among these angels – like “Enoch walked (וַיִּהְיֶה לְךָ) [with God]” (Gen. 5:24).⁴⁷

(8) Hearken well, O High Priest Joshua, you and your fellows sitting before you! For those are miracle men – Its explanation is: These men deserve that I should perform miracles in their time.⁴⁸

I am going to bring My servant the Branch, who is Zerubbabel.⁴⁹

(9) For mark well this stone which I place before Joshua, a single stone with seven eyes – Its explanation is: This is the stone with which they will rebuild the Temple.

Sometimes, it says **before Joshua**, and sometimes it says to Zerubbabel – as is said, “When they see the stone of distinction in the hand of Zerubbabel” (4:10) – because they both rebuilt the Temple. As for what it says **a single stone with seven eyes**, they are the eyes of the Holy

apodosis. He makes the same point in the standard commentary by writing that the phrase “I will permit” would begin in Arabic with the prefix *ف* (*fa*). The HaKeter edition seems to have underestimated the exegetical purpose of this comment, since it remarks that the first *ואם* differs from the Masoretic text’s *וגם*, as if to imply that Ibn Ezra intended to cite the verse verbatim until “and if you will guard My courts,” but he (or a subsequent copyist) accidentally wrote *ואם* or had a text of the Bible that read *ואם* instead of *וגם* (cf. Kennicott).

⁴⁷ **Enoch walked (וַיִּהְיֶה לְךָ) [with God]** – Ibn Ezra might merely be making a lexical comment, using a more common verb from the root *הלך* to interpret the rare word *מְהַלְכִים*. However, he might also be observing a conceptual parallel between Enoch’s experience in Gen. 5:24, in which Enoch seems to somehow walk among the heavenly hosts and God’s offer to Joshua that Joshua could walk among angels. This point might depend on how one interprets Enoch’s experience. Elsewhere in his writings, Ibn Ezra wavers regarding whether Enoch “walking” with God is simply a description of his piety, comparable to descriptions of Noah (Gen. 6:9) and other pious individual, or if it means that he interacted with angels (cf. both commentaries to Gen. 5:22; Ps. 73:24 and 101:2). The latter possibility resembles Saadiah’s claim that our verse is promising Joshua a great reward in the afterlife (*Beliefs and Opinions* 9:8, Rosenblatt 347; cf. Saadiah to Isa. 33:16 and 53:12, Ratzhabi, תפסיר ישעיה, 300 and 347).

⁴⁸ **Miracle men... These men deserve that I should perform miracles in their time** – See the standard commentary.

⁴⁹ **The Branch, who is Zerubbabel** – Ibn Ezra is rejecting the view that “the Branch” is the Messiah; see the standard commentary and both commentaries to 6:12.

One, blessed be He, as is said afterward, “Those seven are the eyes of the Lord, ranging over the whole earth” (*ibid.*).⁵⁰

I will execute its engraving – [the engraving] of this stone – **declares the Lord of Hosts.**

וַיִּמְשְׁתֵּי that country’s guilt in a single day – The explanation of [וַיִּמְשְׁתֵּי] is: “I will remove” (אסיר),⁵¹ similar to: “He did not take away (יָמִישׁ).”⁵²

Chapter 4

(2) He said to me, “What do you see?” And I answered, “I see a lampstand all of which was gold.”⁵³

וְגִל (with a pool) above it [means] a water channel (צְנוּר);⁵⁴ similarly, “the upper pools (גִּלֹת) and the lower pools.”⁵⁵

⁵⁰ **This is the stone with which they will rebuild the Temple... as is said afterward, “Those seven are the eyes of the Lord, ranging over the whole earth”** – Throughout this passage, Ibn Ezra is equating the stone that was “before Joshua” in v. 9 with the stone that was “in the hand of Zerubbabel” in 4:10 (cf. the standard commentary).

⁵¹ **וַיִּמְשְׁתֵּי... is: “I will remove”** – Ibn Ezra is asserting that the verb has a transitive meaning in this verse (see standard commentary).

⁵² **He did not take away (יָמִישׁ)** – Ibn Ezra could intend Ex. 13:22, Isa. 46:7, or Nah. 3:1 as his proof-text. In all three cases, the proof depends on a debatable interpretation. In Ex. 13:22, Ibn Ezra maintains that יָמִישׁ is a transitive verb with God as its subject (“[God] did not take away the pillar of cloud by day”), as do many other exegetes (Rashi, Rashbam, Bekhor Shor), but others believe that יָמִישׁ is intransitive in that verse, with the cloud as its subject (“The pillar of cloud did not depart by day”; see Radak, Jud. 16:26). Ibn Ezra similarly maintains that יָמִישׁ is transitive in Isa. 46:7 and In Nah. 3:1, but many medieval exegetes do not accept his view in either case (cf. Radak and Isaiah of Trani to both verses).

⁵³ **I see a lampstand all of which was gold** – Ibn Ezra is paraphrasing the verse, which literally refers to the lamp as “a lamp of gold, all of it.”

⁵⁴ **וְגִל (with a pool) above it [means] a water channel (צְנוּר)** – Ibn Ezra uses the Hebrew synonym צְנוּר to explain the word גִּלָּה. It is not entirely clear how to translate צְנוּר, which appears only twice in the Bible. Its meaning is unclear in II Sam. 5:8, and in Ps. 42:8 it appears as parallel to “waves.” Translators of Ps. 42:8 are divided about whether to translate it as a “waterfall” (NASV) or “cataract” (JPS 1917, NJPS) – which would indicate that the צְנוּר is the actual flow of water – or as a “waterspout” (KJV), implying that the צְנוּר is a pipe through which the water gushes. Ibn Ezra’s own commentary to Ps. 42:8 appears to favor the first approach; indeed, Strickman translates צְנוּר as “cataract” (*Ibn Ezra’s Commentary ad loc.*)

⁵⁵ **The upper pools (גִּלֹת) and the lower pools** – Ibn Ezra cites a verse to demonstrate that גִּלָּה refers to a pool of water. The oral commentary’s spellings of “upper” and “lower” in MS Paris 217 indicate that the proof-text is Jos. 15:19, which spells them עֲלִיּוֹת and תַּחְתִּיּוֹת, respectively. However, a nearly identical verse appears in Jud.

Its seven lamps are on this lampstand and seven other lamps that pour into the lamps that are on its top.⁵⁶

(6) Then he explained to me as follows: “This is the word of the Lord” – Its explanation:

This lampstand that you saw is **“the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit”** – Its explanation is: “By prophets who prophesy **by My spirit,**” namely, Haggai and Zechariah,⁵⁷ for they prophesied about this temple that it would be built,⁵⁸ as was said: “Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet and Zechariah son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem, inspired by the God of Israel” (Ezra 5:1).⁵⁹

(7) Whoever you are, O great mountain in the path of Zerubbabel, you will turn⁶⁰ into level ground!

For he shall bring forth that top stone – Its explanations is that he shall bring forth **the stone** and build it on top.⁶¹

1:15, with minor variations in spelling (עלית and תקיית). Indeed, MS Escorial G-II-16 uses the spelling from Jud. 1:15 (cf. standard commentary).

⁵⁶ **Seven other lamps that pour into the lamps that are on its top** – By “other lamps,” Ibn Ezra presumably means seven *tubes* – one that pours into each lamp on the lampstand (cf. the standard commentary).

⁵⁷ **By prophets who prophesy by My spirit, namely, Haggai and Zechariah** – Ibn Ezra interprets the phrase “by My spirit” as alluding to the prophetic inspiration of that guided Haggai and Zechariah during this period. Other exegetes interpret it as Torah observance (al-Qumisi) or the divine spirit that inspired Persian kings to support the Temple’s reconstruction (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency; cf. Abarbanel)

⁵⁸ **That it would be built** – Due to the lack of vocalization, the Hebrew word שיבנה, which I am translating as “that it would be built” (שִׁיבְנֶה), could also be translated as “that he would build” (שִׁיבְנֶה). However, I think the latter option is less likely, since the transitive verb would have likely been followed by an object suffix (שיבנהו), “that he would build *it*”).

⁵⁹ **Then the prophets... inspired by the God of Israel** – This passage, which comes from the Aramaic portion of Ezra, contains multiple spelling variants between manuscripts, none of which correspond perfectly to the Masoretic text. The same holds true for other cases where Ibn Ezra cites an Aramaic passage, presumably because many medieval scribes would not have understood the Biblical Aramaic that they were copying. I have therefore presented the standard NJPS translation of the verse in English, but the apparatus of my Hebrew edition cites the spelling variants.

⁶⁰ **You will turn** – Ibn Ezra inserts this phrase into the verse, because the original Hebrew verse lacks a verb.

⁶¹ **For he shall bring forth that top stone... he shall bring forth the stone and build it on top** – The oral commentary appears to understand that the “top stone” in this verse is the top stone of the Temple. However, the standard commentary interprets the “top stone” as the stone of the plumb line for building the Temple.

With **תְּשׂוּאוֹת** (shouts) of “**Beautiful! Beautiful!**” – There will be **shouts**, from “a voice of tumult” (שֹׁאוֹן).⁶²

(9) Zerubbabel’s hands have founded this House and Zerubbabel’s hands shall complete it;⁶³ similarly, “when the Lord has completed (יְבַצֵּעַ) all His work” (Isa. 10:12).⁶⁴

Zerubbabel is Sheshbazzar; just as the Chaldeans called Daniel “Belteshazzar” (Dan. 1:7), so, too, they called Zerubbabel “Sheshbazzar.”⁶⁵ [Here is] proof of this matter: It is said in the Book of Haggai (2:2) “to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah,” and in the Book of Ezra it is said about Sheshbazzar “[the one called Sheshbazzar] whom he had appointed governor” (5:14). And it says, “That same Sheshbazzar then began rebuilding,”⁶⁶ yet is says, **Zerubbabel’s hands have founded [this House].**

⁶² **A voice of tumult (שֹׁאוֹן)** – This phrase appears in Isa. 13:4 and 66:6. שֹׁאוֹן is vocalized שֹׁאוֹן in 66:6, which is the correct vocalization in absolute state, but it is vocalized שֹׁאוֹן in Isa. 13:4, where it appears in construct state. Rashi and Tanḥum cite this phrase as a proof-text, too. It is not clear whether Ibn Ezra is arguing that שֹׁאוֹן and תְּשׂוּאוֹת share a common etymology or merely a common lexical meaning (cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary).

⁶³ **Shall complete it** – Ibn Ezra uses the more common Hebrew word יְשַׁלְּמוּ as a synonym for the verse’s less common word תְּבַצְעֶנָּה.

⁶⁴ **When the Lord has completed (יְבַצֵּעַ) all His work** – This verse proves that the root בַּצַּע can mean “to complete.” The standard commentary offers the same interpretation with the same proof-text.

⁶⁵ **Zerubbabel is Sheshbazzar... they called Zerubbabel “Sheshbazzar”** – Ibn Ezra also asserts that Sheshbazzar is Zerubbabel in his first and second commentaries to Daniel (6:29 and 9:1, respectively). He rejects a midrashic view that Sheshbazzar is Daniel (Pesiq. R., Ish Shalom p. 23b; cited by Pseudo-Rashi to Ezra 1:8; attacked by Ibn Ezra, Dan. 1:4). Moses Kimḥi (Ezra 1:8) adopts Ibn Ezra’s view that Sheshbazzar is Zerubbabel – a view shared by Jacob b. Reuben (Ezra 1:8).

⁶⁶ **That same Sheshbazzar then began rebuilding** – The beginning of this quote comes from Ezra 5:16, “That same Sheshbazzar then came and laid the foundations for the House of God in Jerusalem.” The continuation comes either from Ezra 5:2 (“Thereupon Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak began rebuilding the House of God in Jerusalem”) or 5:17 (“Let the royal archives there in Babylon be searched to see whether indeed an order had been issued by King Cyrus to rebuild this House of God in Jerusalem”). Assuming he intended 5:2 – since only it has the Aramaic word for “began” (שְׁרִי) – perhaps Ibn Ezra compared 5:2 and 5:16 to demonstrate that Zerubbabel and Sheshbazzar were one and the same person, prompting the student who authored the oral commentary to mistakenly blur the two verses into one. Alternatively, perhaps Ibn Ezra was citing from memory, in which case he might have misremembered either 5:2 or 5:17 as referring to Sheshbazzar.

For further discussion of the equation of Zerubbabel with Sheshbazzar, see my interoduction (p. 157). Moses Kimḥi and Ralbag (Ezra 1:8) accept Ibn Ezra’s claim that Zerubbabel was the same person as Sheshbazzar.

(10) Does anyone scorn a day of small salvations⁶⁷ – Its explanation: It was said about Israel, for they had scorned and said, “This is a minor salvation.”⁶⁸ Now, they will rejoice **when they see the stone of distinction in the hand of Zerubbabel.**

(14) Then he explained, “They are the two sons of oil” – Its explanation: They are Zerubbabel and Joshua the Priest, who **stand before the Lord of all the earth.**⁶⁹

Chapter 5

(1) I looked up again, and I saw a flying (עפה) scroll – Some explain עפה as “spread out,” and others explain עפה as “folded.”⁷⁰ But [here is] the correct explanation: עפה is like: “It flew (וַיִּפֹּךְ) over to me” (Is. 6:6); thus it appeared to him in a dream, as if he saw a **flying scroll,**⁷¹ and **(2) its length was twenty cubits, and its breadth ten cubits.**

(3) “That,” he explained to me, “is the imprecation (אלה) which goes out” – Its explanation is: This scroll that you see is **the imprecation which goes out** – that is to say, the oath.⁷²

⁶⁷ **Small salvations** – I have used the word “salvations” in my translation based on the standard commentary’s analysis of the verse’s syntax (according to which “small” modifies an implied noun) and the continuation of this passage, in which the oral commentary cites people who said, “This is a minor salvation.”

⁶⁸ **They had scorned and said, “This is a minor salvation”** – Ibn Ezra is alluding to the disappointment that the older people experienced when they realized that the Second Temple was inferior to the First Temple (see Hag. 2:3 and Ezra 3:12). Yefet elaborates on the ways in which the Second Temple’s reconstruction struck the people as “a minor salvation.”

⁶⁹ **The two sons of oil... Zerubbabel and Joshua the Priest, who stand before the Lord of all the earth** – Ibn Ezra explains that the expression “sons of oil” refers to Zerubbabel and Joshua, who were anointed to positions of royalty and priesthood, respectively. He elaborates on this point in the standard commentary.

⁷⁰ **Others explain עפה as “folded”** – The Hebrew word כפולה (“doubled”) could also refer to the scroll containing writing on both its sides; the Talmud (bEr. 21a) indicates that this scroll was folded and also contained writing on both sides.

⁷¹ **Some explain עפה as “spread out,” and others explain עפה as “folded...” But [here is] the correct explanation... a flying scroll** – The standard commentary also presents all three of these interpretations of עפה and also concludes that the correct interpretation is “flying.”

⁷² **The imprecation which goes out – that is to say, the oath** – The imprecation is a curse that God has sworn to bring upon them; see Muraoka and Shavitsky (based on standard commentary), and see BDB (46) regarding the usage of אלה, to mean both “curse” and “oath.”

So it is written to the Lord:⁷³ **For everyone who has stolen shall be swept away (נִקָּה) on the one side like it [is] like:** “And she shall be emptied (וְנִקְתָּהּ), shall sit on the ground” (Is. 3:26).⁷⁴

(4) I have sent it – this curse – forth—declares the Lord of Hosts—and it shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name, and this curse shall lodge inside their houses and shall consume it⁷⁵ with its timber and its stones

(6) And he said, “This ephah that is approaching – Its explanation is “the measure.”⁷⁶

“This,” said he, “is their eye in all the land” – That is to say, the eyes of all the land are upon this measure.⁷⁷

(7) And behold, a disk of lead was lifted – This is the ephah,⁷⁸ revealing a woman seated inside the ephah.

(7-8) “That,” he said, “is Wickedness” – Its explanation: She is the Babylonian Empire.

That is to say, **this woman** whom you saw **seated inside the ephah** is the Babylonian Empire.⁷⁹

⁷³ **To the Lord** – My translation assumes that the Hebrew word לַשֵּׁם is vocalized לְשָׁם. The word could also be vocalized לְשָׁם (“to there”), which would be an awkward way of saying “on there” (i.e., on the scroll).

⁷⁴ **Shall be swept away (נִקָּה)... like:** “And she shall be emptied (וְנִקְתָּהּ), shall sit on the ground” – The oral commentary appears to be interpreting נִקָּה to connote punishment, just as the proof-text from Isaiah 3:26 uses a word from the same root in order to describe a punishment. Student of Trani cites the same proof-text (cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 317), and Saadiah’s commentary to Isa. *ad loc.* cites our verse as a proof-text (cf. Ratzhabi’s supercommentary, תפסיר ישעיה, 261 n. 2). However, the standard commentary interprets נִקָּה as the false belief that these sinners “were exonerated.” Each interpretation of נִקָּה has the support of several other exegetes (see my supercommentary to the standard commentary).

⁷⁵ **And shall consume it** – The verse expresses this concept with a verb and direct-object suffix (וְנִקְתָּהּ), but Ibn Ezra separates the suffix from the verb in order to clarify the meaning (וְהַכֵּלָה אִתּוֹ).

⁷⁶ **This ephah that is approaching... the measure** – An ephah is a biblical measure of volume. Ibn Ezra believes that the ephah in this vision symbolizes God meting out punishment (see standard commentary).

⁷⁷ **The eyes of all the land are upon this measure** – Ibn Ezra believes that “their eye” refers to the eyes of the rest of the world, not the eyes of the sinners; see standard commentary.

⁷⁸ **A disk of lead was lifted – this is the ephah** – This phrase in the oral commentary implies that the ephah and the lead were one and the same. However, in the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra explains that the lead was being lifted inside the measure.

(9) I looked up again and saw two women coming, who [represent] the king of Persia and king of Media.

And they carried off the measure between sky and earth.⁸⁰

(11) And he answered me, “To build a home for her in the land of Shinar” – Its explanation is: to repay her⁸¹ the measure for what they did to Israel. Indeed we find that the king of Persia and king of Media went to Babylonia and seized it.

Chapter 6

(3) The horses [of the fourth chariot] were בְּרָדִים (spotted) is similar to “streaked, speckled, and spotted (בְּרָדִים)” (Gen. 31:10).⁸²

(5) In reply, the angel said to me, “Those are the four winds (רִיחוֹת) of heaven,” that is to say, four kingdoms that dwell in the **four directions (רִיחוֹת)**⁸³ **of heaven and are coming out from presenting themselves to the Lord of all the earth** and are committing evil in the world.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ **This woman whom you saw seated inside the ephah is the Babylonian Empire** – In this comment and the subsequent comments, the oral commentary maintains that the woman sitting in the ephah represents Babylonia, and the two winged women represent the kings of Persia and Media. Therefore, the vision alludes to God enabling Persia and Media to conquer the Babylonians as punishment for destroying and exiling Judah. The standard commentary interprets this vision in a completely different manner, addressing Babylonian Jewry.

⁸⁰ **Between sky and earth** – My text follows MS Paris 217. Other manuscripts read “between earth and sky,” which matches the word order of standard editions of the Masoretic text (cf. Kennicott).

⁸¹ **Her** – The woman who symbolizes Babylonia.

⁸² **בְּרָדִים is similar to “streaked, speckled, and spotted (בְּרָדִים)”** – Ibn Ezra (Gen. 30:31) claims that the word בְּרָדִים derives from the Hebrew word for hailstones (בָּרָד), so it indicates that the animals had white spots that resembled hailstones. Tanḥum cites the same proof-text.

⁸³ **Four winds (רִיחוֹת) of heaven... four directions (רִיחוֹת)** – Although Ibn Ezra uses the same Hebrew word as the verse (רִיחוֹת), I have translated it differently when he uses it than in the verse, since the purpose of his comment is to explain that the word רִיחוֹת, which literally means “winds,” is referring to the directions of the four corners of the earth (cf. Muraoka and Shavitsky, based on the standard commentary).

⁸⁴ **Four kingdoms who dwell in the four directions of heaven... are committing evil in the world** – Many exegetes argue that this vision and Zechariah’s other visions that involve fours (1:7-2:4) symbolize the same four kingdoms about which Daniel prophesies in Dan. 7-8 (Saadia, Ratzhabi 231-232; Rashi; Joseph Kara; Eliezer of Beaugency; Radak; Abarbanel; cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary, 1:8 and 2:1-3).

(6) The one with (אֲשֶׁר רָב) the black horses – Its explanation is: the chariot **with (אֲשֶׁר רָב) the black horses** and the chariot with the **white** horses.⁸⁵

[The one with the black horses,]⁸⁶ they are going out to the region of the north, to Babylonia; they [represent] the king of Persia and the king of Media.

(8) Then he alerted me, and said to me, “Behold the king of Persia and the king of Media who went out to the region of the north – which is Babylonia – **have eased My spirit** – That is to say, they have implemented My will – **in the region of the north**, which is Babylonia.”⁸⁷

(10) Receive from the exiled community – Its explanation is: **from** these members of the **exiled community—from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah—and you proceed⁸⁸ the same day**

The oral commentary’s explanation – “four kingdoms who dwell in the four directions of heaven” – also seems to allude to the four kingdoms of Daniel, about which Ibn Ezra writes “that the four kingdoms were in different directions” (Dan. 7:11). However, the standard commentary does not appear to share this understanding, as it omits any mention of the four kingdoms in its interpretation of this passage.

⁸⁵ **The one with (אֲשֶׁר רָב) the black horses** – Its explanation is: **the chariot with the black horses and the chariot with the white horses** – The purpose of this comment is to clarify that “the chariot” the referent of the Hebrew relative pronoun and possessive pronoun in the phrase אֲשֶׁר רָב.

⁸⁶ **The one with the black horses** – I added this part of the quote in brackets in order to avoid the impression that “the white horses” are also part of the subject of “are going out.” The HaKeter edition does not place any punctuation at the end of the previous phrase, which causes this paragraphs and the previous one to read as one sentence: “The chariot with the black horses and the chariot with the white horses are going out to the region of the north - to Babylonia; they [represent] the king of Persia and the king of Media,” implying that the black horses and white horses represent Persia and Media, respectively. Indeed, some exegetes who interpret this vision as a vision of four kingdoms do maintain that the black and white horses represent Persia and Media (cf. Rashi, Joseph Kara). However, others maintain that the black horses represent Persia and Media, while the white horses represent Greece (cf. Radak). Regarding Ibn Ezra’s opinion, the oral commentary lacks sufficient information to conclusively assert whether he considered the white horses to be traveling together with the black ones to Babylonia (as the HaKeter edition’s punctuation assumes) or maintained that the white horses represent a later empire. The standard commentary (which interprets the overall message of the vision in a very different manner) explicitly states that the white horses did not travel together to the same destination: “The white ones have gone out after them – But he does not concern himself to know the region to which they have gone.”

⁸⁷ **Have eased My spirit... they have implemented My will** – **in the region of the north, which is Babylonia** – Rashi also interprets this verse as alluding to Babylonia’s destruction at the hands of Persia and Media.

⁸⁸ **And you proceed** – Ibn Ezra replaces the verse’s ו- consecutive form of this verb (וּבְאֵתָהּ) with an imperfect form (וּתְבֹא) that translates the same way.

to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah. (11) And take⁸⁹ this from them: silver and gold, and make crowns. Place [one] on the head of High Priest Joshua son of Jehozadak,

(12) And say to him, “Thus said the Lord of Hosts: Behold, a man called the Branch, who is Zerubbabel. He shall branch out from his place,⁹⁰ and he shall build the Temple of the Lord.”

(13) And there shall also be a priest seated on his throne was said about Joshua.⁹¹

And harmonious understanding shall prevail between them – Its explanation is, between Zerubbabel and Joshua.

(15) Those who are far off shall come – Its explanation is that nations **who are far off shall come and take part in the building of the Temple of the Lord...⁹² if only you will obey the Lord your God!**

Chapter 7

(2) When Bethel, Sarezzer and Regem-melech and his men sent to entreat the favor of the Lord – Its explanation is: This **Sarezzer and Regem-melech** were Israelite men who

⁸⁹ **Take** – In this case, as well, Ibn Ezra replaces the verse’s ו-consecutive form of this verb (וַלְקָחָה) with an imperfect form (תִּקַּח) that translates the same way.

⁹⁰ **His place** – Both here and in the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra’s uses the Hebrew word וממקומו instead of the verse’s וּמִתַּחְתָּיו; which could be translated literally as “underneath him.”

⁹¹ **And there shall also be a priest seated on his throne... about Joshua** – See standard commentary to v. 11.

⁹² **Nations who are far off shall come and take part in the building of the Temple of the Lord** – By writing that “nations” (עַמִּים) shall come, the oral commentary implies that this prophecy describes Gentiles coming to assist with the Temple’s reconstruction, whereas the standard commentary insists that this verse is referring to people of “Israel” who are currently in far-off locations of their exile. If one were seeking to reconcile the two commentaries with each other, perhaps one could argue that by “nations” the oral commentary intended Jewish exiles in those nations, but the author of the oral commentary failed to express himself clearly.

remained in Babylonia and did not return with the exiles. They sent their men⁹³ to **Bethel**, which is the Holy Temple⁹⁴ to entreat the favor of the Lord.

(3) They sent to the priests of the House of the Lord and to the prophets: “Shall I weep in the fifth month” – which is the month of Ab – for the First Temple’s destruction,⁹⁵ or perhaps we are no longer obligated, since the Temple has already been rebuilt?

נָזַרְנוּ (practice abstinence) – Its explanation: Will we separate (נִפְרִישׁ) ourselves from eating,⁹⁶ **as we have been doing all these years?”** נָזַרְנוּ is similar to, “וַיִּנְזְרוּ [from the holy things of] the children of Israel” (Lev. 22:2), whose [Aramaic] translation is וִיפְרִישׁוּן (“They shall separate themselves”).⁹⁷

(14) I dispersed⁹⁸ them (וְאֶסְעָרָם) – Its explanation is: I scattered (פִּיזַרְתִּי) them **among all those nations.**⁹⁹

⁹³ **Their men** – The Hebrew has a singular suffix here, “his men,” which disagrees with the plural subject. In the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra explains that the men were specifically Regem-melech’s men.

⁹⁴ **Bethel, which is the Holy Temple** – Bethel literally means “God’s house” although it is also the name of a city north of Jerusalem. Ibn Ezra presumably did not interpret Bethel as referring to the city, since v. 3 indicates that the message was sent to the Temple. In the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra offers a completely different interpretation of Bethel: It is the name of a colleague of Sarezzer and Regem-melech.

⁹⁵ **For the First Temple’s destruction** – The First Temple was destroyed in the fifth month (II Kings 25:8 and Jer. 52:12). See the standard commentary for a lengthier discussion of the precise date of its destruction.

⁹⁶ **Its explanation: Will we separate (נִפְרִישׁ) ourselves from eating** – Ibn Ezra uses the root פִּרַשׁ (to separate) as a synonym for נָזַר. He also interprets the word הִנְזָר as abstention in the standard commentary.

⁹⁷ **Whose [Aramaic] translation is וִיפְרִישׁוּן** – This is a citation of Onkelos, *ad loc.*

⁹⁸ **I dispersed** – Although, I have translated this verb in past tense, אֶסְעָרָם is in the imperfect form. However, it is preceded by a prefix ו of uncertain status. If this ו is a *vav*-consecutive, then it would render the verb past tense. But ordinarily, a *qamatz* would be the vowel under a *vav*-consecutive before a first-person imperfect verb, so this ו – with a *sheva* under it – would appear to be a conjunctive ו that does not change the tense to past. Indeed, Ibn Ezra appears to interpret אֶסְעָרָם as future tense in the standard commentary. However, I have decided to translate it here as past tense due to the tense of the synonym פִּיזַרְתִּי. Tanḥum argues that the prefix ו in אֶסְעָרָם is a *vav*-consecutive despite its vocalization.

⁹⁹ **Its explanation is: I scattered (פִּיזַרְתִּי) them among all those nations** – Ibn Ezra uses the better-known root פָּזַר (to scatter) to explain the difficult verb אֶסְעָרָם. The oral commentary does not discuss the unusual vocalization of אֶסְעָרָם, which was a source of debate among his predecessors (cf. the standard commentary). His predecessors also debated where אֶסְעָרָם is transitive or intransitive. Assuming that the oral commentary is employing פִּיזַרְתִּי as a synonym for אֶסְעָרָם, it would be treating אֶסְעָרָם as a transitive verb, whereas the standard commentary appears to consider אֶסְעָרָם to be intransitive (see my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Alternatively, the oral commentary might consider it intransitive and thus not intend פִּיזַרְתִּי as a synonym but rather as a

Chapter 8

(2) Thus said the Lord of Hosts: Now I am very jealous for Zion.¹⁰⁰

(6) Thus said the Lord of Hosts: Though what I do will seem impossible to the remnant of this people, that the squares of the city will be crowded with boys and girls (cf. v. 5), **shall it also be impossible to Me**¹⁰¹ – interrogatively?¹⁰²

(10) For before that time – Its explanation is: before the Temple was rebuilt.¹⁰³

The earnings of men were nil, as it was said in Haggai (1:6): “He who earns anything earns it for a leaky purse.”¹⁰⁴

(12) For the seed (זרע) of peace – That is to say, there will be peace and you will sow (תזרעו),¹⁰⁵ and **the vine shall produce its fruit, the ground shall produce its yield.**

(14) For thus said the Lord of Hosts... (16) If you are to do this thing: Speak the truth to one another, render true and perfect justice in your gates... (19) [then] the fast of the

description of the verse’s main idea – God will “shake” (סער) and generate a wind which will in turn “scatter” (פזר) them – just as the standard commentary adds the verb תפיץ (“scatter”) as an implied transitive verb: ואסער ויאסער – עליהם בסערת רוחי והיא תפיץ אותם – “I will rage (ואסער) against them with a storm of My wind, and it will scatter them.”

¹⁰⁰ **Now I am very jealous for Zion** – Ibn Ezra adds the word “now” to stress that God is describing His current state of mind even though the Hebrew verb קנאתי is in suffix form and thus might be translated as past tense (“I was jealous”).

¹⁰¹ **What I will do, that the squares of the city will be crowded with boys and girls, shall it also be impossible to Me** – V. 6 appears to introduce a new prophecy (“Thus said the Lord of Hosts...”) and it follows a paragraph break in the Masoretic text. Ibn Ezra therefore stresses that it nevertheless continues the previous verse, so the events of v. 5 are precisely what will seem “impossible.”

¹⁰² **Interrogatively** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting the verse’s phrase, “Shall it also be impossible to Me,” as a question. Without punctuation (which ancient Hebrew texts lacked) the verse could be declarative: “It shall also be impossible to Me.” The absence of an interrogative prefix ה at the start of the phrase could also support a declarative interpretation of the verse. In the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra cites Judah Halevi as interpreting this verse interrogatively, but Ibn Ezra himself dismisses his view.

¹⁰³ **Before the Temple was rebuilt** – Ibn Ezra offers the same interpretation in the standard commentary.

¹⁰⁴ **He who earns anything earns it for a leaky purse** – Ibn Ezra to Hag. *ad loc.* also explains the image of the leaky purse as a symbol of the financial hardships which that generation faced. Eliezer of Beaugency similarly cites Haggai’s words.

¹⁰⁵ **That is to say, there will be peace and you will sow (תזרעו)** – The standard commentary offers the same interpretation (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.* for its explanation).

fourth month, the fast of the fifth month, the fast of the seventh month, and the fast of the tenth month shall become occasions for joy and gladness for the House of Judah –

Its explanation is: He originally said, “I did not command you to fast, but rather to observe My laws.¹⁰⁶ So eat and make these fasts into **joy and gladness, but you must love honesty and integrity.**”

Chapter 9

(1) A pronouncement:¹⁰⁷ The word of the Lord – Its explanation: This prophecy is **the word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach and in Damascus – which is the resting place of Hadrach¹⁰⁸** – that they will all return to the Holy One, blessed be He.

For all men’s eyes will turn to the Lord, with all the tribes of Israel,¹⁰⁹ as was written: “In those days, ten men from nations of every tongue will take hold—they will take hold of every Jew by a corner of his cloak and say, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you’” (8:23).

¹⁰⁶ **Its explanation is: He originally said, “I did not command you to fast, but rather to observe My laws”** – See the standard commentary to 7:5-7.

¹⁰⁷ **A pronouncement** – Heb. אָמַר; see standard commentary to Mal. 1:1.

¹⁰⁸ **Which is the resting place of Hadrach** – This comment interprets the possessive suffix in מְנוּחָתוֹ (his/its resting place) as referring to Hadrach: “Damascus is [Hadrach]’s resting place.” The standard commentary considers אָמַר to be the referent: “Damascus is [the pronouncement]’s resting place.”

¹⁰⁹ **For all men’s eyes will turn to the Lord, with all the tribes of Israel** – By adding the word “with,” the oral commentary might be understanding of the verse’s syntax such that “all the tribes of Israel” will “turn to the Lord,” and the rest of mankind will join them in this behavior. The standard commentary understands the verse’s syntax differently, that the Gentile’s eyes are “will turn to the Lord and [to] all the tribes of Israel” (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*), so the two commentaries might contradict each other. Alternatively, the oral commentary might agree with the standard commentary, in which case it is adding “with” in order to create a second target for the Gentiles’ eyes: Their eyes will turn “to the Lord [along with turning to] all the tribes of Israel.”

(2) And Hamath also shall border (תִּגְבֹּל) by it – Its explanation: **Hamath also** will form [one] region (גְּבוּל) with Hadrach to return to the Holy One, blessed be He.¹¹⁰

And Tyre and Sidon, although they are very wise¹¹¹ – that **(3) [Tyre] has built¹¹² herself a fortress** and has amassed¹¹³ **silver like dust and jewels like the mud in the streets** – how will that benefit her? **(4) Behold, the Lord will dispossess her (יִרְשָׁנָה)** – That is to say, He will expel her,¹¹⁴ and **He will defeat her forces at sea.**

(5) And Ashkelon shall see it and be frightened, and Gaza shall similarly see these blows and **shall tremble violently, and Ekron, at the collapse of מְבִטָּה (her hope),** that is to say, where she was looking (מִבְּטָח).¹¹⁵

(7) But I will clean out the blood from his mouth – Its explanation is: **from** the Philistine king's [mouth] and the detestable things from between his teeth. And after that, **he also shall be a**

¹¹⁰ **And Hamath also shall border (תִּגְבֹּל) by it... will form [one] region (גְּבוּל) with Hadrach to return to the Holy One, blessed be He** – The oral commentary deems Hadrach to be the referent of “it,” while other exegetes consider the referent to be Israel, or specifically Jerusalem (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak, Ibn Caspi). The standard commentary is somewhat cryptic but appears to consider Israel as the referent of “it” (cf. Tanḥum, as understood by Shy, *ad loc.*, to be basing himself on Ibn Ezra).

¹¹¹ **Although they are very wise** – This paraphrase of the verse replaces the verse’s word כִּי with the phrase אֲף־עַל פִּי־שׁ. The word כִּי can sometimes be interpreted as “although” but it more commonly means “because” or “for” (cf. the debate cited by Ibn Ezra to Exod. 13:17). Ibn Ezra is therefore stressing that Tyre and Sidon will be vanquished despite their wisdom. Rashi, Joseph Kara, and Student of Trani understand this verse in the same way (cf. Tanḥum).

¹¹² **Has built** – Ibn Ezra replaces the *vav*-consecutive form of this verb with a perfect form that translates the same way.

¹¹³ **Has amassed** – See note 112.

¹¹⁴ **Behold, the Lord will dispossess her (יִרְשָׁנָה)** – **That is to say, He will expel her** – I am assuming that according to Ibn Ezra, the word יִרְשָׁנָה derives from the root יִרַשׁ and is a *hif'il* verb means “to dispossess” (literally, “to cause others to inherit”). The etymology of יִרְשָׁנָה is subject to debate: Rashi and Eliezer of Beaugency believe that יִרְשָׁנָה means that God will “impoverish” Tyre (presumably deriving from the root רוּשׁ; cf. I Sam. 2:7) – a view that is also implied by Ibn Saruk (מַחְבֵּרַת מִנְחָם), Philipowski 8, Sáenz-Badillos 12*). By contrast, Jonathan interprets יִרְשָׁנָה as “He will dispossess her” (מִתְרִיךְ לָהּ); cf. his translation of I Sam. 2:7 as opposed to his translation of Jos. 3:10), as do Student of Trani, Tanḥum, and Abarbanel. Although Ibn Ezra does not analyze the etymology of יִרְשָׁנָה in detail, his comment here that God “will expel” Tyre supports Jonathan’s view, as does the standard commentary’s comment that God “will cause Israel to possess” Tyre (יִרְשָׁנָה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל).

¹¹⁵ **מְבִטָּה... where she was looking (מִבְּטָח)** – According to the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra interprets מְבִטָּה as where Ekron was looking for salvation.

remnant for our God, and he shall be as a chief in Judah, and Ekron shall be like a Jebusite, who are from the land of Israel.

(8) And I will encamp in My House against armies – The explanation is: I will encamp in My House so that armies of the enemy shall not set upon her anymore.¹¹⁶

(9) Rejoice greatly, Fair Zion; raise a shout, Fair Jerusalem! Lo, your king is coming to you – Its explanation: Some explain that this prophecy was said about the Messiah.¹¹⁷ But that is impossible, because the scripture states: “And I will arouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece” (v. 13), but the Greek empire has no power now. So along came R. Moses [Ibn Chiquitilia] and said that this prophecy was said about none other than Nehemiah son of Hacaliah, for he came and built Jerusalem, as is explained in the Book of Ezra.¹¹⁸ But this, too, is impossible, for it is written that when this king arrives, **(10) he shall speak peace unto the nations, and his rule shall extend from sea to sea, and from ocean to land’s end.** But Nehemiah – although he did build Jerusalem – remained under [the authority of] Artaxerxes.¹¹⁹ So R. Abraham b. Meir [Ibn Ezra] said¹²⁰ that what is said, **(9) Lo, your king is coming to you**, is not [Nehemiah] but rather Judah the Hasmonean, for he executed great

¹¹⁶ **So that armies of the enemy shall not set upon her anymore** – This comment affirms the meaning of the word “armies” even though the verse spells it צבקה rather than the standard spelling of צבא. Ibn Ezra states this explicitly in the standard commentary. See Student of Trani and Kennicott for evidence that some texts of the Bible did spell the word as צבא in our verse.

¹¹⁷ **Some explain that this prophecy was said about the Messiah** – For sources that support the messianic interpretation, see my supercommentary to the standard commentary.

¹¹⁸ **The Book of Ezra** – Ibn Ezra is referring to the Book of Nehemiah, but medieval exegetes considered Ezra-Nehemiah to be one book.

¹¹⁹ **But this, too, is impossible, for it is written... he shall speak peace unto the nations, and his rule shall extend from sea to sea, and from ocean to land’s end. But Nehemiah... remained under [the authority of] Artaxerxes** – Ibn Ezra dismisses Ibn Chiquitilia’s view on the grounds that Nehemiah never established sovereignty over the geographic area that Zechariah prophesies. Rashi adopts this same line of reasoning to insist that this prophecy must be messianic, because no Jewish leader since Zechariah’s time ruled over that entire territory.

¹²⁰ **So R. Abraham b. Meir [Ibn Ezra] said** – The HaKeter edition assumes that from here until the end of the paragraph is a later gloss. This passage appears in all witnesses, so the HaKeter edition is presumably basing its decision on the fact that this passage cites Ibn Ezra by name. However, the entire oral commentary is the work of a student rather than Ibn Ezra’s own writing.

vengeance upon Greece. And we do not find that Israel had sovereignty during the Second Temple except during the time of the Hasmoneans.¹²¹ Therefore, it is written, “And I will arouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece” (v. 13).

I am required to clarify herein how Israel rebuilt the Temple and came to be under Greece: Initially, Nebuchadnezzar came and exiled Jerusalem, and the Holy One, blessed be He, said: “When Babylon’s seventy years are over, I will take note of you... [to bring you back to this place]” (Jer. 29:10). So at the time when the seventy years were completed, King Cyrus of Persia came upon Babylonia, seized it, and crowned Darius there, as is written: “Darius the Mede received the kingdom” (Dan. 6:1) – [meaning] that he received the kingdom from Cyrus. The two of them – Cyrus and Darius – reigned at the same time. But this first Darius is not the Darius in whose time Haggai and Zechariah prophesied, for [the former] was a Mede while [the latter] was Persian.

The Holy One, blessed be He, roused Cyrus’ spirit (cf. Ezra 1:1) and commanded that he rebuild the Temple. Then Joshua son of Jehozadak and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and his brethren rose up “and built the altar of the God of Israel” (Ezra 3:2). But they could not build more than that in Cyrus’ time, because the people of the land undermined the resolve of the people of Judah to build, as is written: “The people of the land undermined the resolve of the people of Judah, and made them afraid to build.” [The people of the land] bribed ministers against them “in order to thwart their plans all the years of King Cyrus of Persia and until the reign of King Darius of Persia” (Ezra 4:4-5).

¹²¹ **R. Abraham b. Meir [Ibn Ezra] said... Judah the Hasmonean... executed great vengeance upon Greece... during the time of the Hasmoneans** – The standard commentary also interprets this prophecy as foretelling the Hasmoneans’ triumph. Ibn Ezra emphasizes the fact “that Israel had sovereignty during the Second Temple” under the Hasmoneans in order to justify Judah Maccabee being depicted as a “king” even as Ibn Ezra rejects the possibility of applying that title to Nehemiah.

Then Cyrus died, and Artaxerxes – who was Ahasuerus – reigned after him. The enemies arose and slandered Israel to the king, so the construction was cancelled, as is written:

When the text of the letter of King Artaxerxes was read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their colleagues, they hurried to Jerusalem, to the Jews, and stopped them by main force. At that time, work on the House of God in Jerusalem stopped and remained in abeyance until the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia (Ezra 4:23-24).

Then Artaxerxes died, and Darius the Persian reigned after him; Haggai and Zechariah prophesied in the days of this Darius. Zerubbabel arose after this and rebuilt the entire Temple, but he did not build anything more than the Temple, and [then] he died. Afterward, this Darius died, and Artaxerxes II reigned after him. In the days of [Artaxerxes II], Ezra and Nehemiah immigrated¹²² and rebuilt the entire city [of Jerusalem]. There is proof in Scripture that there were four kings:¹²³

- Cyrus and Darius [I, the Mede] are [counted as] one,¹²⁴ for they reigned at the same time.
- Artaxerxes [I reigned] after Cyrus.
- Darius II, [the Persian, reigned] after Artaxerxes [I].
- Artaxerxes II [reigned] after Darius [the Persian].

¹²² **Immigrated** – See note 158.

¹²³ **There is proof in the scriptures that there were four kings** – Ibn Ezra presents the same list of kings in Dan. 11:2, where he contrasts his view with those of his predecessors. For a further analysis of Ibn Ezra's understanding of the chronology of this period, cf. Milikowsky, סדר עולם 465-466; First, *Jewish History* 188-190, and Chapter VII of my introduction.

¹²⁴ **Cyrus and Darius [the Mede] are [counted as] one** – Ibn Ezra's concern for how to count the kings stems from Daniel's prediction that there would be four Persian kings (11:2). Ibn Ezra believes that five kings ruled during the Persian Period, so he is forced to explain that two of them – Cyrus and Darius the Mede – ruled concurrently and therefore count as only one king in Daniel's prophecy.

In the days of this [second] Artaxerxes, the king of Greece came and seized everything, as is said: “In the first year of Darius the Mede, I took my stand to fortify and strengthen him.

And now I will tell you the truth: Persia will have three more kings, and the fourth” – who was Artaxerxes [II] – “will be wealthier [than them all]; by the power he obtains through his wealth, he will stir everyone up against the kingdom of Greece.” (cf. Dan. 11:1-2).

(10) I shall banish chariots from Ephraim and horses from Jerusalem – Its explanation is that Judah the Hasmonean had no need for horses or chariots, for he had peace from all the surrounding [nations] after he executed vengeance upon Greece.

And his rule shall extend from sea to sea – Its explanation is: **from the Sea of Reeds to the Sea of Philistia**, for the land Israel was not larger than that,¹²⁵ as is written: “I will set your borders from the Sea of Reeds to the Sea of Philistia” (Exod. 23:31).

(11) You, too, for the sake of the blood of your covenant, I have released your prisoners – Its explanation is: On account of the commandments which you have fulfilled, **I have released your prisoners**, for I have made a covenant with you on account of the commandments,¹²⁶ as was said: “This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord now makes with you concerning all these commands” (Exod. 24:8).

¹²⁵ **From sea to sea... from the Sea of Reeds to the Sea of Philistia, for the land Israel was not larger than that** – Ibn Ezra restricts the meaning of “from sea to sea” to the borders of Israel in accordance with his belief that this prophecy was fulfilled by the Hasmoneans, whose sovereignty did not extend beyond those borders (cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary).

¹²⁶ **For the sake of the blood of your covenant... On account of the commandments which you have fulfilled... for I have made a covenant with you on account of the commandments** – Ibn Ezra adopts the same interpretation in the standard commentary.

(12) Return to the stronghold (לְבַצְרוֹן), you prisoners (אֲסִירֵי) of hope – Its explanation: He is addressing Israel, who should return to their fortified (בְּצוּרוֹת) cities, for they had been imprisoned (אֲסוּרִים), and they were longing for their savior to come.¹²⁷

I announce even today that I will repay you double – Its explanation: **I will repay (אֲשִׁיב)** twice what I told you.¹²⁸

(15) They shall devour, and shall conquer the sling-stones – Its explanation is: Israel **shall devour** the enemies and conquer them as one conquers a **sling**.¹²⁹

They – the Gentiles – **shall drink** and **shall rage like** a man who is drunk with **wine**.

And be filled with drunkenness like **a dashing bowl** when it is full, and like **the corners** of an **altar** that is filled with sprinkled [blood].¹³⁰

(16) Like crown (כִּתְרוֹ) jewels – Its explanation: So will Israel be, like the jewels that one puts in a **כִּתְרוֹ**, which is a crown (כֶּתֶר), so that they will be seen by all, like a flag (נֶס)¹³¹ that is seen [throughout] the **land**.

¹²⁷ **They had been imprisoned (אֲסוּרִים), and they were longing for their savior to come** – The root אָסַר means “to bind” or “to imprison.” Ibn Ezra appears to take the word אֲסִירֵי (prisoners) literally in this verse, understanding that the “prisoners of hope” are people who were literally imprisoned and were hoping to be freed. Ibn Janah (הַרְקֵמָה 331) interprets it as a figurative expression for people who are filled with hope, similar to an Arabic expression for people who are “bound with gratitude,” meaning that they are filled with gratitude.

¹²⁸ **I will repay (אֲשִׁיב) twice what I told you** – The oral commentary appears to be interpreting אֲשִׁיב (“I will return/restore”) in the sense of compensation or reward (as per the covenant to which Ibn Ezra alludes in v. 11). However, given the terseness of this sentence, it might be rendering אֲשִׁיב as “I will reply,” which would match the standard commentary.

¹²⁹ **Its explanation is: Israel shall devour the enemies and conquer them as one conquers a sling** – Ibn Ezra is stressing that the “sling-stones” are the direct object of the verb נִכְבְּשׁוּ (“They shall conquer”) and not its subject (see my supercommentary to standard commentary).

¹³⁰ **Like a dashing bowl when it is full, and like the corners of an altar that is filled with sprinkled [blood]** – See the standard commentary.

¹³¹ **A flag (נֶס)** – The Hebrew word נֶס is a play on the verse’s word “glittering” (מִתְנוֹסֵסוֹת). I have translated נֶס as “flag” based on context (cf. the standard commentary); it can also mean “miracle.”

Some explain **like crown jewels** was said about High Priest Matthias, due to the ephod, since the jewels were affixed to it,¹³² and the jewels were visible like a flag that would be seen [throughout] the **land**.

(17) For how great is its goodness, and how great is its beauty – Its explanation: How great, how beautiful shall it be at that time! For there will be **grain** for **young men** to eat and **wine** for **young women** to drink until they speak.¹³³

יְנוּבָב (making fruitful) is similar to “I create the fruit (נִיב) of the lips” (Isa. 57:19).¹³⁴

Chapter 10

(1) Ask the Lord for rain – Its explanation: At that time, they will ask **the Lord for rain**¹³⁵ **in the season of late rain**.

And the Holy One, blessed be He, will give so much **rain** that the land will be satiated, and afterward it will make **קְוִיָּים** which are *fuli* (פּוּלִי) in the vernacular (לַעֲזָא).¹³⁶

And He will provide rainstorms for them until **everyone** has grass in the fields.

¹³² **Like crown (קִנֹּר) jewels** – Its explanation: **So will Israel be, like the jewels that one puts in... a crown... that will be seen [throughout] the land. Some explain... crown jewels... about High Priest Matthias, due to the ephod, since the jewels were affixed to it** – Ibn Ezra suggests that crown jewels’ symbolism lies on one of two things – the jewels’ visibility or their resemblance to priestly vestments. He alludes to both of these possibilities in the standard commentary, too.

¹³³ **Until they speak** – Drinking “until they speak” is an allusion to Ibn Ezra’s subsequent interpretation of the word יְנוּבָב as referring to speech.

¹³⁴ **יְנוּבָב (making fruitful) is similar to “I create the fruit (נִיב) of the lips”** – See standard commentary.

¹³⁵ **Ask the Lord for rain** – Its explanation: **At that time, they will ask the Lord for rain** – The verb “ask” in the verse is imperative (שְׁאַל), but Ibn Ezra is explaining that, in fact, this is not a command but rather a statement of fact. Al-Qumisi similarly renders שְׁאַל as “when you ask...” Radak interprets שְׁאַל as a condition: “If you ask the Lord for rain, then...” (cf. Abarbanel). Rashi presents שְׁאַל as an imperative, but adds a condition to it: “Ask the Lord for rain if you need [it]”

¹³⁶ **קְוִיָּים... are fuli in the vernacular** – Exegetes debate whether קְוִיָּים are thunder, lightning, or clouds (cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary). In the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra appears to interpret קְוִיָּים as thunder. However, of those possible meanings, the foreign word פּוּלִי in this comment most closely resembles the Latin word for lightning (*fulmen* or *fulgur*). Although this is the only instance in which the oral commentary cites a foreign word as לַעֲזָא, Ibn Ezra’s own writings do occasionally cite Latin words as לַעֲזָא (e.g., “*origanum*” in Exod. 12:22, “*manna*” in Exod. 16:13).

(2) For the teraphim spoke delusion – Its explanation: At that time, [people] will know that **the teraphim spoke delusion.**¹³⁷

(3) Like the horse of its majesty in battle – Its explanation is: like a **horse** whose majesty is **in battle.**¹³⁸

(4) From them shall come הַפֶּה (a cornerstone) – The explanation of הַפֶּה is a rock.¹³⁹

And this [verse] is like an allegory. That is to say, the king, the princes, and the archers of **bows of combat shall arise** from Judah.

(5) בוֹסִים (trampling) is similar to “Have trampled (בִּסְטוּ)¹⁴⁰ My field”¹⁴¹ (Jer. 12:10).

(8) They shall increase as they have increased – Its explanation is: **as they increased** before they were exiled.¹⁴²

¹³⁷ **At that time, [people] will know that the teraphim spoke delusion** – Cf. the standard commentary and my supercommentary *ad loc.*

¹³⁸ **Like a horse whose majesty is in the battle** – Ibn Ezra’s comment is motivated by the fact that the Hebrew construct פֶּה הוֹדוֹ is ambiguous and could mean “horse of its [own] majesty” or “horse of His [=God’s] majesty.” He adopts the former possibility, which he then connects to the verse’s concluding phrase, explaining that the horse demonstrates its majesty “in the battle.” Virtually all exegetes interpret this phrase in a similar manner (Jonathan, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak, Tanḥum, Abarbanel), and it is implied by the standard commentary, too.

¹³⁹ **The explanation of הַפֶּה is a rock** – Although Ibn Ezra does not specify that he intends a cornerstone, “corner” is the etymological meaning of פֶּה, so by stating that it is a rock, he presumably intends a cornerstone (cf. Ibn Saruk, מחברת מנחם, Philipowski 143, Sáenz-Badillos 303*)

¹⁴⁰ **בוֹסִים is similar to Have trampled (בִּסְטוּ)** – The interpretation of בוֹסִים as trampling is shared by Jonathan, al-Qumisi, Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak, Tanḥum, and Abarbanel.

¹⁴¹ **My field** – For “my field” Ibn Ezra’s Hebrew text reads נַחֲלָתִי, which could also be translated as “my inheritance,” while standard editions of the Masoretic text of Jer. 12:10 reads תְּלִקְתִּי. Rashi also cites Jer. 12:10 as a proof-text, and he, too, cites it with נַחֲלָתִי instead of תְּלִקְתִּי. Perhaps they both erred because the word תְּלִקְתִּי appears three times in Jer. 12:7-9 (and cf. Jer. 50:11). More likely, however, they might have encountered manuscripts of Jeremiah that read נַחֲלָתִי in 12:10 (cf. the variant cited by Kennicott and BHS; Rashi to Isa. 22:5, 63:6, and Amos 5:11; Isaiah of Trani to Amos 5:11 and Ps. 60:14 and 102:7).

¹⁴² **As they increased before they were exiled** – See the standard commentary, where Ibn Ezra claims that this verse is directed at those who remained in exile in Egypt and Assyria.

(10) And place shall not be found (ימצא) for them – Its explanation is: [The place] shall not suffice for them;¹⁴³ similarly, “Could enough flocks and herds be slaughtered to suffice (וימצא) them” (Num. 11:22).

(11) Affliction shall pass over the sea – Its explanation: **Affliction shall pass over the king** of Assyria, for it is the style of Scripture to compare kings to seas and rivers.¹⁴⁴

And all the deeps of the נַיִם (Nile) shall dry up – Its explanation: This is the king of Egypt, since it is written: “My Nile (נַיִם) is my own; I made it for myself” (Ezek. 29:3).

Chapter 11

(1) Throw open your gates, O Lebanon [and let fire consume your cedars] – Its explanation: The prophet prophesied the Second Temple’s destruction.¹⁴⁵

(2) Howl, cypresses, for cedars have fallen – Its explanation: The cypresses shall howl because the cedars fell. And this like is an allegory that they will all go into exile – the kings and princes. **(3) All of this [will be] because אֲדָרְתָם is spoiled** – The explanation of [אֲדָרְתָם] is “their glory” (אָדָר).¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ [The place] shall not suffice for them – The standard commentary interprets this phrase in the same way.

¹⁴⁴ **Affliction shall pass over the king of Assyria, for it is the style of Scripture to compare kings to seas and rivers** – This metaphorical interpretation, in which “the sea” and “the Nile” are a metaphor for the kings of Assyria and Egypt, respectively, differs from the standard commentary, in which Ibn Ezra derives from this verse that these bodies of water will literally dry up in order to facilitate the return of exiles (cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary).

¹⁴⁵ **The prophet prophesied the Second Temple’s destruction** – Ibn Ezra might be alluding to the midrashic tradition that the word “Lebanon” alludes to the Temple in several verses including ours (yYom 6:3; bYom. 39b; *Avot de-R. Nathan* I:4, II:7, Schechter 11a, 12b; cf. Ibn Caspi). The standard commentary writes that this prophecy is predicting the downfall of the Hasmonean dynasty, as opposed to the Temple’s destruction. Rashi cites the midrashic view that Zechariah is predicting the destruction of the Second Temple and appears to interpret vv. 1-6 as such. However, starting in v. 7, Rashi and Joseph Kara interpret the rest of the chapter as a parable for the history of the two First-Temple kingdoms (Judah and Israel).

¹⁴⁶ **אֲדָרְתָם... is “their glory” (אָדָר)** – Ibn Ezra may have deemed it necessary to comment on the word אֲדָרְתָם because the ת is a feminine suffix and thus might lead one to believe that it is a different word than אָדָר (v. 13). The noun אָדָר and its feminine counterpart אֲדָרְתָא can refer to an elegant cloak or mantle (e.g., Gen. 25:25, Jos.

(4) Thus said [my God] the Lord: Tend the sheep meant for slaughter – I say¹⁴⁷ that the way of prophets is that the Holy One, blessed be He, shows them [something] like an allegory in their prophecy: sometimes what He will do to the nation in the future and sometimes what He has [already] done. So when He showed¹⁴⁸ Ezekiel (4:4-5) what He told him: “Lie on your left side” for 390 days, it was allegorical, that He would eventually destroy the First Temple according to the number of sabbatical cycles that they rebelled.¹⁴⁹ And He further told him to lie “another forty days on your right side” (Ezek. 4:6), which was an allegory for the forty years that Judah sinned:¹⁵⁰ the 2 years that Amon reigned (II Kings 21:19), eleven [years] of Jehoiakim (II Kings 23:36), eleven of Zedekiah (II Kings 24:18), and sixteen of Manasseh, since he repented during the remainder of his years, as is explicit in Chronicles.¹⁵¹

7:31, Mic. 2:8; cf. Radak, השרשים 9, and BDB 12), but in the context of our verse, Ibn Ezra likely intends the more abstract “glory” rather than a specific glorious garment. Ibn Janah (השרשים 13-14) explicitly interprets אֲדָרְתָם in our verse as “their grandeur and splendor” (גדולתם וכבודם). Rashi, Radak, and Tanḥum share that interpretation of אֲדָרְתָם, although Tanḥum also cites a view that אֲדָרְתָם means “their cloak.”

¹⁴⁷ **I say** – Some manuscripts spell this word defectively (אמר), which could also be vocalized as a masculine singular participle אֹמֵר (“He/it is saying”) or a perfect verb אָמַר (“He/it said”). However, “I will say” (אֶמַר) fits the context better, and some manuscripts have the plene spelling אומר which precludes the possibility of being a perfect verb.

¹⁴⁸ **Showed** – This choice of verb conforms to Ibn Ezra’s view that Ezekiel did not actually lie on his side but imagined this experience in a prophetic vision (Hos. 1:2). Hence, God “showed” this to Ezekiel, rather than Ezekiel physically performing the act of lying on his side.

¹⁴⁹ **So when He showed Ezekiel... “Lie on your left side” for 390 days, it was an allegory, that he would... destroy the First Temple according to the number of sabbatical cycles that they rebelled** – Ibn Ezra is alluding to a rabbinic tradition that the seventy years of exile between the First Temple and the Second Temple were a punishment for seventy sabbatical and jubilee years that were not properly observed (cf. Lev. 26:34-35, II Chron. 36:21). According to this tradition, seventy sabbatical and jubilee years reflect 430 total years of sinful behavior that transpired between Joshua’s conquest and the First Temple’s destruction. 390 of these sinful years occurred before Assyria exiled the northern kingdom, and forty of them occurred when only the kingdom of Judah remained. The 430 years, divided into 390 and 40, correspond to Ezekiel’s vision in which he lies on his left side for 390 days and forty days on his right side (Sed. Ol. R., Ch. 26; cf. bSan. 39a; *Avot de-R. Nathan* I:38, Schechter 58a; Rashi and Ibn Ezra to Lev. 26:35). Ibn Ezra provides his calculation of these 430 years in his second commentary to Daniel (9:1).

¹⁵⁰ **The forty years that Judah sinned** – Ibn Ezra is referring to the years that Judah sinned after the northern kingdom’s destruction, when Judah was the only remaining kingdom.

¹⁵¹ **Sixteen of Manasseh, since he repented during the remainder of his years, as is explicit in Chronicles** – II Chron., 33:12-16 describes how Manasseh sinned and then repented, although it does not specify the year in which he repented. Ibn Ezra’s second commentary to Dan. 9:1 asserts that Manasseh sinned for fifteen years.

What Zechariah saw [applied] to the past and to the future. [God] showed him that this happened to Israel in the past and it would befall them thus in the future.¹⁵²

(6) For I will pity the inhabitants of the land no more – Its explanation: It is speaking¹⁵³ about all of the nations.¹⁵⁴

(7) So I tended the sheep meant for slaughter – Its explanation: This refers to the past, for this did not happen in Zechariah’s time; rather, He showed him thus, that He had tended **the sheep meant for slaughter**.

Therefore (לִכֵּן), O afflicted of the sheep – Its explanation is: **Therefore**, listen, **O afflicted of the sheep**, for I got **two staffs, one of which I named No’am (נועם)** – who is the king of Israel; **No’am** is from נָעִים (“pleasant”; Ps. 81:3). **And the other I named Hovlim (הובלים)**, and he is the king of Judah;¹⁵⁵ **Hovlim** is like: “For by wise counsel (בְּתַחְבֻּלוֹת) you wage war” (Prov. 24:6).

Ibn Ezra’s insistence that Manasseh did not sin for more than sixteen years likely stems from his desire to have the number of sinful years add up to forty (as per Ezekiel’s prophecy), since no other textual evidence exists for establishing the precise year of Manasseh’s repentance. The comment “as is explicit in Chronicles” applies to the fact that Manasseh repented but not to the year in which he repented.

¹⁵² **What Zechariah saw [applied] to the past and to the future. [God] showed him that this happened to Israel in the past and it would befall them thus in the future** – According to the oral commentary, Chapter 11 contains prophecies that highlight parallels between the destruction of the First-Temple kingdoms and the Second Temple. It interprets vv. 1-3 as predicting the Second Temple’s destruction, while vv. 4-14 allude to specific events from the First Temple. The final unit (vv. 15-17) depicts the punishment of those who exiled Israel (presumably alluding to the destructions of both temples, although this is not stated explicitly).

¹⁵³ **It is speaking** – Heb. יֹאמֵר is the last word in the sentence according to the Hebrew word order. Hence, it could also be interpreted as the first word of the next sentence, in which case the text would read: “(6) **For I will pity the inhabitants of the land no more** – Its explanation is: all of the nations. (7) **It says (יֹאמֵר): So I tended the sheep meant for slaughter** – Its explanation: This is referring to the past.” A faint dot before the word in MS Leipzig 41 might favor the latter punctuation.

¹⁵⁴ **About all of the nations** – These words are scraped off of MS Parma 2722, such that the ink from the previous page is visible underneath. Presumably, they were scraped off in an act of censorship, since they might have angered Christians. The words “about the kings of [Gentile] nations” in v. 15 are scraped away in the same manner.

¹⁵⁵ **No’am... is the king of Israel... Hovlim... is the king of Judah** – Rashi also explains these two staff as symbolizing the two kingdoms. They presumably associate the first staff with Israel and the second with Judah because the first staff is broken first, just as Israel was exiled before Judah. Radak, who also interprets this

(8) But I annihilated the three shepherds in one month – Its explanation is: I cut down **the three shepherds**, the kingdom of Israel, the kingdom of Judah, and the kingdom of the priesthood¹⁵⁶ **in one month** – at one time.

Then I loathed them, and they in turn abhorred (בְּהִלָּה) me. [בְּהִלָּה] has no similar [word] in Scripture, but its interpretation based on its context is: **They in turn, loathed (נִפְשׁ בְּקִצְרָה) me.**¹⁵⁷

(9) And I said: “I am not going to tend you; let the one that is to die die etc.”

(10) I took my staff No‘am – Its explanation is: I took the kingdom of Israel and cut it down, for I had annulled **the covenant I had made with all the peoples**, as was said above: “For I will pity the inhabitants of the land no more” (v. 6).

(12) So they weighed out my wages, thirty shekels of silver – Its explanation is: They [represent] the thirty people who immigrated¹⁵⁸ to rebuild the Temple – eleven with Ezra and nineteen with Zerubbabel.¹⁵⁹

prophecy as an allegory for the same historical period as the oral commentary and Rashi, explains the two staffs as symbolizing different situations – one staff alludes to times of proper behavior, while the other alludes to times of sinning.

¹⁵⁶ **But I annihilated the three shepherds in one month... the kingdom of Israel, the kingdom of Judah, and the kingdom of the priesthood** – Ibn Ezra presumably introduced “the kingdom of the priesthood” as a means to explain why there are three shepherds despite there being only two staffs. For other interpretations of the three shepherds, see my supercommentary to the standard commentary.

¹⁵⁷ [בְּהִלָּה]... **based on its context is... loathed (נִפְשׁ בְּקִצְרָה) me** – This same interpretation appears in the standard commentary. Regarding the correct translations of בְּהִלָּה and קִצְרָה according to Ibn Ezra, see my supercommentary *ad loc.*

¹⁵⁸ **Immigrated** – Literally, “went up” (עלו); cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary).

¹⁵⁹ **Eleven with Ezra and nineteen with Zerubbabel** – It is unclear how Ibn Ezra concluded that Ezra immigrated with eleven men and Zerubbabel with nineteen, since neither number is supported by the lists of those who accompanied them: Ezra 2 or Neh. 7 (for Zerubbabel’s journey) or Ezra 8 (for Ezra’s journey). Most likely, the text should be emended to reverse the numbers (“eleven with Zerubbabel and nineteen with Ezra”). Zerubbabel came with either ten men (according to Ezra 2:2) or eleven men (according to Neh. 7:7). Regarding Ezra’s journey, eighteen names appear on the list of those who came with him (Ezra 8:2-14). If Ibn Ezra included Zerubbabel and Ezra, respectively, in his count, then he might have adopted the list in Ezra 2:2 for Zerubbabel and concluded that eleven men (including Zerubbabel) and nineteen men (including Ezra) returned

(13) Deposit it in the [House of] the Creator (הַיּוֹצֵר)¹⁶⁰ – Its explanation is: Deposit this wage in the [House of] the Creator, which is the Temple, which is **the glory of the splendor which I valued from them.**¹⁶¹

(14) Then I cleft in two my second staff – Its explanation: I cut down the kingdom of Judah and I annulled the brotherhood that I had between Judah and Israel.

(15) The Lord said to me further: Get yourself the gear of a foolish shepherd – Its explanation: It is speaking about the kings of [Gentile] nations,¹⁶² who are fools. I will requite them because they exiled Israel.

(16) Nor sustain הַנִּצְבָּה (the frail) – Its explanation is: one who cannot walk with her leg.¹⁶³

from exile. This interpretation of the thirty silver shekels as symbolizing the eleven men in the first wave of immigration and the nineteen men in the second wave appears in Jacob b. Reuben's ספר העשר and could have reached Ibn Ezra through Karaite sources.

Although no textual witness of the oral commentary reads “eleven with Zerubbabel and nineteen with Ezra,” it is important to note that the base manuscript is completely missing the number eleven, which might indicate that its text of this sentence was corrupted. Moreover, the two manuscripts that do contain both numbers write them using Hebrew letters' numerical values (י"א for eleven and ט"ט for nineteen) rather than writing them in words (אחד עשר and תשעה עשר). Therefore, it is easy to imagine how the text could have become corrupted, with י"ט and י"א switching places.

The one plausible alternative to emending the text would be to posit that Ibn Ezra (or the student who recorded the oral commentary) was citing the numbers from memory and misremembered the details of the lists in Ezra and Nehemiah. Indeed, both of Ibn Ezra's commentaries to Est. 2:10 refer to Mordecai as the third-ranked member of Zerubbabel's entourage, which might indicate that Ibn Ezra misremembered the precise text of Ezra 2:2 or Neh. 7:7 (both of which list Mordecai later than third). Nevertheless, given that the interpretation of “eleven with Zerubbabel and nineteen with Ezra” predates Ibn Ezra and is supported by the lists in Ezra 2:2 and 8:2-14, emending Ibn Ezra's text seems compelling.

¹⁶⁰ **The [House of] the Creator (הַיּוֹצֵר)** – Regarding this translation of הַיּוֹצֵר, see my supercommentary to the standard commentary.

¹⁶¹ **The glory of the splendor which I valued from them** – See the standard commentary regarding Ibn Ezra's interpretation of this phrase.

¹⁶² **About the kings of [Gentile] nations** – Cf. note 154 above.

¹⁶³ **הַנִּצְבָּה... one who cannot walk with her leg** – The word הַנִּצְבָּה literally means “one who is standing still” (fem.), so Ibn Ezra is explaining that in this context, it refers to a sheep that is standing still because she cannot walk. For an alternative interpretation of הַנִּצְבָּה, cf. Ibn Saruk (מהברת מנחם), Philipowski 148, Sáenz-Badillos 315*).

Chapter 12

(1) A pronouncement: The word of the Lord concerning Israel – Its explanation: This entire passage, through, “In that day a fountain shall be open to the House of David” (13:1), was said about the Messiah son of Ephraim.¹⁶⁴

(2) [Behold, I will make Jerusalem] a פ תרעל (bowl of reeling) for the peoples – Its explanation: פ is the name of a vessel, which is filled with “the wine of staggering (תרעלה)” (Ps. 60:5);¹⁶⁵ “Some of the blood that is in the basin (בסר)” (Exod. 12:22) is similar to it.¹⁶⁶

Also Judah shall be caught up in the siege in Jerusalem.¹⁶⁷

(3) A מַעֲמֵסָה (heavy) stone is similar to: “Each loaded (וַיַּעֲמֵס) his pack animal” (Gen. 44:13).¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ **This entire passage... was said about the Messiah son of Ephraim** – See standard commentary. The Messiah “son of Ephraim” is equivalent to the Messiah “son of Joseph” in the standard commentary.

¹⁶⁵ **A פ תרעל (bowl of reeling)... a vessel, which is filled with “the wine of staggering (תרעלה)”** – The decision to translate the root רעל as “reeling” or “staggering” is based on Ibn Ezra’s commentaries to Isa. 51:17 and Nah. 2:4 (cf. Muraoka and Shavitsky) and is also implied by Jonathan (מרורי). Other exegetes interpret רעל as “fatigue/weariness” or as “poison” (cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 483; Rashi, *ad loc.*, Isa. 51:17, Nah. 2:4, Ps. 60:5; Radak, *ad loc.*, Nah. 2:4, and השרשים 712-713; Tanḥum).

¹⁶⁶ **פ is the name of a vessel... “Some of the blood that is in the basin (בסר)” is similar to it** – Exod. 12:22 confirms the meaning of פ as a bowl or basin. Ibn Ezra cites the same proof-text in the standard commentary (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

¹⁶⁷ **Also Judah shall be caught up in the siege in Jerusalem** – This is a near-verbatim citation of the verse, except for removing two occurrences of the preposition על (on, against) and replacing the second one with the preposition ב (in). Ibn Ezra thus edited the verse as follows in his paraphrase: נָגַם עַל יְהוּדָה יְהוָה בְּמִצּוֹר צֵל, “Also ~~against~~ Judah shall be caught up in the siege ~~against~~ [in] Jerusalem.” It appears that the main purpose of his paraphrase is to remove the first על and thus resolve the verse’s problematic syntax – in which “Judah” seems to be both the subject and an indirect object of the same verb (“shall be caught up”). I have therefore decided not to bold the words “also Judah” despite the fact that they appear in the verse, in the phrase “also against Judah,” since Ibn Ezra seeks to paraphrase “also against Judah” rather than cite it verbatim.

It is less clear whether changing the second preposition from על to ב intends to alter the meaning in any way. “In Jerusalem” might imply that this verse describes Jews under siege inside the city walls, but the oral commentary to v. 5 implies that Ibn Ezra is currently is describing the Jews who camped with the Gentile enemies, so perhaps “in the siege in Jerusalem” simply means that these Jews are camped alongside the sieging army in the Jerusalem area but are not under siege.

¹⁶⁸ **A מַעֲמֵסָה (heavy) stone is similar to “Each loaded (וַיַּעֲמֵס) his pack animal”** – For the sake of readability in English, I followed NASV in translating the phrase אָבָן מַעֲמָסָה as “a heavy stone.” However, the Hebrew phrase is a noun construct, so “a stone of burden” (JPS 1917) would be a better literal translation. Ibn Ezra cites a proof-text to prove that the root עַמַּס denotes a heavy load or burden, although the root is used as a verb (to load)

לא יִשְׂרְטוּ (Shall injure themselves) is similar to: “They shall not make gashes (לא יִשְׂרְטוּ) [in their flesh]” (Lev. 21:5).¹⁶⁹

(5) And the chiefs of Judah will say to themselves, “The dwellers of Jerusalem are my strength” – Its explanation is: On that day, **the chiefs of Judah** who are outside of Jerusalem will say to themselves, “**The dwellers of Jerusalem are stronger (אֲמִצָּה) than me (לִי)**”¹⁷⁰ – That is to say, **the dwellers of Jerusalem** will be mightier (יותר יהיו תקיפים)¹⁷¹ – for the sake of the House of David’s honor, and the honor of the dweller of **Jerusalem** – than¹⁷² **Judah**.

(6) Like a כִּיּוֹר¹⁷³ of fire among sticks – Its explanation is: like a **כִּיּוֹר** filled with **fire**, that if you put it **among sticks**, it will devour them. **And like a torch of fire** that if you put it

in his proof-text. Ibn Janah (השרשים 375) and Radak (השרשים 440) also cite our verse and Gen. 44:13 together and interpret the root עָמַס in the same manner, as a synonym of the more common root נָשָׂא (to lift or bear a load).

¹⁶⁹ **לא יִשְׂרְטוּ (Shall injure themselves)** is similar to: “They shall not make gashes (לא יִשְׂרְטוּ) [in their flesh]” – Ibn Ezra cites this proof-text to demonstrate the meaning of the rare root שָׂרַט as injury through gashing. In a similar vein, Ibn Saruk juxtaposes our verse to Lev. 21:5 as proofs that the root שָׂרַט means “to scrape or destroy” (מהברת מנהם, Philipowski 181, Sáenz-Badillos 389*; cf. Ibn Janah, השרשים 535; Radak, השרשים 810). In our verse, the root appears in *nif'al*, so it would be translated as passive or reflexive verb.

¹⁷⁰ **Stronger (אֲמִצָּה) than me (לִי)** – I have interpreted the first-person preposition לִי as comparative (“than me”) based on the oral commentary’s subsequent comment that the Jewish chiefs will say: “The dwellers of Jerusalem will be mightier.” However, the standard commentary interprets לִי as “on my behalf” or “for my sake” (בעבורי), meaning that the chiefs of Judah who are outside the city will view the Jerusalemites’ might as serving on their behalf.

¹⁷¹ **The dwellers of Jerusalem are my strength (אֲמִצָּה)... the dwellers of Jerusalem will be mightier** – By employing the adjective תְּקִיפִים (mighty) as a synonym for אֲמִצָּה, Ibn Ezra interprets the root אֲמַצ as connoting strength. Ibn Saruk (מהברת מנהם, Philipowski 27, Sáenz-Badillos 48*) and Ibn Janah (השרשים 38) interpret it the same way (cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary, 6:3). Tanhum adopts their view but notes that Jonathan’s translation (אשתכח) appears to interpret אֲמִצָּה as an irregular spelling and vocalization of אֲמַצָּא (“I will find”) from the root מָצָא.

¹⁷² **Than** – The Hebrew preposition עַל can also be interpreted as “against” or “over,” but Ibn Ezra appears to be using it here comparatively.

¹⁷³ **A כִּיּוֹר** – Exegetes differ regarding correct the translation of this Hebrew word. The standard commentary interprets כִּיּוֹר as “stove,” but it is difficult to attribute that interpretation to the oral commentary, since the image of putting “it among sticks” more easily fits other possible interpretations of כִּיּוֹר, such as a pan or a firebrand. For a summary of possible interpretations of כִּיּוֹר, see my supercommentary to the standard commentary.

among sheaves, it will devour them. So, [too,] **the chiefs of Judah shall devour all the besieging peoples right and left.**

(8) The feeblest of them in battle on that day shall be considered like David.

(10) But I will fill the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem with a spirit of pity and compassion; and they shall look unto Him¹⁷⁴ whom they have pierced – Its explanation is: after they look at the Messiah son of Ephraim whom the enemies pierced, I will fill **the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem with a spirit of pity and compassion; and they will wail over the Messiah son of Ephraim as over a favorite son.**

(11) In that day, the wailing over the Messiah son of Ephraim shall be as great as the wailing over Ahab, whom Hadarimmon¹⁷⁵ killed, and over Josiah, who was killed in the plain of Megiddon.¹⁷⁶

Chapter 13

(1) In that day a fountain shall be open to the House of David – Its explanation: This will happen in the time of the Messiah son of **David.**¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ **Unto Him** – Regarding Ibn Ezra’s use of the pronoun “him,” rather than “me” that appears in standard editions of the Masoretic text, see my supercommentary to the standard commentary.

¹⁷⁵ **Hadarimmon** – The Masoretic text of the verse writes the name as Hadadrimmon (either as one word, or as two words: Hadad-rimmon; cf. Breuer, נוסח המקרא *ad loc.*). The standard commentary writes the name as one word: Hadadrimmon. The fact that the narrative in I Kings 20 presents Ben-hadad as Ahab’s adversary would seem to preclude the oral commentary’s spelling of Hadarimmon (without the second “d/ד”). However, Kennicott does cite several different spellings of the name Hadadrimmon in our verse, including the oral commentary’s spelling. It is therefore unclear whether the spelling “Hadarimmon” is a scribal error here – in which the scribe omitted one ד (perhaps due to the graphic similarity between the adjacent ד and ד in the Hebrew name הדדדמון) – or whether the author or copyist saw a text of the Bible in which the name was spelled “Hadarimmon.”

¹⁷⁶ **As the wailing over Ahab, whom Hadarimmon killed, and over Josiah, who was killed in the plain of Megiddon** – The standard commentary labels this interpretation – which was widespread among earlier exegetes – as *derash* and instead offers an alternative interpretation (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

For טָהָרָה (purification) and נָדָה (cleansing) – Its explanation is: for water of **purification** (מִי טָהָרָה; cf. Num. 8:7) and for water of **lustration** (מִי נָדָה; cf. Num. 19:13).¹⁷⁸

(5) For a man bequeathed [soil] to me (הִקְנֵנִי)¹⁷⁹ in my youth to till the land, not to prophesy.

(6) And if one asks him, “What are those wounds on your back?” Its explanation is: **the wounds** that his father and mother beat into him because he prophesied falsely (v. 3). **He will reply, “From being beaten in the homes of my friends,”** but he will not want to say: “from being beaten because I prophesied falsely.”

(7) O sword! Rouse yourself [against My shepherd, against the man that is My fellow] – Its explanation: The verse is speaking about the king,¹⁸⁰ who thinks to himself¹⁸¹ that he can shepherd Israel well and be like Me.

עֲמִיתִי (My fellow) is like: “[Do not wrong] one another (עֲמִיתוֹ)” (Lev. 25:17).¹⁸²

Against [all] the צִעְרִים – Its explanation is: **against** those shepherds who caused grief (שְׁצִיעָרוֹ) to Me.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ **This will happen in the time of the Messiah son of David** – According to Ibn Ezra, this prophecy applies to “the time of the Messiah son of David,” which follows the time of the Messiah son of Joseph to which Ibn Ezra applied the immediate past prophecy in Chapter 12.

¹⁷⁸ **Its explanation is: for water of purification and for water of lustration** – Ibn Ezra is explaining the verse’s cryptic remark that the fountain will be “for purification and lustration.” Both “purification” (טָהָרָה) and “lustration” (נָדָה) are interpreted as legal terms, referring to situations in which fresh water can remove someone’s state of ritual uncleanness.

¹⁷⁹ **Bequeathed [soil] to me (הִקְנֵנִי)** – This translation of הִקְנֵנִי is based on the standard commentary (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*), because the oral commentary provides no information about the etymology or meaning of הִקְנֵנִי. The translation of “sold me as a slave” (NASV) would also be compatible with the oral commentary.

¹⁸⁰ **The verse is speaking about the king** – According to the standard commentary, the verse is addressing the *Gentile* king to whom God will grant dominion over Israel at that time.

¹⁸¹ **To himself** – Literally, “in his heart”; see note 43.

¹⁸² **עֲמִיתִי is like: “Do not wrong one another (עֲמִיתוֹ)”** – Ibn Saruk (מִזְבַּחַת מִנְחָה, Philipowski 134, Sáenz-Badillos 283*) also juxtaposes our verse and Lev. 25:17, implying that they share the same meaning of “fellow” or “peer” (cf. Ibn Janah, הַשְּׂרִישִׁים 376).

(8) פִּי־שְׁנַיִם (Two parts)... shall perish and¹⁸⁴ shall die – Two-thirds shall perish and shall die.¹⁸⁵

Chapter 14

(1) Your spoil shall be divided in your very midst – Its explanation is: in the midst of Jerusalem.¹⁸⁶ This shall happen “on the day when Gog sets foot on the soil of Israel” (Ezek. 38:18).

(3) As when he fought in the day of battle – Its explanation is: as He fought in the time of Joshua.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ **צִעָרִים... those shepherds who caused grief (שְׂצִיעָרִים) to Me** – The word צִעָרִים is frequently translated as “little ones” (e.g., KJV, JPS 1917), from the same etymology as צעיר (small, young). In Rabbinic Hebrew, the root צער is frequently used in the sense of “to cause pain” (cf. Jastrow 1294-1295). The standard commentary cites Yefet as interpreting צִעָרִים the former way. But this passage in the oral commentary indicates that Ibn Ezra himself prefers the latter meaning here, namely that the צִעָרִים are tormenters. In the standard commentary, his view is less clear, because he cites a proof-text where the root צער is used but does not fully explain the root’s meaning in that proof-text (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). Ibn Janah (השרשים 434-435) interprets צִעָרִים in our verse as distinguished figures, arguing that the root צער can be used for small or lowly ones but also for the opposite. Ibn Ezra fundamentally rejects the notion of a root having two opposite meanings (cf. the standard commentary to Hag. 2:12 and my supercommentary *ad loc.*), so it is no surprise that he does not accept Ibn Janah’s interpretation of צִעָרִים. Jonathan translates צִעָרִים as תּוֹנִיָּא (“deputies”). Most exegetes similarly maintain that צִעָרִים are younger or lower-ranking assistants to the shepherds, such that in the allegory, the “shepherds” are kings and the צִעָרִים are their subordinate officials (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak). Tanḥum anonymously cites and defends the view that צִעָרִים are prominent leaders (Ibn Janah), but also anonymously cites Ibn Ezra’s view that צִעָרִים are tormenters.

¹⁸⁴ **And** – The HaKeter edition implies that Ibn Ezra considered the conjunctive ו (“and”) to be part of the biblical text. Indeed, this conjunctive ו does appear in several manuscripts cited by Kennicott. However, it is also possible that Ibn Ezra adds the conjunctive ו for clarity; otherwise the phrase would literally read “shall perish shall die.”

¹⁸⁵ **פִּי־שְׁנַיִם... Two-thirds shall perish and shall die** – The phrase פִּי־שְׁנַיִם (“two parts”) does not specify a denominator, and could therefore be understood as “a double portion” of any denominator (e.g., Deut. 21:17, regarding the firstborn son’s double portion of inheritance, regardless of the number of heirs; cf. Ibn Caspi). Ibn Ezra thus clarifies that that Zechariah is speaking about two *thirds*, which is evident from the end of the verse: “And one-third of it shall survive.”

¹⁸⁶ **Your spoil shall be divided in your very midst – Its explanation is: in the midst of Jerusalem** – Ibn Ezra interprets “your” spoil as referring to the spoil of Jerusalem that the enemy shall plunder, not the spoil of *the enemy* that the Jews shall plunder (cf. the standard commentary).

¹⁸⁷ **In the day of battle... as He fought in the time of Joshua** – Joshua led many battles, from the battle against Amalek (Exod. 17:8-13) when he was still Moses’ assistant through his multi-year conquest of Canaan. It is thus unclear which battle(s) the oral commentary has in mind when it points to God’s role in “the time of Joshua” as a parallel for God’s role in this prophecy. The standard commentary interprets “the day of battle” as referring to the splitting of the Red Sea (cf. Exod. 14:25), which raises a second difficulty with the oral

(4) On that day, He will set His feet on the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall split in half, east and west – Its explanation: Half the mountain will split to the east and to the west, so a great gorge will be created from the mountain. Then the remaining half of the Mount shall shift and split to the north to the south.¹⁸⁸

commentary's comment: Does interpreting "the day of battle" as an event from Joshua's time necessarily contradict the standard commentary, or can the two commentaries be understood as complementary rather than contradictory? The oral commentary can thus be understood in one of the following ways:

- a) In order to view the two commentaries as complementary, one must assume that oral commentary is referring to the battle against Amalek when it compares God's behavior in our verse to His behavior "in the time of Joshua." Indeed, that battle could parallel our verse's depiction of God as leading the battle, because Joshua only prevailed against Amalek when Moses raised his hands toward the heavens (cf. mR.H. 3:8) and because the narrative ends with the declaration: "The Lord will be at war with Amalek throughout the ages" (Exod. 17:6). In order to harmonize this interpretation with the standard commentary, one must further posit that Ibn Ezra viewed the entire sequence of events from Exod. 14-17 as one chain of divinely-guided battles to which our verse alludes. Hence, "the day of battle" refers to all of God's actions from the splitting of the sea through Joshua's victory over Amalek.

However, it would seem somewhat unusual to refer to the battle against Amalek as the "time of Joshua," since Moses – not Joshua – led the nation at that time (although Joshua did command the soldiers on the battlefield). Moreover, considering the regularity with which Ibn Ezra's two commentaries differ from one another, the very attempt to harmonize them in this case seems unnecessary.

- b) More likely, the oral commentary compares our verse's "day of battle" to "the time of Joshua," meaning the time when Joshua was the supreme leader. If the oral commentary has a specific battle in mind, then several battles to conquer Canaan could serve as models for divine leadership, since they included a unique sign or miracle from God (e.g., Jos. 6:8, 8:18, 10:11). The most probable candidate would be Jos. 10:11, when God Himself "hurled huge stones" upon Joshua's enemies. Indeed, when the phrase יום קרב appears in Job 38:22-23 adjacent to hail ("the vaults of hail, which I have put aside for a time of adversity, for a day of war [יום קרב]"), Ibn Ezra (*ad loc.*) compares the verse to Jos. 10:11 (and to the hail of Exod. 9:24). While the context in Job – unlike our verse – explicitly mentions hail (cf. Rashi, Jacob Tam, Moses Kimhi, and Ramban *ad loc.*), it is possible that Ibn Ezra viewed the incident in Jos. 10:11 as a powerful example of God leading a battle against Israel's foes, worthy of comparison to our verse, too. Interestingly, the association of Jos. 10:11 with the phrase יום קרב in Job 38:23 would have been fresh in his mind, since his commentary to Job and the oral commentary were composed in Italy at approximately the same time (cf. Sela and Freudenthal 18, 25, 27).
- c) One final possibility is that the oral commentary interprets the phrase יום קרב as "a day of battle" – referring to the entire conquest of Canaan (i.e., many individual days of battle) – rather than "the day of battle." The Hebrew phrase יום קרב is a noun construct, and the first noun of a Hebrew noun construct cannot be preceded by the definite article regardless of whether it is definite. Hence, as the first word in a noun construct, יום could be translated as "a day" or "the day."

¹⁸⁸ **Half the mountain will split to the east and to the west, so a great gorge will be created from the mountain. Then the remaining half of the Mount shall shift and split to the north to the south** – The standard commentary follows the straightforward meaning of the verse: When the mountain splits, the crack will run from east to west, so the two halves will be the northern the northern half the southern half. The oral commentary, however, appears to interpret the phrase מִן־הַקְּרָקָה לְיָמָה not as a *crack* from "east to west" but rather that the mountain will split in two, "east and west," which would then contradict the concluding phrase's description of the halves moving toward "the north and the south." He thus explains that the mountain will split

It is clear according to many sources:¹⁸⁹ When the Holy One, blessed be He, will reveal Himself in the world, the entire world will quake before Him – the mountains and hills, the seas and rivers.¹⁹⁰

(5) You shall flee (ונסתם) into the gorge (בגיא) of the Mount,¹⁹¹ for the Mount's gorge shall reach Azal – Its explanation: When the Mount of Olives will split, its peak¹⁹² shall reach¹⁹³ Azal – which is the name of a place.¹⁹⁴

into *quarters*: A great gorge will be created by half of the mountain splitting into an eastern quarter and a western quarter, while the other half of the mountain will split into northern and southern quarters.

¹⁸⁹ **It is clear according to many sources** – Literally, “This is a clear matter in several sources” (וזה דבר ברור) (בכמה מקומות).

¹⁹⁰ **It is clear according to many sources... the world will quake before Him – the mountains and hills, the seas and rivers** – Ibn Ezra does not appear to be referring to one specific event or proof-text (cf. the HaKeter edition's citation of Isa. 42:15), but rather to the Bible's frequent use of images of quaking mountains and stormy seas during moments of divine revelation (e.g., Jud. 5:4-5; Hab. 3:6; Ps. 18:8-16, 96:9-13, 98:7-9, 114:3-7).

¹⁹¹ **You shall flee (ונסתם) into the gorge (בגיא) of the Mount** – The Hebrew word ונסתם is vocalized וְנִסְתָּם (“You shall flee”) in the Tiberian Masoretic tradition, but it can also be vocalized as וְנִסְתָּם (“It shall be stopped up”). The standard commentary cites a Babylonian tradition (reflected in Jonathan's translation) to adopt the latter vocalization and thus render the verse's opening phrase as: “The gorge of My mountains shall be stopped up.” Although the standard commentary does not state whether Ibn Ezra personally agrees with this vocalization, the oral commentary seems to assume the vocalization of וְנִסְתָּם by adding the prepositional prefix ב before the word גיא (gorge) and thereby precluding the possibility of the gorge being the subject of the verb ונסתם. Indeed, the oral commentary to Amos 1:1 cites this verse and similarly appears to interpret the word ונסתם as describing people who are fleeing, supporting the vocalization וְנִסְתָּם.

¹⁹² **Peak** – Ibn Ezra replaces the verse's word “gorge” with “peak” (ראש), which corresponds to his comments elsewhere that the word גיא (gorge, valley) can refer to the gorge's peak (Num. 21:19, Deut. 3:29 and 34:6).

¹⁹³ **Shall reach** – In MS Paris 217 and MS Parma De Rossi 470, the words “shall reach” are followed by a puzzling phrase: “in/upon Egypt. Woe is to them, except that the plague shall befall them.” This phrase makes little sense here. It would appear to be commenting on v. 18. Here is the Hebrew phrase (underlined) as it appears in these two manuscripts to v. 5:

ונסתם בגיא ההר כי יגיע גיא ההר אל אצל פי' כשיבקע הר הזתים יגיע במצרים או להם אם לא כי תהיה עליהם המגפה ראשו אל אצל
Perhaps it was intended as a gloss to v. 18 but was copied into the body of the commentary in the wrong spot.

In v. 18, it could fit the commentary as follows:

ונאם משפחת מצרים לא תעלה ולא באה ולא עליהם כמו כן יהיה השובע ותהיה המגפה במצרים. או להם אם לא כי תהיה עליהם המגפה
אשר יגף יי את הגוים אשר לא יעלו לחג את חג הסוכות.

If the community of Egypt does not make this pilgrimage, upon them there shall similarly be **no** abundance. But the plague shall be upon Egypt. Woe is to them, except that the plague with which the Lord will strike the other nations that do not come up to observe the Feast of Booths shall befall them. The purpose of this comment would be to stress that although the drought of v. 17 would not harm Egypt – due to the Nile's plentiful water – the gruesome plague of rotting flesh, eyes, and tongues (v. 12) would nevertheless afflict Egypt (cf. the standard commentary to v. 18). Hence, Egyptians who hear the threat of drought may believe that they are being spared punishment, “except that” God will nevertheless afflict them with the plague described in v. 12.

(6) In that day, there shall not be light – Its explanation: **There shall not be light** alone, but along with the **light** will be stones of **heaviness** and **קפאון (hail)**. The explanation of **קפאון** is [that] they are a type of stones that fall with snow.¹⁹⁵

(7) But there shall be one day – Its explanation is: “On the day when Gog sets foot [on the soil of Israel]” (Ezek. 38:18), that day **shall be known to the Lord**. And that day will be **neither true day nor true night, but there shall be light at eventide**.¹⁹⁶

(10) Then the whole country shall become like the Arabah, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. And she – Jerusalem – shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place.¹⁹⁷

(13) And everyone shall snatch at the hand of another, and everyone shall raise his hand against (על) everyone else’s hand – Its explanation is that they shall be killed by one another.¹⁹⁸

(14) Judah shall join the fighting in Jerusalem – Some explain [that **Judah**] themselves **shall join the fighting** for the spoils. Others explain [that **Judah**] **shall join the fighting** against (נג) the enemies.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁴ **Azal – which is the name of a place** – Ibn Ezra makes the same comment in the standard commentary (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*).

¹⁹⁵ **The explanation of קפאון is that they are a type of stones that fall with snow** – This interpretation of קפאון seemingly differs from the standard commentary, where Ibn Ezra interprets קפאון as a type of thick cloud or fog (cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary).

¹⁹⁶ **And that day will be neither true day nor true night, but there shall be light at eventide** – Ibn Ezra adopts a literal interpretation of Zechariah’s depiction of a day which is neither day nor night. He elaborates on this interpretation in the standard commentary, where he attacks those who interpret “day” and “night” as metaphors for exile and redemption.

¹⁹⁷ **And she – Jerusalem – shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place** – Ibn Ezra rearranges the verse’s word order to clarify that Jerusalem – and not “the country” (הארץ) – is the subject of the feminine verbs “shall be lifted up and inhabited” (וַיִּשָּׂבַח וַיִּשְׂכְּנָהּ), because both Jerusalem and הארץ are feminine nouns.

¹⁹⁸ **Everyone shall raise his hand against (על) everyone else’s hand – Its explanation is that they shall be killed by one another** – I have translated the preposition על as “against” because the oral commentary interprets the image of raised hands as a depiction of people killing one another. Rashi similarly interprets this verse as depicting chaos in which people seize and kill each other. However, the standard commentary appears to interpret על as “in.”

(16) To bow low to the king (לְמֶלֶךְ) Lord of Hosts – Some explain: [to bow] to the Holy One, blessed be He.²⁰⁰ Others explain: to the Messiah.²⁰¹

(17) Upon them there shall be no rain – Its explanation is: **Upon them there shall be no abundance.**

(18) If the community of Egypt does not make this pilgrimage, upon them there shall similarly be no abundance.²⁰²

But there shall be **the same affliction with which the Lord will strike the other nations that do not come up to observe the Feast of Booths.**²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ **Some explain [that Judah] themselves shall join the fighting for the spoils. Others explain... against the enemies** – The terse presentation of both views makes it difficult to determine the precise difference between them, but they appear to differ regarding the circumstances that led Judah to enter the war. The first view appears to maintain that Judah will wage war of its own volition (“themselves”) in order to conquer the enemy’s spoils. In the second view, Ibn Ezra appears to be alluding to a widespread view that “Judah” refers to Jews who were initially compelled to fight alongside the Gentile enemies (Jonathan, Rashi, and Joseph Kara, Radak; cf. the standard commentary to 12:2). I have translated the preposition מן in the context of waging war as “against” (cf. Ramban, Exod. 17:9; *Yal. Shimoni* to Jos. 14:15). It could also be translated “on account of,” which would further support the suggestion that this second view interprets “Judah” as the Jews who entered the war “on account of (מן) the enemies” that coerced them to be there.

²⁰⁰ **לְמֶלֶךְ... Some explain: [to bow] to the Holy One, blessed be He** – Normally, “to the king” would be vocalized לְמֶלֶךְ, with the *patah* under the prefix representing the definite article. In its absolute state, the word לְמֶלֶךְ – with a *sheva* under the prefix ל – is indefinite (“to a king”). This first opinion maintains that in our verse, לְמֶלֶךְ is a definite noun (“to the King”) despite the *sheva* under the ל. According to this view, “the King” refers to God, with the next phrase (“the Lord of Hosts”) in apposition to it: “to the King, [i.e.,] the Lord of Hosts.” This view is adopted by Ibn Janah (הרקמה 280), who cites our verse alongside several other verses in which a definite article is missing even though the context indicates that the noun is definite. Jonathan also interprets “the King” in our verse as God, but he does so by accepting that לְמֶלֶךְ begins a construct (“the King of...”), similar to Ibn Ezra’s own approach (cf. the standard commentary). However, unlike Ibn Ezra - who sees the construct chain as continuing with the next words in the verse (“the king of the Lord”), Jonathan adds an implied noun: “the King of [the universe (עלמיה)]” and thus maintains that “the King” is God.

²⁰¹ **Others explain: to the Messiah** – See the standard commentary, where Ibn Ezra renders the phrase “to the king Lord of Hosts” as a noun construct: “to the king *of* the Lord of Hosts,” meaning the Messiah (i.e., the Lord’s chosen king).

²⁰² **Upon them there shall similarly be no abundance** – The verse itself simply states “not upon them,” without neither a verb nor a noun. Ibn Ezra therefore argues that the verb and subject from the previous verse are implied in this phrase, too. Hence, the full phrase would be: “upon them shall be no rain” (and the commentary to the previous verse interpreted the rain as symbolizing “abundance”).

²⁰³ **But there shall be the same affliction with which the Lord will strike the other nations that do not come up to observe the Feast of Booths** – See note 193 above and the standard commentary.

(20) In that day, there will be on the קְצִלֹת (bells) of the horses – Its explanation is: those bells that hang on horses' necks and make noise, similar to: “My lips quivered (צָלְלוּ) at the sound” (Hab. 3:16).²⁰⁴

(21) And there will no longer be a Canaanite – Some explain: an actual Canaanite; others explain: a trader – **in the House of the Lord of Hosts in that day.**²⁰⁵

The commentary to Zechariah is concluded.

²⁰⁴ קְצִלֹת... bells that... make noise, similar to: “My lips quivered (צָלְלוּ) at the sound” – In the proof-text from Habakkuk, the lips shake against one another, similar to the bell that makes noise by shaking back and forth.

²⁰⁵ **And there will no longer be a Canaanite** – Some explain: an actual Canaanite; others explain: a trader – **in the House of the Lord of Hosts in that day** – Ibn Ezra cites the same two views in the standard commentary, but there he dismisses the view that “Canaanite” refers to ethnic Canaanites.

Ibn Ezra to Malachi – Oral Commentary

Chapter 1

(1) A pronouncement: The word of the Lord to Israel through Malachi – Its explanation: Malachi prophesied this prophecy upon Judah and upon those Israelites who returned during the Second Temple period.²⁰⁶

(2) I have shown you love, said the Lord – Its explanation: The prophet says that the Holy One, Blessed Be He, said regarding Israel: **“I have shown you love.”** But if you will ask, **“How have You shown us love?”**²⁰⁷ The answer is that through this **I have shown you love**, [that] **Esau is Jacob’s brother; yet I have loved Jacob** [such] that although I exiled them, I returned them and they rebuilt the Temple. **(3) But** [as for] **Esau** – after I exiled him, I did not return him; rather, I made **his hills a desolation, his territory a home for beasts**

²⁰⁶ **Malachi prophesied... upon Judah and upon those Israelites who returned during the Second Temple period** – Ibn Ezra stresses that some people returned from the northern kingdom of Israel, because the verse mentions “Israel” despite the fact that most residents of Judea in Malachi’s time descended from the southern kingdom of Judah (cf. the standard commentary).

²⁰⁷ **“I have shown you love.” But if you will ask, “How have You shown us love?”** – The verse presents a dialogue between God and the nation which would imply – if taken literally – that the nation is expected, even obligated, to challenge God: “I have shown you love... And you will say (וְאָמַרְתֶּם), ‘How have You shown us love?’” Ibn Ezra instead interprets וְאָמַרְתֶּם conditionally – “if you will say...” This interpretation was already suggested by Ibn Janah (הַרְקָמָה 65), who cites the prefix ו of וְאָמַרְתֶּם as proof that a prefix ו can serve to introduce the protasis of a condition, with the word “if” (אם) implied. Jonathan’s translation also adds the word “if” (אם) (תִּימְרוּן), as do many exegetes in their paraphrases or interpretations of the verse (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak, Student of Trani, Tanhum).

(לתנוות) of the desert. The explanation [of תנוות] is [the same as] תנין (a serpent); in the masculine form they are called תנינים (cf. Gen. 1:21), and in feminine תנוות.²⁰⁸

(4) Whereas Edom says: “We have been impoverished” – Its explanation: If Edom says, “Although we have been impoverished, we can build the ruins again,” thus said the Lord... They may build, but I will tear down.

[And they shall call them the region of wickedness,] the people damned of the Lord – For²⁰⁹ they are a people damned forever of the Lord.²¹⁰

(5) Your eyes shall behold when I do this to Edom, and you shall declare, “Great is the Lord.”

(6) A son honors [his] father, and a slave his master - For²¹¹ the way of the world²¹² is that the son honors the father and a slave fears his master. But now, if I am a father, where is

²⁰⁸ **The explanation [of תנוות] is [the same as] תנין; in the masculine form they are called תנינים, and in feminine תנוות** – The masculine-singular noun תנין (plural: תנינים) is a large sea serpent (Ibn Ezra’s long commentary to Gen. 1:21), so the oral commentary is apparently arguing that the feminine-plural noun תנוות in our verse is describing female sea serpents. Such an interpretation would contradict the standard commentary, which asserts that תנוות is the feminine plural form of תנים (jackals). Moreover, jackals would seem to fit the context of our verse better than sea serpents, since the verse is describing the ruins of Edom as a desolate wasteland inhabited by “תנוות of the wilderness.” Indeed, most exegetes interpret תנוות in our verse as jackals or similar wild beasts (Ibn Janah, השרשים 545; Rashi, Joseph Kara, Eliezer of Beaugency, Radak), and Tanḥum specifically cautions against misinterpreting תנוות as serpents (ערבד in the Judeo-Arabic singular form; cf. Ratzhabi, הערבית, 99), when in fact they are jackals (אבן און). One wonders if the author of the oral commentary misheard or misunderstood Ibn Ezra’s interpretation and erroneously wrote תנין and תנינים when Ibn Ezra intended תנים.

MS Leipzig 41 reads תנים (jackals), rather than תנינים, as the masculine equivalent of תנוות. That reading would correspond to the standard commentary and resolve the aforementioned difficulties with interpreting תנוות as sea serpents. Nevertheless, I have adopted the reading of תנינים, since it is supported by all other extant manuscripts to this verse (including the fragmentary text in MS Modena-Archivio di Stato 692). The reading of תנים is undermined by the oral commentary’s comment that תנין is the masculine singular of this creature, since the singular form of תנים would presumably be תן (although it is not attested in the Bible; cf. Ibn Janah, *ibid.*). Perhaps the scribe of MS Leipzig 41 sensed the problematic nature of the reading of תנינים and thus emended the text to תנים.

²⁰⁹ **For** – Some manuscripts read “its explanation” (פי) instead of “for” (כי).

²¹⁰ **For they are a people damned forever of the Lord** – Perhaps the purpose of this comment is to present “a people damned forever of the Lord” as an objective description of Edom and not merely something that others will call Edom.

²¹¹ **For** – Some manuscripts read “its explanation” (פי) instead of “for” (כי).

the honor due Me? And if I am a master, where is the reverence due Me?—said the Lord of Hosts to you, O priests who scorn My name – Its explanation: I am saying²¹³ this to you, **the priests**, who scorn **My name**.

And if you ask, **“How have we scorned Your name?” (7)** That you offer **defiled food on My altar**. And if you ask,²¹⁴ **“How have we defiled You?”** That you say, **“The table of the Lord can be treated with scorn.”**

(8) When you present a blind animal for sacrifice, you say that there is no evil, and when you present a lame or sick one, you say that it is not evil! Just offer it לְפָחֶתָּהּ (to your governor) – Its explanation is: to your ruler (נְשִׂיא).²¹⁵

(9) And now implore the favor of God – Its explanation: He is talking to the priests.²¹⁶

(10) Oh that there were even one among you that would shut the doors – Its explanation: Perhaps²¹⁷ there were someone²¹⁸ **among you** who would shut **the doors and not kindle** (חֲבַעִירוּ)²¹⁹ **My altar to no purpose!**

(11) And everywhere incense and pure oblation are offered to My name – Its explanation is: because **My name is honored among the nations** everywhere as if they perform incense

²¹² **The way of the world** – The Hebrew phrase מנהג העולם (“custom of the world”) refers to a widely accepted norm or practice.

²¹³ **I am saying** – I have translated this word (אומר) in the first person (אומר), but it could also be translated in the third person: “He is saying” (אומר).

²¹⁴ **And if you ask** – This paraphrase of the Hebrew word נֶאֱמַרְתֶּם – adding the word “if” – reflects the same issue as Ibn Ezra’s paraphrase of נֶאֱמַרְתֶּם in v. 2 (cf. note 207).

²¹⁵ **... your ruler (נְשִׂיא)** – Ibn Ezra offers the Hebrew synonym נְשִׂיא to explain the word פָּחָה. Both words could be translated as “governor” (cf. the standard commentary to Hag. 1:14)

²¹⁶ **He is talking to the priests** – See the standard commentary.

²¹⁷ **Perhaps** – The oral commentary’s use of “perhaps” is similar to the standard commentary’s use of “if only” to introduce this verse.

²¹⁸ **Someone** – Ibn Ezra adds “someone” in order to clarify the Bible’s language.

²¹⁹ **Kindle (חֲבַעִירוּ)** – Ibn Ezra offers the Hebrew synonym חֲבַעִירוּ to explain the word תְּאִירוּ. Both words could be translated as second-person plural imperfect verbs meaning “kindle.” He employs the same synonym in the standard commentary (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*)

and offering to My name and pure oblation,²²⁰ for My name is honored among the nations —said the Lord of Hosts.

(12) - But you profane it when you say (כשתאמרו),²²¹ “The table of the Lord is defiled and its fruit (ניבו), one who eats it (אכלו) can be treated with scorn” – Its explanation: One who eats its fruit – namely, the showbread²²² – can be treated with scorn.²²³

(13) You say, “Oh, what exhaustion it is!” And so you puff at it – Its explanation: When they bring you a good lamb, you puff at it with your breath, and you say, “Why do you exhaust us, since it is bad?” But you do this matter with guile, because you take it for yourselves and bring [as a sacrifice] the stolen, the lame, and the sick.

(14) And cursed be a נוכל (deceiver) – Its explanation is: one who thinks,²²⁴ it is similar to, “They conspired (ויתנקלו) against him [to kill him]” (Gen. 37:18), whose [Aramaic] translation is, “They thought” (והשיבו; Onkelos *ad loc.*). So, too, the prophet says: “Cursed

²²⁰ As if they perform incense and offering to My name and pure oblation – Ibn Ezra adds the words “as if” Gentiles in Malachi’s time were presumed to be pagans and thus were not actually offering sacrifices to the Jewish God. He elaborates on this problem in the standard commentary, where he initially explains this verse differently, but a gloss cites him as adopting the same interpretation as the oral commentary.

²²¹ When you say – Ibn Ezra substitutes the Hebrew word כשתאמרו (relative pronoun followed by second-person masculine plural imperfect) for the word באמרוכם in the verse (temporal prefix + infinitive + second-person masculine plural suffix). The infinitive could be translated in different tenses depending on the context.

²²² Its fruit – namely, the showbread – Exegetes struggle to interpret the words ניבו in this verse. In both commentaries, Ibn Ezra claims that it means “its fruit” or “its yield,” referring to the showbread, which is the “fruit” of the table upon which it rested in the Temple. Radak cites this interpretation anonymously.

²²³ אכלו... One who eats its fruit... can be treated with scorn – The word אכלו – a word followed by a third-person masculine suffix – is ambiguous: The word before the suffix could be the noun אכל (“food”), the *qal* participle אכל (“one who eats”), or the *qal* infinitive אכול. Hence, some exegetes interpret אכלו as “[the altar]’s food” (Rashi, Joseph Kara), but the oral commentary appears to interpret אכלו as “one who eats its fruit” (i.e., the showbread), so the complete phrase נביו נביו אכלו means: “One who eats [the showbread] is treated with scorn.” (Regarding the possibility of אכלו being the *qal* infinitive אכול plus an object suffix, see Tanhum.)

²²⁴ נוכל... one who thinks – The standard commentary interprets the word נוכל the same way, albeit citing a different proof-text.

be one who thinks this evil thought, that **he has an unblemished male in his flock, but for his vow sacrifices a מִשְׁחָת (spoiled) item to the Lord**, which is a blemished animal.²²⁵

Chapter 2

(3) And I will strew פְּרִשׁ (dung) is similar to “[the bull, its hide, its flesh, and] its dung (פְּרִשׁוֹ)” (Lev. 8:17).

And he shall carry you to Me – Its explanation: I will do this evil to you so that you will return to Me.²²⁶

(5) My covenant was with him – Its explanation is: with the priests. **And I gave them to him in reverence** – [with them] referring to Israel – **and he revered Me**, [i.e.,] they – the priests – revere Me.²²⁷

And he נִתַח (trembled) before my name is similar to: “A terror (חֲתָת) of God was [upon the cities]” (Gen. 35:5).²²⁸

²²⁵ **מִשְׁחָת... is a blemished animal** – The interpretation of the word מִשְׁחָת as a blemished animal who is unfit for sacrifice is based on Lev. 22:25, as many exegetes observe (Rashi, Joseph Kara, Radak, Student of Trani, Abarbanel; cf. Eliezer of Beaugency).

²²⁶ **And he shall carry you to Me... I will do this evil to you so that you will return to Me** – Standard editions of the Masoretic text read אֵלָיו (“to him/it”), which is also the reading in Ibn Ezra’s standard commentary. By contrast, the oral commentary employs the word אֵלַי (“to me”). The reading of אֵלַי is not cited as a variant of the Masoretic text by Kennicott or BHQ. Therefore, it seems that the oral commentary is not presenting an alternate reading of the text (cf. the HaKeter edition, which bolds אֵלַי as part of the lemma). Rather, the oral commentary is addressing an exegetical problem: In the sentence, “And he/it shall carry you to him/it,” the referent of the third-person pronouns is unclear (cf. חַיְיִי, כְּתָבֵנוּ אֶלְנִתֵּךְ, Basal 272-273). The oral commentary seems to be suggesting that the referent is God, despite the fact that God speaks in the first person in the earlier part of the verse (“I will strew dung”). However, due to the fact that God speaks in the first person in the beginning of this verse, most exegetes – including the standard commentary – seek another referent for the third-person pronouns (cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary). The discrepancy between first person and third person might not have bothered Ibn Ezra as much as other exegetes, since he considers it “the custom of those [who speak] Hebrew” to refer to themselves in the third person (second commentary to Est. 1:15) even when they speak in first person in the same passage (introduction to Exod. 20; cf. Lev. 8:34).

²²⁷ **My covenant was with him... they – the priests – revere Me** – Ibn Ezra offers the same interpretation in the standard commentary; cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.* for an explanation of the ambiguities that Ibn Ezra is attempting to resolve.

(6) Proper rulings were in his mouth – Its explanation: It is fitting for the priest to act so, that **proper rulings** will be **in his mouth and nothing perverse** will be **on his lips**; he will walk **with Me in peace and uprightness** and will hold **the many back from iniquity**.²²⁹

(8) But they have turned away from the good course: They **have made the many stumble in the Torah**,²³⁰ and **have corrupted the covenant of the Levites**.

(9) Therefore, I have made them despicable and vile in the eyes of **all the people, because** they do not **keep My ways and show partiality in their rulings**.

(11) For Judah has profaned what is holy to the Lord—what He desires—and married daughters of alien gods – Its explanation: They married Gentile women, as is explicit in the Book of Ezra.²³¹

(12) May the Lord cut off the man who does this – Its explanation: **May the Lord cut off the man who** engages in this licentiousness, that he should have no one who will rouse (שיעורר) him and answer (יענה) him.²³² If he is from Israel, He shall **cut him off from the**

²²⁸ **חַתָּה... is similar to: “A terror (חַתָּה) of God was [upon the cities]”** – Ibn Ezra is explaining the root חתת based on a parallel verse in Genesis. The standard commentary cites other proof-texts for the same lexical interpretation.

²²⁹ **Proper rulings will be in his mouth and nothing perverse will be on his lips; He will walk with Me in peace and uprightness and will hold the many back from iniquity** – Ibn Ezra replaces the perfect verbs in the verse with imperfect verbs in order to express his view that Malachi is describing how a priest should behave rather than the past behavior of a specific priest. In the standard commentary he contrasts his position with those who claim that Malachi is describing the behavior of a particular historical figure such, as Aaron or Phineas.

²³⁰ **The Torah** – Regarding my decision to leave the word Torah untranslated here while translating it as “rulings” in the next verse, cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary (here and Zech. 7:12).

²³¹ **They married Gentile women, as is explicit in the Book of Ezra** – The widespread intermarriage during this period is discussed in Ezra 9-10 and Neh. 13:23-30. (Medieval exegetes refer to both books – Ezra and Nehemiah – as “Ezra.”)

²³² **That he should have no one who will rouse (שיעורר) him and answer (יענה) him** – The Hebrew phrase עַר נְעִנָה is difficult to interpret. In the standard commentary, Ibn Ezra interprets it as “sons or grandsons,” based on context, but ignores its etymology. The oral commentary focuses on each word’s etymology – עַר from the *poleil* of עור (to rouse) and נְעִנָה from the *qal* of ענה (to answer). This explanation of both words’ etymology comes from Ibn Janah (השרשים 360-361), who adds that destroying “one who will rouse him and answer him” is a metaphor for destroying one’s entire household. It thus appears that Ibn Ezra’s two commentaries do not

tents of Jacob, and if he is from the priests, He shall **cut him off** that he will not have [descendants] **presenting offerings to the Lord of Hosts.**²³³

(13) And this you do as well – Its explanation: **You do this evil as well**; you cover **the altar of the Lord with tears**, from **weeping, and moaning**, because there is no longer anyone who will look **at your oblation** and willingly take it **from your hand**.

(14) But you ask, “Because of what did this evil befall us?” Because the Lord is a witness between you and the wife of your youth with whom you have broken faith and taken another woman²³⁴ **licentiously.**²³⁵

(15) Did not one make – Its explanation: **Did not** the Holy One, Blessed Be He, Who is **one,**²³⁶ **make us**, whereas all **remaining spirits are His**, that is to say, they are under His authority? **And what does that One seek** – Its explanation: **What does** the Holy One, Blessed Be He – Who is **one** – **seek**, but that you should be **godly folk?**

necessarily disagree: Like Ibn Janah, Ibn Ezra might have interpreted the cutting off of עַר וְעֵנָה as a metaphor for destroying one’s descendants (as explained by the standard commentary) and understood the words’ literal meanings based on the aforementioned etymology. However, the oral commentary does not clarify if it interprets the phrase עַר וְעֵנָה as referring exclusively to sons or also to grandsons or future descendants. If the former, than it would differ from the standard commentary’s own interpretation of “sons *and* grandsons” (but cf. the interpretation that the standard commentary attributes to Yefet).

²³³ **If he is from Israel... from the tents of Jacob, and if he is from the priests... he will not have [descendants] presenting offerings to the Lord of Hosts** – The standard commentary also explains the second half of the verse as addressing priests exclusively, since only they presented offerings in the Temple.

²³⁴ **Woman** – Hebrew uses the same word (אִשָּׁה) for both “woman” and “wife.” In this case, I have translated it as “woman,” because the Jewish man who took this foreign woman could not legally marry her.

²³⁵ **Licentiously** – The Hebrew word בִּזְמָה poses the same ambiguity as the synonymous word “promiscuously” in v. 16 (cf. note 238).

²³⁶ **The Holy One, Blessed Be He, who is one** – The standard commentary does not appear to share this interpretation of “one” as referring to God, nor do most exegetes (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). However, one midrashic reading does interpret “one” as a reference to God in the context of an imagined debate between Moses and the Israelites (*Sifra* to Lev. 18:2).

So be careful of your life-breath, and do not deal treacherously (אֶלְתַּבְּגֹּד) with the wife of your youth.²³⁷

(16) For I detest divorce [said the Lord, the God of Israel] – Its explanation: For the Holy One, Blessed Be He, detests one who divorces his wife and takes another woman promiscuously²³⁸ and covers himself with lawlessness as with a garment—said the Lord of Hosts.

(17) הַיְגַעְתֶּם הַלֹּדֵי הַיְגַעְתֶּם the Lord with your talk – Its explanation: You have wearied (יְגַעַתְם) the Holy One, Blessed Be He, with your talk.²³⁹ But if you say, “By what have we wearied [Him]?” When you say, “Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and in them He

²³⁷ **So be careful of your life-breath, and do not deal treacherously (אֶלְתַּבְּגֹּד) with the wife of your youth –** Standard editions of the Masoretic text have a third-person imperfect verb (יִבְגֹּד), as do some manuscripts of this commentary, but our translation follows MS Paris 217, which reads תַּבְּגֹּד (second person). The reading that conforms to the Masoretic text is likely a scribal emendation to “fix” what the scribe deemed to be an error. In fact, the oral commentary’s replacement of יִבְגֹּד with תַּבְּגֹּד serves an exegetical purpose. It interprets the verb as if it were second person (“do not deal treacherously”), so that it agrees with the earlier part of the sentence, which was in second person (albeit plural): וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם בְּרוּחֵיכֶם (“Be careful of your [m.p.] spirit”). Elsewhere (ההגנה, Oshri 94; Ruth 4:4), Ibn Ezra cites this interpretation from Dunash (תשובות דונש על רס"ג #150, Schroeter 50) and Ibn Janah (הרקמה 328), and it was also suggested by Jacob b. Reuben.

Kennicott cites many manuscripts of the Masoretic text that read תַּבְּגֹד or תַּבְּגֹד instead of יִבְגֹד, which raises the possibility that the oral commentary reflects a reading of תַּבְּגֹד in the Masoretic text (cf. the parenthetical note in the HaKeter edition of the oral commentary). However, Dunash, Ibn Janah and Jacob b. Reuben assume that the Masoretic text reads יִבְגֹד and suggest its replacement with תַּבְּגֹד as mere exegesis. Considering that Ibn Ezra’s other aforementioned writings cite Dunash and Ibn Janah’s view explicitly, it appears that the oral commentary’s replacement of יִבְגֹד with תַּבְּגֹד is based on their exegesis and does not reflect a variant text.

In both ההגנה and his commentary to Ruth, Ibn Ezra himself dismisses the interpretation that he adopts here of replacing יִבְגֹד with תַּבְּגֹד. In both works, as well as the standard commentary to our verse, Ibn Ezra prefers to interpret יִבְגֹד as a third-person verb with an implied subject – “your spirit” – from earlier in the verse: “Be careful of your spirit, and let not [your spirit] deal treacherously.” It is understandable that Ibn Ezra ultimately rejected Dunash and Ibn Janah’s view, since he fundamentally opposes their exegetical method of replacing one word with another (cf. my supercommentary to Zech. 3:5).

²³⁸ **Promiscuously** – The Hebrew word בְּזוּנָה could intend that the purpose of taking this woman was to engage in promiscuity or that taking the woman is itself an act of promiscuity (since rabbinic law does not recognize a Jew’s marriage to a Gentile woman).

²³⁹ **הַיְגַעְתֶּם... You have wearied (יְגַעַתְם) the Holy One... with your talk** – Ibn Ezra might be paraphrasing the *hif'il* verb with a *pi'el* verb in order to stress that the root begins with a י (cf. Hāyyuj, כתאב אלנתר, Basal 274-275, Maman and Ben Porat 325). Although the word יְגַעַתְם is not vocalized in manuscripts, Ibn Ezra intends the *pi'el* verb יְגַעַתְם and not the *qal* verb יִגְעַתְם, because he writes elsewhere that the *qal* verb is intransitive (Ecc. 1:8).

delights,” for if He did not delight in them, **“Where is... the justice that the Holy One, Blessed Be He, should mete out against them?”**²⁴⁰

Chapter 3

(1) Know now that behold, I am sending My messenger to clear the way before Me, and the lord whom you seek shall come to His Temple suddenly.

(2) But who can endure the day of his coming, and who shall be able to stand when he appears? For he is like a fire in which one smelts silver and like lye with which one washes.

(3) The Holy One, Blessed Be He, shall sit like a smelter who purifies silver; and he shall purify the descendants of Levi and... like gold and silver, so that they shall present offerings in righteousness. (4) Then the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasing to the Lord.

(5) I will come near to you to judgment – Its explanation: Because you said, “Where is the God of justice” (2:17), therefore, **I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness** against the adulterers, and against the sorcerers.²⁴¹

(6) For I am the Lord—I have not changed – That is to say, I am who I was, and I have never changed,²⁴² **and you are the children of Jacob—you have not ceased to be.**

²⁴⁰ “Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and in them He delights,” for if He did not delight in them, “Where is... the justice that the Holy One, Blessed Be He, should mete out against them?” – See the standard commentary and my supercommentary *ad loc*.

²⁴¹ **Against the adulterers, and against the sorcerers** – Ibn Ezra’s citation reverses the order of the indirect objects from the Masoretic text, which reads “against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers.”

²⁴² **I have not changed** – That is to say, **I am who I was, and I have never changed** – Ibn Ezra is interpreting this verse as a categorical assertion that God does not undergo changes, rather than a limited statement that he

(7) But this is the evil thing that you did: **From the very days of your fathers you have turned away from My laws and have not observed them. Now, turn back to Me, and I will turn back to you—said the Lord of Hosts.** But if you will ask, “**How shall we turn back?**” (8) The answer is, **ought man to defraud (הִיקַבַּע) God?** Its explanation is: **Ought man to rob God**, as you rob me?²⁴³ But if you will ask, “**How** have we been robbing You?” The answer is: on account of **tithes and contributions** that you have not brought.

(9) And therefore, **you are suffering under a curse, yet you think to rob²⁴⁴ from Me!** That is to say, “You do the evil to yourselves.”²⁴⁵

(10) Now do this: **Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, and let there be food in My House, and put Me to the test with this matter – said the Lord of Hosts. I will surely open the floodgates of the sky for you.**

(11) **And I will banish the devourer from you –** Its explanation is: the locusts.²⁴⁶

has not changed his mind regarding his attitude toward Israel. The standard commentary similarly interprets the phrase as, “No change can happen to Me.”

²⁴³ **As you rob me** – The oral commentary is interpreting the Hebrew root קבע as “to rob” (גזול). The standard commentary interprets the root in the same fundamental manner but with a slightly different connotation: “to withhold a due” (ממשכנים ומעכבים); cf. Muraoka & Shavitsky).

²⁴⁴ **To rob** – The Hebrew text – if not emended (see note 245) – employs a verb and noun of the same root – לגזול הגזול (“to rob the robbed item”) – in a manner that is common in Biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew but redundant in English. Hence, the Hebrew text literally reads “to rob the robbed item from Me.”

²⁴⁵ **That is to say, “You do the evil to yourselves”** – This Hebrew sentence is somewhat cryptic. My translation is based on my critical edition, where the text reads: במארה אתם נארים ואתי אתם חשבים לגזול הגזול? כלו: לעצמכם תעשו הרע. However, it is not clear how the final phrase – “Do the evil to yourselves” (לעצמכם תעשו הרע) – relates to the rest of the sentence. It could be either a statement (“You are harming yourselves by robbing Me”) or a question (“Do you [wish to] harm yourselves by robbing Me?”). Alternatively, by emending the words הגזול כלו to read כלו הגזול, the text could be split into two separate comments:

- 1) חשבים לגזול במארה, אתם נארים ואתי אתם חשבים לגזול, which would essentially cite the verse but paraphrase לגזול for the word קבעים – thus interpreting the rare word קבעים in the same manner as the commentary to the previous verse.
- 2) הגזול יכלו: לעצמכם תעשו הרע – This comment would explain the significance of the final phrase (“the whole nation”): The entire nation was harming itself by engaging in this treacherous behavior.

The word יכלו contains the same consonants as the contraction כלו (for כלומר). Moreover, the word is written כלה in two manuscripts, which could be vocalized כלה but could not be a contraction for כלומר. However, all four manuscripts read הגזול rather than הגזי.

(12) **And [all nations] shall call you happy (וְאַשְׁרֵי)** is similar to “Happy am I (בְּאַשְׁרֵי)! For the daughters will call me happy” (אֲשֶׁרוּנִי; Gen. 30:13).²⁴⁷

(13) **Your words הִנְקוּ (have been strong) against Me** – Its explanation: **Your words** have been forceful (תִּקְפוּ) **against Me—said the Lord**. But if you will say, “How have we spoken²⁴⁸ **against You?**” (14) The answer is: when **you have said, “It is useless** for us to serve the Holy One, Blessed Be He. **How did it benefit us to keep His charge and walk קִדְרָנִית?”** The explanation [of קִדְרָנִית] is: in the dark.²⁴⁹

(15) And they said: **We מְאַשְׁרִים (call happy) the proud**, like: “And [all nations] shall call you happy” (וְאַשְׁרֵי; v. 12).

They have indeed done evil yet are built up (נִבְנוּ), [meaning] that they have not seen harm.²⁵⁰

They have indeed dared God, inasmuch as they said, “Let us see if the Holy One, Blessed Be He, will retaliate for that which we sinned against Him,” **and escaped**.

²⁴⁶ **The devourer... the locusts** – The standard commentary interprets “the devourer” in the same manner.

²⁴⁷ **וְאַשְׁרֵי is similar to “Happy am I! For the daughters will call me happy” (אֲשֶׁרוּנִי)** – Tanḥum cites the same proof-text. Ibn Janah (השרשים 40-51) also cites our verse and this proof-text alongside one another to demonstrate this meaning of the root אָשַׁר.

²⁴⁸ **How have we spoken** – The Masoretic text has the *nif'al* verb נִבְרַנּוּ (“[we have] been saying among ourselves”). All manuscripts of the oral commentary have the verb in *pi'el* – דִּבְרַנּוּ (“we spoke”), but it appears that the oral commentary is paraphrasing – as it frequently does – and does not intend to cite a variant text of the verse.

²⁴⁹ **The explanation [of קִדְרָנִית] is: in the dark** – Most classical Bible translations interpret the Hebrew adverb קִדְרָנִית here as “mournfully,” as does BDB (871). Ibn Ezra’s standard commentary also appears to interpret קִדְרָנִית in that manner (cf. my supercommentary *ad loc.*). The oral commentary interprets קִדְרָנִית as literal darkness, which could connote confusion, but likely connotes suffering or mourning in our context (cf. Joseph Kara and Student of Trani). Assuming the latter connotation, Ibn Ezra’s two commentaries fundamentally agree about the meaning of קִדְרָנִית.

²⁵⁰ **נִבְנוּ, [meaning] that they have not seen harm** – Ibn Ezra explains that the evildoers were “built up” in the sense of living without suffering. Joseph Kara similarly writes that they were able to live their entire lives “in peace.” Student of Trani claims that נִבְנוּ connotes the evildoers having children (cf. Gen. 16:2 and both commentaries of Ibn Ezra *ad loc.*).

(16) Then have those who revere the Lord been talking [to one another] – Its

explanation: The prophet says that when the wicked say, “We call the proud happy” (v. 15), if at that time there will be **those who revere the Lord** – who talk **to one another** out of reverence²⁵¹ for the Holy One, Blessed Be He – [then] He will hear and take note of them, and a **scroll** of remembrance will be written²⁵² **before Him**.

(17) They shall be to me, said the Lord of Hosts, on the day that I am preparing – a treasured possession – Its explanation: **On the day that I am preparing** revenge, those who revere Me will be **a treasured possession**.²⁵³

(20) But for you who revere My name [a sun of victory] shall rise – Its explanation: Since it was said of the wicked, “And the day that is coming shall burn them” (v. 19), therefore it was said of the righteous, **“But for you who revere My name a sun of victory shall rise to bring healing,”** [so the sun] shall not harm them.²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ **Out of reverence** – The Hebrew word מִירֵאוֹתוֹ could mean either that these people were speaking *about* the topic of their reverence for God or merely that they spoke to one another in a tone and manner that reflects reverence toward God. The former possibility seems more likely, since Ibn Ezra is contrasting these people with the wicked people in the previous verse. Those individuals questioned God’s fairness and spoke admiringly of evildoers who succeeded in life and escaped divine punishment, so presumably the people in our verse are characterized by the fact that they instead speak reverently *about* God. The standard commentary’s description of these God-fearing individuals as “the enlightened ones” (הַמְשֻׁכְּלִים) also implies that according to Ibn Ezra, these people have some insight into God’s ways, so they would be likely to speak *about* reverence of God.

²⁵² **A scroll of remembrance will be written** – Due to ambiguity regarding the vocalization of the Hebrew word וַיִּכְתֹּב, this phrase could be translated as, “And He will write (וַיִּכְתֹּב) a scroll of remembrance,” rather than, “And a scroll of remembrance will be written” (וַיִּכְתֹּב). I have adopted the reading that matches the vocalization of the word in the Masoretic text, on the assumption that Ibn Ezra is quoting that text except for converting the perfect verb into an imperfect verb.

²⁵³ **On the day that I am preparing revenge, those who revere Me will be a treasured possession** – Ibn Ezra is rejecting the possibility that “a treasured possession” is the object of the verb “am preparing,” despite their juxtaposition in the verse. He presents the same argument in the standard commentary, where he adds “judgment” to his paraphrase of the verse for the same purpose that he adds “revenge” here.

²⁵⁴ **Since it was said of the wicked, “And the day that is coming shall burn them”... it was said of the righteous... “a sun of victory shall rise to bring healing,” [so the sun] shall not harm them** – The standard commentary equates the blazing heat of “the day” (v. 19) with the heat of the sun in our verse. The oral commentary assumes the same equation and thus contrasts the wicked of v. 19 with the righteous people in our

וּפְשָׁתֶם (and you will spread out) is like “You spread out (תְּפִישׁוּ) [as a heifer at grass]” (Jer. 50:11).²⁵⁵

(21) וְעָטוּתֶם (and you shall tread upon) the wicked – Its explanation: You shall trample (וּתְרַמְסוּ) the wicked.²⁵⁶

(23) Lo, I²⁵⁷ will send the prophet Elijah to you before the awesome, fearful day of the Lord will come.²⁵⁸ **(24) And He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.** And therefore, I will send you Elijah beforehand, so that, when I come, I do not strike the whole land with utter destruction.

Lo, I²⁵⁹ will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of the Lord.²⁶⁰

The commentary to Malachi, and the commentary to all of Minor Prophets, by our Rabbi Isaiah²⁶¹ is concluded, praise to the ancient Sustainer,²⁶² Your glory, O God!²⁶³

verse: The same hot sun that will incinerate the evildoers is portrayed in our verse as a sun of “victory” and “healing” because it will not harm the righteous.

²⁵⁵ **As a heifer at grass** – I have translated the Hebrew word תְּפִישׁוּ as “at grass” in accordance with Ibn Ezra’s view that the word is related to the noun for grass, תְּפִישׁוּ (see צְהִירָה, Lippmann 13a-b, Valle Rodriguez 36; cf. BDB 206). However, Ibn Ezra himself observes that several of his predecessors maintain that this word derives from the hollow root תְּפִישׁוּ (to thresh). For a critique of Ibn Ezra’s view and a defense of his predecessors’ view, see R. Menahem b. Simon’s commentary to Jer. (*ad loc.*). Regardless of whether Jeremiah is depicting a heifer “at grass” or “threshing,” Ibn Ezra’s interpretation of תְּפִישׁוּ as “spread out” is reasonable (cf. my supercommentary to the standard commentary) though not the only possible interpretation of the word (cf. Jonathan, Rashi, and Isaiah of Trani to Jer. *ad loc.*).

²⁵⁶ **וְעָטוּתֶם... You shall trample (וּתְרַמְסוּ) the wicked** – Ibn Ezra offers a synonym to interpret the word וְעָטוּתֶם. This lexical interpretation of וְעָטוּתֶם is consistent with the standard commentary’s etymological interpretation of it.

²⁵⁷ **Lo, I** – The Hebrew word הַגִּבּוֹר is a paraphrase of the Bible’s phrase הַגִּבּוֹר אֲנִכִּי but has the same translation.

²⁵⁸ **Before the... day of the Lord will come** – Ibn Ezra uses the words קִדְוָם שִׁיבָא (“before it will come”) in place of לִקְפֹּי בּוֹא, replacing the infinitive in the verse with an imperfect verb. Both phrases share the same English translation.

²⁵⁹ **Lo, I** – See note 257 above.

²⁶⁰ **Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of the Lord** – The repetition of 3:23 follows the Jewish custom – when publicly reading this passage in the synagogue – to reread 3:23 after completing 3:24 so as to not end with the threat of utter destruction in 3:24.

²⁶¹ **Our Rabbi Isaiah** – MS Paris 217 reads “Rabbi Isaiah” because it is a manuscript of R. Isaiah of Trani’s commentary to Prophets that contains Ibn Ezra’s oral commentary to Minor Prophets (presumably because he did not have access to R. Isaiah’s commentary to Minor Prophets, which has not survived after Nah. 3:11). MS Parma 2722 – which was copied from it – emends the name to “Ibn Ezra,” and MS Modena 692 similarly reads “Abraham ben Ezra.”

²⁶² **Ancient Sustainer** – Literally, “the ancient help” (עזרה הישנה).

²⁶³ **The commentary to Malachi... is concluded, praise to... Your glory, O God** – Manuscripts differ greatly regarding the closing sentence, which is not part of the actual commentary. Some contain a reference to Isa. 40:29, thanking God “Who gives strength to the weary, fresh vigor to the spent,” which also appears at the end of some manuscripts of the standard commentary.

References

- Almog, Zvi. *Critical Edition of Moses Ibn Tibbon's 'Olam Katan: with an Essay on the History of Microcosm in Medieval Jewish Philosophy*. Dissertation, Dropsie College. Philadelphia: 1966.
- Altmann, Alexander "Judah Halevi's theory of climates" (trans. Lenn Schramm) *Aleph* 5 (2005) 215-246.
- Avishur, Yitzhak. "The Attitude of R. Avraham Ibn Ezra to the Translation and Commentary of R. Saadiah Gaon," in F. Diaz Esteban (ed.) *Abraham ibn Ezra y su tiempo*. Adas del Simposio Internacional. Madrid, 1990. 17-24.
- Ben-Shammai, Haggai. "The Tension Between Literal Interpretation and Exegetical Freedom," *With Reverence for the Word*, ed. J.D. McAuliffe et al (New York: Oxford University Press 2003), 33-50.
- Berger, Yitzhak. "Peshat and the Authority of *Hazal* in the Commentaries of Radak," *AJS Review* 31:1 (2007), 41-59.
- Berger, Yitzhak. "The Contextual Exegesis of Rabbi Eliezer of Beaugency and the Climax of the Northern French 'Peshat' Tradition." *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 15,2 (2008), 115-129
- Berlin, Adele. "On the Use of Traditional Jewish Exegesis in the Modern Literary Study of the Bible," *Tehillah le-Mosheh: Biblical and Judaic Studies in Honor of Moshe Greenberg*, ed. M. Cogan, B. Eichler, J. Tigay (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 173-183.
- Berlin, Adele. *Biblical Poetry through Medieval Jewish Eyes*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1991.
- Birnbaum, Philip. *The Arabic Commentary of Yefet ben 'Ali the Karaite on the Book of Hosea*. Philadelphia: Dropsie College, 1942.
- Blidstein, Gerald J. "Maimonides on 'Oral Law,'" *Jewish Law Annual* 1 (1978): 108-122.
- Cohen, Gerson. *The Book of Tradition (Sefer ha-Qabbalah) by Abraham Ibn Daud*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1967.
- Cohen, Mordechai Z. "'The Best of Poetry': Literary Approaches to the Bible in the Spanish Peshat Tradition," *The Torah U-Madda Journal* 6 (1995/6): 15-57.
- Cohen, Mordechai Z. *Three Approaches to Biblical Metaphor*. Leiden: Brill, 2003
- Cohen, Mordechai Z. *Opening the Gates of Interpretation: Maimonides' Biblical Hermeneutics in Light of his Geonic-Andalusian Heritage and Muslim Milieu*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.
- Contac, Emanuel. "The Reception of Zechariah 9:9 in the New Testament and in the Early Church," *Sacra Scripta: Journal of the Centre for Biblical Studies*, 11 (2013) 181-205. <http://www.academia.edu/2552324/The_Reception_of_Zechariah_9_9_in_the_New_Testament_and_in_the_Early_Church> Accessed 16 September 2015.

- Davidson, Herbert A. *Moses Maimonides: The Man and His Works*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Derenbourg, J. *Oeuvres Complètes de R. Saadia ben Iosef al-Fayyûmî*. Hildesheim, New York: G. Olms, 1979.
- De Vreugd, Kees. "Yefet ben 'Eli's Commentary on the Book of Zechariah." *Middle Arabic and Mixed Arabic; Diachrony and Synchrony* Liesbeth Zack and Arie Schippers (eds.). Leiden: Brill, 2012. 279-293.
- Díaz Esteban, Fernando (ed.). *Abraham Ibn Ezra y su tiempo = Abraham Ibn Ezra and His Age; actas del simposio internacional...* Madrid: Asociación Española de Orientalistas, 1990
- Elman, Yaakov. "It Is No Empty Thing" *Torah U-Madda Journal* IV (1993) 1-83.
- Elman, Yaakov. "The Rebirth of Omnisignificant Biblical Exegesis in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *JSIJ* 2 (2003) 199-249.
- First, Mitchell. *Jewish History in Conflict: A Study of the Major Discrepancy between Rabbinic and Conventional Chronology*. Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 1997.
- First, Mitchell. "The Origin of Ta'anit Esther." *AJS Review*, 34 (2010) 309-351.
- Friedlander, Michael. *The Commentary of Ibn Ezra on Isaiah*. London: Society of Hebrew Literature 1875.
- Friedlander, Michael. *Essays on the Writings of Abraham Ibn Ezra*. London: Society of Hebrew Literature, 1875
- Gallego, María Ángeles. *El judeo-árabe Medieval: Edición, Traducción y Estudio Lingüístico del Kitāb al-Taswi'a de Yonah ibn Gānāḥ*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2006.
- Galliner, Julius. *Abraham Ibn Ezra's Hiobkommentar auf seine Quellen untersucht*. Berlin: M. Poppelauer, 1901.
- Golb, Norman. *The Jews in Medieval Normandy: a Social and Intellectual History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998
- Gómez Aranda, Mariano and Ortega Monasterio, María Teresa. "Critical Editions of Medieval Biblical Commentaries and Masorahs: the Cases of Abraham Ibn Ezra and the Masorah of Spanish Manuscripts." *Bible and Computer; the Stellenbosch AIBI-6 Conference; Proceedings of the Association Internationale Bible et Informatique "From Alpha to Byte" 17-21 July, 2000*. Johann Cook (ed.). Leiden: Brill, 2002 231-243
- Gómez Aranda, Mariano, "The Influence of Isaac Ibn Ghayyat on Abraham Ibn Ezra's Commentary on Ecclesiastes" *Journal of Jewish Studies* 63,1 (2012) 84-104.
- González, Enrique Ruiz and Ángel Sáenz-Badillos. *Abraham Ibn Ezra: Šafah Be'urah, la Lengua Escogida*. Córdoba: Ediciones El Almendro, 2004.
- Goodman, Mordechai S. *Sefer Ha'ibbur: a Treatise on the Calendar by Abraham Ibn Ezra*. Jersey City, N.J.: Ktav, 2011.
- Goodman, Mordechai S. *The Sabbath Epistle of Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra: 'Iggeret haShabbat*. Jersey City, NJ: Ktav, 2009.
- Gross, Henri. *Gallia Judaica: Dictionnaire Géographique de la France D'après les Sources Sabbiniques; et un Supplément de Simon Schwarzfuchs*. Paris: Peeters, 2011.
- Grunhaus, Naomi. *The Challenge of Received Tradition: Dilemmas of Interpretation in Radak's Biblical Commentaries*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Haas, Jair. "Did Medieval Jewish Commentators Understand Biblical Parallelism? A Critique Of Robert Harris' 'Discerning Parallelism'" *Revue des Etudes Juives* 166,3-4 (2007) 463-472

- Halkin, Abraham. "Ibn 'Aknin's Commentary on the Song of Songs," in: *Alexander Marx Jubilee Volume*, ed. S. Lieberman (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950), 389-424 (English section).
- Halkin Abraham S. *Moses Maimonides' Epistle to Yemen: The Arabic Original and the Three Hebrew Versions* (trans. Boaz Cohen). New York: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1952.
- Harris, Jay. *How Do We Know This?* Albany: SUNY Press, 1995.
- Harris, Robert. *Discerning Parallelism: a Study in Northern French Medieval Jewish Biblical Exegesis*. Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2004.
- Hayman, Peter. *Sefer Yesira: Edition, Translation and Text-Critical Commentary*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004
- Himmelfarb, Martha. *Jewish Messiahs in a Christian Empire: a History of the Book of Zerubbabel*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Hippocrates. "Airs, Waters, Places." *Hippocrates, Volume I: Ancient Medicine (Loeb Classical Library, No. 147*, trans. W.H.S. Jones). London: Heinemann, 1923. 65-137.
- Husik, Isaac. *A History of Mediaeval Jewish Philosophy*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966
- Jacobs, Jonathan. "Does Rashbam's Commentary on the Torah Acknowledge the Commentaries of Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra?" *Journal of Jewish Studies* 61,2 (2010) 291-307
- Japhet, Sara. "The Tension Between Rabbinic Legal Midrash and the 'Plain Meaning' (Peshat) of the Biblical Text – an Unresolved Problem? In the Wake of Rashbam's Commentary on the Pentateuch," *Sefer Moshe: The Moshe Weinfeld Jubilee Volume*, ed. Ch. Cohen, A. Hurvitz and Sh. Paul (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 403-425.
- Jiménez Patón, Lorenzo. *Sefer Moznayim: Libro de la Balanza de Abraham ibn Ezra* (Ed. Ángel Sáenz-Badillos). Córdoba: El Almendro, 2002
- Kasher, Rimon. "The Interpretation of Scripture in Rabbinic Literature," *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. M. J. Mulder (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 547-594.
- Katz, Ben Zion. "Kimchi and Tanhum ben Joseph Hayerushalmi on Chronicles". *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 26,1 (1998) 45-51.
- Kennicott, Benjamin. *Vetus Testamentum Hebraicum cum Variis Lectionibus*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1776-1780.
- Kislev, Itamar. "The Relationship Between the Torah Commentaries Composed by R. Abraham Ibn Ezra in France and the Significance of this Relationship for the Biographical Chronology of the Commentator." *Journal of Jewish Studies* 60,2 (2009) 282-297.
- Kogel, Judith. *Joseph Seniri: Commentary on the Former Prophets*. Leiden: Brill, 2014.
- Kraemer, Joel. "On Maimonides' Messianic Posture." *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature* 2 (Ed. Isadore Twersky) Cambridge, MA: Harvard U. Center for Jewish Studies, 1984. 109-142
- Kugel, James. *How to Read the Bible: A Guide to Scripture, Then and Now*. New York: Free Press, 2007.
- Kugel, James. *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998
- Kugel, James. *Traditions of the Bible: a Guide to the Bible as It Was at the Start of the Common Era*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998.

- Lancaster, Irene. *Deconstructing the Bible: Abraham Ibn Ezra's Introduction to the Torah*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.
- Lane, Edward William. *An Arabic-English Lexicon*. London, Edinburgh, Williams and Norgate, 1863-93
- Langermann, Tzvi, "Abraham Ibn Ezra", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/ibn-ezra/>.
- Lasker, Daniel. "The Jewish-Christian debate in Transition: from the Lands of Ishmael to the Lands of Edom." *Judaism and Islam: Boundaries, Communications, and Interaction; Essays in Honor of William M. Brinner* (Eds. Benjamin H. Hary, John L. Hayes, Fred Astern). Boston: Brill, 2000. 53-65.
- Lawee, Eric. "On the threshold of the Renaissance: new methods and sensibilities in the biblical commentaries of Isaac Abarbanel," *Viator* 26 (1995) 283-319.
- Linetsky, Michael. *Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra's Commentary on the Creation*. Northvale, N.J.: Jason Aronson, 1998.
- Lipshitz, Abe. *The Commentary of Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra on Hosea*. New York: Sepher-Hermon Press, 1988.
- Liss, Hanna. "[Review of] Discerning Parallelism: A Study in Northern French Medieval Jewish Biblical Exegesis" *Review of Biblical Literature*, 2006 http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/4840_5023.pdf. Accessed 1/16/13
- Lockshin, Martin, "Tradition or Context: Two Exegetes Struggle with Peshat," *From Ancient Israel to Modern Judaism: Essays in Honor of Marvin Fox*, ed. J. Neusner et al. (Atlanta, 1989) II:173-186.
- Maori, Yeshayahu. "The Approach of Classical Jewish Exegetes to *Peshat* and *Derash* and its Implications for the Teaching of Bible Today" (trans. M. Bernstein), *Tradition* 21 (1984): 40-53.
- Manekin, Charles Harry. "Freedom Within Reason? Gersonides on Human Choice," *Freedom and Moral Responsibility; General and Jewish Perspectives*, ed. Charles H. Manekin (Bethesda, MD: University Press of Maryland, 1997) 165-204.
- Mann, Jacob. "Early Karaite Bible Commentaries". *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 12.4 (1922): 435-526.
- Margoliouth, D. S. *A Commentary on the Book of Daniel by Jepheth ibn Ali the Karaite*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889.
- Marwick, Lawrence. *Retribution & Redemption: Yefet Ben 'Eli on the Minor Prophets: a Lost Work of Lawrence Marwick*. Columbia, SC: al-Qirqisani Center/Kara Publications, 2000
- Muraoka, Takamitsu and Ziva Shavitsky. "Abraham Ibn Ezra's Biblical Hebrew Lexicon: the Minor Prophets" *Abr-Nahrain* 28 (1990) 53-75 and 29 (1991) 106-128
- Muraoka, Takamitsu and Ziva Shavitsky. "A Biblical Hebrew Lexicon of Abraham Ibn-Ezra: Daniel," *Abr-Nahrain* 31 (1993) 106-109.
- Muraoka, Takamitsu and Ziva Shavitsky. "Abraham Ibn Ezra's Biblical Hebrew Lexicon: the Five Megilloth," *Abr-Nahrain* 25 (1987) 68-91 and 26 (1988) 80-111.
- Nadler-Akirav, Meirav. *Yefet ben Eli's Commentary to Haggai*. 2015. TS.
- Nemoy, Leon. *Kitāb al-Anwār wal-Marāqib: Code of Karaite law by Ya'qūb al-Qirqisānī*. New York: The Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1939-1943.
- Nemoy, Leon. "Jeshua ben Judah." *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred

- Skolnik. 2nd ed. Vol. 11. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007. 242-243. Gale Virtual Reference Library. Web. 29 Dec. 2014
- Niessen, Friedrich. "[Review of] El comentario de Abraham Ibn Ezra al libro de Job: Edición crítica, traducción y estudio introductorio. By Mariano Gómez Aranda." *The Journal of Theological Studies*, Volume 57, issue 1 (April 2006), 291-293.
- Novetsky, Hillel. *The Influences of Rabbi Joseph Bekhor Shor and Radak on Ramban's Commentary on the Torah*. (MA Thesis, Yeshiva University, 1992)
- Pines, Shlomo. *Moses Maimonides: the Guide of the Perplexed*. Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1963.
- Polliack, Meira, ed. *Karaite Judaism: A Guide to Its History and Literary Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), chapters 15, 16.
- Poznanski, S. A. *Mose B. Samuel Hakkohen Ibn Chiquitilla: nebst den Fragmenten seiner Schriften*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1895.
- Poznanski, S. A. "Tanhoum Yeruschalmi et Son Commentaire sur le Livre de Jonas." *Revue des Etudes Juives* 40 (1900) 129-153
- Poznanski, S. A. "The Arabic Commentary of Ibn Bal'am on the Twelve Minor Prophets," *Jewish Quarterly Review* XV (1924-1925) 1-53.
- Prijs, Leo. *Abraham Ibn Esra's Kommentar zu Genesis, Kapitel I; Einleitung, Edition, und Superkommentar*. Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1973.
- Rawidowicz, Simon. "On Interpretation." *PAAJR* 26 (1957): 83-126.
- Reeves, John C. "Sefer Zerubbabel." *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*. (Eds. Richard Bauckham, James R. Davila, Alexander Panayotov). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Pub., 2013. 448-466
- Rodríguez Arribas, Josefina. "Ibn Ezra, Abraham (Abu Iṣḥāq)." *Encyclopedia of Jews in the Islamic World*. Executive Editor Norman A. Stillman. Brill Online, 2013. Reference. 03 July 2013 <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-jews-in-the-islamic-world/ibn-ezra-abraham-abu-ishaq-COM_0010510>
- Rodríguez Arribas, Josefina. "The Terminology of Historical Astrology According to Abraham Bar Hiyya and Abraham Ibn Ezra," *Aleph* 11,1 (2011) 11-54.
- Rosenthal, Judah. "The Four Commemorative Fast Days." *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 57 (1967) 446-459.
- Saadia Gaon. *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions* (trans. Samuel Rosenblatt). New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948.
- Sæbø M. et al, eds., *Hebrew Bible / Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation*, vol. I/2, *The Middle Ages* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), chapters 25, 31-34, 37.
- Sáenz-Badillos, Angel. *Mahberet Menahem ben Saruq; Edición Crítica e Introducción*. Granada: Universidad de Granada; Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1986.
- Sáenz-Badillos, Angel. "Abraham Ibn Ezra and Sa'adia on Hebrew Grammar." *Mas'at Aharon: Linguistic Studies Presented to Aron Dotan*. Eds. M. Bar-Asher and C.E. Cohen. Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2009. 19-39.
- Salters, Robert B. "Using Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Joseph Kara on Lamentations." *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 25,1 (1999) 201-213
- Shachter, Jay F. (trans.) *The Commentary of Abraham Ibn Ezra on the Pentateuch*. Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Pub. House, 1986
- Schwartz, Baruch. "On Peshat and Derash, Bible Criticism and Theology," *Prooftexts* 14 (1994): 71-88.

- Sela, Shlomo and Gad Freudenthal, "Abraham Ibn Ezra's Scholarly Writings: A Chronological Listing," *Aleph* 6 (2006): 13-55.
- Sela, Shlomo. *Abraham Ibn Ezra and the Rise of Medieval Hebrew Science*. Boston: Brill, 2003.
- Sela, Shlomo. "Abraham ibn Ezra's Special Strategy in the Creation of a Hebrew Scientific Terminology," *Micrologus* 9 (2001) 65-87
- Sela, Shlomo, ed. *Études sur le Judaïsme Médiéval*, Volume 35: *Abraham Ibn Ezra, The Book of Reasons*. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2007.
- Sela, Shlomo, ed. *Études sur le Judaïsme Médiéval*, Volume 50: *Abraham Ibn Ezra on Elections, Interrogations, and Medical Astrology*. Boston: Brill, 2011.
- Shy, Hadassa. "AlKulliyat - the General Introduction to Tanhum Hayerushalmi's Commentary on the Bible." *Jewish Studies at the Turn of the Twentieth Century; Proceedings of the 6th EAJIS Congress, Toledo, July 1998*. Eds. Judit Targarona Borrás and Angel Sáenz-Badillos. Leiden: Brill, 1999 vol. I 536-540.
- Shy, Hadassa. "Taḡdir and Its Counterparts in Mediaeval Judaeo-Arabic," *Genizah Research after Ninety Years* (ed. Joshua Blau and Stefan C. Reif, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 144-154.
- Simon, Uriel. "Transplanting the Wisdom of Spain to Christian Lands: the Failed Efforts of R. Abraham Ibn Ezra," *Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook* 8 (2009) 139-189.
- Simon, Uriel, and Raphael Jospe. "Ibn Ezra, Abraham ben Meir." *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Ed. Michael Berenbaum and Fred Skolnik. 2nd ed. Vol. 9. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2007. 665-672. Gale Virtual Reference Library. Web. 17 July 2012.
- Simon, Uriel. "Abraham Ibn Ezra" *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament* (Magne Sæbø, et. al. eds.) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000) I,2 377-387
- Simon, Uriel. *Four Approaches to the Book of Psalms: From Saadia Gaon to Abraham Ibn Ezra*. (trans. L. Schramm) Albany: SUNY Press, 1991.
- Simon, Uriel. "Ibn Ezra between Medievalism and Modernism – The Case of Isaiah XL-LXVI." *Vetus Testamentum Supplement* 34 (1985) 257-71.
- Simon, Uriel. "Marginal Notes to Collation of Ibn Ezra's Commentary to Minor Prophets." Archived Unpublished Notes. Bar Ilan University Institute for Jewish Bible Interpretation. Ramat Gan, Israel. n.d.
- Steiner, Richard C. "Meaninglessness, Meaningfulness, and Super-Meaningfulness in Scripture: an Analysis of the Controversy Surrounding Dan 2:12 in the Middle Ages." *Jewish Quarterly Review* 82,3-4 (1992) 431-449
- Steiner, Richard C. *A Biblical Translation in the Making: The Evolution and Impact of Saadia Gaon's Tafsir*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Center for Jewish Studies, 2010.
- Steiner, Richard C. "A Jewish Theory of Biblical Redaction from Byzantium: Its Rabbinic Roots, its Diffusion, and its Encounter with the Muslim Doctrine of Falsification," *JSIJ* 2 (2003), 123-67.
- Steiner, Richard C. "Saadia vs. Rashi: On the Shift from Meaning-Maximalism to Meaning-Minimalism in Medieval Biblical Lexicology." *Jewish Quarterly Review* 88 (1998): 213-58.
- Steiner, Richard C. "The Byzantine Commentary to Ezekiel and Minor Prophets and Its Place in the History of Biblical Exegesis" read to the Talmud Plenary Session of the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, on July 31, 1997

- Strickman, H. Norman and Arthur M. Silver. *Ibn Ezra's Commentary on the Pentateuch*. New York, N.Y.: Menorah Pub. Co., 1988
- Strickman, H. Norman. *The Secret of the Torah: a Translation of Abraham Ibn Ezra's Sefer Yesod Mora ve-Sod ha-Torah*. Jason Aronson: Northvale, NJ, 1995
- Strickman, H. Norman. *Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra's Commentary on the Book of Psalms*. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2009
- Strickman, H. Norman. "Abraham Ibn Ezra's Non-Literal Interpretations." *Hakirah: the Flatbush Journal of Jewish Law and Thought* 9 (2010) 281-296
- Sysling, Harry. "Saadya's portrayal of the Messiah ben Joseph." *Nordisk Judaistik* 13,2 (1992) 73-82
- Talmage, Frank. *David Kimhi: The Man and the Commentaries*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975.
- Twersky, Isadore and Jay Harris, eds. *Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra: Studies in the Writings of a Twelfth Century Jewish Polymath*, ed., I. Twersky and J. Harris. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993.
- Twersky, Isadore, ed. *Rabbi Moses Nahmanides (Ramban): Explorations in His Religious and Literary Virtuosity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983.
- Valle Rodríguez, Carlos del. *Sefer Şaḥot de Abraham Ibn 'Ezra: Edición Crítica y Versión Castellana*. Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia 1977.
- Vehlow, Katja. *Abraham ibn Daud's Dorot 'Olam (Generations of the Ages): a Critical Edition and Translation of Zikhron Divrey Romi, Divrey Malkhey 'Israel, and the Midrash on Zechariah*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013.
- Visi, Tamás. "Ibn Ezra, a Maimonidean Authority: the Evidence of the Early Ibn Ezra Supercommentaries." *The Cultures of Maimonideanism: New Approaches to the History of Jewish Thought* (Ed. James T. Robinson). Leiden: Brill, 2009.
- Walfish, Barry. "The Two Commentaries of Abraham Ibn Ezra on the Book of Esther". *The Jewish Quarterly Review*, New Series, Vol. 79, No. 4 (Apr., 1989) 323-343
- Wechsler, Michael G. *The Arabic Translation and Commentary of Yefet ben 'Eli the Karaite on the Book of Esther*. Boston: Brill, 2008.
- Wechsler, Michael G. *Strangers in the Land: The Judaeo-Arabic Exegesis of Tanhum Ha-Yerushalmi on the Books of Ruth and Esther*. Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2010.
- Wechsler, Michael G. "Innovative Aspects of Saadia Gaon's Judaeo-Arabic Translation and Commentary on the Book of Esther" (read in absentia by M. Polliack). 2015 SBL Annual Meeting (Atlanta), Biblia Arabica session: Trends in a Newly Developing Field. <https://www.academia.edu/19560763/Innovative_Aspects_of_Saadia_Gaon_s_Judaeo-Arabic_Translation_and_Commentary_on_the_Book_of_Esther> Accessed 24 May 2018
- Wechsler, Michael G. *The Book of Conviviality in Exile (Kitab al-Inas bi-'l-Jalwa): the Judaeo-Arabic Translation and Commentary of Saadia Gaon on the Book of Esther*. Boston: Brill, 2015
- Weiss Halivni, David. *Peshat and Derash: Plain and Applied Meaning in Rabbinic Exegesis*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Wendkos, Philip David. *The Arabic Commentary of Yefet b. Ali the Karaite on the Book of Jeremiah*. Dissertation, Dropsie College. Philadelphia: 1969

אבן בלעם, יהודה. פירוש לבמ דברודברים (מהדו' מערבי פרץ). 1970.
 אבן ג'נאה, יונה. ספ' השרשי מ: הואהחל קהש נממחברתהדקדוק. ברלין: מקיצי נרדמים, תרנ"ו.

- אבן סרוק, מנחם. **מחב רתמנחם** (מהדו' צ' פיליפאוסקי). לונדון ואדינבורג, 1854.
- אבן-שמואל, יהודה. **מד רשיגאלה**; **פרק יאהפוקלי פסקהיהו דיתמ חתימתהתלמו דהבבל יוע דר אשיתהאל פ השישי**. ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק, תשנ"ד.
- אברבנאל, יצחק. **פירו שעל נביאים**. ירושלים: תורה ודעת, תשט"ו-תשט"ז.
- אברמסון, שרגא. **ש לשקספ ריקש ל רביהו דהב נבלעם**: מקור ותרגום לעברית. ירושלים: קרית-ספר, תשל"ה
- אורבך, אפרים א. **ספ הערוגת הבשם**: כולל פירושים לפיוטים; חברו אברהם ב"ר עזריאל (ד' כרכים). ירושלים: מקיצי נרדמים, תרצ"ט-תשכ"ג.
- אורפלי, משה. "ראב"ע והפולמוס היהודי-נוצרי". **תעודה ח**; **מחק ריפביצירת נש לאבר הקאב נעזרא** (עורכים: ישראל לוינ ומאשה יצחקי). תל-אביב: אוניברסיטת תל-אביב, תשנ"ב. 193-205.
- אושרי, יגאל. **אבר הקאבן ע זרא**; **ספ רההג נהע ל רבסעדיה גא ונ**; **המכ ונה"שפת-יתר" (מהד' בקורתית**. (עבודה לשם קבלת תואר מוסמך. (רמת-גן: תשמ"ח.
- אידל, משה. "ר' משה בן נחמן - קבלה, הלכה ומנהיגות רוחנית." **תרביץ** סד, ד) (תשנ"ה) 535-580
- אייזנשטיין, יהודה דוד. **אוצ המדרשים**: בית עקד למאתים מדרשים קטנים ואגדות ומעשיות בסדר אלפא ביתא, ניו יורק: תרע"ה.
- איש שלום, מאיר. **מ דרשפסיק תארבתי**. ווינא, תר"מ.
- אלבוים, יעקב. **להב ינדב ריחכמים**: מבחר דברי מבו לאגדה ולמדרש, משל חכמי ימי הביניים. ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק, תש"ס
- אלוני, נחמיה. **האגרון**; **כתאב אצו לאלשע ראלעברא נמאת ר' סעדיה גאון**. ירושלים: האקדמיה ללשון עברית, תשכ"ט.
- אלוני, נחמיה. **יסו דדקדוק**; **הו אש פתית רמ אתאבר הקאב נעזרא**. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תשמ"ה.
- אלטמן, אלכסנדר. "תורת האקלימים לר' יהודה הלוי". **מלילה 1** (1944) 1-17.
- אליקים, נסים. "הקשרים בין ר' יהודה הלוי ור"א אבן עזרא בפרשנות המקרא". **שמעתין** 133-134 (תשנח) 85-103
- אלסטר, ברוך. **א הבקאנושי תווי קתהלאהב הרוחני תבפרשנו ותהיהו דיתלשי רהשירים**. דיסרטציה, אוניברסיטת בר-אילן, רמת-גן, תשס"ז.
- אנטולי, יעקב ב"ר אבא מרי. **מלמ דהתלמידים**. ליק: מקיצי נרדמים, תרכ"ו.
- ארדר, יורם. "הצומות בהלכה הקראית הקדומה" **אוהבשלום**; **מחק ריפלכבוד נש לישראל לפרידמ נבן-שלום** (עורכים: דב גרא ומרים בן זאב). באר שבע: אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון והמכללה האקדמית ספיר, תשס"ה. 507-537
- ארנד, משה. "פירושי אבן עזרא לתרי עשר במהדורת אוריאל סימון". **סי ניקד** (אב-אלול תשמט) רעו-רפד [נדפס מחדש - ארנד, משה. **פרש נותהמקר אהוראתו**: אסופת מאמרים של משה ארנד. ירושלים: מאירים, המכללה האקדמית הדתית לחינוך ע"ש רא"מ ליפשיץ, תשס"ו. 214-222].
- ארנד, משה. "לבריור המושג פשוטו של מקרא". **המקר אברא נמפרשיו**; ספר זיכרון לשרה קמין. בעריכת שרה יפת. ירושלים: הוצאת מאגנס, תשנ"ד. 237-261
- בכר, בנימין זאב. **ר'אבר הקאב נעזר אהמדקדק** (תורגם מגרמנית ע"י א. ז. רבינוביץ). ירושלים: קדם, תשל"ל בלאו, יהושע. "על תרגום התורה של רב סעדיה גאון". **ספ רהיוב לל רבמ רדכברויאר**; אסופת מאמרים במדעי היהדות. כרך א-ב. עורך: משה בר-אשר. ירושלים: אקדמון, תשנב. 633-638
- בלאו, יהושע מילו **נלטקסטים ערביים יהודיים פמימ ירהביניים**. ירושלים: האקדמיה ללשון העברית, תשס"ו.
- בן-יהודה, אליעזר. **מל ונהלש ונהעב ריתהי שנהוהחדשה**. ניו-יורק ולונדון: ט. יוסלוף, תש"ך.
- בן-מנחם, נפתלי. **בשע ריפפר**. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תשכ"ז. 168-172.
- בן-מנחם, נפתלי. **מג נזישראל לבוואטיק אנ:תי אורש לשל ושיפוח משה כתבניד**. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תשי"ד.
- בן-מנחם, נפתלי. **עניי ניאב נעזרא**. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תשל"ח
- בן-מנחם, נפתלי. "פרקי ר' אברהם בן עזרא." **הד רופכו** (תשכח) 207-220
- בן-נון, יואל. "יום ייסוד היכל ה' (על-פי נבואות חגי וזכריה). **מגדים יב** (תשרי תשנא) 49-97
- בן-שמאי, חגי. "הקדמת ר' סעדיה גאון לישעיה - מבוא לספרי הנביאים." **תרביץ** סג, (תשנא) 371-404

בן-שמאי, חגי. "הספרות המדרשית-הרבנית בפירושי רס"ג: המשך וחיידוש." **מסור תושינוי בטר בותהערבית-היהודי תש לימי הביניים**; דברי הוועידה השישית של החברה לחקר התרבות הערבית-היהודית של ימי-הביניים. עורכים: יהושע בלאו, דויד דורון. רמת-גן: אוניברסיטת בר-אילן, תשס. 69-33 בקר, דן. **ה'רסאלה' ש' ליהו דקב נקוריש: מהדו רהביקורתית**. תל-אביב: אוניברסיטת תל-אביב, תשמ"ד. בר-אילן, מאיר. "[על] אברהם אבן עזרא, 'יסוד מורא וסוד התורה', מהד' י' כהן וא' סימון". **קב להק** (תשסד) 351-335; 13) תשסה (321-337

ברגר, יצחק. "עמדתו של רד"ק בשאלת המשמעותיות של רכיבי טקסט התורה על פי פירושו לספר בראשית." **ליישבפשוטו ש למקרא**; אסופת מחקרים בפרשנות המקרא. עורכים: שרה יפת וערן ויזל. ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק; האוניברסיטה העברית, תשעא. 180-192.

ברודי, ירחמיאל (רוברט). **ר בסעדיה גאון**. ירושלים: מרכז זלמן שזר לתולדות ישראל, תשס"ז ברואר, מרדכי. **נוס קהמקר אב'כת רירוש לימ'ן מקורותינבמסו רהו כתבניהיד**. ירושלים: הוצאת קרן המסורה, תשס"ג.

ברויר, יוחנן. "מדרש התנאים ופשוטו של פסוק - וירא ישראל את מצרים מת על שפת הים." **מחקרים בתלמוד ובמדרש** (תשסה) 71-78

ברומברג, א.י. "הרד"ק כפרשן של הראב"ע בספר תהילים." **סיני** סג (תשכח) 4-12.

ברומברג, א.י. "השפעת רבינו סעדיה גאון על ר' אברהם אבן עזרא." **תלפיות** ט (תשל) 761-784 גודמן, מרדכי שאול. **ספראי וק עמפירושיאב נעזרא**. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תש"ע.

גודמן, מרדכי שאול. **ספ רמא זנים;עני נידק דוקבלשו ונהק ודשופיר ושפסו קים קשימל פיפש וטפודקדוקם, ל רביאבר הפאב נעזרא**. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תשע"ו.

גודמן, מרדכי שאול. **ספ רצח ות;עני נידק דוקבלשו ונה קודשופיר ושפסו קים קשימלפי פש וטפודקדו קבלרבי אבר הפאב נעזרא**. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תשע"ו.

גודמן, מרדכי שאול. "גזירות השמים במשנת ראב"ע" **סיני** קלח (ניסן-סיון תשסו) פו-צז.

גולב, נחום (נורמן). **תולד ותהיהו דימבעי ררוא נבימי הביניים**. תל-אביב: הוצאת דביר, תשל"ו.

גולדשטיין, רוני. "פירושי אבן עזרא הספרדי בלבוש עברי וספרדי חדש". **שנתון למקר אולחק רהמזר תהקדום**, יט, (תשסט) עמ' 339-351.

געש, אמיר. "ספר תשובות דונש הלוי בן לברט על רבי סעדיה גאון: חיבור עברי במקורו או תרגום מן הערבית?" <http://hebrew-academy.org.il/wp-content/uploads/Amir-Gaash-HE-5.2.pdf> הורד 19 פברואר

2018

גרינברג, משה (עורך). **פרש נותהמקר אהיהודית**: פרקי מבוא. ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק, תשמ"ג

גרינברג, משה. "איוב היה או לא היה: סוגיה בפרשנות ימי הביניים." **שע ריטלמון**; מחקרים במקרא, קומראן והמזרח הקדמון מוגשים לשמריהו טלמון. בעריכת עמנואל טוב ומיכאל פישביין. וינונה לייק, אינ:

אייזנבראונס, 1992. 3-11.

גרינברג, משה. "היחס בין פירוש רש"י לפירוש רשב"ם לתורה." **ספ היצח קא ריהזליגמן**; מאמרים במקרא ובעולם העתיק. ערכו יאיר זקוביץ ואלכסנדר רופא. כר' א-ב. ירושלים: הוצאת א. רובינשטיין, תשמג. 559-

567

דודוביץ, תמימה. "פירושי הראב"ע לאסתר." **סיני** קא (כסלו-טבת תשמח) 113-125

דודוביץ, תמימה. "יחס הראב"ע למדרשי חז"ל לאור פירושו לאסתר." **סיני** קד (אב-אלול תשמט) 224-239 דודוביץ, תמימה. **ש ניפירושי נש לר' אבר הפאב נעז ראלספ רשמות; מחקר השוואתי**. עבודת-גמר לקבלת תואר שלישי, בר אילן, 1978.

דוראן, יצחק. **מעשהאפד**. ירושלים: מקור, תש"ל

דירינבורג, יוסף. **אלתפאס ירואלכת בואלרסאיל לרבינו סעדיה גאון בן יוסף אלפימי**. פאריס: א. לרו, 1893 - 1899

דן, יוסף. **תולד ותמו רתהסו דהעב רית**. ירושלים: מרכז זלמן שזר לתולדות ישראל, תשס"ט

האס, יאיר. "שליטת האמונה בתחיית המתים בהגותו של ר' אברהם אבן עזרא" **JSIJ** 13 (2015) 1-40

<http://www.biu.ac.il/JS/JSIJ/13-2015/Haas.pdf>

הדסי, יהודה. **ספ ראשכ להכפר**. גוזלוו: דפוס מ. טירישקן, 1836.

- הלברטל, משה. **על דרך האמת**: הרמב"ן ויצירתה של מסורת. ירושלים: מכון שלום הרטמן, תשס"ו
 הרוי, זאב. "הדיבר הראשון ואלהי ההיסטוריה: ריה"ל ורח"ק מול ראב"ע ורמב"ם" **תרכ"ץ** נו, ב) (תשמח) 203-
 216
- הרכבי, אברהם. "מספרי המצות הראשונים לבני מקרא" **לקוטי קדמוניות**: לקור ותד תבנ ימ קראוהליטעראטו ה
שלהם עפ"י כתבי יד עבריים וערביים (בעריכת שמחה פינסקער), חלק שני. סט. פטרבורג: תרס"ג.
 ויזל, עירן. "הפירוש המיוחס לרש"י לספר עזרא-נחמיה" *JSIJ* 9 (2010) 123-180
<http://www.biu.ac.il/js/JSIJ/9-2010/Viezel.pdf>
- ויזל, עירן. "הטעמים אלוהיים והמילות של משה: השקפתו של ר' אברהם אבן עזרא בשאלת חלקו של משה
 בכתיבת התורה, מקורותיה ומסקנותיה" **תרכ"ץ** פ, ג) (תשעב) 387-407
 ווייס, פנחס. "אבן עזרא והקראים בהלכה". **מלילה: קובץ מחקרים** (בעריכת א' רוברטסון ומ' ולנשטיין) א,
 מנצ'סטר תש"ד, 35-53; ב, תש"ו, 121-134; ג-ד, תש"י, 188-203.
 ווילנסקי, מיכאל. **ספר ההקמה (כת אבאללמע) (ל ר'י ונהאב נג'נאה; בתרגו מנהעב ריש ליהו דהאב נתיבון**
 ירושלים: האקדמיה ללשון העברית, תשכ"ד
 ווילנסקי, מיכאל. "ספר שפה ברורה לר' אברהם בן עזרא." **דביר** ב) (תרפ"ד) 274-302
 ורהפטיג, איתמר. "משיח בן דוד ושלמה". **ספר רהיובל מנחה לאי"ש: קובץ מאמרים**, מוגש בהוקרה להרב
 אברהם ישעיהו דולגין, עורך: איתמר ורהפטיג. (ירושלים: בית כנסת בית-יעקב, רמות אשכול, תשנא. 414-
 427
- ורטהימר, שלמה אהרן. **ג נזירי שלים: תורת נש לגא וניפוקדמוני יפמת וכתבי-י דהג ניזקשבמצרים**.
 ירושלים: ראובן מס, תשמ"ב.
 זהרי, מנחם. **מ קורותרש"י**: מדרשי הלכה ואגדה בפירושו. ירושלים: כנה, תשנג
 זר, רפאל יצחק. "רבי אברהם בן עזרא ופרשנות המקרא הקראית". **מג דיפלב** (תשס) 97-106
 זר-כבוד, מרדכי. **ת ריעש ה עפיר ושד עתמקרא**, כרך ב' (עורכים: אהרן מירסקי, פיבל מצלר, וכו'). ירושלים:
 מוסד הרב קוק, תשל"ט.
- חזון, רעיה. "ספר תיקון השגגות-תשובות אדניה על רס"ג: זהות מחבר התשובות וסוגיות נוספות." **מש את**
אהרן: מחק ריפבלשו נמוגש יפלאהר נדותן (עורכים: משה בר-אשר, חיים א' כהן). ירושלים: מוסד
 ביאליק, תש"ע. 289-304
- חכם, עמוס. "פירושי הראב"ע, רבי אברהם אבן עזרא, למקרא". **מחנ ייב** 3) (תשנג) 126-137
 חיוג', יהודה. **ספר רינדקדו קמר אשהמדקד קיפך ייהודה חיוג' אש רהעתיק פהחכ פראב רהפב נעזר א** (מהדו'
 יהודה ליב דוקעס). פראנקפורט אם מיין: דפוס באך 1844.
 חיוג', יהודה. **כתאב אלנתה: פיר ושנהדקד וקיש לר ייהוד החיוג ילספרי נב יאיפבעיבוד ע ליב נסלימ נ** (מהדו'
 אהרן ממן ואפרים בן פורת). ירושלים: האקדמיה ללשון העברית, תשע"ב.
 חיוג', יהודה. **שלו שתחיבור יהדקדוק** (מהדו' עלי ותד ודניאל סיון). באר שבע: אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב,
 תשע"ב.
- חיות, צבי הירש. **אגר תבקר: כול לענ ניפ חדשיפומועי ליפע להתרגו מיפומדרשים**. פרעסבורג תרי"ג
 חמיאל, חיים יצחק. **המקר אותרגומיו: פש טודרוש בתרגו מיפארמ ייפלמקרא** (כרך א'). ירושלים: מאירים,
 תשס"א
- חרל"פ, לובה ר'. **תו רתהלשו נש ל רבנאבר הפאבן-עזרא: מסור תותידוש**. באר שבע: אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון
 בנגב, תשנ"ט.
- טוב עלם, יוסף אליעזר בן יוסף. **ספ רצפ נתפענ ח:והו אפירו שע להראב"ע ע להתורה** (מהדו' דוד הערצאג).
 קראקא, תרע"ב.
- טויטו, אלעזר. "האמנם משקף כתב יד לייפציג 1 את הנוסח המקורי של פירוש רש"י לתורה?" **תרכ"ץ** סא
 (תשנ"ב) 85-116
- טויטו, אלעזר. "**הפש תותהמתח דשיפככ ליום**": עיונים בפירושו של רשב"ם לתורה. רמת גן: הוצאת
 אוניברסיטת בר אילן, תשס"ג
- טויטו, אלעזר. "על גלגולי הנוסח של פירוש רש"י לתורה." **תרכ"ץ** נו, ב) (תשמז) 211-242
 טל, אבי. **דר כפירשנותו של ר' לתנ חופהירושל מילספרי פמל כיפב, ישעי היר מיה, ויתזקא ל עבודת-גמר**

- לקבלת תואר שלישי, בר אילן, תשס"ז
 טל, אבי. "עיון מחודש בזיקתו של רבי תנחום הירושלמי לרבי אברהם בן עזרא". **עי וניקבתר בותהערבית-היהודית**; דברי הוועידה הארבע עשרה של החברה לחקר התרבות הערבית-היהודית של ימי הביניים (בעריכת יורם ארדר, חגי בן שמאי, אהרן דותן ומרדכי עקיבא פרידמן). (תל-אביב: אוניברסיטת תל-אביב, תשע"ד 3-23)
- טנא, דוד. **ספ רההשגהל ר'י ונהאב נג'נאח בתרגו מנהעב רש לעובד יתהספרדי** (אהרן ממון, עורך). (ירושלים: האקדמיה ללשון העברית, תשס"ו).
- יהלום, יוסף. "חילופי מלכויות בארץ-ישראל על פי תפיסתם של פייטנים ודרשנים". **שלם: מחק ריקבתולד ות ארץ-ישראל לוי שובהיהודי** 1 (תשנב) 1-22.
- יעלינעק, אהרן. **ביתהמדרש**. לייפציג: תרי"ג (דפוס צילום: ירושלים, תשכ"ז)
- יעקב בן ראובן. **ספ רהעשר**. (נדפס בסוף מבח רישר יפלאהרן בן יוסף הרופא). גוזלווא, תקצ"ה.
- יפת, שרה. "המתח בין פשוטו של מקרא ובין מדרש ההלכה: בעיה ללא פתרון"? **דו רדו רופרשניו**; אסופת מחקרים בפרשנות המקרא. ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק, תשסח 35-54
- כהן, יוסף. **הגו תהפילוסופית ש לר'אבר המאבן-עזר אראשון לציון**: שי, תשנ"ו.
- כהן, יוסף ואוריאל סימון. **יסו דמור אסו דתורה** - אברהם אבן עזרא; מהדורה מדעית מבוארת. רמת גן: אוניברסיטת בר אילן, תשס"ז
- כהן, מנחם (עורך). **מקראו תגדו לותהכתר**. רמת גן: אוניברסיטת בר-אילן, <http://mgketer.org>. 2016
- כהן, מרדכי. "פרשנות הפשט של פילוסוף: גישתו הספרותית של הרמב"ם לספר איוב ומקומה בתולדות פרשנות המקרא". **שנתו נלחק רהמקר אזהמזר תהקדום** 10 (תשסח) 213-264
- כהן, מרדכי. "הרהורים על חקר המונח 'פשוטו של מקרא' בתחילת המאה העשרים ואחת". **ליישבכפשו טושל מקרא**; אסופת מחקרים בפרשנות המקרא (עורכים: שרה יפת וערן ויזל). ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק; האוניברסיטה העברית, תשע"א. 5-58
- כסלו, איתמר. "הזיקה בין פירושיהם של ראב"ע ורשב"ם: סוגיית מרכיבי הקטורת". **תרביץ** עה,א (תשס"ט) 61-80
- כסלו, איתמר. "הפשטות המתחדשים בכל יום": פירושו הקצר של ר' אברהם אבן עזרא לתורה כמקור לרשב"ם בפירושו לתורה". **תרביץ** עט,ג-ד (תשע-תשע"א) 413-438
- כשר, מנחם (עורך). **חומ שותו רהשלמה**: והוא התורה שבכתב עם ביאור "תורה שבעל פה". ירושלים: הוצאת בית תורה שלמה, תשנ"ב.
- כשר, רימון. **תוספתו תתרגו פלנביאים**. ירושלים: האיגוד העולמי למדעי היהדות, 1996.
- לוביץ, רונן. "יעקב ועשו בשיטתו הפרשנית של רש"י: עיון בשאלת היחס לנוצרים והערה חינוכית בצדו". **שאנן** יג (תשסח) 71-107.
- לוי בן יפת הלוי. **ספ רמצו ותל לויב ני פתה לוי, תרגום**. <http://maagarim.hebrew-academy.org.il/Pages/PMain.aspx?mishibbur=665000&page=96> 07 אוגוסט 2017
- לוי, ב.מ. **אוצ רהג אונים; תשובות גאו נקבל ופירושי הקע ל פיסד רהתלמוד**. ירושלים, תרצ"ד
- לוי, ב.מ. "פרקי פרקים ממלחמות רב סעדיה גאון" סיני 1 (ת"ש) 36-47.
- לוי, ישראל. **אבר המאבן-עזרא**; חיי נושירתו. תל אביב: הקיבוץ המאוחד, תשל"ו.
- לוי, ישראל. **שירי-הקוד שש ל אבר המאבן נעזרא**. ירושלים: האקדמיה הלאומית הישראלית למדעים, תשל"ו.
- לוי, ישראל. **ילקוט אבר המאבן-עזר אגיו יורק**: קרן ישראל מץ, 1985.
- לוי, ישראל. **מחק ריקביצירת נש ל אבר המאבן עזרא**. תל אביב: תשנב
- לוי, ישראל. **אברה קאב נעז רא; שי רים, תל-אביב**: אוניברסיטת תל אביב, תשע"א
- לוצאטו, שמואל דוד. **אגרו תשד"ל**. ערך שאלתיאל אייזיק גראבער. פרזעמישל: דרוק זופניק עט קנאללער, תרמ"ב-תרנ"ד.
- ליברמן, שאול. **תוספת אכפשוטה**. ירושלים: בית המדרש לרבנים שבאמריקה, תשנ"ג
- ליברמן, שאול. **תוספתא**: על פי כתב יד ווינה ושנויי נוסחאות מכתב יד ערפורט, קטעים מן הגניזה ודפוס ויניציאה רפ"א. ניו-יורק בית המדרש לרבנים שבאמריקה, תשט"ו
- ליפמאן, גבריאל הירש. **ספ רצ חותמ החכמהגדו ל רבאבר המב נ רבמאי רהספר דקהמכו נהב נעזר אפירודא**,

תקפ"ז

- ליפמאן, גבריאל הירש. **ספר השפלה החכמה גדול ל רבנאב רהמב נ רבנמאי רהספר דיהמכ ונהאב נעזרא**. פיורדא, תקצ"ד
- ליפמאן, גבריאל הירש. **שפה ברו רהלאב רהמב נמאי רהמכ ונהאב נעזרא**; עם מחברת ביאור מספיק בשם מבין שפה. פיורדא, תקצ"ט
- ליפשיץ, אברהם. "הגישה הפרשנית של ר' אברהם אבן-עזרא ור' יצחק אברבנאל אל הנבואות שנאמרו לעתיד". **הקונג רסהעול מילמדע יהיהדות 6, א** (תשלג) 133-139. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23515536>. הורד: 03 אוגוסט 2017
- ליפשיץ, אברהם. "פירוש רבי אברהם אבן-עזרא על יואל: יו"ל על פי ששה כתבי-יד ודפוס ראשון בצירוף מבוא, חילופי נוסח וביאורים". **ספ ריוב ללכבו זמור ננהגאו נ רבניוס דדוקה לויסולובייציק**. בעריכת שאול ישראל, נחום לאם, יצחק רפאל (ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק; ניו-יורק: ישיבה-אוניברסיטה, תשמד) 995-1035
- ליפשיץ, אברהם. **עי ונימבלשו נותהראב"ע**. שיקאגו: הוצאת ספרים של המדרשה ללימודי היהדות, תשכ"ט.
- ליפשיץ, אברהם. **פר קיעיון במש נת רבנאבר המאב נעזרא**. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תשמ"ב.
- לעהרער, צבי יעקב הלוי. "ראב"ע בעיני גדולי הדורות". **צפונות א, ג** (תשמ"ט) 80-86.
- מאורי, ישעיהו. "על משמעות המונח 'דברי יחיד' בפירושו ראב"ע למקרא: ליחסו של ראב"ע למדרשי חז"ל". **שנתון לחק רהמקר אזהמזרח הקדום יג** (תשסב) 201-246
- מאק, חננאל. "טעות המחבר, טעות סופר או שינוי מכוון בפירושו אבן-עזרא לתורה" **ביתמקר א41, ג** (תשנז) 257-261
- מונדשין, אהרן. "שיטה שלישית לפירושו של ר' אברהם אבן עזרא לתורה? על גילוי של קטע חדש מביאוריו". **או רליעקב**; מחקרים במקרא ובמגילות מדבר יהודה לזכרו של יעקב שלום ליכט. (יאיר הופמן, פרנק פולק, עורכים). ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק; תל-אביב: אוניברסיטת תל-אביב, תשנז 167-179.
- מונדשין, אהרן. "האם הכיר ר' אברהם אבן עזרא את פירושו ר' יוסף קרא לתורה". **תרביץ עגב** (תשסד) 239-270
- מונדשין, אהרן. "ואין בספריו פשט רק אחד מני אלף: לדרך ההתייחסות של ראב"ע לפירושו רש"י לתורה". **עיו נמקר אופרשנות ה** (תשס) 221-248.
- מונדשין, אהרן. "יש לו סוד והמשכיל ידום": מסגנונו האניגמטי של ראב"ע עד הערכת אישיותו. **שנתון נלחק ר המקר אזהמזרח הקדום יד** (תשסד) 257-288
- מונדשין, אהרן. "לשאלת היחס שבין פירושיהם של ראב"ע ורשב"ם לתורה: בחינה מחודשת". **תעודה טז-יז** (תשסא) 51-64
- מונדשין, אהרן. "ספרייתו של ר' אברהם אבן עזרא". **תלפי ותח** (תשנה-תשנז) 259-273.
- מונדשין, אהרן. "ליחסו של ראב"ע אל השימוש הפרשני במידת הגימטריה". **תעודה ח** (תשנב) 137-161.
- מונדשין, אהרן. "על ספרו של אוריאל סימון: 'אזן מלין תבחן': מחקרים בדרכו הפרשנית של ר' אברהם אבן עזרא" **שנתון נלחק רהמקר אזהמזרח הקדום יד** (תשעד) 299-306.
- מיליקובסקי, חיים. **סד רעולם; מהדו רהמד עית, פירושו ומבוא**. ירושלים: יד יצחק בן-צבי, תשע"ג.
- מלמד, אברהם. "ארץ-ישראל והתיאוריה האקלימית במחשבה היהודית" **ארץ-ישראל לבהג ותהיהו דיתבימי הביניים** (משה חלמיש ואביעזר רביצקי, עורכים). ירושלים: יד יצחק בן-צבי, תשנא (52-78)
- מלמד, עזרא ציון. **מפרש יהמקרא; דרכי הפושיטותיהם**. ירושלים: הוצאת ספרים ע"ש י"ל מאגנס, האוניברסיטה העברית, 1978.
- מנדלבוים, דוב. **פסיקת אדרב כהנא אע לפיכ תב ידאוקספור קוש נוינוסחאות**. ניו יורק: בית המדרש לרבנים שבאמריקה, תשכ"ב
- מנדלסון, משה. **תו רהנביאים וכתובים; עפפיר ושרש "יז" לובאו רמ אתמש המנדלסו נוממשיכיו**. ווילנא: דפוס יוסף ראובן ראם, תרי"ג
- מרגליות, אליעזר. "היחס שבין פירושו הרשב"ם לפירושו הראב"ע על התורה". **ספראסף**; קובץ מאמרי מחקר מוגש לכבוד הרב פרופ' שמחה אסף. בעריכת מ"ד קאסטו, יוסף קלוזנר, יהושע גוטמן. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תשיג. 357-369

מרדלר, רונאלה. "תגובתו של ר' אברהם אבן עזרא לפירושו הדקדוקי של ר' שמואל בן מאיר." ש "יְלֶשֶׁר הַיְפֶת; מחקרים במקרא, בפרשנותו ובלשונו. עורכים: משה בר-אשר [ואחרים]. ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק, תשסח. 195-215

מרמרשטיין, אברהם. **מד רשקסירו תויתירות**: על פי ג' כ"י עם הערות, מראה מקומות ומבוא. לונדון: לוזאך, תרע"ז

מרקון, יצחק דוב. **פתרו נשנ יפעשר**; פירוש לתרי עשר לדניאל אלקומסי. ירושלים, מקיצי נרדמים, תשי"ח נבו, יהושפט. "היחס בין פירושי התורה של רבי יוסף בכור-שור וראב"ע". **תרבי קנא**, ג (תשמב) 503-507 נבו, יהושפט. **פרשנ ותהמק ראצהרפתית**: עיונים בדרכי פרשנותם של מפרשי המקרא בצפון צרפת בימי הביניים. רחובות: מורשת יעקב, תש"ס

סאנו-בדיליוס, אנחל. "עקרונות לההדרת חיבורים בלשניים מימי הביניים". **לשונ נננד**, ב-ד (ירושלים: האקדמיה ללשון עברית, תשנ) 217-230

סימון, אוריאל [על] אשר ויזר, 'פירושי התורה לר' אברהם אבן עזרא'; Leo Prijs, 'Abraham Ibn Esra's 'Kommentar zu Genesis Kapitel 1' קרי תספר נא (תשל) 646-659 סימון, אוריאל. "ר' אברהם אבן עזרא - בין המפרש לקוראיו." **הקונג רסהעול מיל מדעיהיהדות** 9, ישיבות מרכזיות: מקרא ומזרח קדמון (תשמ) 23-42.

סימון, אוריאל. **ש נפירושי ר'אבר הקאב נעזר אלתרי-עשר**: מהדורה מדעית מבוארת. רמת-גן: הוצאת אוניברסיטת בר-אילן, תשמ"ט

סימון, אוריאל. "אזן מלין תבחן: העצמאות הפרשנית של בני הדורות האחרונים בתפיסת ר' אברהם אבן עזרא" ש "יְלֶשֶׁר הַיְפֶת. עורכים, משה בר-אשר [וכו']. ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק, תשס"ה 217-232 סימון, אוריאל. "לדרכו הפרשנית של הראב"ע על-פי שלושת ביאוריו לפסוק אחד" **בר-אילן** ג (תשכה) 92-138 סימון, אוריאל. "שני עקרונות-יסוד של פירוש התורה לראב"ע: 'בעבותות הדקדוק נקשר ובעיני הדעת יכשר'".

מחקרי סבמקר אובחינוך, מוגשים לפרופ' משה ארנד. בעריכת דב רפל. ירושלים: טורו קולג', תשנו סימון, אוריאל. "הפרשנות הפשטית של ההיסטוריה המקראית - בין היסטוריות, דוגמטיות ובינייםמיות". **תה לה למשה**: מחקרי סבמקר אובמדע יהיהדות, **מ וגשיפלמשה גרינברג**. עורכים: אליהו דב אייכלר, יעקב חיים טיגאי, מרדכי כוגן. וינונה לייק, אינדיאנה: איזנבראונס, תשנ"ז.

סימון, אוריאל. **א זמלי נתבחן**; מחקרים בדרכו הפרשנית של ר' אברהם אבן עזרא (מהדורה שנייה). רמת-גן: אוניברסיטת בר-אילן, תשע"ו

סימון, אוריאל. **ר'אבר הקאב נעזר א- הפיר ושקצ קלתור ה,הפ ירושהאר וקלבראשית ושמו תוקטע** **הפירו ששבעל- פקלבראשית**.

<https://www.mgketer.org/article/8/%D7%A8%D7%91%D7%99-%D7%90%D7%91%D7%A8%D7%94%D7%9D-%D7%90%D7%91%D7%9F-%D7%A2%D7%96%D7%A8%D7%90-%D7%94%D7%A4%D7%99%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%A9-%D7%94%D7%A7%D7%A6%D7%A8-%D7%9C%D7%AA%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%94-%D7%94%D7%A4%D7%99%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%A9-%D7%94%D7%90%D7%A8%D7%95%D7%9A-%D7%9C%D7%91%D7%A8%D7%90%D7%A9%D7%99%D7%AA-2018>

סלע, שלמה. **אסטרוולוג יהופרש נותהמקר אבהגות נשל אבר הקאב נעזרא**. רמת-גן: אוניברסיטת בר-אילן, תשנ"ט

פאזאנסקי, שמואל אברהם. **פירו שע ליחזקא לות ריעש קל רבנאליעז המבלגנצי**: הוציאו לאור בפעם הראשונה וספח לו **מבו אע לחכ מיצר פתמפרש יהמקרא**. ווארשא: בדפוס הצפירה, תר"ע-תרע"ג פוליאק, מאירה, ואליעזר שלוסברג. **פירושי פתב נעלי לספ הוושע**. רמת-גן: אוניברסיטת בר-אילן, 2009. פילווארג, יונה. **בנירשף**: חלק שני, על נביאים וכתובים וחמש מגילות, פיעטרקוב, תר"ס פינסקער, שמחה. **מבו אא להנקו דהאשו רי אנהב לי, ונל והאלי נספ היסו דמספ הלהח כקאב רהקב נעזרא**.

- ווין, תרכ"ג) דפוס צילום: ירושלים, תשכ"ח.)
 פינסקער, שמחה. **ספּ רַהאַחד, להפּלסו תְּהאַל הַנְּאַבּר הַפּאַבן עֶזְרָא: עַל תְּשַׁע־מַסְפְּרֵי הַפּוּשׁוּטִים**. אדעסא, תרכ"ז
 פלוסר, דוד. **ספּ הַיוֹסֵיפּ וְהַנוֹסֵת הַמַּקּוּרִי**: צילום כתב-יד ירושלים 8 41280 עם הוספות. ירושלים: מרכז זלמן שזר, 1978
 פלוסר, דוד. **ספּ הַיוֹסֵיפּוֹן**: יוצא לאור, סדור ומוגה על-פי כתבי-יד בלוויית מבוא, ביאורים וחילופי גרסאות. ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק, תשל"ח.
 פלוסר, דוד. "ההשכיח עם ישראל את החשמונאים בימי-הביניים?" (קתדרה 75) (תשנה 54-36) נדפס גם בספרו: **יהוד ותבני תש ניהכ מיהוספרותה**. ירושלים: יד יצחק בן-צבי; הוצאת מאגנס, האוניברסיטה העברית, תשס"ב)
 פליישר, י. ל. "רבנו אברהם בן עזרא ומלאכתו הספרותית בארץ אנגליה" **אוצר החיים ז** (תרצ"א) 69-76
 פליישר, י. ל. "פרושים לפראב"ע למקרא" **אוצר החיים יד** (תרצ"ח) 55
 פליישר, י. ל. **ספּ רַאב נַעֲזָרָא לְסַפּ רַשְׁמוֹ תַּעֲפַרְוּשְׁמִשְׁנָה לַעֲזָרָא**. וינה: הוצאה עברית מנורה, תרפ"ו
 פליישר, עזרא. "לצביון 'השאלות העתיקות' ולבעיית זהות מחברן". *HUCA* (מדור עברי) 38 (1967) א-כג.
 פריס, אריה. **אבר הפאב נעזר אלברא שית, פר קא-ג: מ עשקהבראשי תומעשה ג נעדן**; מבוא, חלופי גרסאות, ביאורים והערות. לונדון, 1990.
 פרץ, מערבי. "תרומת ר' יהודה אבן בלעם לפרשנות מקרא פילולוגית בספרד" **בר-אילן כ/א** (תשמג) 151-171
 פרץ, מערבי. "חילוף' מלה בזולתה כמידה פרשנית אצל חכמי ימה"ב". **עיו ניקמר אופרשנות ב** (תשמו) 207-228
 פרץ, מערבי. "לדרכו הפרשנית של ר' יונה אבן ג'נאח: ייחוס דברים לרחוק ולא לקרוב." **ה גיגנבעה ח** (תשס) 1-17
 צוקר, משה. **ע לתר גופרס"ג לתור ה; פרש נותה לכהפולמיקה, בתרגו פהתו רהש לר'סעדיה גאו, תעודות, ומחקרים**. ניו-יורק: פלדהיים, תשי"ט.
 קאפוטא, חיים זאב. **או רלנתיבה**. למברג, תשנז.
 קאפח, יוסף. **מש נהעפ ירושמשהב נמימון** - תרגם מערבית על-פי כתב-היד המקורי. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, 1963-1968
 קאפח, יוסף. **ספּ הַיַּצִּי רַה עַפְפִּיר וְשֶׁהַגָּא וְנָרַב נָסַע דִּיהָב" הַיּוֹסֵיפּוֹי**. ירושלים: הועד להוצאת ספרי רס"ג, תשל"ב.
 קוגוט, שמחה. "יחסה של הפרשנות היהודית ללשונות יתרות במקרא: נפתולים בין התופעה לבין המינוח." **ליישב פשוט נש למקרא**; אסופת מחקרים בפרשנות המקרא. עורכים: שרה יפת וערן ויזל. ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק; האוניברסיטה העברית, תשעא. 275-317
 קומלוש, יהודה. **המקר אבאו רהתרגום**. תל-אביב: דביר, תשל"ג.
 קמחי, דוד (רד"ק). **ספּ הַהַשׁ רַשִּׁים**. ברלין, תר"ז.
 קמחי, יוסף. **ספּ הַהַגְלוּי** (מהדו' הינרי יוחנן מאתיואס). ברלין, תרמ"ז.
 קמין, שרה. **רש"י: פשו טן שלמ קראומדרש נש למקרא**. ירושלים: הוצאת ספרים ע"ש י"ל מאגנס, האוניברסיטה העברית, תשמ"ו.
 קמין, שרה. **ביניהו דיפלונוצ ריפברש נותהמקרא**. ירושלים: הוצאת ספרים ע"ש י"ל מאגנס, האוניברסיטה העברית, תשנ"א
 קרינסקי, יהודה ליב. **ח משה חומשיתו רהעפפירו שע לאב נעז ראמחוק קניהודה**. ווילנא, תרפ"ח.
 ראטה, משלם. **מבש רעזרא**; הערות והארות בפירוש הראב"ע על התנ"ך. ירושלים, תשכ"ח.
 רבינוביץ, חיים ראובן. "האבן עזרא ויחסו לפרשני המקרא". **ש נהבשנה** (תשכט) 207-217.
 רוזנברג, שלום. "על פרשנות המקרא בספר המורה". **מחק רירורש ליפבמחש בתישראל א** (תשמא) 85-157
 רוזנטאל, יהודה. "שאלות עתיקות בתנ"ך" *HUCA* (מדור עברי) 21 (1948) כט-צא.
 רחמן, יוספה. "[על] אוריאל סימון [ואחרים], 'שני פירושי ר' אברהם אבן עזרא לתרי עשר'". **מחק ריפביצירתו ש לאבר הפאב נעזרא**. עורך: ישראל לוין. תל-אביב: אוניברסיטת תל-אביב, תשנב. 207-214
 רטנר, דוב בר. **מזר שס דרעולם: גו תהמדר שעפמהבו אנההערו תש לז ובבר רטנר** (עורך: ש. מירסקי). ניו

- יורק: מכון טל אורת, תשכ"ו.
- רייפמן, יעקב. **עיוני פבמש נההראב"ע** (עורך: נפתלי בן-מנחם) ירושלים: מחברות לספרות, תשכ"ב רצהבי, יהודה. **אוצ רהלשו נהערבית בתפסי ר' סעדיה גאון**. רמת-גן: אוניברסיטת בר-אילן, תשמ"ו.
- רצהבי, יהודה. **תפסי רישע יקל רבסעדי ה' כת אבאלאסתצלאח** (קריית אונו: מכון משנת הרמב"ם, תשנ"ד).
- רצהבי, יהודה. **מפירוש ירב סעדיה גאון נלמקרא**. ירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תשס"ד.
- שגיא, אברהם. "הטקסט המקראי הקאנוני והאתגר ההרמנויטי: עיון ביקורתי בעקבות הרמב"ן". **דעת** 50-52 (תשסג) 121-141
- שוסמן, אביבה. "קווים אלגוריים, תיאולוגיים ופולמוסיים בפירוש לספר יונה מאת ר' תנחום הירושלמי". **פעמים** 59 (תשנ"ד) 85-104
- שורץ, מיכאל. **מו רהנבו כיפארב נומשהב נמימון**; תרגום מערבית לעברית והוסיף הערות ומפתחות. תל-אביב: אוניברסיטת תל-אביב, הפקולטה למדעי הרוח ע"ש לסטר וסאלי אנטין, בית הספר למדעי היהדות ע"ש חיים רוזנברג, 1996. <<http://press.tau.ac.il/perplexed>>
- שי, הדסה "תנחום בן יוסף הירושלמי". **פר קיבבעב ריתלתקופותיה**; אסופת זיכרון לשובה בהט. (עורך: משה בר-אשר). (ירושלים: האקדמיה ללשון העברית, תשנ"ז) 197-206
- שי, הדסה. **אלמרש דאלכאפי; המד ריךהמספיק**: מילונו של תנחום הירושלמי למשנה תורה לרמב"ם. ירושלים: האקדמיה הלאומית הישראלית למדעים, תשס"ה.
- שי, הדסה. **פירו שתנ חוקב ניוס תהירושל מילתרי-עשר**: ההדירה לפי כתב-יד בודלי שבאוקספורד, תרגמה לעברית והוסיפה מבוא והערות. ירושלים: הוצאת ספרים ע"ש י"ל מאגנס, האוניברסיטה העברית, תשנ"ב. שילת, יצחק. **איגרותהרמב"ם**. מעלה אדומים: הוצאת מעליות, תשמ"ז.
- שלוסברג, אליעזר. "הזיקה בין החזרה בתשובה לבין הגאולה במשנת רס"ג על רקע המצב החברתי בימיו", **בכל דר כיךדעהו** 3 (1996) 99-110.
- שלוסברג, אליעזר. "עיבוד מהמאה ה-16 לתרגומו של יפת בן עלי הקראי לספר מלאכי", **מחק ריפבערבית ובתר בוותהאס לאם** 1 (תשסא) 129-155
- שמלצר, מנחם חיים. **יצחקב נאבר הפאב נ עזרא; שירים**. ניו יורק: בית המדרש לרבנים באמריקה, תשמ"א. שעוועל, חיים דוב. **כתבירבי נומשהב ננחמ** וירושלים: מוסד הרב קוק, תשכ"ד.
- שפרבר, אלכסנדר. **כתב יד קדשבארמית**: על יסוד כתבי-יד וספרים עתיקים. לייזן: א. י. בריל, 1959-1973
- שרוטר, רוברט. **ספ רתשובות דו נשה לויבן לבר טע ל רביסעדיה גאון**. ברסלאו 1866
- שרים, יצחק. **ספ רהד רעזר**, פירוש יקר ונחמד, ביאור רחב ונפלא על דברי אברהם אבן עזרא על נביאים וכתובים. בני-ברק: יהדות התורה, תשמ"ט
- שר שלום, רחמים. "מניין השנים בעם ישראל בעבר ובהווה". **שמעתין** 54 (תשסד) 111-125
- תא-שמע, י"מ. "ביקורת המקרא". **כ נסתמחקרים**: עיונים בספרות הרבנית בימי הביניים. (ירושלים: מוסד ביאליק, תשס"ד) כרך א, פרק י"ט

Hebrew Critical Texts

דודו בכהונה גדולה¹⁴ בימי יהושע, גם בימי¹⁵
 בנו¹⁶ ונכדו,¹⁷ ככת' בספר עזרא.¹⁸ **(ב) כה** - כדרך
 "ואני¹⁹ אנה אני²⁰ בא" (בר' לו, ל). **(ג) ויהי**.²¹
לאמר במקום הזה - **לאמר** לעם הזה;²² מה שאין
 כן בתורה, כי²³ "וידבר השם אל משה לאמר"
 פירושו: דבר²⁴ למשה לאמר לו העניין; על כן
 כתוב²⁵ אחריו "דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת
 אליהם"²⁶. **(ד) העת** ²⁷ לבנות ולשבת בבתיים
ספונים? כמו "וספון בארו" (יר' כב, יד).
(ה) ועתה. דרכיכם²⁸ - בצרכי העולם.
(ו) זרעתם. והבא - דגן³⁰ אל הבית מעט. **אכול**
 - אתם אוכלים. **לשכרה** - כמו **לשבעה**; כדרך

¹⁴ גדולה נחסר
¹⁵ בימי נחסר
¹⁶ בנו אור בן בנו
¹⁷ ונכדו נ עבדו
¹⁸ דודו בכהונה גדולה בימי יהושע גם בימי בנו ונכדו ככת'
 בספר עזרא לחסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹⁹ ואני ב אני
²⁰ אני ר חסר
²¹ ויהי לחסר
²² הזה לחסר
²³ ויהי לאמר במקום הזה לאמר לעם הזה מה שאין כן
 בתורה כי א וזהו
²⁴ דבר אור חסר
²⁵ כתוב בדלנ חסר
²⁶ אליהם בד להם
²⁷ העת ד עת
²⁸ דרכיכם פ צרכיכם
²⁹ זרעתם לחסר
³⁰ דגן אור הדגן

ס פֶּרֶחַג י, פִּירוּשׁ רָגִיל

חגי פרק א

(א) בשנת¹ זה **דריוש** הפרסי, שאמר² קדמונינו
 שהוא בן אסתר³ המלכה. אמר⁴ רבי משה, כי
בחדש - תחלת החדש בכל מקום. ואם כן, למה
 כתוב⁵ **ביום אחד לחודש?** והוא **זרובבל** - בן רפיה
 אחי **שאלתיאל**⁶ מבני יכניה; ובעבור שגדלו דודו
שאלתיאל, קראו על שמו⁷ - 'בנו';⁸ כמו "ויהי לה
 לבן" (שמו' ב, י); וככה "ואלה"⁹ בני מיכל¹⁰ בת
 שאול" (השווה ש"ב כא, ח) - כי לא היה לה ולד,
 רק גדלה אותם. **ויהוצדק**¹¹ אבי **יהושע** היה **כהן**
גדול בבית ראשון כאשר נשרף, כי כן כתוב¹²
 (ראה דה"א ה, מא); על כן ירש בנו¹³ מעלתו
 בצאת ישראל מגלות בבל. על כן לא שימש עזרא

¹ בשנת לחסר
² שאמרו לנ אמרו
³ אסתר נחסר
⁴ אמר ל ויאמר
⁵ כתוב אדור כתב
⁶ שאלתיאל ל שלתיאל
⁷ שמו לנ שם
⁸ בנו אור חסר
⁹ ואלה אור אלה נחסר
¹⁰ מיכל אר מיכה
¹¹ ויהוצדק ד ויהוצק
¹² כן כתוב נ כתר (? כתוב?)
¹³ כן ירש בנו ו ירש בנוי (? אנר ירש בנו

(מש' ז, כ). ואם היה **נקוב**, לא ימצא בו⁵³ מאומה.
 (ז) **כה**.⁵⁴ **שימו** - אחר שתעשו מה שאצוה אליכם:⁵⁵ **(ח) עלו**. **(ט) פנה**⁵⁶ - עד עתה פניתם **אל הרבה, והבאתם** אותו אל בתיכם, ונפחתי בו⁵⁷ - באותו המעט, ואין בו ברכה. ועתה דעו יען מה - והט' :⁵⁸ למה היה כן? בעבור **ביתי אשר הוא**⁵⁹ **חרב, ואתם רצים** - כל אחד מכם הולך, ואין איש שם על לב חרבן **ביתי**, לבנותו. **(י) על כן**.⁶⁰ טעם **עליכם** - בעבור השמים, כדרך "והיו שמיך אשר על ראשך"⁶¹ (דב' כח, כג); או: **עליכם** - לבדכם, לא⁶² על יושבי⁶³ הארץ, **כלאו** תת הטל.⁶⁴ **(יא) ואקרא חורב** - דרך צחות, כדרך "יען ביתי אשר הוא⁶⁵ חרב" (לעיל, ט). וטעם⁶⁶ **ואקרא** - ואגזור.⁶⁷ **על הארץ** - עד [היותה]⁶⁸ כנחושה⁶⁹ (ע"פ וי' כו, יט). **ועל ההרים** - מגד

"ואכלתם ולא תשבעו" (וי' כו, כו); כי יש זמן³¹ שבני אדם אוכלים הרבה ואינם שבעים. וככה **שתה** הרבה³² - ואין שכרות; לא שיעבר החק להשתכר. [ודע],³³ כי מלת **חם** קשה; כי הנה כתוב "חם לבני"³⁴ (תה' לט, ד), והוא האמת; "וחם להם" (קה' ד, יא) - צריך להיות³⁵ האויר מחמם, וככה **ואין לחום לו**. **וחום** - במשקל [יקורי],³⁶ מפעלי הכפל. וזה פירושו³⁷ [מפיו]:³⁸ "וחם"³⁹ הוא מן 'חמס',⁴⁰ והפתח⁴¹ יוכיח, כי כל פעלי⁴² הכפל נפתחין כשתחסר⁴³ אות הכפל; כמו "אם תם הכסף" (בר' מז, יח), שהוא מן⁴⁴ 'תמס'. ולא נוכל לומר⁴⁵ שהוא⁴⁶ כמו "ושב...⁴⁷ את שבותך"⁴⁸ (דב' ל, ג); כי⁴⁹ "ושב" הוא קמוץ, ו"חם"⁵⁰ הוא פתח. **צרו**⁵¹ - כמו⁵² "צרו הכסף"

³¹ זמן ל חסר

³² הרבה נ חסר

³³ [ודע] מפ יודע (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)

³⁴ לבי דונר לבי בקרבי (המשך הפסוק)

³⁵ להיות אנ להיותו

³⁶ [קור] מבפ סור (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)

³⁷ פירושו אדור פירושי ל פי נ פירוש

³⁸ [מפיו] מ מפניו (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)

³⁹ וחם ו חום

⁴⁰ הוא מן חמס ל הוא חמס נ מן המים הוא

⁴¹ והפתח אור חסר

⁴² פעלי א בעלי נ חסר

⁴³ כשתחסר ל כשיחסר

⁴⁴ מן אדור חסר

⁴⁵ לומר א לאמר

⁴⁶ שהוא א(?) דד שהוא כמו שב שפעמים שהוא פועל עומד

שהוא שב בעצמו ופעמים שהוא פועל יוצא ו שהוא כמו שב

שפעמים שהוא פועל עומד ושהוא פעל יוצא ל שהוא כמו שב

שפעמים שהוא פועל עומד ופעמים שהוא פועל יוצא נ

שהוא כמו שב שפעמים הוא פועל עומד שהוא שב בעצמו

ופעמים שהוא פועל יוצא

⁴⁷ ושב ל ושב ייי

⁴⁸ שבותך ו שבותו

⁴⁹ כי ר כי ושב את שבותך

⁵⁰ וחם נ ואם

⁵¹ פתח אדולר פתוח

⁵² כמו נ הוא כמו

⁵³ ימצא בו או ימצא בה ר ימצאכן (?) בה

⁵⁴ כה ל חסר

⁵⁵ אליכם אור עליכם ל לכם

⁵⁶ פנה אר חסר

⁵⁷ ונפחתי בו ל ונפחתי נ והפחתי

⁵⁸ מה והט' אור ביתי

⁵⁹ אשר הוא בד שהוא

⁶⁰ על כן ל חסר

⁶¹ ראשך ד ראשך נחשת (המשך הפסוק)

⁶² לא נ ולא

⁶³ יושבי אור כל יושבי

⁶⁴ כלאו תת הטל או כלאו מלתת טל דד כלאו מלתת הטל נ

כל אותות הטל פ כל אותה הטל (תוקן ע"פ פ²: כלאו תת

הטל)

⁶⁵ אשר הוא בנ שהוא

⁶⁶ וטעם נ וטעם ואין

⁶⁷ ואגזור ר ואגזור (?)

⁶⁸ עד [היותה] במפ עד היתה ל להיותה נ על היותה (תוקן

ע"פ אור)

⁶⁹ כנחושה ר כחושה

(א) **בשביעי** - בחדש השביעי. (ב) **אמר נא**⁸⁷ - לעולם חולקים כבוד למלכות על הכהונה ועל הנבואה; כמו יהושע לפני כלב (ראה במ' יד, ו). רק בדברי [השם]⁸⁸ הדבר הפוך: כלב קודם (שם, ל); ואע"פ שהיה יהושע⁸⁹ גדול מכלב⁹⁰ בשנים, הקדימו השם בדברו בו, בעבור "ויהס כלב" (במ' יג, ל) ולא 'ויהס'⁹¹ יהושע. וכת' "אחרי שאול ואחרי שמואל" (ש"א יא, ז); "המה [יָסַד דויד]⁹² ושמואל" (דה"א ט, כב). וככה **זרובבל** לפני יהושע, שהוא מבני יהויכין (ראה דה"א ג, יז-יט). (ג) **מי בכס** - אתם, הזקנים. (ד) **ועתה**.⁹³ **ועשו**⁹⁴ - דבק עם תחלת הפסוק הבא אחריו, והוא (ה) **את הדבר**; והטעם: דברי התורה לשמור [ולעשות].⁹⁵ **ורוחי** - נבואתי. (ו) **כי עוד אחת** - פליאה אעשה, **מעט היא**⁹⁷ בעיני לעשותה; או: **למעט** ימים תהיה. וטעם 'להרעיש' - דרך משל. או כמשמעו: שישמע רעם ורעש, וירגזו כל האדם שהם **בחרבה** או⁹⁸ בספינות **הים**, ויביאו מנחות⁹⁹ לביתי. (ח) **לי** - בכל מקום שלי הוא; ואני

ההרים⁷⁰; כמו 'ומראש'⁷¹ הררי קדם וממגד גבעת עולם"⁷² (דב' לג, טו). **ועל כל**⁷³ **יגיע כפים** - כי לא יצליחו ויגעו לריק (ע"פ יש' סה, כג) המשקים מימי⁷⁴ באר; לא יועילו. (יב) **וישמע בקול**⁷⁵ - שהם חייבים לבנות בית השם, אפילו לא התנבא על כן. **ועל דברי** - ועוד על דברי⁷⁶. (יג) **ויאמר**.⁷⁷ **מלאך השם**⁷⁸ - שליח. **במלאכות** - בשליחות השם; **ומלאך** - מלה 'רביעיה'⁷⁹; או המ"ם נוסף; או מגז'⁸⁰ "מלאכה" (להלן, יד). (יד) **ויער** - היה ראוי שיאמר⁸¹ 'ויער', כמו 'ויקם'⁸² (שמי מ, יח); 'וישב' (בר' יד, טז), רק נפתח מפני העי"ן. **פחת** - כמו "הקריבהו נא לפחתך" (מלי א, ח); וכמהו "להיות פחס"⁸³ (נחמי ה, יד). [ובלשון]⁸⁴ פרס **פחת** נקרא⁸⁵ "התרשתא" (עז' ב, סג). (טו) **ביום עשרים** - דבק עם 'ויעשו מלאכה" (לעיל, יד), אע"פ שיש הפסק.⁸⁶

חגי פרק ב

⁷⁰ ההרים נ הרים

⁷¹ ומראש ל מראש

⁷² עולם אור חסר

⁷³ כל נ כי (?)

⁷⁴ מימי ל ממימי (כך ברד"ק) נ ממי

⁷⁵ בקול ל הקול

⁷⁶ ועוד על דברי אור ועוד כל דברי ל חסר

⁷⁷ ויאמר ל חסר

⁷⁸ השם ל חסר

⁷⁹ רביעיה אולנר רביעית

⁸⁰ או מגז' אדור ומגזרתו ל ומגזר' (?) נ ומגזרת

⁸¹ שיאמר ל לומר

⁸² ויקם ד ויקח

⁸³ פחס נ פחת

⁸⁴ [ובלשון] במפ ולשון (תנוק ע"פ אדולנר)

⁸⁵ נקרא ל הנקרא

⁸⁶ הפסק אר הפסח (?)

⁸⁷ נא לנ בא

⁸⁸ [השם] במפ חסר (תנוק ע"פ אדולנר)

⁸⁹ יהושע ר חסר

⁹⁰ מכלב נ מכל

⁹¹ ויהס ל חסר

⁹² [יָסַד דויד] מ יסוד פ יסוד דוד (תנוק ע"פ אדולנר)

⁹³ ועתה ל חסר

⁹⁴ ועשו אור עשו

⁹⁵ [ולעשות] מ לעשות (תנוק ע"פ אדולנר)

⁹⁶ כי עוד ל חסר

⁹⁷ היא לנ הוא

⁹⁸ או אדונר גם ל שהם

⁹⁹ ויביאו מנחות נ ויבאו מנחה

"למלוך" דבק עם "בשנה הרביעית" (שם); כי אין מנהג ישראל [למנות לחדשים, כי אם לשנים, וככה הוא: בשנה הרביעית]¹²³ למלך שלמה על ישראל בחדש זיו,¹²⁴ הוא החדש השני,¹²⁵ שהוא אייר.¹²⁶ **(יא) כה. הכהנים** - הם¹²⁷ מורי התורה. ובימי חגי היו מקריבים העולות על המזבח תשע עשרה שנה טרם נבנה הבית. ובספר דניאל נתבאר זה בפירוש (ט,א). ועתה שם היה¹²⁸ בכלל **הכהנים** יהושע, שהוא הכהן [הגדול],¹²⁹ ותורה¹³⁰ יבקשו מפיהו (ע"פ מל' ב,ז); ולא יטעה להשיב. וראינו¹³¹ על דרך הפשט, כי חגי לא¹³² אמר לכהנים שלא תורו¹³³ תורת אמת, רק אמר "כן העם הזה"¹³⁴ (להלן, יד). **(יב) הן. בשר קדש** - כמשמעו,¹³⁶ **קדש** ממש. והפך **יקדש**:¹³⁷ "יטמא" (להלן, יג); ואם **יקדש** - למה ישנה, כי זה הכתוב אחר¹³⁸ זה!¹³⁹ וכתוב "ולא תטמאו..."

¹²¹ עם לחסר
¹²² למלוך ו לבנות (? למוות?)
¹²³ כי אין מנהג ישראל [למנות לחדשים, כי אם לשנים, וככה הוא: בשנה הרביעית] **במפ** כי אין מנהג ישראל **לנ חסר** (השמטת הדומות) (תוקן ע"פ **אדור**)
¹²⁴ זיו נחסר
¹²⁵ השניני ו השנית
¹²⁶ אייר **אור חסר** (תוקן ע"י א²)
¹²⁷ הם **אור חסר**
¹²⁸ היה **לנ** יהיה
¹²⁹ [הגדול] ד גדול **מפר חסר** (תוקן ע"פ **אבולנפ**)
¹³⁰ ותורה **לנ** והתורה
¹³¹ וראינו נ וראינו כי
¹³² לא **אור חסר**
¹³³ תורו **אולנר** הורו
¹³⁴ הזה **אור חסר**
¹³⁵ הן **ל חסר**
¹³⁶ כמשמעו **ל חסר**
¹³⁷ יקדש **ל** היקדש
¹³⁸ כי זה הכתוב אחר **ל** זה הכתוב אחרי **נ** זה הכתוב כי זה הכתוב אחר

אעשה¹⁰⁰ פלא,¹⁰¹ לשום בלב הכל להביא **הזהב** אל ביתי. **(ט) גדול** - אמר יפת,¹⁰² **כי הבית הראשון** עמד ארבע מאות שנה¹⁰³ ועש' שנים,¹⁰⁴ **והבית השני**¹⁰⁵ עמד ארבע מאות ועשרים שנה.¹⁰⁶ וכן¹⁰⁷ היה בימי הירודוס,¹⁰⁸ כאשר כתוב בספר יוסף בן גוריון. ור' משה¹⁰⁹ אמר כי זה¹¹⁰ היה על תנאי, אלו היו צדיקים¹¹¹ גמורים, כאשר אמר זכריה "והיה אם שמע תשמעון"¹¹² (ו,טו). **(י) בעשרים**. אמר ר' ישועה,¹¹³ כי זה **תשיעי**¹¹⁴ הוא להתחלת¹¹⁵ מלכות **דריוש**, ולא ידענו מתי היה תחלת מלכותו.¹¹⁶ ולא דבר נכונה, כי הנה כתוב בנבואת זכריה "לחדש התשיעי בכסליו"¹¹⁷ (ז,א), והנה החשבון מניסן. וככה "חודש"¹¹⁸ זיו" (מ"א ו,א) הוא אייר,¹¹⁹ כי "החודש השניני" (שם) אינו דבק¹²⁰ עם¹²¹ "למלוך"¹²² שלמה" (שם), רק

¹⁰⁰ אעשה **ר חסר**
¹⁰¹ פלא **נ חסר**
¹⁰² יפת נ ר' יפת
¹⁰³ שנה **ר חסר**
¹⁰⁴ ארבע מאות שנה ועש' שנים **ל** ת"כ שנה נ ארבע מאות ועשרים שנה
¹⁰⁵ השני **אר שני**
¹⁰⁶ ועשרים שנה **ב** ועשרים **ד חסר**
¹⁰⁷ וכן **ד** וכך
¹⁰⁸ הירודוס **זנפ** הורודוס **לנ** הירודוס
¹⁰⁹ משה **ו חסר**
¹¹⁰ כי זה **ב** שהוא
¹¹¹ צדיקים **ו** צדיקי
¹¹² תשמעון **אבדונר** תשמעו **ל** תשמען (?תשמעו?)
¹¹³ ר' ישועה **ב** ר' משה ישועה **פ** ר' ישעיה (? אולי תוקן ע"י פ²?)
¹¹⁴ תשיעי **אולנר** עשירי
¹¹⁵ להתחלת **אולנר** לתחלת
¹¹⁶ תחלת מלכותו **בדנפ** תחלת חודש מלכותו
¹¹⁷ לחדש התשיעי בכסליו **ו** בחודש התשיעי לכסליו
¹¹⁸ חודש **ו** החדש
¹¹⁹ אייר **בדנ** חודש אייר **ר** תואר
¹²⁰ דבק **בד** דבוק

ועל¹⁶² כן צוה הכתוב "כמעשה¹⁶³ ארץ מצרים"¹⁶⁴
 (וי' יח, ג). והנה [השאלה]¹⁶⁵ על **בשר קדש** –
 שכת' "וכל אשר¹⁶⁶ יגע בבשרה יקדש" (וי' ו, כ);
 אם נגע הכלי,¹⁶⁷ הוא **הכנף** ששם הבשר –
 [הוא]¹⁶⁸ **הקדש** - **אל הלחם** או לאחד¹⁶⁹
 הנזכרים, **היקדש**? אז יענו¹⁷⁰ **הכהנים**
ויאמרו: לא! [ונכונה]¹⁷² דברו, אחרי שלא נגע
 בכל אלה לבד הכנף, ולא **בשר הקדש** ממש נגע
 בהם.¹⁷³ ואין¹⁷⁴ הדין¹⁷⁵ [נותן שיקדשו],¹⁷⁶ כי לא
 נגעו **בבשר קדש**.¹⁷⁷ (יג) **[ויאמר]**.¹⁷⁸ טעם **בכל**
אלה - באחד **מאלה**; כמו "בן אתונות"¹⁷⁹ (זכ' ט,
 ט); ורבים כאלה:¹⁸⁰ "ויקבר בערי גלעד"¹⁸¹
 (שוי' יב, ז). **(יז) ויען**. הטעם: שהיו ישראל
 מביאין¹⁸² קרבן חטאת על שגגתם, היו

והייתם קדושים" (וי' יא, מג-מד); "והיא
 מתקדשת מטומאתה" (ש"ב יא, ד). ומלת "פן
 תקדש"¹⁴⁰ (דב' כב, ט) - קדש ממש, כי יתערב
 הכל¹⁴¹ וישוב קדש אם לא יוציאו הקדש¹⁴²
 בזמנו, כאשר באר זה¹⁴³ מנחם בן סרוק¹⁴⁴
 הספרדי באר [היטב].¹⁴⁵ ומלת "קדשה" (ברי'
 לח, כא) - מתקדשת ומזמנת עצמה לכל חפץ,
 ואין¹⁴⁶ פירוש המלה 'טמאה'. גם "קדש"¹⁴⁷ (דב'
 כג, יח) - כמעשה המצרים¹⁴⁸ בדברי הבתולות: כי
 תולדת המצרים¹⁴⁹ היא רפה¹⁵⁰ מפני היאור,
 המרבה לחה שלהם; על כן אין בהם¹⁵¹ כח,
 כשהן¹⁵² קרובי¹⁵³ לארבעים¹⁵⁴ או יותר, לבעול
 הבתולה,¹⁵⁵ עד שיבא¹⁵⁶ נער מבחוריהם¹⁵⁷
 וישכב¹⁵⁸ עמה מעט¹⁵⁹ עד שיהיה הפתח פתוח;
 והוא נקרא¹⁶⁰ 'קדש', דרך¹⁶¹ זנות: אומנותו בכך.

¹⁶¹ דרך אור דבר
¹⁶² ועל נ על
¹⁶³ כמעשה ר במעשה את
¹⁶⁴ מצרים בד מצרים וגוי אולנר מצרים אשר ישבתם בה
 לא תעשו (המשך הפסוק)
¹⁶⁵ [השאלה] מ הסלאה פ הסאלה (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר²)
¹⁶⁶ אשר פ אסר(?) אפר(?) (תוקן ע"פ פ²: אשר)
¹⁶⁷ הכלי אר הכל
¹⁶⁸ [הוא] מ או (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
¹⁶⁹ לאחד לנ אל אחד
¹⁷⁰ אז יענו דל אז ענו נ ויענו
¹⁷¹ ויאמרו ד ואמרו
¹⁷² [ונכונה] מ נכונה (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
¹⁷³ נגע בהם פ בהם נגע
¹⁷⁴ ואין בד והוא
¹⁷⁵ הדין א דין
¹⁷⁶ [נותן שיקדשו] אבדומפר חסר נ שיקדשו (תוקן ע"פ ל)
¹⁷⁷ קדש א קודש ר קדוש
¹⁷⁸ [ויאמר] מבפ ויען לחסר (תוקן ע"פ אדונר)
¹⁷⁹ בן אתונות א כן (?) אתונות ל ועל עיר בן אתונות נ ועיר
 בן אתונות
¹⁸⁰ כאלה בד כמוהו
¹⁸¹ ויקבר בערי גלעד ר ויקבר
 בערי גלעד
¹⁸² מביאין לפ מביאים אבדונפ² המביאים

¹³⁹ תטמאו ו יטמאו
¹⁴⁰ פן תקדש ב פן תקדש את המלאה ל פן תקדש המלאה
¹⁴¹ הכל לחסר
¹⁴² הקדש נ קדש
¹⁴³ זה נחסר
¹⁴⁴ סרוק נ שרוק
¹⁴⁵ [היטב] מ הטיב (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר) ו הטב
¹⁴⁶ ואין ו שויו (?)
¹⁴⁷ קדש ו מלת קודש ר מלת קדש
¹⁴⁸ המצרים אור ארץ מצרים נ המצריים
¹⁴⁹ המצרים אולנר מצרים
¹⁵⁰ רפה אולנר רפה מאד
¹⁵¹ בהם נ להם
¹⁵² כשהן אדור כשהם ל כשאין
¹⁵³ קרובי אבדולנ(?) ר קרוב
¹⁵⁴ לארבעים ר לארבעים שנה
¹⁵⁵ הבתולה ל הבתולות
¹⁵⁶ שיבא אדולנ שיביאו ר שיביא
¹⁵⁷ מבחוריהם אדור חסר
¹⁵⁸ לארבעים או יותר לבעול הבתולה עד שיבא נער
 מבחוריהם וישכב ב חסר
¹⁵⁹ מעט ב חסר אדולנר מעט מעט
¹⁶⁰ נקרא ו הנקי אלנ הנקרא ר הנקראת

לשבתם, ובית השם חרב. על כן אחריו (טו)
 ועתה²⁰⁶ שימו נא לבבכם.²⁰⁷ וטעם "ומעלה"
 (שם) - היום הבא אחר זה; כמו "מבן עשרים
 שנה ומעלה" (במ' א, ג). ותחסר²⁰⁸ מלת יכ"י.
 מטרים²⁰⁹ שום אבן. וטרם²¹⁰ ישרת בעבור אחר,
 וכן הוא:²¹¹ מטרים (טז) היותם האבנים יסוד
 ההיכל²¹² - כל בא אל²¹³ ערמת דגן,²¹⁴ ויחשבו
 המְחַשְּׁבִים²¹⁵ שיהיו בה²¹⁶ עשרים מדה, והנה
 חציה, כי המְאָרָה היתה בה. מלת לחשוף -
 כמו²¹⁷ "לחשוף²¹⁸ מים מגבא" (יש' ל, יד), כמו
 'לדלות'. והנה המארה - שימצאו בה²¹⁹ פחות
 מהחצי שיחשבו. (יז) הכיתי. כבר הזכרתי בספר
 עמוס (ד, ט), כי מכת²²⁰ השדפון - בקמה, כמו
 "שדופות קדים" (בר' מא, כג), וירקון²²¹ -
 שמוריק; והעד כי כן²²² הוא, שהזכיר הברד.²²³

מזידים¹⁸³: אשמים בדברים קשים שהם
 חמורים,¹⁸⁴ ולא היו [נזהרים]¹⁸⁵ מהם, ויביאו
 קרבן על דבר שנעלם; והם עושים שלא כהוגן
 בדעתם¹⁸⁶ בזדון. גם הכהנים - דבר הטהרה
 והטמאה. על כן אמר חגי:¹⁸⁷ כן העם הזה - הם
 הכהנים, וכן¹⁸⁸ הגוי הזה - הם ישראל. ופי'
 זה:¹⁸⁹ וכן כל מעשה ידיהן,¹⁹⁰ ואשר יקריבו
 במזבח¹⁹¹ לפני, וזהו¹⁹² שם, טמא הוא. והנה
 התברר, כי אין כח¹⁹³ בקדש לקדש מה שלא היה
 קדש על יד¹⁹⁴ מגע¹⁹⁵ אמצעי, ככח¹⁹⁶ טמא¹⁹⁷
 נפש¹⁹⁸ לְטִמְאָה. וזה היה דרך²⁰⁰ משל, כדרך
 משל נתן²⁰¹ אל דוד, שתַּפְסֹו בדבריו²⁰² ואמר לו:
 "אתה האיש!" (ש"ב יב, ז). ויען - גם נכון הוא²⁰³
 להיות²⁰⁴ המשל²⁰⁵ בעבור שהם בונים בתים

²⁰⁵ המשל אולנפר זה המשל
²⁰⁶ ועתה לחשר
²⁰⁷ לבבכם פ לבבם (? לבבם?)
²⁰⁸ ותחסר נ ותחת
²⁰⁹ מטרים פ חשר (הושלם ע"י פ²: מטרים)
²¹⁰ וטרם אור וטעם
²¹¹ וכן הוא לנ וכן הוא מהיותם
²¹² ההיכל לנ האהל ההיכל
²¹³ אל נ על
²¹⁴ דגן אור הדגן ל חטים דגן
²¹⁵ ויחשבו המְחַשְּׁבִים או וחשבו המחשבים ר וחשבו
 המשכים
²¹⁶ שיהיו בה א שהיו בה ו שיהיו בזה ר שיהו בה
²¹⁷ לחשוף כמו בד חשר (השמטת הדומות)
²¹⁸ לחשוף ל ולחשוף (כנה"מ)
²¹⁹ בה ו בזה
²²⁰ מכת אור המכת
²²¹ וירקון ל וידקון
²²² כן אר כן
²²³ כמו שדופות קדים וירקון שמוריק והעד כי כן הוא
 שהזכיר הברד נחשר

¹⁸³ מזידים אור מזרים (? מזידים?) נ מביאים
¹⁸⁴ חמורים נ המורים
¹⁸⁵ [נזהרים] אבדומפר נזכרים (תוקן ע"פ לנ)
¹⁸⁶ בדעתם ו ודעתם נ ברעתם ר כרעתם (? כדעתם?)
¹⁸⁷ חגי ו חגאי
¹⁸⁸ וכן נ כן
¹⁸⁹ על כן אמר חגי כן העם הזה הם הכהנים וכן הגוי הזה
 הם ישראל ופי' זה ל על כן חגי כן ופי' זה וכן הגוי הזה הם
 ישראל הכהנים כן העם הזה
¹⁹⁰ מעשה ידיהן בוד מעשי ידיהם אלנר מעשה ידיהם
 (כנה"מ)
¹⁹¹ במזבח ל על המזבח נ המזבח
¹⁹² וזהו ו וזהוא
¹⁹³ כח נ חשר
¹⁹⁴ על יד בודלנ על ידי
¹⁹⁵ מגע ו מגיע ל חשר
¹⁹⁶ אמצעי ככח אור אמצעי בכח פ אמצעו ככה
¹⁹⁷ טמא א שמא (?)
¹⁹⁸ נפש נ חשר
¹⁹⁹ לְטִמְאָה ו למת
²⁰⁰ דרך א חשר
²⁰¹ נתן ר חשר
²⁰² בדבריו נ בבגדיו
²⁰³ הוא ל היה
²⁰⁴ להיות א להיותי

וטעם²²⁴ ואת²²⁵ כל מעשה ידיכם²²⁶ - כי²²⁷ מארת השם כללה הכל,²²⁸ הפך "וברכך ה' אלהיך בכל²²⁹ מעשה ידיך²³⁰ אשר תעשה" (השווה דב' יד, כט; טו, יח; כד, יט). ואין אתכם אלי - הטעם: לא שבתם אלי. והנה התברר כי השם יסרם,²³¹ אולי ישובו מדרכם הרעה²³² (ע"פ יונה ג, י), ולא שבו; על כן נתן להם²³³ המשל הנזכר. (יח) שימו. הנה הזכיר למעלה "ויעשו מלאכה...²³⁴ בששי"²³⁵ (א, יד-טו), וזה²³⁶ היה להביא האבנים ולהיותם²³⁷ מגוררות ומתוקנות. ובתשיעי החלו לשום²³⁸ "אבן אל אבן"²³⁹ (לעיל, טו) - ליסד.²⁴⁰ ולמ"ד למן היום - נוסף, כלמ"ד "השלישי לאבשלום"²⁴¹ (דה"א ג, ב). (יט) העוד - הה"א לתימה, ובעבור אות²⁴² הגרון נפתח, כמשפט. וזה כמו²⁴³ "העוד אביכם חי?"

(ברי מג, ז). והנה היה הזרע זרוע בארץ;²⁴⁴ והנה הטעם: אין לכם אחד במגורה - מקומות שישימו [שם]²⁴⁵ הדגן²⁴⁶ בבתים; כמו "נהרסו ממגורות" (יואל א, יז). כי בעבור שהכם בברד (ראה לעיל, יז), לא היה להם, רק מעט. והנה הטעם: אם אכה אתכם זאת השנה, תמותו. והנה החלוקתם ליסד²⁴⁷ הבית, אז [תחל]²⁴⁸ הברכה בכל.²⁴⁹ מן היום²⁵⁰ - אשר יסד ההיכל, אברך; וזהו "מן היום²⁵¹ הזה²⁵² ומעלה" האמור למעלה (לעיל, יח). והזכיר מפרי העץ הנזכרים: הגפן והתאנה והרמון והזית. וטעם לא נשא - ציץ או²⁵³ עלה ואף כי²⁵⁴ פרי, עד עתה לא נשא.²⁵⁵ (כ) ויהי.²⁵⁶ שנית - כי ביום אחד התנבא²⁵⁷ פעמים. (כא) אמור.²⁵⁸ מרעיש - דרך משל; כאשר אומרים²⁵⁹ בימים האלה בארץ ישמעאל בבוא שמועות רעות ממלחמות: נהפך העולם. (כב) והפכתי - כי מלחמות רבות היו עתידות בימי הנביא, בהנבאו להיותם. וידענו כי כן היה,

וטעם ל הטעם²²⁴
ואת בד את (כנה"מ) וחסר²²⁵
ידיכם אולנר ידיהם²²⁶
כי ל חסר²²⁷
כללה הכל ל קללה הכל נ קללה²²⁸
בכל ל על כל²²⁹
מעשה ידיך א חסר (כנה"מ בדב' טו: יח) ומעשה ידך²³⁰
(כנה"מ בדב' יד, כט)
יסרם בחסר דנ ייסרם ר צורם²³¹
מדרכם הרעה ל מדרכיהם הרעה נ מדרכיהם הרעים פ²³²
מיידיכם (?) הרעה
להם א חסר²³³
ויעשו מלאכה ד יעשו (?) ועשו? מלאכה ר חסר²³⁴
בששי לנ בשש (?)²³⁵
וזה א והז²³⁶
האבנים ולהיותם לנ אבנים להיותם²³⁷
לשום אב לשים (?)²³⁸
אל אבן אור חסר נ על אבן²³⁹
ליסד ד ליסד הבית²⁴⁰
לאבשלום לנ לאבשלום בן מעכה (המשך הפסוק)²⁴¹
אות נ חסר²⁴²
כמו ב כמי ל כמלת²⁴³

²⁴⁴ בארץ ל על הארץ
²⁴⁵ [שם] מפ בה (תוקן ע"פ בדלנפ?)
²⁴⁶ הדגן נ הדגים
²⁴⁷ ולמ"ד למן היום נוסף כלמ"ד השלישי לאבשלום...
והנה החלוקתם ליסד אור חסר (השמטת הדומות)
²⁴⁸ [תחל] מ החל (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפ?) (ר)
²⁴⁹ בכל ל בכלי (?) בכל?)
²⁵⁰ היום נ היום הזה
²⁵¹ היום ל חסר
²⁵² הזה אור חסר
²⁵³ או בד ולא
²⁵⁴ כי פ כל
²⁵⁵ נשא או נשא פרי
²⁵⁶ ויהי ל חסר
²⁵⁷ התנבא אול נתנבא
²⁵⁸ אמור ל חסר נ אחר (?) אמר?
²⁵⁹ אומרים נ אומר (?) אומר?

רק לא מצאנו²⁶⁰ ספרים לקדמונים²⁶¹ לדעת
 המלחמות שהיו בימי דריוש זה²⁶² הפרסי ובימי
 ארתחששתא²⁶³ המולך²⁶⁴ אחריו. ובימיהם היה
 זרובבל [הנשיא]²⁶⁵ ליהודי, כי הוא ששבצר,
 בראיות גמורות מן המקרא.²⁶⁶ **(כג) ביום.**²⁶⁷
אקחד - כדרך²⁶⁸ "ישלח ממרום יקחני" (תהי'
 יח, יז). **ושמתיד** שְמוֹר, כאלו היית **חותם** על יד
 ימיני (ע"פ יר' כב, כד); וזה דרך משל.

²⁶⁰מצאנו א מאצנו

²⁶¹לקדמונים בד הקדמונים

²⁶²זה לנ חסר

²⁶³ארתחששתא אב ארתחששתא ד ארתחשתא

²⁶⁴המולך ופ המלך א המלך המלך (אולי כוונתו : המלך

המלך)

²⁶⁵[הנשיא] מ הנביא (תוקן ע"פ אבולנפ)

²⁶⁶והזכיר מפרי העץ הנזכרים הגפן והתאנה והרמון

והזית... כי הוא ששבצר בראיות גמורות מן המקרא ד

חסר

²⁶⁷ביום לחסר

²⁶⁸כדרך א בדרך

מוציאים²⁸⁶ ספר קדמון שהיה מספר מה
 [שהתחדש]²⁸⁷ בימים ההם ממלחמות,²⁸⁸ היינו
 ממששין כעורים²⁸⁹ (ע"פ ישי נט, ל), לומר:²⁹⁰ אולי
 בעבור [זה היתה]²⁹¹ הנבואה; ועתה אין לנו על
 מה נשען. וראיתי ספרי חכמים היו²⁹² בצרפת,
 [שפירשו]²⁹³ המראות²⁹⁴ שראה²⁹⁵ זכריה
 אחרנית, על דבר [שכבר]²⁹⁶ עבר בימי זה הנביא:
 כמו האיפה (ראה זכי ה, ו) - כי בעבורה גלה²⁹⁷
 יהודה אל בבל; ושני המקלות (ראה זכי יא, ז) -
 פירשום²⁹⁸ שהם ישראל ויהודה;²⁹⁹ והכתיב אמר
 "רעה³⁰⁰ את צאן ההריגה" (שם, ד) - והנה
 הנבואה לעתיד היתה בימי הנביא!³⁰¹ ועתה אחל
 לפרש:

זכריה פרק א

(א) **בחדש. לאמר** - לישראל. והנכון: **לאמר** -
 לנביא. (ב) **קצף**. כי הנביא - כנגד כל ישראל,

ס פְּרִזְכָּרְיָה, פִּירוּשׁ רְגִיל

הקדמה

ספר זכריה: מעלות הנבואה הם רבות,²⁶⁹ ואין
 דרך לספרם; כי כח הנשמוי ההגונות²⁷⁰
 המקבלות כח²⁷¹ רוח הקדש להנבא אינינו²⁷² על
 דרך אחת.²⁷³ ובהיות הכבוד עם²⁷⁴ ישראל, בטרם
 שגלו,²⁷⁵ אין צורך לפרש הנבואה; כמו "הנה"²⁷⁶
 בן נולד לבית²⁷⁷ דוד יאשיהו שמוי" (מ"א יג, ב),
 והיה²⁷⁸ הדבר מתבאר מעצמו.²⁷⁹ ואחר הגלות הן
 מראות²⁸⁰ וצריכות פירוש, כמראות²⁸¹ דניאל; כי
 לולי²⁸² שהמלאך מפרש,²⁸³ לא היה דניאל יודעם,
 ואף כי אחרים. וככה מראות **זכריה**: ואשר פירש
 המלאך הדובר בו²⁸⁴ במראות הלילה - הם
 ידועות, ואשר²⁸⁵ לא פירש - הם סתומות
 ונעלמות מעיני המשכילים. ואילו היינו

²⁶⁹ הם רבות **אולנר** רבות **בד** רבים
²⁷⁰ ההגונות **אור חסר**
²⁷¹ כח **אור חסר**
²⁷² אינינו **פ** אינו (**תוקן ע"י פ**)
²⁷³ אחת **אבדלנפר** אחד
²⁷⁴ עם **אופר** על (**תוקן ע"י פ**)
²⁷⁵ שגלו ל גלותם
²⁷⁶ [הנה] **מפ** הן (**תוקן ע"י אבדולנר**)
²⁷⁷ לבית נ לבן
²⁷⁸ והיה ר והיות
²⁷⁹ מעצמו ר בעצמו
²⁸⁰ מראות א מראה ל המראות
²⁸¹ פירוש כמראות א לפרש במראות ו במראות ר כמראות
 (?)
²⁸² לולי ר למי
²⁸³ מפרש **אור** היה מפרש
²⁸⁴ **בו אדר** בי כי **ונ** בי
²⁸⁵ ואשר **אבדור** אשר **לנ** ואת אשר

²⁸⁶ מוצאים ו מוצאים
²⁸⁷ [שהתחדש] מ שתתחדש **אור** התחדש (**תוקן ע"י בדלנפ**)
²⁸⁸ ממלחמות נ חסר
²⁸⁹ ממששין כעורים **אור** ממששים כעורים קיר (**המשך**)
²⁹⁰ לומר **אולר** לאמר נ אולי לאמר
²⁹¹ [זה היתה] **מפ** זאת (**תוקן ע"י אבדולנפ**)
²⁹² ספרי חכמים היו **או** ספרי חכמים אשר היו **בד** ספרי
 חכמים שהיו **לנ** חכמים היום
²⁹³ [שפירשו] מ שפירש **פ** שפירשי (**תוקן ע"י אבדול**)
²⁹⁴ המראות **לנ** במראות
²⁹⁵ שראה ו שואה (?)
²⁹⁶ [שכבר] מ שעבר (**תוקן ע"י אבדולנפ**)
²⁹⁷ בעבורה גלה **לנ** בעבור הגלה **לנ** בעבורה הגלה
²⁹⁸ פירשום **בד** פירשו
²⁹⁹ ישראל ויהודה נ יהודה וישראל
³⁰⁰ רעה **א** ערה **א** וארעה
³⁰¹ הנביא **לנ** זה הנביא

על כן: **וישובו**, ויודו. (ז) **ביום**³¹⁸ - עתה יחלו
 מראות הנבואה. (ח) **ראיתי**. כתוב בתורה "הוא
 ישלח מלאכו לפניך" (בר' כד, ז); "וילכו"³¹⁹ שני
 המלאכים סדמה" (השווה בר' יח, כב ויט, א);
 וכתוב "המלאך הגואל אותי" (בר' מח, טז);
 "וישלח מלאך"³²⁰ (במ' כ, טז);³²¹ "הנה אנכי
 שולח מלאך"³²² (שמי' כג, כ); "ומלאך פניו
 הושיעם" (יש' סג, ט). ובספר דניאל מפורש: שר
 יון (ראה דני' י, כ), ושר מלכות פרס (ראה שם, יג),
 ושר השרים הוא מיכאל³²³ (ראה דני' יב, א). והנה
 הכלל:³²⁴ כל מעשה³²⁵ השם הנכבד – [על] יד³²⁶
 המלאכים³²⁷ הם, שהם עושי³²⁸ דברו. והנה
 המשל שיבינו בני האדם,³²⁹ למלאך יושב³³⁰ על
 כסאו (ע"פ מ"א כב, יט) וישלח שלוחיו,³³¹
 מהם³³² רגלים³³³ ומהם רוכבים על סוסים,
 שיבואו במהרה³³⁴ ויודיעוהו הדברים [שהם]³³⁵
 בממלכתו;³³⁶ וככה זה:³³⁷ **והנה איש** - מלאך,

וידבר השם אליו כאילו מדבר לכל³⁰² ישראל;
 כמו "מה תצעק אלי" (שמי' יד, טו) - כי ישראל
 היו צועקים, כמו שכתוב למעלה³⁰³ "ויצעקו בני
 ישראל אל יי"י" (שם, י). (ג) על כן: **ואמרת. כה
 אמר ...** - הזכיר השם שלשה פעמים בזה הפסוק;
 והטעם: **שובו**, והשם [יוכיחכם] ויזהירכם³⁰⁴
 פעמים רבות. (ד) **אל** תעשו אתם, עמי, כאשר
 עשו **אבותיכם**, שקראו אליהם **נביאים** רבים,³⁰⁵
ולא שמעו. (ה) **אבותיכם** הנה מתו, המוכחים
 והמוכיחים.³⁰⁶ (ו) ואתם תדעו, כי **דברי** ונבואתי
השיגו אבותיכם;³⁰⁷ והטעם, שבאו להם והם
 הודו.³⁰⁸ וטעם **כאשר זמם** - שידע מעשיהם³⁰⁹
 לפני עשותם.³¹⁰ ויפת אמר, כי הטעם: דעו כי
 תפסק³¹¹ הנבואה, וזה טעם³¹² **הלעולם יחיו**;
 רק³¹³ דברי התורה³¹⁴ וחוקים³¹⁵ - **הלא**
 השיגוה³¹⁶ **אבותיכם**; כי [בתורה]³¹⁷ כתוב: אם
 תשוב אל השם, ישיב שבותך (השווה דב' ל, ב-ג);

³¹⁸ ביום **אול חסר** (תוקן ע"י ז'²)
³¹⁹ וילכו ל ויבאו (כנה"מ)
³²⁰ וישלח מלאך או ישלח מלאכו
³²¹ ועתה אין לנו על מה נשען... וישלח מלאך ר חסר
³²² מלאך ל מלאכי
³²³ מיכאל נ מלאך מיכאל
³²⁴ הכלל א הכל
³²⁵ מעשה ולנ מעשי
³²⁶ [על] יד **מנפ יד אדונר** על ידי (תוקן ע"י ז'²)
³²⁷ המלאכים ל מלאכים
³²⁸ עושי ל עושים
³²⁹ שיבינו בני האדם ל יבינו בני אדם נ שיבינו בני אדם
³³⁰ יושב **אולר** שיושב
³³¹ שלוחיו נ שלוחם (תוקן ע"י ז'²)
³³² מהם **אור** שהם מהם
³³³ רגלים ב רוגלים
³³⁴ במהרה **אבדולנר** מהרה
³³⁵ [שהם] **מפ** שהוא (תוקן ע"י א **אבדולנר**)
³³⁶ בממלכתו **אולר** במלכותו נ בהמלכתו (?)

³⁰² לכל ל עם נ חסר
³⁰³ למעלה נ חסר
³⁰⁴ [יוכיחכם ויזהירכם] מ יוכיחם (?) ויזהירכם או יוכיח
 אתכם ויזהירכם ל יוכיחם נ יוכיחם (תוקן ע"י פ **בדפ**)
³⁰⁵ רבים לנ הרבה
³⁰⁶ המוכחים והמוכיחים ו המוכחים והמוכיחים לנ
³⁰⁷ אבותיכם או את אבותיכם
³⁰⁸ הודו ו הוא
³⁰⁹ מעשיהם או את מעשיהם
³¹⁰ עשותם לנ עושיהם (ל' עושי + ל' הם)
³¹¹ תפסק לנ תפסוק
³¹² וזה טעם ל והטעם
³¹³ רק ל אך רק נ אך
³¹⁴ דברי התורה א דברי תורה ו דברה תורה
³¹⁵ וחוקים ל והחקים
³¹⁶ השיגוה ל השיגו
³¹⁷ [בתורה] **מפ** בתוכה (?) כתובה? כתוכה? (תוקן ע"י פ
אבדולנר)

"שורקה" (בר' מט, יא), כמראה שורק.³⁵⁶ ואלה
 הסוסים הם רבים³⁵⁷ על שני עינים³⁵⁸ – פי':
 גוונים (ראה זכ' ו, ג).³⁵⁹ (ט) ואומר אל³⁶⁰ המלאך
 הדובר בי - ואיננו³⁶¹ "העומד³⁶² בין ההדסים",
 כפי פי'³⁶³ יפת. ולפי דעתי כי הוא³⁶⁴ המלאך
 הדובר בו,³⁶⁵ הוא הרוכב על סוס אדום, כי הוא
 השר. (י) ויען - עתה פירש³⁶⁶ כי³⁶⁷ הוא³⁶⁸ העומד
 בין ההדסים. אלה³⁶⁹ הסוסים - שלוחי השם
 לשוט בארץ; כמו שטן איוב, שגם הוא מלאך
 (ראה איוב א, ז). (יא) ויענו³⁷⁰ את מלאך יי' -
 הוא האיש הנזכר (לעיל, ג), שהוא אחד השרים.
 ואלה³⁷¹ הסוסים - שלוחיו³⁷² במצות השם.
 (יב) ויען - כמו "וענית ואמרת" (דב' כו, ה); "ויען
 איוב" הראשון (איוב ג, ב). או הטעם, שיענה לשם
 ששלחו;³⁷³ והוא הנכון. והנה³⁷⁴ הטעם:

³⁵⁶ כמראה שורק ב חסר ד במראה שורק נ כמראה
³⁵⁷ רבים ל חסר
³⁵⁸ עינים ל עינים
³⁵⁹ וככה זה והנה איש מלאך... על שני עינים פי' גוונים ר
 חסר כאן אבל השתרבב לקמן אחרי ב: ב: "ואלה כדברי
 יחזקאל ופני שור מהשמאל ומלת שרוקים מגזרת שורקה
 כמראה שורק ואלה הסוסים הם רבים על שני עינים פי'
 גוונים ואומר אל המלאך הדובר בי הוא הרוכב על סוס
 אדום ואיננו עומד בין ההדסים כמו פי' יפת"
³⁶⁰ ואומר אל ד ואומר (לשון הפסוק) ל אל
³⁶¹ ואיננו ל איננו
³⁶² העומד אונר עומד
³⁶³ כפי פי' אור כמו פי' ל כפי נ כפירוש ר'
³⁶⁴ הוא אבדולר חסר
³⁶⁵ בו אב(?) דולנר בי (לשון הפסוק)
³⁶⁶ פירש נ פירוש
³⁶⁷ הוא הרוכב על סוס אדום כי הוא השר ויען עתה פירש
 כי ר חסר (השמטת הדומות)
³⁶⁸ הוא ב חסר
³⁶⁹ אלה א אל
³⁷⁰ ויענו ר ויען
³⁷¹ ואלה לנ אלה
³⁷² שלוחיו לנ שלוחים
³⁷³ ששלחו ל חסר

כמו "והאיש גבריאלי" (דני ט, כא). על סוס אדום -
 ככה³³⁸ ראה, ואין צורך לבקש טעם³³⁹ למה
 אדום. וככה לא נבקש טעם למה "צליל³⁴⁰ לחם³⁴¹
 שעורים" (שוי' ז, יג), ולא 'חטים'. והמפרש כי
 "שעורים"³⁴² - מדרך³⁴³ 'סערה'³⁴⁴ ואדום כמו
 הדם,³⁴⁵ לשפוך דמים - [ואלה]³⁴⁶ כדברי דרש³⁴⁷
 הם. וזה האיש הרוכב³⁴⁸ הוא שר. ופירוש
 במצולה³⁴⁹ - קשה. ויפת אמר כי היא³⁵⁰ שם
 מקום, ונפתח הבי"ת כמו "וזבח וצלמנע
 בקרקר" (שוי' ח, ג), אע"פ שאין דרך להפתח על
 שם³⁵¹ מקום; כי לא יאמר 'בציון', 'בשומרון',³⁵²
 כי אם בשווא³⁵³ או בחירק. ורבי משה הכהן³⁵⁴
 אמר, כי במצולה - ברכת מים, וסביבותיה
 הדסים. ואחריו סוסים - ואין איש רוכב
 עליהם.³⁵⁵ ואלה כדברי יחזקאל "ופני שור
 מהשמאל" (א, ג). ומלת שרוקים - מגזרת

³³⁷ זה א חסר
³³⁸ ככה לנ וככה
³³⁹ טעם ל חסר
³⁴⁰ צליל או צלי
³⁴¹ לחם בדל חסר (הושלם ע"י ל')
³⁴² שעורים א שעורים
³⁴³ מדרך לנ מגזרת
³⁴⁴ סערה ולנ שערה
³⁴⁵ כמו הדם א כמו דם ב כי הדם נ מגזרת הדם
³⁴⁶ [ואלה] מ גאלה לנ אלה (תוקן ע"פ אבדופ)
³⁴⁷ דרש או הדרש
³⁴⁸ הרוכב ו רוכב
³⁴⁹ במצולה ד במצולה
³⁵⁰ כי היא ד כי הוא לנ שהוא
³⁵¹ על שם אולנ בשם
³⁵² בשומרון פ חסר
³⁵³ כי אם בשווא ב בשבא ד כי אם בשבא ל כי אם בשורק
³⁵⁴ הכהן נ חסר
³⁵⁵ עליהם או על הסוס

(טז) **לכן**.³⁹¹ וקו – [משקולת]³⁹² הבונים.

(יז) **עוד תפוצינה** - בכל³⁹³ צד; מרוב הטובה יגדל היישוב.

זכריה פרק ב

(א) **ואשא** - גם זה במראה. **ארבע קרנות** -

מארבע³⁹⁴ פאות ירושלים. (ב) **ואומר**. והנה³⁹⁵ טעם "קרנות" (לעיל, א) - האויבים שהיו סביבות **ירושלים**, הבאים לזרותה;³⁹⁶ כדרך "וקרני [ראם קרניו בהם]"³⁹⁷ עמים ינגח יחדו³⁹⁸ (דב' לג, יז).

(ג) **ויראני**. הזכיר השם, כי זה סוד [המראה]³⁹⁹ הראשונה.⁴⁰⁰ **וחרשים**⁴⁰¹ - חרשי משחית.

(ד) **ואומר** - אל המלאך הדובר בי, אע"פ שלא הזכירו; כי תפש דרך קצרה. וטעם [כפי]⁴⁰² **איש** - על בני יהודה, כל אחד כפי מעלתו. **לא נשא ראשו** - אחד מהן כנגד⁴⁰³ **אלה הקרנות**. **ויבאו**⁴⁰⁴ **אלה** - האנשים. **לידות [את] הקרנות**⁴⁰⁵ -

להשליכם ממקומם; כמו "ידו גורל" (יואל ד, ג).

³⁹¹לכן לחסר
³⁹²[משקולת] מ משקולות (תוקן ע"פ אבדול(?) פר)
³⁹³בכל ל מכל
³⁹⁴מארבע ו בארבע
³⁹⁵והנה ל והפה (?)
³⁹⁶לזרותה ל לזרותם
³⁹⁷[ראם קרניו בהם] מ ראמים קרניו ב ראמים קרניו בהם ל ראם קרניו (תוקן ע"פ אדופר)
³⁹⁸עמים ינגח יחדו א עמים ינגח ו ינגח עמים לחסר
³⁹⁹[המראה] מאופ'ר חסר (תוקן ע"פ בדלפ')
⁴⁰⁰קרניו בהם] עמים ינגח יחדו ויראני הזכיר השם כי זה סוד [המראה] הראשונה נ חסר
⁴⁰¹וחרשים ר וחרשית (?)
⁴⁰²[כפי] מ בפי (?) אור איש כפי אכלו (תוקן ע"פ בדלפ')
⁴⁰³כנגד אור חסר לנ כנגד כל
⁴⁰⁴ויבאו או ויביאו
⁴⁰⁵[את] הקרנות מ אלה הקרנות ד את קרנות (תוקן ע"פ אבולנפר)

בהתעורר³⁷⁵ מלחמות, אז יבנה בית השם על

יד³⁷⁶ זרובבל, כאשר התנבא חגי "ושמתידך

כחותם" (ב, כג). וזה³⁷⁷ **שבעים שנה** - בארתיו

באר [היטב]³⁷⁸ בספר דניאל (ט, ב). (יג) **ויען** -

עתה הזכיר מה שענה³⁷⁹ השם בדרך כלל, כאשר

שמע זה הנביא. והמלאך הוסיף לפרש לו.³⁸⁰

(יד) **ויאמר**³⁸¹ - כל 'קנאה' קשורה עם למ"ד

איננה כמו קשורה בבי"ת.³⁸² והנה זה - כמו

"המקנא אתה לי" (במ' יא, כט), והטעי'³⁸³:

[בעבורי]³⁸⁴; "ויקנא יי' לארצו" (יואל ב, יח) -

בעבור ארצו; והיא³⁸⁵ קנאה לטוב,³⁸⁶ לאותו³⁸⁷

הנזכר. וכשהיא³⁸⁸ קשורה בבי"ת,³⁸⁹ כמו

"ויקנאו בו פלשתים" (השווה ברי' כו, יד וברי'

לז, יא), היא להפך. (טו) **וקצף** - זה לאות על

מלחמות³⁹⁰ רבות וצרות קשות על הגוים בימים

ההם. **קצפתי מעט** - על ישראל, והם הוסיפו.

³⁷⁴והנה ו הנה
³⁷⁵בהתעורר לנ בהתעבר
³⁷⁶יד אונר ידי
³⁷⁷וזה ד זה
³⁷⁸באר [היטב] מ באר הטיב ר ביאר הטיב (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפ)
³⁷⁹שענה ל ענה
³⁸⁰לפרש לו ב חסר
³⁸¹ויאמר ל חסר
³⁸²בבי"ת ל עם ביי"ת
³⁸³והטעי' לנ חסר
³⁸⁴[בעבורי] מב בעבור או כמו ד בעבור כמו (תוקן ע"פ לנפ)
³⁸⁵והיא לנ והנה
³⁸⁶לטוב או חסר
³⁸⁷לאותו נ באותו
³⁸⁸וכשהיא ל וכאשר היא
³⁸⁹והנה זה כמו המקנא אתה לי והטעי' [בעבורי] ויקנא יי' לארצו בעבור ארצו והיא קנאה לטוב לאותו הנזכר וכשהיא קשורה בבי"ת ר חסר (השמטת הדומות)
³⁹⁰מלחמות ו המלחמות

שהם תלויות בארץ.⁴¹⁸ **מארץ צפון** - היא בבל ועילם ומלכות פרס ומדי.⁴¹⁹ **וטעם כי כארבע**⁴²⁰ - כאשר לא יתחבר רוח אל רוח, ככה⁴²¹ הייתם עד עתה. **(יא) הוי. יושבת עם בת בבל**; והטעם: שובי אל ארצך, ולא⁴²² תשכני עם זרים. **(יב) כי אחר** שלוח⁴²³ כבודו [אלי שלחני]⁴²⁴ - והטעם: לומר ליושבים [בבבל],⁴²⁵ כי אין להם⁴²⁶ פחד מכל אויב בדרך לשוב⁴²⁷ אל ציון. **(יג) כי אני מניף ידי** להכות כל מבקש⁴²⁸ לשלול אתכם. **(יד) רני. ושכנתי** - על תנאי: אם התחברו ישראל מכל הגוים. והנה לא עשו כן, כאשר פירשתי במגילת שיר⁴³⁰ השירים (ה, ד-ו). וככה מראות האיפה (ראה זכ' ה, ו-יא), כאשר אפרש. **(טו) ונלוו** - אם⁴³¹ ישראל יבאו. **(טז) ונחל** - יקחנו **לחלקו**;⁴³² כמו [ו'ונחלתנו']⁴³³ (שמי' לד, ט). או⁴³⁴ הפועל יוצא, כמו⁴³⁵ "אשר ינחלו לכם",⁴³⁶

והנה הטעם, שיסורו כל השוטנים, ויבנו הבית. **(ה) ואשא** - גם זאת במראות הלילה. **(ו) ואומר. למוד** - מפעלי הכפל, כמו "לחוג" (זכ' יד, יח); ["לרוסי"]⁴⁰⁶ (יחי' מו, יד); "לבוז"⁴⁰⁷ (אסי' ג, יג). והנה ראה כי השם צוה וגזר שתהיה בנויה⁴⁰⁸ ככה באורך, וככה ברחב, לפנים מהחומה.⁴⁰⁹ **(ז) והנה. יוצא** - מבין ההדסים⁴¹¹ (ראה זכ' א, ח-י). והנה **מלאך אחר יוצא** - והנה שליח אחר מהשם אל המלאך הדובר בי. **(ח) ויאמר. הלז** - כמו "הלזה" (בר' כד, סה); אותו העומד. והנה שלשה נביאים⁴¹² נתנבאו והם נערים: זכריה, שמואל (ראה ש"א ג, א), וירמיה (ראה יר' א, ו). **פרזות** - מחוץ לחומה.⁴¹³ **(ט) ואני. חומת אש** - לשמר ירושלים וה'פרזות' (ראה לעיל, ח) **סביב**, להשחית כל הקרב אליהם להרע [להם].⁴¹⁴ **(י) הוי** - לשון קריאה; ציווי השם על יד הנביא⁴¹⁵ לנשארים [בבבל],⁴¹⁶ לבוא אל ירושלים⁴¹⁷ לעזור לבנות הבית ולעשות המצוות

⁴¹⁸ בארץ ו הארץ
⁴¹⁹ פרס ומדי אור מדי ופרס
⁴²⁰ כארבע אור כארבע רוחות ד בארבע רוחי
⁴²¹ ככה נ כך פ חסר (הושלם ע"י פ²)
⁴²² ולא בד ואל
⁴²³ כי אחר שלוח לנ כה אמר שלום
⁴²⁴ [אלי שלחני] מפ שלחני אלי (תוקן ע"פ אבדור)
⁴²⁵ ליושבים [בבבל] מ ליושבים בבל בד ליושבי בבבל (תוקן ע"פ אופר)
⁴²⁶ להם בחסר
⁴²⁷ כבודו [אלי שלחני] והטעם לומר ליושבים [בבבל] כי אין להם פחד מכל אויב בדרך לשוב לנ חסר
⁴²⁸ מבקש פ המבקש (?)
⁴²⁹ רני ל חסר נ רני ושמחי בת ציון
⁴³⁰ שיר נ חסר
⁴³¹ אם לנ עם
⁴³² לחלקו לנ אל חלקו ר חסר
⁴³³ [ונחלתנו] מפ ונחלתינו א נחלתנו (?) (תוקן ע"פ בדולגר)
⁴³⁴ או ל או הוא
⁴³⁵ כמו נ חסר
⁴³⁶ לכם לנ אתכם

⁴⁰⁶ ["לרוסי"] מ(?)א(?)בפ(?) לרום (תוקן ע"פ דול?)
⁴⁰⁷ לבוז אר לבור ו חסר
⁴⁰⁸ בנויה נ חסר (?)
⁴⁰⁹ וככה ברחב לפנים מהחומה ב וברוחב מהחומות ד וברוחב לפני מהחומי
⁴¹⁰ והנה א חסר נ והיה (?)
⁴¹¹ ההדסים נ הדסים
⁴¹² נביאים בד חסר
⁴¹³ לחומה אור למחנה
⁴¹⁴ [להם] מנ אליהם (תוקן ע"פ אבדולפ)
⁴¹⁵ הנביא ל נביאו
⁴¹⁶ [בבבל] מר בבל (תוקן ע"פ אבדולפ)
⁴¹⁷ אל ירושלים לנ לירושלים פ ירושלים (תוקן ע"י פ²) ר על ירושלים

ותַבְּנָה עֲבוֹדַת⁴⁵³ בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ שְׁלִימָה. וּטְעַם הַלֵּא
 - דָּרֶךְ מִשַּׁל: דִּי⁴⁵⁴ לֵאלֹהֵי צַעֲרָם, שְׁנַמְלִטוּ⁴⁵⁵
 מֵהַגְלוֹת! או: אִיךְ תּוֹכַל לִשְׁטֹנוּ וְהֵאֵשׁ לֹא⁴⁵⁶
 הִזִּיקוּ? דָּרֶךְ מִשַּׁל; אִיךְ תּוֹכַלוּ⁴⁵⁷ לִשְׁטֹנוּ, אַחֲרֵי
 שֶׁהוּא מוֹצֵל מֵהַגְלוֹת: (ג) וַיְהוֹשֻׁעַ. יֵשׁ אוֹמְרִים,
 כִּי הַבְּגָדִים הַצּוֹאִים - אֶחָד מִבְּנֵי בְּנֵי הַיָּהוּהָ חָתָן
 לִסְנַבְלֵט. וְזֶה הָעוֹן אֵינּוּ עַל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, כִּי לֹא הָיָה זֶה
 בִּימֵיו! וְהַנְּכוּן, כִּי אֵין לוֹ⁴⁵⁸ בְּגָדֵי כְבוֹד
 וְתַפְאֶרֶת, כִּי לֹא הָיָה לָהֶם,⁴⁶⁰ רַק מִזְבַּח לְהַקְרִיב
 הָעוֹלוֹת,⁴⁶¹ וְאֵין לָהֶם בֵּית וְלֹא פְרֻכַת⁴⁶² וְכַפְרַת
 וּמִזְבַּח הַזֶּהָב וּבְגָדֵי זֶהָב.⁴⁶³ וְהֵנָּה הַבְּגָדִים - מִשַּׁל,
 שֶׁאֵין לוֹ⁴⁶⁴ כְּבוֹד וְהוֹד.⁴⁶⁵ (ד) וַיַּעַן - זֶה הַמְּלֹאךְ
 (רֵאשִׁית לְעֵיל, ג). אֵל הָעוֹמְדִים - לִפְנֵי זֶה הַמְּלֹאךְ;
 וְהוּא שָׂר עֲלֵיהֶם, כִּי יַעֲשׂוּ מֵה שִׁיּוּצוֹם. וַיֵּשׂ אוֹמֵי,
 כִּי לִפְנֵינוּ - שֶׁב אֵל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, וְזֶה רַחוּם; כִּי לִמָּה⁴⁶⁶
 יַעֲמְדוּ אַנְשֵׁים לִפְנֵינוּ⁴⁶⁷ וּמָה מַעֲלָה יֵשׁ לוֹ, כִּי הוּא

(במ' לד, יז). (יז) [הס] ⁴³⁷ - על דרך "ידמו כאבן"
 (שמי טו, טז). ומלת נעור - מבניין 'נפעל', כמו
 "נכון" (בר' מא, לב); וזה ⁴³⁸ הבניין יבא בלשון
 הווה ⁴³⁹ פעול, גם בלשון עבר, כמו "נכוננו
 ללצים" ⁴⁴⁰ (משי יט, כט); "והממלכה נכונה"
 (מ"א ב, מו). גם זה נעור ⁴⁴¹ - לשון עבר; ⁴⁴²
 והעתיד: "אשר יעור משנתו" (זכ' ד, א). ובא קמץ
 קטן תחת גדול; אולי ⁴⁴³ היה כן בעבור אות
 הגרון. והמפרש כי הוא כמו "נערו כגורי
 אריות" ⁴⁴⁴ (יר' נא, לח) - סברה נכונה חשב, בעבור
 הס. ⁴⁴⁵

זכריה פרק ג

(א) ויראני השם בדרך ⁴⁴⁶ מראות הלילה. והשטן
 - אויב; ⁴⁴⁷ כמו שעשה סנבלט, ⁴⁴⁸ וכאשר עשו צרי
 יהודה; ושם כתו "כתבו" ⁴⁴⁹ שטנה" (עז' ד, ו). והם
 היו לשטן ליהושע, כי לא ירצו שהבית יבנה
 ויהיה יהושע כהן גדול. (ב) ויאמר שהשם
 יסיר ⁴⁵⁰ כל שטן שוטן ⁴⁵¹ שלא יבנה ⁴⁵² הבית,

⁴⁵² יבנה ל ירצה להבנות
⁴⁵³ עבודת לנ חסר (הושלם ע"י נ)
⁴⁵⁴ די נ כי די
⁴⁵⁵ שנמלטו נ שימלטו
⁴⁵⁶ והאש לא נ והוא שלא
⁴⁵⁷ תוכלו אבלנפר תוכל
⁴⁵⁸ בימיו א מבניו
⁴⁵⁹ אין לו אור לא היה לו
⁴⁶⁰ להם ור חסר
⁴⁶¹ העולות לנ חסר
⁴⁶² ולא פרכת ל ופרכת
⁴⁶³ זהב אור זהב
⁴⁶⁴ בגדי כבוד ותפארת כי לא היה להם רק מזבח להקריב
 העולות ואין להם בית ולא פרכת וכפרת ומזבח הזהב
 ובגדי זהב והנה הבגדים משל שאין לו א חסר (השמטת
 הדומות)
⁴⁶⁵ והוד בד והדר ו והון
⁴⁶⁶ למה לנ לא
⁴⁶⁷ אנשים לפניו לנ לפניו אנשים

⁴³⁷ [הס] מ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)
⁴³⁸ וזה אור והנה
⁴³⁹ הווה נ הזה (?)
⁴⁴⁰ ללצים אדולנר ללצים שפטים (המשך הפסוק)
⁴⁴¹ זה נעור אר זה ו לזה
⁴⁴² לשון עבר פ לשעבר
⁴⁴³ אולי פ חסר (הושלם ע"י פ)
⁴⁴⁴ כמו נערו כגורי אריות או נער כנגד הס ר נעור כנגד הס
⁴⁴⁵ הס אדולנר מלת הס
⁴⁴⁶ בדרך אדור כדרך
⁴⁴⁷ אויב א אויב
⁴⁴⁸ סנבלט לנ סנבלט החורוני
⁴⁴⁹ כתבו ר חסר
⁴⁵⁰ יסיר נ ישר
⁴⁵¹ שטן שוטן ל שטן נ שוטן

אילו⁴⁸⁵ היה צניף טהור על ראשו! או⁴⁸⁶ מלת ואומר זה - בלבי; ככה⁴⁸⁷ [חשבתני]⁴⁸⁸ בלבי, וראיתי שנתקיימה מחשבתי והנה הושם הצניף הטהור⁴⁸⁹ על ראשו, וכבר הלבישוהו בגדים. כמו "וירם תולעים ויבאש" (שמי טז, כ) - וכבר באש; כי כל דבר יבאש תחלה, ואחר כך ירום תולעה.

(ו) ויעד - נפתח העי"ן בעבור היותו מהגרון; כמו "וישב את כל הרכוש" (ברי יד, טז). (ז) כה. טעם⁴⁹⁰ וגם - אם היית⁴⁹¹ טוב כאביך יהוצדק, שהיה כהן גדול בבית ראשון. ו"ו⁴⁹² ונתתי - [כפ"ה]⁴⁹³ רפה בלשון ישמעאל; וכמהו "והאבן הזאת אשר שמתני מצבה" (ברי כח, כב), וככה⁴⁹⁴ "והחרמתי את עריהם" (במי כא, ב). והנה שכרו - שיהלך⁴⁹⁵ בין העומדים, שהם המלאכים.

(ח) שמע⁴⁹⁶ עתה.⁴⁹⁷ ראיתי מפרש, כי "הכהן הגדול" (זכי ו, יא) שב אל יהוצדק, לא אל יהושע, כי אמר⁴⁹⁸ ששמש בטנוף. ולא פירש נכון, ⁴⁹⁹ כי אז הראיתי לו⁵⁰⁰ דברי המלאך ליהושע, הפסוק

לבוש (ג) בגדים צואים? ודע, כי לבש⁴⁶⁸ - פועל יוצא; ובאומרם 'לובש'⁴⁶⁹ - הוא לובש עצמו;⁴⁷⁰ ו'לבוש' - אחר שם עליו⁴⁷¹ אלה הבגדים הצואים. (ד) ומלת עונך - כדרך⁴⁷² "גדול עוני מנשוא" (ברי ד, יג): גדול עונשי⁴⁷³ וצערי; על כן אמר⁴⁷⁴ אחריו "הן גרשת אותי"⁴⁷⁵ (שם, יד). וגם זה עונך ככה: העברתי מעליך ענשך וצערך וחרפתך; כדרך "ונקה האיש מעוון" (במי ה, לא), וכן "והאשה... תשא את⁴⁷⁶ עונה" (שם). מחלצות - כמו "אל⁴⁷⁷ חליצתו" (השווה ש"ב ב, כא) - חליפתו,⁴⁷⁸ דבר שהוא נחלץ ממנו; ומחלצות - שחלץ אחרים⁴⁷⁹ תחתיהם. (ה) ואומר - אמר ר' מרינוס כי הוא תחת ויאמר⁴⁸⁰; וכזה⁴⁸¹ לא ימצא בלשון!⁴⁸² והנכון, שהנביא⁴⁸³ אמר, אחר⁴⁸⁴ שהסירו הבגדי הצואים וילבשוהו בגדי תפארת: כמה היה נאה

⁴⁶⁸ לבש אדולנר לבוש

⁴⁶⁹ לובש אור חסר

⁴⁷⁰ עצמו ל את עצמו

⁴⁷¹ עליו אור על

⁴⁷² כדרך לנ כמו

⁴⁷³ עונשי אור עוונ

⁴⁷⁴ אמר לנ כתוב

⁴⁷⁵ אותי לנ אותי היום

⁴⁷⁶ וכן והאשה תשא את א וכן והאשה ההיא תשא ור וכן

והאשה ההיא תשא את (לשון הפסוק) לנ והאשה ההיא

תשא את (לשון הפסוק בלי "וכן" בין חלקי

(הפסוק)

⁴⁷⁷ אל דל את (כנה"מ לש"ב ב, כא)

⁴⁷⁸ חליצתו חליפתו אור חליצתי חליפתי נ חליצתו את

חליפתו

⁴⁷⁹ אחרים וחסר

⁴⁸⁰ ויאמר או ויאמר

⁴⁸¹ וכזה אור וככה

⁴⁸² בלשון דונר בלשון הקודש

⁴⁸³ והנכון שהנביא ור והנביא

⁴⁸⁴ אחר לנ חסר

⁴⁸⁵ אילו ור אם

⁴⁸⁶ או נ אז (?)

⁴⁸⁷ ככה לנ חסר

⁴⁸⁸ [חשבתני] מר חישבתי (תוקן ע"פ בדולנפ)

⁴⁸⁹ הטהור נ חסר

⁴⁹⁰ טעם ל חסר נ וגם טעם

⁴⁹¹ אם היית לנ את היית בעוכרי (ע"פ שופטים יא: לה)

⁴⁹² ו"ו ל חסר נ ואומר

⁴⁹³ [כפ"ה] מ כסק (?) כסה? ור כפ"א (תוקן ע"פ בדולנפ)

⁴⁹⁴ וככה ל וכן

⁴⁹⁵ שכרו שיהלך ור שכרו שיהלך ל שבחו שילך

⁴⁹⁶ שמע לור שמע נא נ שמעו נא

⁴⁹⁷ עתה נ עתה אמר ר' סעדיה

⁴⁹⁸ כי אמר ל חסר

⁴⁹⁹ פירש נכון לנ דיבר נבונה (ע"פ איוב מב: ז-ח, וכך לשון

ראב"ע להלן ט, ט)

⁵⁰⁰ לו ר לא (?)

שב⁵¹⁸ הוא בעצמו, גם יושב⁵¹⁹ אחר, כמו
 'והשיב'. ככה: "לא משו מקרב המחנה"⁵²⁰ (במי
 יד, מד), ומשתי את עון.⁵²¹ וטעם⁵²² עון - הענש
 והרע⁵²³ והגלות. (י) ביום [שיוסד]⁵²⁴ ההיכל, אז
 תשכנו לבטח. והנה דברי זכריה - כדברי חגי
 הנביא.

זכריה פרק ד

(א) וישב - בעבור שאמר ויעירני, והוא⁵²⁵ ישן.
 וטעם יעור - ולא יוער על ידי אחר, רק מעצמו,
 בלט; כאילו מעצמו נעור.⁵²⁶ (ב) ויאמר.⁵²⁷ וגלה
 - כמו⁵²⁸ "גלות עליית"⁵²⁹ (שופ' א, טו). ועתה⁵³⁰
 אומר לך בדרך קצרה דבר זאת המנורה, כי
 הזכיר הנביא⁵³¹ אחרי⁵³² כן כל דבריה: היו (ג)
 שנים זתים - אילנות, [מימין]⁵³³ הגלה
 ומשמאלה. (יב) ושבולי⁵³⁴ הזתים נופלים מן

הזה, שקראו לעצמו 'הכהן הגדול'. ורעיד - הם
 שאר הכהנים, שהם⁵⁰¹ ראויים לשבת לפניו,⁵⁰² כי
 הוא [הכהן] הגדול.⁵⁰³ כי אנשי מופת⁵⁰⁴ - ראויים
 [הם]⁵⁰⁵ שיעשה להם השם⁵⁰⁶ מופת. צמח - הוא
 זרובבל, כאשר⁵⁰⁷ יאמר "צמח שמו" (זכ' ו, יב);
 וסוף הפרשה מוכיח: "לפני זרובבל" (זכ' ד, ז).
 ומפרשים רבים אמרו, כי זה צמח הוא המשיח,
 ונקרא זרובבל כי הוא⁵⁰⁸ מזרעו; כמו⁵⁰⁹ "ודוד
 עבדי נשיא להם לעולם"⁵¹⁰ (יח' לז, כה). גם אני
 עשיתי דרך דרש: כי צמח - בגימטריא 'מנחם',
 והוא⁵¹¹ בן עמיאל. (ט) כי.⁵¹² זאת האבן היא
 אבן המשקולת, כאשר יפרש עוד, שתהיה ביד
 זרובבל בהחלו ליסד את⁵¹³ הבית (זכ' ד, י). וזה
 יהיה לפני יהושע. וכן [פני]⁵¹⁴ הפסוק: האבן
 אשר נתתי ביד זרובבל לפני יהושע.⁵¹⁵ ומשתי
 את... הארץ⁵¹⁶ - הנה זאת המלה מהפעלים
 היוצאים, כמלת 'שב', שתמצא על שני⁵¹⁷ דרכים:

⁵¹⁸ שב ור חסר
⁵¹⁹ גם ושב ל ושב פ שב וגם
⁵²⁰ ומשתי את הארץ הנה זאת המלה מהפעלים היוצאים
 כמלת שב שתמצא על שני דרכים שב הוא בעצמו גם ושב
 אחר כמו והשיב ככה לא משו מקרב המחנה נ חסר
 (השמטת הדומות)
⁵²¹ עון אבודר עון הארץ
⁵²² וטעם ר וטעם כמ'
⁵²³ והרע א והעני (?) והרוע?
⁵²⁴ [שיוסד] מ שווסד (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
⁵²⁵ והוא אולנר והנה
⁵²⁶ נעור ו נוער
⁵²⁷ ויאמר ל ויאמר אלי מה אתה רואה
⁵²⁸ כמו נ חסר
⁵²⁹ עלית אדולנר עיליות
⁵³⁰ ועתה אור עתה
⁵³¹ הנביא אבדולנר זה הנביא
⁵³² אחרי אבדולנר אחר
⁵³³ [מימין] מ ממין (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
⁵³⁴ ושבולי או ושבילי (?) נ ואען ושבילי

⁵⁰¹ שהם ור שהיו
⁵⁰² לשבת לפניו ל לשרת לפני
⁵⁰³ הוא [הכהן] הגדול מ הוא כהן הגדול ור כהן גדול הוא
 (תוקן ע"פ בדלנ)
⁵⁰⁴ מופת ל מופת המה
⁵⁰⁵ [הם] מ השם (תוקן ע"פ בדולנפר)
⁵⁰⁶ השם בדנ חסר
⁵⁰⁷ כאשר ב ומפרשים (?) כאשר
⁵⁰⁸ הוא ל הוא המשיח נ הנה המשיח
⁵⁰⁹ כמו נ חסר
⁵¹⁰ לעולם ל חסר
⁵¹¹ והוא ר חסר
⁵¹² כי ור כי האבן
⁵¹³ את בדולנר חסר
⁵¹⁴ [פני] מ הפירש מ² פ פירש (תוקן ע"פ בדלנ)
⁵¹⁵ וכן פירש הפסוק האבן אשר נתתי ביד זרובבל לפני
 יהושע ור חסר (השמטת הדומות)
⁵¹⁶ את הארץ בלור חסר
⁵¹⁷ על שני ד על שנים ור לשנים ל על שתי

יבנה הבית, וכת⁵⁵⁴ "ונביא⁵⁵⁵ די⁵⁵⁵ מסעדין להון"⁵⁵⁶ (השווה עז' ה,ב). (ז) מי - הנביא ידבר אל כל⁵⁵⁷ שר ומלך: אם אתה נחשב בעיניך כהר פל' הגדול, למישור תשוב לפני זרובבל. ובהוציאו⁵⁵⁸ את האבן הראשה - היא אבן⁵⁵⁹ הבדיל שתנתן⁵⁶⁰ ביד זרובבל⁵⁶¹ (ראה להלן, ל), והיא האמורה למעלה "אשר נתתי⁵⁶² לפני יהושע"⁵⁶³ (זכ' ג,ט), [תשואות]⁵⁶⁴ - שאון רב יהיה לה, שאון חן חן⁵⁶⁵ שהכל ישמח; כמו "תשואות מליאה"⁵⁶⁶ (יש' כב,ב). (ח) ויהי - עתה יפרש⁵⁶⁶ דבר המנורה. ⁵⁶⁷ (ט) ידי⁵⁶⁸ יסדו - פעל עבר. ⁵⁶⁹ תבצענה - תשלמנה, ⁵⁷⁰ "כי⁵⁷¹ יבצע יי את כל מעשהו"⁵⁷² (יש' י,יב). וידעת - [רמז לזרובבל], ⁵⁷² שהוא במקום ⁵⁷³ כל ישראל. שלחני אליכם - לו

האילנים ⁵³⁵ [על]⁵³⁶ שני צנתרות זהב,⁵³⁷ ומאיליהם ⁵³⁸ נפלו ונדרכו, ונעשה שמן זך כזהב, והיו ⁵³⁹ מריקים אל הגלה. ובגלה היו (ב) שבעה מוצקות; שבעה נרות ושבעה מוצקות.⁵⁴⁰ והנה ⁵⁴¹ שבעה, [פעם אחרת]⁵⁴² - כמו "אל החצר החיצונה... אל העם" (יח' מד,יט). והמלאך פירש⁵⁴³ טעם זאת המראה: ⁵⁴⁴ (ו) לא בחיל ולא בכח": כאשר ראיתה⁵⁴⁵ השמן נעשה מאיליו ודולק ⁵⁴⁶ - ככה יבנה הבית, לא ⁵⁴⁷ בכח גדול שיש לזרובבל ולא ברוב חילו, כי אם ברוח השם וסיועו. (ג) ושנים - עוד יפרש מה ⁵⁴⁸ טעם הזתים ⁵⁴⁹ שהיו שנים (להלן, יא-יד). (ד) ואען - ידע ⁵⁵⁰ הנביא כי זה במראה נבואה, ⁵⁵¹ על כן שאל. (ה) ויען ⁵⁵² - שאלו, אם יש בו טעם חכמה להבין טעם המראה. ⁵⁵³ (ו) ויען - הנה דבר יי

⁵⁵⁴ וכת' ד וכת' יי
⁵⁵⁵ ונביא ב נביא (כנה"מ) ד נביא לנ ונביאה
⁵⁵⁶ להון לנ ליה
⁵⁵⁷ אל כל ל אל נ כל
⁵⁵⁸ ובהוציאו ל והוציאו (לשון הפסוק)
⁵⁵⁹ היא אבן פ היא אבן היא אבן
⁵⁶⁰ שתנתן ו תנתן
⁵⁶¹ ובהוציאו את האבן הראשה היא אבן הבדיל שתנתן ביד זרובבל ר חסר (השמטת הדומות)
⁵⁶² לפני זרובבל ובהוציאו את האבן הראשה היא אבן הבדיל שתנתן ביד זרובבל והיא האמורה למעלה אשר נתתי נ חסר (השמטת הדומות עם תיבת "לפני")
⁵⁶³ לפני יהושע ל ביד זרובבל
⁵⁶⁴ [תשואות] מבנפ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אדולר)
⁵⁶⁵ חן חן ד חן חן לה (המשך הפסוק)
⁵⁶⁶ יפרש ל פי
⁵⁶⁷ דבר המנורה אבד דברי המנורה ו דברי הנבואה
⁵⁶⁸ ידי ל חסר אור ידי זרובבל (המשך הפסוק)
⁵⁶⁹ עבר אר עובר פ עבר
⁵⁷⁰ תשלמנה א תשלחנה (?)
⁵⁷¹ כי בדל כמו כי נ חסר
⁵⁷² [רמז לזרובבל] מפ כמו לזרובבל ידבר וידעת לזרובבל בד לזרובבל ידבר אור רמז לזרובבל ידבר וידעת לזרובבל (תוקן ע"פ לנ)
⁵⁷³ לנ חסר (תוקן ע"פ בד) במקום ל במקום הזה כנגד נ במקום הזה כנגדו

⁵³⁵ מן האילנים אבדולנפר מהאילנים
⁵³⁶ [על] מבפ עלי (תוקן ע"פ אדולר)
⁵³⁷ זהב ל זהב
⁵³⁸ ומאיליהם נ מאיליהם
⁵³⁹ והיו אבדולנפר והם
⁵⁴⁰ שבעה נרות ושבעה מוצקות ר חסר (השמטת הדומות)
⁵⁴¹ והנה אור והם
⁵⁴² [פעם אחרת] מב פנים אחרות נ אחרת (תוקן ע"פ אדולפר)
⁵⁴³ פירש ל פי נ פירוש
⁵⁴⁴ המראה ר המלה המראה
⁵⁴⁵ ראיתה אבדור ראיתי לנ ראית
⁵⁴⁶ ודולק לנ ודולק מאליו
⁵⁴⁷ לא ר ולא
⁵⁴⁸ מה א מן
⁵⁴⁹ הזתים לנ זתים
⁵⁵⁰ ואען ידע לנ ואדע מעין
⁵⁵¹ נבואה אולנר הנבואה
⁵⁵² ויען ל חסר
⁵⁵³ ויען שאלו אם יש בו טעם חכמה להבין טעם המראה אור חסר (השמטת הדומות)

משוטטים בכל הארץ. וטעם **שבעה** - כדרך⁵⁹⁶
 "ויקרא אותה שבעה" (ברי' כו, לג), ושבועה⁵⁹⁷ -
 מגזרת 'שבעה', כמו שאמר⁵⁹⁸ "כי שם נשבעו
 שניהם" (ברי' כא, לא); על דרך שהזכיר בעל
 'ספר' [599 יצירה': יהיכל הקדש⁶⁰⁰ מְכַנֵּן באמצעו.
 וצריך⁶⁰¹ פירוש ארוך, כי שם כתו': "שש פאות
 הם: מעלה ומטה, פנים ואחור, ימין ושמאל.
 והיכל הקדש מכוון באמצעו". וזה קצת הפירוש:
 כי לכל⁶⁰² דבר יש אלה⁶⁰³ השש פיאות
 שהזכיר; ⁶⁰⁴ והיכל⁶⁰⁵ הקדש⁶⁰⁶ הוא הדבר⁶⁰⁷ אשר
 לו⁶⁰⁸ הפיאות⁶⁰⁹ האלה, והוא מכוון באמצעו.⁶¹⁰
 וקראו 'היכל הקדש', הוא הנכבד האמצעי,⁶¹¹
 והוא בעל הפיאות, כי ממנו הם ולו הפיאות.
 ודבר זה כולל כל הנוצרים. ועל הנכבד יותר
 הזכיר 'היכל קדשי'.⁶¹² (**יב**) **ואען**.⁶¹³ 'שבלים' -

ולכל⁵⁷⁴ ישראל. (**י**) **כי**.⁵⁷⁵ **קטנות** - תאר,⁵⁷⁶
 והמתואר חסר; כמו "וידבר אתם [קשות]"⁵⁷⁷
 (ברי' מב, ז). ומלת **בז**⁵⁷⁸ - מן עלומי⁵⁷⁹ העיין, כמו
 "לא יבוזו לגנבי"⁵⁸⁰ (מש' ו, ל). והנה⁵⁸¹ הוא: **כי**
 [מי]⁵⁸² **בז ליום**⁵⁸³ נחמות או ישועות **קטנות**;
 וזהו חסרון המתואר; כמו⁵⁸⁴ 'וידבר אתם
 מלות'⁵⁸⁵ קשות,⁵⁸⁶ (ראה ברי' מב, ז). כאשר יראו
 אבן המשקולת, שהוא⁵⁸⁷ אבן **הבדיל ביז זרובל**
 לבנות הבית;⁵⁸⁸ הנה **שבעה** עינים ישמרוה, שלא
 יקרב איש להפילה. ויתכן **שבעה** עינים⁵⁸⁹ -
 הרבה שומרים; ⁵⁹⁰ או - פירוש⁵⁹¹ אחר - כמו
 שפירש⁵⁹² המלאך: **שבעה אלה**⁵⁹³ **עיני** השם. ופי'
 המלאך, **כי השבעה**⁵⁹⁴ הם **עיני** השם שהם⁵⁹⁵

⁵⁷⁴ לו ולכל או לכל

⁵⁷⁵ כי לחסר

⁵⁷⁶ תאר לנ שם התאר

⁵⁷⁷ [קשות] מ מלות קשות (טעות בעקבות הנאמר אח"כ;

תוקן ע"פ **אבדולנר**)

⁵⁷⁸ בז ו כן (?)

⁵⁷⁹ מן עלומי ל מעלומי

⁵⁸⁰ לגנב ל לגנב למלא נפשו כי ירעב (המשך הפסוק בדילוג

שתי מילים)

⁵⁸¹ לא יבוזו לגנב והנה ו והנה ו לא יבוזו

⁵⁸² [מי] **מפ**¹ מי הוא (תוקן ע"פ **אבדולנר**)

⁵⁸³ ליום ל ליום קטנות

⁵⁸⁴ כמו **ב חסר**

⁵⁸⁵ מלות **אור חסר**

⁵⁸⁶ ומלת בז מן עלומי העיין כמו לא יבוזו לגנב והנה הוא

כי מי הוא בז ליום נחמות או ישועות קטנות וזהו **חסר** ון

המתואר כמו וידבר אתם מלות קשות **נ חסר** (השמטת

הדומות)

⁵⁸⁷ שהוא **אב(?) דולנר** שהיא

⁵⁸⁸ הבית **לנ** הבית הזה

⁵⁸⁹ ישמרוה שלא יקרב איש להפילה ויתכן שבעה עינים ו

חסר (השמטת הדומות)

⁵⁹⁰ שומרים או שימרים (?)

⁵⁹¹ או פירוש **בד** ופי'

⁵⁹² שפירש **ר** פירש

⁵⁹³ **שבעה** אלה **א** שפירש המלאך (חזרה על הפסקה

הקודמת)

⁵⁹⁴ השבעה **לנ** שבעה

⁵⁹⁵ שהם **אולר חסר**

⁵⁹⁶ כדרך **ב** כדרך שבעה

⁵⁹⁷ ושבועה ו שבועה

⁵⁹⁸ שאמר **ל חסר**

⁵⁹⁹ [ספר] **מבפ חסר** (תוקן ע"פ **אדולנר**)

⁶⁰⁰ הקדש **נ חסר**

⁶⁰¹ וצריך **לנ** וזה צריך

⁶⁰² וזה קצת הפירוש כי לכל **פ** וצריך פירוש ארוך וזה קצת

פירוש שלכל

⁶⁰³ אלה **אדר חסר** ל אלו

⁶⁰⁴ והיכל הקדש מכוון באמצע וזה קצת הפירוש כי לכל

דבר יש אלה השש פיאות שהזכיר **ב חסר** (השמטת

הדומות)

⁶⁰⁵ והיכל **נ** היכל

⁶⁰⁶ כי לכל דבר יש אלה השש פיאות שהזכיר והיכל הקדש

ו חסר

⁶⁰⁷ הדבר **בז** הדביר

⁶⁰⁸ לו **אור** אין לו

⁶⁰⁹ הפיאות ל הפיאות שהזכיר

⁶¹⁰ באמצע **ב חסר**

⁶¹¹ האמצעי **ב** האמצע (?)

⁶¹² קדש **אור** הקודש

⁶¹³ ואען **ל חסר**

מפרשים שאמרו⁶³⁰: כפולה, מגז' ארמית; ואין טעם לפירושו.⁶³¹ ויפת אמר: פרושה; וכמוהו⁶³² "ועפו בכתף פלשתים" (יש' יא, יד). **(ב) ויאמר**. ראה כאילו זאת המגילה יוצאה⁶³³ מבית השם⁶³⁴ שבנה שלמה על⁶³⁵ האולם (ראה מ"א ו, ג); על כן מדת האורך והרחב - כמו האולם.⁶³⁶ **(ג) ויאמר**. **זאת האלה**⁶³⁷ - והמארה. וטעם היוצאת על פני כל הארץ - כי היא⁶³⁸ כוללת היהודים⁶³⁹ שהיו⁶⁴⁰ בירושלם, ואשר נשאר [בבבל]⁶⁴¹ ובארץ פרס. וטעם מזה כמוה - כי היה כתוב במגלה מזה הצד: **הגונב נקה**, ומצד שני:⁶⁴³ **הנשבע נקה**; או **מזה ומזה**:⁶⁴⁵ **הגונב**⁶⁴⁶ **והנשבע נקה**. והוא נכון.⁶⁴⁷ וטעם נקה - שיחשב⁶⁴⁸ כל אחד, **הגונב והנשבע**, כי השם נקהו. **(ד) והוצאתיה**.

לשון נקבה, כמו⁶¹⁴ 'נשים' ופילגשים.⁶¹⁵ **ואומר**⁶¹⁶ - גם שאל⁶¹⁷ על שתי השבלים שנכרתו משני הזיתים המריקים מעליהם, הם⁶¹⁸ הצנתרות שנדרכו בהם הזתים, והם מריקים⁶¹⁹ מעליהם⁶²⁰ השמן הטוב, הזך⁶²¹ כזהב - יריקו אל הגלה. ובגלה מוצקות⁶²² אשר מהם יוצק השמן לנרות אשר על ראש המנורה (ראה לעיל, ב). **(יד) ויאמר**. הטעם: זרובבל 'בן יצהר', שהוא השמן⁶²³ - [כי הוא]⁶²⁴ משוח לשבת על כסא⁶²⁵ ישראל, כאשר הוא כתי' "ומשל על כסאו"⁶²⁶ (זכ' ו, יג). ויהושע משוח - כי הוא כהן גדול. וכת' "ועצת שלום תהיה בין שניהם" (שם), ולא יקנאו זה⁶²⁷ בזה.

זכריה פרק ה

(א) ואשוב.⁶²⁸ עפה - כאילו תעוף, על כן כתוב

"היוצאת⁶²⁹ על פני כל הארץ" (להלן, ג). ויש

⁶²⁹ היוצאת ר היוצאות
⁶³⁰ יש מפרשים שאמרו **א**ר ויש מפרש שאמ' **ב** ויש מפרשי שאמ' **ד**ו ויש מפרש שאמר **ל** ויש אומ' שהיא **נ** יש מפרשים שאמרו
⁶³¹ לפירושו ל לפירושם
⁶³² וכמוהו **בד** כמו
⁶³³ יוצאה **אור** יוצאת
⁶³⁴ המגילה יוצאה מבית השם ר המגלה יוצאת מבית המגלה יוצאת מבית השם
⁶³⁵ על **אולנ** אל
⁶³⁶ כמו האולם **ל חסר נ** כפי (?) האולם
⁶³⁷ האלה **א** המלה
⁶³⁸ כי היא **לנ** שהיא
⁶³⁹ היהודים **א** היהודים
⁶⁴⁰ שהיו **נ** אשר היו
⁶⁴¹ [בבבל] **מ** בבל (תוקן ע"פ **אבדולנפר**)
⁶⁴² הגונב **אור חסר**
⁶⁴³ שני **א** השיני **ור** השני
⁶⁴⁴ נקה **אור חסר**
⁶⁴⁵ ומזה **לנ** וזה
⁶⁴⁶ הגונב **ב** כי הגונב
⁶⁴⁷ נכון **לנר** הנכון
⁶⁴⁸ שיחשב **א** כי יחשוב **ור** כי יחשב **לנ** אל יחשוב

⁶¹⁴ כמו **לנ** גם
⁶¹⁵ ופילגשים **בד** פילגשים
⁶¹⁶ ואומר **ל** ואען
⁶¹⁷ גם שאל **אופר** שאל גם
⁶¹⁸ הם **ד** והם
⁶¹⁹ שנדרכו בהם הזתים והם מריקים **אל** שנכרתו משתי הזתים המריקים
⁶²⁰ הם הצנתרות שנדרכו בהם הזתים והם מריקים מעליהם **נ חסר** (השמטת הדומות)
⁶²¹ הזך **אולר** והזך
⁶²² ובגלה מוצקות **אור** והגולה מוצקת
⁶²³ לנרות אשר על ראש המנורה ויאמר הטעם זרובבל בן יצהר שהוא השמן **בל חסר** (השמטת הדומות)
⁶²⁴ [כי הוא] **מ** שהוא (תוקן ע"פ **אבדולנפר**)
⁶²⁵ כסא **פ** הכסא
⁶²⁶ ישראל כאשר הוא כתי' ומשל על כסאו **ר חסר** (השמטת הדומות)
⁶²⁷ זה **ר חסר**
⁶²⁸ ואשוב **ל חסר**

(ו) **ואמר**.⁶⁶⁸ **זאת האיפה**. וטעם **איפה** - כי השם ימוד⁶⁶⁹ לאנשי הרשע כפי מחשבותם. **ויאמר זאת** [עינים]⁶⁷⁰ - השם יגלה הנסתר עד שיראוהו הכל. (ז) **והנה**.⁶⁷¹ **עופרת** - שהיא כבידה. ומלת **נשאת**⁶⁷² - תואר מבניין 'נפעל'; והשלים: 'ננשאהי',⁶⁷³ כמו "רוח נשברה" (תהי נא, יט). והעופרת היתה נשואה באיפה. **וזאת אשה** - משפחה מישראל.⁶⁷⁴ (ח) **ויאמר**⁶⁷⁵ **זאת הרשעה** - מחשבת רשע⁶⁷⁶ שיש בלב האשה (ראה לעיל, ז). וטעם **וישלך**...⁶⁷⁷ - כמו⁶⁷⁸ "וכל עולה קפצה פיה" (תהי קז, מב). (ט) **ואשא** - המראה הראשונה לא נשלמה, רק⁶⁷⁹ עם זאת. וטעם **שתיים**⁶⁸⁰ **נשים** - שני שרי ארתחששתא⁶⁸¹ שהיה "מלך בבלי" (נחמי יגו), שיעשה⁶⁸² חמס למשפחות ישראל העומדים [בבבל],⁶⁸³ שנשאר⁶⁸⁴ ולא שמעו אל מצות יי ביד נביאו לבוא⁶⁸⁵ לבית⁶⁸⁶ שיני. והנה אלה⁶⁸⁷ לא

ולנה - לשון נקבה, כמו⁶⁴⁹ 'ולנה'; והיא [מלה]⁶⁵⁰ זרה. והנה הטעם, שיוכיח הנביא אלה העושים אלה⁶⁵¹ השתים עבירות.⁶⁵² (ה) **ויצא** - ממערכת מלאכים אחרים.⁶⁵³ והנה **יוצאת** אחרת, אחרי "היוצאת" בראשונה,⁶⁵⁴ והיא⁶⁵⁵ האלה⁶⁵⁶ (ראה לעיל, ג). עתה שב להוכיח העומדים [בבבל]⁶⁵⁷ ולא באו לבנות הבית ולדור בארץ הקדושה, למלאת מצות השם. כי תחלת⁶⁵⁸ המראת - הקרנות ובניין⁶⁵⁹ ירושלם (ראה זכ' ב, א-יא), גם אחד המראת - כבוד שצוה השם⁶⁶⁰ לעשות [לבאים]⁶⁶¹ מהגולה המתנדבים (שם יב-ז). והנה⁶⁶² במראה [הראשונה]⁶⁶³ ראה מגילה (ראה לעיל, א), ועתה לא ידע מה היא. כי האלה נראית⁶⁶⁴ לאשר נמצאה בידו הגניבה⁶⁶⁵ (ע"פ שמי' כב, ג) או ליודע⁶⁶⁶ שהוא נשבע לשקר⁶⁶⁷ (ראה לעיל, ג-ד); וזאת **היוצא** היא נסתרת ונעלמת בלב.

⁶⁶⁸ ואמר נ ויאמר
⁶⁶⁹ ימוד אור מדד
⁶⁷⁰ [עינים] מ עצם (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
⁶⁷¹ והנה לחסר
⁶⁷² נשאת פ נושאת (? נישאת?)
⁶⁷³ ננשאה ל ננשאת
⁶⁷⁴ משפחה מישראל אור אחת ממשפחות ישראל
⁶⁷⁵ ויאמר ל חסר
⁶⁷⁶ רשע אור הרשע
⁶⁷⁷ וישלך א ודעו לך (?ודעי לך)
⁶⁷⁸ כמו ל חסר
⁶⁷⁹ רק או חסר
⁶⁸⁰ טעם שתיים אר טעם שתי ו טעם שני לנ(?) וטעי שתי
⁶⁸¹ ארתחששתא אבד ארתחששתא ו הרתחששתא ר
ארתחששתא
⁶⁸² שיעשה ר יעשה
⁶⁸³ [בבבל] מ בבל (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
⁶⁸⁴ שנשאר ל שנשאר שם
⁶⁸⁵ נביאו לבוא ל הנביא ולבא נ נביא ולבוא
⁶⁸⁶ לבית ו אל בית ר בבית
⁶⁸⁷ אלה אור חסר

⁶⁴⁹ כמו נ והוא כמו
⁶⁵⁰ מלה מ מלת א מילת (תוקן ע"פ בדולנר)
⁶⁵¹ העושים אלה א כעושים אלו ור העושים אלו
⁶⁵² השתים עבירות ל שתיים העבירות נר השתים העבירות
⁶⁵³ מלאכים אחרים ל המלאכים
⁶⁵⁴ בראשונה ור כראשונה (?)
⁶⁵⁵ והיא ב והנה
⁶⁵⁶ האלה לנ חסר
⁶⁵⁷ [בבבל] מב¹ ל¹ בבל (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
⁶⁵⁸ תחלת בד היא תחלת
⁶⁵⁹ ובניין אר בניין ו כעין (? בניין?)
⁶⁶⁰ שצוה השם בדפ השם שצוה ל שצוה
⁶⁶¹ [לבאים] מבדפ לבאי (תוקן ע"פ אולנר)
⁶⁶² והנה ל והם
⁶⁶³ [הראשונה] מ הראשון (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
⁶⁶⁴ נראית לנ הנראת
⁶⁶⁵ בידו הגניבה אולר הגניבה בידו
⁶⁶⁶ ליודע ד ליוודע
⁶⁶⁷ לשקר נ על (?) שקר

צבא השמים עומדים עליו מימינו⁷⁰⁵ ומשמאלו"
 (השווה מ"א כב, יט). **ונחשת** - שהם עומדים.
(ב) במרכבה - ואלה הסוסים שבראש הספר,
 במראה הראשונה (זכ"א, ח). **(ג) ובמרכבה** - הנה
 במרכבות השלש הזכיר סוסים⁷⁰⁶ עין אחד⁷⁰⁷
 להם, וזה⁷⁰⁸ משונה מזה: אדום, שחור ולבן.⁷⁰⁹
 רק ברביעית הזכיר⁷¹⁰ שני גוונים: **ברדים** [גם]⁷¹¹
אמוצים - מגזי "אמיץ" (השווה יש' מ, כו); והוא
 גוון התקיף,⁷¹² ונראה למרחוק יותר מכל
 הגוונים. **(ד) ואען** - [גם]⁷¹³ זאת המראה היתה
 בעוד **המלאך** עומד. **(ה) ויען**. אלה הגזרות
היוצאות⁷¹⁴ **לארבע**⁷¹⁵ קצות הארץ. **ומהתיצב** -
 כמו "להתיצב על יי"י" (איוב א, ו). **(ו) אשר** -
 הזכיר המראה השנית (ראה לעיל, ב-ג), כי היא⁷¹⁶
 עיקר המראה על היהודים אשר נשאר **אל ארץ**
צפון - בבל ופרס. **והלבנים יצאו אל אחריהם** -
 ולא חשש לדעת את הארץ אשר **יצאו** שם.⁷¹⁷
והברדים⁷¹⁸ - הם המרכבה הרביעית (ראה
 לעיל, ג), **יצאו אל דרום**, הפך המרכבה השניית⁷¹⁹

יניחו האשה,⁶⁸⁸ שהיא⁶⁸⁹ משפחת ישראל היושבת
 בתוך האיפה (ראה לעיל, ז), שתברח משם.
(י) וטעי' אנה ואנה⁶⁹⁰ **המה מוליכות את**
האיפה - המדה שגזר השם לגמול⁶⁹² להם.⁶⁹³
(יא) ויאמר. לבנות לאשה⁶⁹⁴ שהיתה⁶⁹⁵ בתוך
 האיפה (ראה לעיל, ז), **בית**⁶⁹⁶ **בארץ שנער** - כי
 שם יעכבוה על⁶⁹⁷ כרחה, בעבור העון שלא רצתה
 לבוא לבניין⁶⁹⁸ הבית. ומלת **והניחה** - מורכבת
 מן 'והונחה' ו'הניחה';⁶⁹⁹ כמו " **ישַׁבְתָּ בלבנון**⁷⁰⁰
מְקַנְנֵת בארזים"⁷⁰¹ (יר' כב, כג); ["צַמְתוֹתוֹנִי"⁷⁰²
 (תה' פח, יז); ורבים ככה.

זכריה פרק ו

(א) ואשוב - כאשר נשלמה זאת המראָה. **והנה**
ארבע⁷⁰³ **מרכבות**, והמרכבה⁷⁰⁴ - ארבע' סוסים,
 ככת' בספר מלכים (השווה מ"א י, כט). וטעם
מבין שני ההרים - על הגזרות; על דרך "וכל

⁶⁸⁸ האשה נחסר ר והאשה

⁶⁸⁹ שהיא וחסר

⁶⁹⁰ וטעי' נ ואומר טעם

⁶⁹¹ ואנה אדולנר חסר (כנה"מ)

⁶⁹² לגמול ל לגמור

⁶⁹³ להם ב עליהם

⁶⁹⁴ לאשה ל לאשה בית

⁶⁹⁵ שהיתה אבדור שהיא

⁶⁹⁶ בית ל שהייתה

⁶⁹⁷ על בדי בעל ל בארץ שנער בעל

⁶⁹⁸ לבניין נ לבניין (?)

⁶⁹⁹ והניחה ר חסר

⁷⁰⁰ בלבנון ב חסר

⁷⁰¹ בארזים ב חסר

⁷⁰² ["צמתותוני"] מ צמתותוני אור צמתוני ל צמתוני

(תוקן ע"פ בדנפ)

⁷⁰³ ארבע ל ארבעה

⁷⁰⁴ והמרכבה בד המרכבה

⁷⁰⁵ מימינו ו מימינו (?)

⁷⁰⁶ סוסים ב הסוסים

⁷⁰⁷ אחד או אחר (?)

⁷⁰⁸ וזה אבו זה

⁷⁰⁹ ולבן ל לבן

⁷¹⁰ ברביעית הזכיר נ ברביעי הזכיר הזכיר

⁷¹¹ [גם] מ כמו פ גם כמו (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)

⁷¹² גוון התקיף אור גוף תקיף (אולי תוקן ע"י ז')

⁷¹³ [גם] מבפ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אדולנר)

⁷¹⁴ היוצאות אור יוצאת

⁷¹⁵ לארבע ל לארבעה

⁷¹⁶ כי היא אור כי פ היא

⁷¹⁷ שם אלנפ משם

⁷¹⁸ והברדים ר והברבודים (?) והברבורים

⁷¹⁹ הפך המרכבה השינית אור המרכבה

נכתבה לפאר כל הבית,⁷⁴¹ לפאר⁷⁴² בית השם ;
 וזה הנביא התנבא⁷⁴³ לפני בואם (ראה להלן, י),
 כאשר אפרש. (י) **לקוח**⁷⁴⁴ - שם הפועל תחת
 ציווי ; כמו "זכור את יום השבת" (שמי' כ, ח).
ובאת אתה - בעצמך **ביום ההוא**.⁷⁴⁵ **בית** יאשיהו
בן צפניה - שהיה בירושלם. **אשר באו מבבל** - שב
 אל **חלדי וטוביה וידעיה** ; כמו "על שפת היס"
 (שמי' יד, ל)-[שב]⁷⁴⁶ אל⁷⁴⁷ "ישראל" (שם).
(יא) ולקחת כסף וזהב - שיביאו נדבה לבית
 השם,⁷⁴⁸ ועשה מהם⁷⁴⁹ **עטרות** ושים אותם⁷⁵⁰
בראש יהושע, כאשר הושם⁷⁵¹ העטרה על ראש
 המלך. וככה אומר :⁷⁵² "והיה כהן על כסאו"
 (להלן, יג). גם זאת - יתכן היותה בדרך נבואה, גם
 בהקיץ על יד מלאך.⁷⁵³ **(יב) ואמרת אליו** - אל
 יהושע. **צמח**⁷⁵⁴ **שמו** - הוא זרובבל.⁷⁵⁵ **ומתחתיו** -
 ממקומו ; כמו 'מאליו'. **(יג) והוא** - וכאשר
[יבנה]⁷⁵⁶ הבית, אז⁷⁵⁷ **ישא הוד** מלכות (ע"פ

שיצאה⁷²⁰ **אל ארץ צפון**. (ז) **והאמוצים** - הם
 האדומים לבדם,⁷²¹ שהיה⁷²² [במרכבה]⁷²³
 הראשונה (ראה לעיל, ב). **ויבקשו ללכת**⁷²⁴ ...
בארץ למזרח⁷²⁵ ולמערב במצות אדון⁷²⁶ כל הארץ
 (ראה לעיל, ה), על [כן] :⁷²⁷ **ויאמר לנו**.
(ח) ויזעק.⁷²⁸ **וידבר** המלאך הדובר בי⁷²⁹ על פי
 השם, כי השחורים **היוצאים אל ארץ צפון** עשו
 נקמת השם בצפון.⁷³⁰ וזה טעם⁷³¹ **הניחו את**
רוחי ;⁷³² כמו "ומושל"⁷³³ ברוחו" (משי' טז, לב).
 וטעם זאת המראה :⁷³⁴ שהודיע⁷³⁵ הנביא
 לישראל, כי כל היושב מהם **בארץ צפון** [ולא]⁷³⁷
 יבא לבנות הבית, רעה תבא אליהם, מרוב
 מלחמות שתתעוררנה⁷³⁸ **בארץ צפון** ;⁷³⁹ וירושלם
 תשכן לבטח (ע"פ יר' לג, טז). **(ט) ויהי** זאת⁷⁴⁰

⁷²⁰ שיצאה ל שיצאו
⁷²¹ לבדם **אור** לבנים
⁷²² שהיה ל שהיו
⁷²³ [במרכבה] **מ חסר אור** במראה נ המרכבה (?) (תוקן ע"פ
נדלפ)
⁷²⁴ ללכת **אבונפר** להתהלך (המילה הבאה בפסוק) **דל**²
 ללכת להתהלך (הפסוק השלם)
⁷²⁵ למזרח **לנ** במזרח
⁷²⁶ אדון **ב** האדון
⁷²⁷ [כן] **מ חסר** (תוקן ע"פ **אבדולנפ**)
⁷²⁸ ויזעק **א** ויזעק
⁷²⁹ **בי ד** בו
⁷³⁰ עשו נקמת השם בצפון **אור חסר** (השמטת הדומות)
⁷³¹ וזה טעם **אור** וטעם
⁷³² **רוחי ד** רוחו
⁷³³ ומושל **ב** ומשלו (?)
⁷³⁴ המראה **ר** הנבואה המראה
⁷³⁵ שהודיע **אולנ(?)ר** שיודיע
⁷³⁶ **בארץ אור** אל ארץ
⁷³⁷ ולא **נ** לא
⁷³⁸ שתתעוררנה **נ** שתעוררנה
⁷³⁹ [ולא יבא לבנות הבית, רעה תבא אליהם, מרוב
 מלחמות שתתעוררנה בארץ צפון] **מאבדופר חסר** (תוקן
 ע"פ ל)
⁷⁴⁰ זאת ל זא הנבואה

⁷⁴¹ לפאר כל הבית **לנ חסר** (השמטת הדומות : תוספת של
 תלמיד או מעתיק :)
⁷⁴² לפאר ו לפאר את
⁷⁴³ התנבא **אור חסר**
⁷⁴⁴ לקוח **נ** לקום
⁷⁴⁵ ביום ההוא **ל חסר**
⁷⁴⁶ [שב] **מ שם** (תוקן ע"פ **אבדולנפ**)
⁷⁴⁷ אל **פ** על
⁷⁴⁸ לבית השם **ל** לבית לפני השם
⁷⁴⁹ מהם **לנ** מקום
⁷⁵⁰ אותם **נ** אותה (?)
⁷⁵¹ הושם **אולנר** תושם
⁷⁵² אומר **או** אמר **פר** אמ'
⁷⁵³ יד מלאך **א** ידי מלאך **בדונ** יד המלאך
⁷⁵⁴ צמח **ר** יצמח (?) (וצמח?)
⁷⁵⁵ הוא זרובבל **ל** זרובבל הוא **נר** זרובבל
⁷⁵⁶ [יבנה] **מ חסר** (תוקן ע"פ **אבדולנפ**)
⁷⁵⁷ אז **א** אש **פ**¹ אשר (תוקן ע"פ פ²)

בעשור⁷⁷³ **לחדש החמישי**. ואל יהיה⁷⁷⁴ ספק
 בליבך⁷⁷⁵ בעבור שתמצא⁷⁷⁶ כי⁷⁷⁷ בשבעה לחדש
 נשרף (מ"ב כה, ח), כי הטעם: נשרף⁷⁷⁸ קצהו.
 וירושלם חרבה פעם שנית⁷⁷⁹ בימי טיטוס
 [בטי']⁷⁸⁰ באב, ועל אותו חרבן שיני אנו מתענין.
הנזר - שִׁנְזָרוּ מכל⁷⁸¹ מעדנים ומאכל, רק
 יבכו.⁷⁸² והנה הכהנים לא ידעו להשיב, כי אין זה
 הצום⁷⁸³ כתוב בתורה, רק הם קבלו עליהם
 בראותם חרבן⁷⁸⁴ בית ראשון. והנה הנביא
 התנבא, והשיב בסוף הפרשה (ראה זכ' ח, יט).
(ד) ויהי - זה היה⁷⁸⁵ אחר⁷⁸⁶ ששאלו. **(ה) אמור**
אל כל עם⁷⁸⁷ **הארץ** - הם אנשי בבל גם אנשי
 ירושלם, כי הנבואה כוללת⁷⁸⁸ הכל; גם **אל**
הכהנים שלא ידעו להשיב. **וספוד** - שם הפועל,
 וככה הוא: וספדתם **ספוד**⁷⁸⁹; והנה אחז דרך
 קצרה. **בחמישי** - הוא הנזכר (ראה לעיל, ג);
 והוסיף גם **בשביעי** הבא אחריו, והוא צום
 גדליה. והזכיר **זה שבעים שנה** - ולא חשש

דה"א כט, כה). והכהן הגדול יהושע⁷⁵⁸ (ראה
 לעיל, יא) גם [הוא]⁷⁵⁹ יושב⁷⁶⁰ **על כסאו**; ולא
תהיה ביניהם קנאה בעבור שני כסאות.
(יד) והעטרות.⁷⁶¹ **לחלם** הוא "חלדי" (לעיל, י);
 כמו "אחי מות" (השווה דה"א ו, י) - "מחת"⁷⁶²
 (שם, כ), בדברי הימים. **וחן**⁷⁶³ - הוא יאשיהו
 (לעיל, י); כמו "עמינדב"⁷⁶⁴ (שם, ז) הוא
 "יצהר"⁷⁶⁵ (שם, ג), ורבים ככה.⁷⁶⁶
(טו) ורחוקים⁷⁶⁷ - הם מישראל.

זכריה פרק ז

(א) ויהי בשנת ארבע - בהבנות הבית.
(ב) וישלח ביתאל - שם שר הוא, משרי ישראל
 שהיו בבבל. וככה **שראצר ורגם מלך** - שמות
 שרים;⁷⁶⁸ והעד: **ואנשיו** - אנשי⁷⁶⁹ **רגם מלך**.⁷⁷⁰
 ויפת אמר, שהוא כמו "שרי יהודה רגמתם" (תה'
 סח, כח) - הגדולים. **(ג) לאמר**. **בחדש החמישי** -
 הזכיר זה הצום,⁷⁷¹ בעבור כי הבית נשרף⁷⁷²

⁷⁷³ בעשור מ¹ בעבור (אות ב נמחק ע"י מ²)

⁷⁷⁴ יהיה בדל יהי

⁷⁷⁵ ספק בליבך ל בלבך ספק

⁷⁷⁶ שתמצא אור תמצא

⁷⁷⁷ כי ל חסר

⁷⁷⁸ נשרף אור חסר

⁷⁷⁹ פעם שנית אור חסר

⁷⁸⁰ [בטי'] מ טי (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)

⁷⁸¹ מכל ו הכל

⁷⁸² יבכו אור יבנו

⁷⁸³ הצום אור צום

⁷⁸⁴ חרבן לנ בחרבן

⁷⁸⁵ זה היה ל זאת היתה נ היתה(!)

⁷⁸⁶ אחר א(?) אורי

⁷⁸⁷ עם א¹ העם (כנראה תוקן ע"י א²)

⁷⁸⁸ כוללת נ חסר

⁷⁸⁹ וככה הוא וספדתם ספוד ל וככה וספוד הספד נ וככה

הוא

⁷⁵⁸ יהושע לנ הוא יהושע

⁷⁵⁹ [הוא] מבפ והוא (תוקן ע"פ אדלנר)

⁷⁶⁰ יושב אדור ישב

⁷⁶¹ והעטרות ל חסר

⁷⁶² מחת א תחת ל חסר

⁷⁶³ וכן נ וכן

⁷⁶⁴ עמינדב בדפ עמי נדיב

⁷⁶⁵ יצהר ר יצרה

⁷⁶⁶ ורבים ככה ו חסר

⁷⁶⁷ ורחוקים לנ ורחוקים יבואו (המשך הפסוק)

⁷⁶⁸ שרים נ שרים הם

⁷⁶⁹ אנשי ב אנשיו

⁷⁷⁰ מלך אור המלך

⁷⁷¹ הזכיר זה הצום א חסר ב זה הצום

⁷⁷² הבית נשרף לנ נשרף הבית

- גם הנבואה הזאת⁸¹⁰ דְּבָקָה, רק היתה נבואה
 אחרת, יפרש הדברים אשר קרא⁸¹¹ השם ביד
 נביאיו⁸¹² הראשונים; ואלה הם: (ט) כה... (י)
 אלמנה ויתום וגו'.⁸¹³ (יא) וימאנו - אבותיכם.
 כתף⁸¹⁴ סוררת - כמו "קשה"⁸¹⁵ עורף" (שמי
 לד, ט); ואפני לשמוע לא אבו.⁸¹⁶ (יב) ולבם.
 השמיר⁸¹⁷ - אין⁸¹⁸ כח בברזל⁸¹⁹ לעשות לו
 פתוחים.⁸²⁰ את התורה - תורת משה רבינו⁸²¹.
 ואת הדברים... ביד הנבאים - להוכיחם.⁸²² ויהי
 קצף גדול - על אבותיכם. (יג) ויהי - גמולם
 השיב בראשם (ע"פ עב' ט, טו). (יד) ואסערים⁸²³ -
 מלה קשה בדקדוק, כי תראה שהיא⁸²⁴ מהפעלי
 היוצאים, והיה נכון שיאמר [וְאֶסְעָרִים],⁸²⁵ או
 וְאֶסְעָרִים או 'ואסעירים' - בניין הכבד.⁸²⁶ ורבי
 מרינוס אמר: 'ואסעיר';⁸²⁷ וזה אינו⁸²⁸ נכון,

להזכיר שתיים שנים⁷⁹⁰ נוספות או אחת; כי בשנת
 שתיים לדריוש⁷⁹¹ המלך שָׁלְמוּ "לחרבות ירושלם
 שבעים שנה" (דני ט, ב), [וזו]⁷⁹² הנבואה בשנת
 ארבע היתה⁷⁹³ (ראה לעיל, א), וקצת⁷⁹⁴ מן
 [השלישית]⁷⁹⁵ נכנסה כאשר שָׁלְמוּ השבעים,
 ובנבואה⁷⁹⁶ הזאת כבר נכנסה קצת מן הרביעית.
 על כן לא⁷⁹⁷ דקדק כל כך⁷⁹⁸ בחשבון⁷⁹⁹
 שבעים,⁸⁰⁰ כי קרוב הוא. ומלת 'צם'⁸⁰¹ מהפעלים
 העומדים,⁸⁰² על כן צמתוני - צמתם בעבורי, או:
 לכבודי; כי אני לא ציויתי אתכם לצום.⁸⁰³
 (ו) וכי - הטעם⁸⁰⁴: אתם האוכלים ואתם
 הצמים;⁸⁰⁵ מה תתנו לי, או מה⁸⁰⁶ תפעלו בי?
 והנה אני לא ציויתי אתכם את הדבר הזה.
 (ז) הלא רק ציויתי הדברים⁸⁰⁷ ביד הנבאים;⁸⁰⁸
 [ומי]⁸⁰⁹ הוא שהתנבא על פי להתענות? (ח) ויהי

⁸¹⁰ הנבואה הזאת אור זאת הנבואה

⁸¹¹ קרא לני יקרא

⁸¹² נביאיו נ הנביאים

⁸¹³ כה... אלמנה ויתום וגו' אבד כה... אלמנה וגו' ויתום לר

⁸¹⁴ כתף לני ויתנו כתף

⁸¹⁵ קשה ו קשה

⁸¹⁶ אבו ו אנו (?)

⁸¹⁷ ולבם השמיר ל שמיר

⁸¹⁸ השמיר אין ו אין השמיר

⁸¹⁹ כח בברזל ד כח ברזל נ דבריו כברזל

⁸²⁰ לו פתוחים אור בו נ בו פתוחים

⁸²¹ רבינו אבדולנר חסר

⁸²² ביד הנבאים להוכיחם לני להוכיחם

⁸²³ ואסערים מ¹ ואספרם (תוקן ע"י מ²)

⁸²⁴ שהיא נר חסר

⁸²⁵ [וְאֶסְעָרִים] מ אסערים (תוקן ע"י בבלנ)

⁸²⁶ [וְאֶסְעָרִים] או וְאֶסְעָרִים או ואסעירים בניין הכבד אור

ואסערים או ואסעירים בניין הכבד או וְאֶסְעָרִים (הניקוד

חסר כ-נ) ל ואסערים כמו ואסערים או ואסעירים בניין הכבד

נ ואסערים או ואסערים בניין הכבד

⁸²⁷ ואסעיר א וְאֶסְעָרִים לני ואסערים

⁸²⁸ אינו ל אינינו נ איננו

⁷⁹⁰ שנים ו נשים

⁷⁹¹ לדריוש ו לדריוס

⁷⁹² [וזו] מפ¹ חסר לני וזאת (תוקן ע"י אבדולנ²)

⁷⁹³ בשנת ארבע היתה אדור היתה בשנת ארבע ל בשנת ב'

⁷⁹⁴ שנה היתה נ בשנה הרביעית היתה

⁷⁹⁴ וקצת בד ומקצת

⁷⁹⁵ [השלישית] מאבופר השלישי (תוקן ע"י בבלנ)

⁷⁹⁶ ובנבואה ל והנבואה

⁷⁹⁷ לא ר חסר

⁷⁹⁸ כל כך נ חסר

⁷⁹⁹ בחשבון ל במלת

⁸⁰⁰ שבעים און השבעים

⁸⁰¹ צם ל הצום נ העם (?)

⁸⁰² העומדים א חסר

⁸⁰³ לצום מ¹ לצוד (תוקן ע"י מ²)

⁸⁰⁴ הטעם נ חסר

⁸⁰⁵ הצמים לני הצומים

⁸⁰⁶ או מה ו א מה ל או

⁸⁰⁷ הדברים ל את הדברים נ את הנביאים הדברים

⁸⁰⁸ ביד הנבאים ר הנביאים ביד

⁸⁰⁹ [ומי] מבד ומה (תוקן ע"י אולנפר)

ממנו - כי אז יראה תימה, כמו "הממני יפלא"⁸⁴¹
 (יר' לב, כז), רק⁸⁴² כאן⁸⁴³ כתוי:⁸⁴⁴ **גם בעיני**
יפלא. וכאשר **יפלא** הדבר⁸⁴⁵ שאני עושה **בעיני**...
העם הזה - גם⁸⁴⁶ **בעיני** הוא, כי עשיתי פלא גדול.
 רק **בעיני**⁸⁴⁷ - כמו "היא נפלאות בעינינו" (תה'
 קיח, כג); והטעם: שאעשה פלא⁸⁴⁸ לא עשיתי
 כמהו, וראיתי, דרך משל. (ז) **כה**.⁸⁴⁹ **מזרח** - בבל
 ופרס. **ומבא השמש** - מצרים ואשור.
 (ח) **והבאתי** - גם זאת הנבואה⁸⁵⁰ דבקה היא.
 (ט) **מפי הנביאים** - הם⁸⁵¹ חגי וזכריה.⁸⁵² **[בית**
יי]⁸⁵³ - הוא **ההיכל**. (י) **כי לפני**⁸⁵⁴ **הימים ההם**
 - טרם שיבנה,⁸⁵⁵ **לא** ימצא השכיר מה יעשה.
 ומלת **איננה** - על **השכר**, כי מלות רבות
 תמצאנה על לשון זכרים גם נקבות. ור' משה
 אמר, כי **איננה** - שב אל **הבהמה**: אין **שכר**
הבהמה,⁸⁵⁶ **כי איננה**. **הצר**⁸⁵⁷ - הצורך (ע"פ במ'
 י, ט). **ואשלח** - לעשות מריבה. (יא) **ועתה** - לא

בעבור **על כל הגוים**.⁸²⁹ והנכון בעיני: ואסער
 עליהם בסערת רוחי, והיא תפיץ אותם **על כל**
הגוים. והזכיר **והארץ נשמה**⁸³⁰ - הפך "והנגב
 והשפלה ישב" (לעיל, ז).

זכריה פרק ח

(א) **ויהי** - בעבור שהזכיר שממות הארץ, נחם
 אותם. (ב) **כה**.⁸³¹ **קנאתי לציון** - כמו⁸³² "ויקנא
 יי' לארצו" (יואל ב, יח). (ג) **כה**.⁸³³ **שבתי אל ציון**
 - על תנאי, כאשר הזכרתי⁸³⁴ (זכ' ב, יד). (ד)
 (ה) **כה**. הטעם: שתהיה העיר מליאה, ושם
זקנים רבים וילדים. והנה הטעם, שיאריכו **ימים**
 [כל]⁸³⁵ **השוכנים בירושלם ורחובות העיר** -
 הפך⁸³⁶ "וישימו ארץ חמדה לשמה" (זכ' ז, יד).
 (ו) **כה**. אמר ר' יהודה הלוי⁸³⁷ כי ה"א התימה
 חסר, כאילו כתוי: **הגם בעיני יפלא? כמו**
"אתה... תעשה מלוכה על ישראל" (מ"א כא, ז) -
 שהוא חסר ה"א התימה, כאילו הוא 'האתה'.⁸³⁸
 ולפי דעתי אין צריך,⁸³⁹ כי הכתי' איננו⁸⁴⁰ **שיפלא**

⁸⁴¹ יפלא לנ יפלא כל דבר
⁸⁴² רק א ראה
⁸⁴³ כאן ר אין
⁸⁴⁴ כתוי נ כתב
⁸⁴⁵ הדבר **אדולנר** הדבר הזה
⁸⁴⁶ הזה גם ל כי נ גם
⁸⁴⁷ בעיני **אדור** בעיני יפלא
⁸⁴⁸ פלא **במ**¹ כלה (תוקן ע"י מ²)
⁸⁴⁹ כה ל חסר
⁸⁵⁰ זאת הנבואה ל זאת נבואה נ זו נבואה
⁸⁵¹ הנביאים הם **אור** הנביאים נ הנביא והם
⁸⁵² וזכריה **דר** זכריה
⁸⁵³ [בית יי'] **מאבונר** כה בית ה' (תוקן ע"פ דל)
⁸⁵⁴ כי לפני **אולנ** לפני ר לפי
⁸⁵⁵ שיבנה **אור** איננה
⁸⁵⁶ הבהמה **אור** בהמה ל בקמה
⁸⁵⁷ הצר **אדולנר** מן הצר (תוספת מלשון הפסוק)

⁸²⁹ כל הגוים **ב** הגוים **לנ** כל הגוים או ואסעירם בגוים
⁸³⁰ נשמה **ל** הנשמה
⁸³¹ כה **ל חסר**
⁸³² כמו **ר חסר**
⁸³³ כה **ל חסר**
⁸³⁴ כה שבתי אל ציון על תנאי כאשר הזכרתי **ב חסר**
 (השמטת הדומות)
⁸³⁵ [כל] **מב** על (תוקן ע"פ **אדולנר**)
⁸³⁶ הפך **אולנ(?)** ר הנה הפך
⁸³⁷ ר' יהודה הלוי **אבדור** ר' יהודה הלוי מ"כ **לנ** ר' יהודה
 הלוי ז"ל
⁸³⁸ האתה **ל** האתה תעשה
⁸³⁹ צריך **אדונר** צורך **ל** צרך
⁸⁴⁰ איננו **אור חסר** ל איננו אומי

נחמ' ט); והם תועים,⁸⁷⁵ כי אז התענו בעבור⁸⁷⁶
 מעל הגולה (ע"פ עז' ט, ד). ואין שם כתי'⁸⁷⁷ כי רע
 בא על ישראל⁸⁷⁸ בחדש השביעי, [רק דבר גדליה;
 וכת' "ויהי בחודש השביעי"⁸⁷⁹] (ירי מא, א).
 ובעבור שלא הזכיר ימי החדש, יתכן להיותו⁸⁸⁰
 בתחלת החדש בחידוש⁸⁸¹ הלבנה, כמו "חדש
 ושבת" (יש' א, יג); "בחדש השלישי לצאת בני
 ישראל" (שמי' יט, א). ובאמרו⁸⁸² הכתי' "באחד
 לחדש"⁸⁸³ - נאמר כן לחזוק,⁸⁸⁴ שלא יעלה⁸⁸⁵ על
 לב השומע כי איננו היום הראשון; כי הכתי' הוא
 "חדשיכם ומועדיכם" (יש' א, יד). ואין טענה
 ממלת "ובראשי חדשיכם" (במ' כח, יא) - כי הם
 הם⁸⁸⁶ חדשי ניסן; וכת' שם "עלת חדש בחדשו"
 (שם, יד). ומדברי הקבלה⁸⁸⁷ (ראה סוכה נה, א)
 נקבל "וביום שמחתכם ובמועדיכם ובראשי
 חדשיכם" (במ' י, ג). אם כן נהרג⁸⁸⁸ גדליה בראש
 השנה, על כן קבעוהו ליום⁸⁸⁹ השלישי; [או]⁸⁹⁰

אשלח איש ברעהו, רק שלום יהיה.⁸⁵⁸ (יב) כי -
 הטעם: יזרעו ויקצרו איש⁸⁵⁹ בשלום. (יג) והיה
 כאשר הייתם קללה - חרפת⁸⁶⁰ רעב (ע"פ יחי'
 לו, ל). הטעם: ⁸⁶¹אם ⁸⁶²תבא להם ⁸⁶³קללה,
 היו⁸⁶⁴ אומי' כי בעבורכם היתה. (יד) כה⁸⁶⁵ - גם
 זאת⁸⁶⁶ הנבואה דבקה. וזממוי' על⁸⁶⁷ 'השם' -
 הם⁸⁶⁸ הגזרות. (טו) כן. הזכיר את בית יהודה,
 כי הם הרבים; ⁸⁶⁹גם בעבור המלכות. (טז) אלה.
 דברו אמת - בסתר, ושפטו⁸⁷⁰ - בגלוי. (יז) ואיש
 - הנה אסור לחשב רע בלב, ⁸⁷¹גם בפה להשבע
 בשקר. (יח) ויהי - עתה ישיב תשובה על שאילת
 הצום. (יט) והזכיר צום הרביעי - והוא היה
 בתשעה לחדש, כי אז נבקעה העיר (ראה מ"ב
 כה, ג-ד). וצום החמישי - כאשר הזכרתי (זכ' ז, ג),
 בעשור לחדש. וצום השביעי - אין כתי' מספר
 ימי החדש. והמינים⁸⁷² אמרו, כי הוא יום⁸⁷³
 שהתענו בסוף חג הסוכות, הכתי'⁸⁷⁴ בעזרא (ראה

⁸⁷⁵ תועים ל טועים
⁸⁷⁶ בעבור נ בעוד
⁸⁷⁷ שם כתי' ל כתוי' שם
⁸⁷⁸ על ישראל או לישראל
⁸⁷⁹ [רק דבר גדליה וכת' ויהי בחדש השביעי] מ חסר
 (השמטת הדומות; תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)
⁸⁸⁰ להיותו ל להיות
⁸⁸¹ בחידוש א בחודש בדו בחדש (ב מנוקד בחדש)
⁸⁸² ובאמרו ו אומרו
⁸⁸³ באחד לחדש לנ חסר
⁸⁸⁴ לחזוק או לחזוק ר לחזוק
⁸⁸⁵ יעלה ו יענה (?)
⁸⁸⁶ הם הם אבדולנר הם
⁸⁸⁷ הקבלה אבדולנר קבלה
⁸⁸⁸ נהרג ו והרג (?)
⁸⁸⁹ ליום אור רק ביום בדלנ ביום
⁸⁹⁰ [או] מפ' (?) אי ב חסר (תוקן ע"פ אדולנר')

⁸⁵⁸ שלום יהיה בדנ יהיה שלום
⁸⁵⁹ איש ל חסר
⁸⁶⁰ קללה חרפת בד קללה אומר חרפת ל חרפת
⁸⁶¹ הטעם נ או הטעם
⁸⁶² אם ו חסר
⁸⁶³ להם אולנר עליהם בד חסר פ אליהם
⁸⁶⁴ היו ד יהיו
⁸⁶⁵ כה מ' גם כה 'גם" נמחק ע"י מ' נ כי כה
⁸⁶⁶ זאת נ זו
⁸⁶⁷ על בד חסר
⁸⁶⁸ הם לנ חסר
⁸⁶⁹ הרבים אור קרובים בדפ רבים
⁸⁷⁰ ושפטו ל ושפטו אמת
⁸⁷¹ רע בלב א בלב ל בלב רע
⁸⁷² והמינים נ והמניין
⁸⁷³ יום ל חסר
⁸⁷⁴ הכתי' בד חסר

אין פירושו כאשר חשבו רבים, וככה פירושו:⁹¹⁰
 שקיימו וקבלו על נפשם ימי הפורים (ע"פ אס' ט, כז-ל) לשמוח בהם - - אע"פ שלא צָנָם
 הנבאים, רק חייבים הם הבנים⁹¹¹ לעשות מה
 שקבלו אבותם "כאשר קבלו על נפשם דברי
 הצומות" (ע"פ אס' שם) - אלה הארבעה
 הנזכרים,⁹¹² ולא היו מפי נביא.⁹¹³ והנה
 התשובה:⁹¹⁴ שישימו אלה הימים שהיו בוכים
 וסופדים⁹¹⁵ בהם ימי **ששון ושמחה**, וישמרו
 מצות השם על פי הנבאים; וזהו **והאמת
 והשלום**⁹¹⁶ **אהבו**, כאשר כתוב "אמת"⁹¹⁷ ומשפט
 שלום" (לעיל, טז). וזאת התשובה שהשיב הנביא
 היא⁹¹⁸ כנגד השואלים "האבכה בחדש
 החמישי"⁹¹⁹ (זכ' ז, ג), שלא⁹²⁰ היו שומרי⁹²¹
 התורה שצוה⁹²² השם, והיו שואלים אם
 ישמרו⁹²³ מה שקיבלו האבות⁹²⁴ על עצמן; והנה
 השיב הנביא: יותר טוב היתם עושים אם הייתם

⁹¹⁰ וככה פירושו ו וכבר פירושו
⁹¹¹ חייבים הם הבנים **אור** הבנים חייבים הם ד הבנים הם
 חייבים
⁹¹² הארבעה הנזכרים **א** ארבעה הנזכרים ו ארבעה
 הנזכרים
⁹¹³ נביא **א** נביא' (?) נביאי?
⁹¹⁴ התשובה **או** תשובה
⁹¹⁵ בוכים וסופדים **או** בונים וסופדים **לנ** סופדים ובוכים
⁹¹⁶ והשלום **ב** חסר
⁹¹⁷ אמת **א** חסר
⁹¹⁸ היא **ב** הוא ו היה
⁹¹⁹ החמישי **אולר** השביעי
⁹²⁰ שלא **פ** שאלו
⁹²¹ שומרי **ל** שומרים
⁹²² שצוה **בד** שצום
⁹²³ אם ישמרו **א** חסר **ל** אם
⁹²⁴ האבות **בד** אבות

קבלנו ככה מפי⁸⁹¹ האבות הקדושים. **וצום
 העשירי** – כת'⁸⁹² ביחזקאל:⁸⁹³ "כתוב לך את שם
 היום"⁸⁹⁴ (יח' כד, ב). והנה חכמינו⁸⁹⁵ ז"ל הניחו
צום השביעי והעשירי⁸⁹⁶ כאשר היו לפנים.
 ובעבור כי [בשבעה עשר]⁸⁹⁷ בתמוז נהרגו הכהנים
 בבית השם, וחמשה דברים קָרְאָנוּ⁸⁹⁸ בו,
 קבעוהו⁸⁹⁹ בתענית; ולא הטריחו על הציבור
 להתענות בתשיעי.⁹⁰⁰ וביום תשעה באב נלכדה
 ירושלים בפעם⁹⁰¹ השנית, גם⁹⁰² נשרף בו הבית
 הראשון, קבעוהו.⁹⁰³ ולא הזכיר הכת' תענית
 אסתר - וכבר עבר זמן אחשוורוש - כי אין כת'
 [במגילה]⁹⁰⁴ קביעת⁹⁰⁵ יום התענית,⁹⁰⁶ כי כל
 ישראל [בניסן] התענו שלשה ימים.⁹⁰⁷ ודברי⁹⁰⁸
 הכת' "דברי הצומות וזעקתם"⁹⁰⁹ (אס' ט, לא)

⁸⁹¹ קבלנו ככה מפי **אור** קבלו ככה ד קבלו ככה מפי ל
 קבלנו מפי
⁸⁹² כת' **ל** ככות'
⁸⁹³ ביחזקאל **אול'נר** בספר יחזקאל
⁸⁹⁴ היום **לנ** היום הזה
⁸⁹⁵ חכמינו **ל** החכמי'
⁸⁹⁶ והעשירי **ד** ועשירי
⁸⁹⁷ [בשבעה עשר] **מ** חסר (תוקן ע"פ **אבדולנפר**)
⁸⁹⁸ קראנו **ד** קרנו **לנ** קראנו (ניקדתי בהנחה שנוסח **לנ** הוא
 הנכון. ייתכן שהסופרים שכתבו "קראנו" התכוונו בטעות
 לקראנו, אבל ברור שגירסת "קראנו" שגויה, שהרי דברי
 ראבי"ע מבוססים על המשנה, תענית ד, ו שחמשה דברים
 "ארעו")
⁸⁹⁹ קבעוהו **אור** קראנוהו **נ** קבעוהו
⁹⁰⁰ בתשיעי **ל** בשביעי בתשיעי
⁹⁰¹ בפעם **בד** גם בפעם
⁹⁰² גם **לנ** וגם
⁹⁰³ קבעוהו **ל** וקבעוהו צום
⁹⁰⁴ [במגילה] **מבפ** מגילה **ד** במדגלה (?) במרגלה (?) (תוקן ע"פ
אולר)
⁹⁰⁵ קביעת **ל** חסר
⁹⁰⁶ התענית **ור** תענית
⁹⁰⁷ [בניסן] התענו שלשה ימים **מבפ** באדר התענו שלשה
 ימים **אדור** התענו שלשה ימים בניסן (תוקן ע"פ **לנ**)
⁹⁰⁸ ודברי **ד** ובדברי
⁹⁰⁹ וזעקתם **ב** וזעקתם

בעבור אחרת; כמ"ם⁹³⁹ "מאל אביך ויעזרך"⁹⁴⁰
 (ברי מט, כה), שהיא תשרת⁹⁴¹ בעבור [מ"ם]
 אחרת: "ואת שדי"⁹⁴² (שם) - 'ומאת שדי'⁹⁴³.
 וככה הוא: ⁹⁴⁴[ולכל] ⁹⁴⁵שבטי ישראל. עיניהם⁹⁴⁶
 לשם לעבדו, ולאשר יורום ישראל. (ב) וגם היא
 בעצמה, חמת, תשים גבול בה לישראל,⁹⁴⁷ וככה
 צר וצידון. (ג-ד) ותבן⁹⁴⁸ - הטעם: אחר
 שנבנתה,⁹⁴⁹ הנה השם יורישנה את ישראל.
 (ה) תרא. ⁹⁵⁰מבטה - שהיתה מבטת אליו
 להושיעה. ואלה המקומות הם סביבות ירושלים,
 על כן הזכירם הכת'. והטעם: [כי ירושלים]
 תשב⁹⁵¹ לבטח. (ו) וישב ממזר⁹⁵² - אמר ר'י
 יהודה⁹⁵³ בן בלעם, כי הוא שם לגוי.⁹⁵⁴ ולפי
 דעתי, שהוא ממזר מהעריות,⁹⁵⁵ והיו⁹⁵⁶ לבדד
 סמוכים לירושלים.⁹⁵⁷ והטעם: השפלים⁹⁵⁸

⁹³⁹כמ"ם פ כמו
⁹⁴⁰ויעזרך בדולנר חסר
⁹⁴¹בעבור אחרת כמ"ם מאל אביך שהיא תשרת א חסר
 (השמטת הדומות)
⁹⁴²בעבור מ"ם אחרת ואת שדי מו בעבור אחרת ואת שדי
⁹⁴³שדי אלר שדי ויברכך
⁹⁴⁴ואת שדי ומאת שדי וככה הוא ו וככה
⁹⁴⁵[ולכל] מאבדופר וכל (תוקן ע"פ לנ)
⁹⁴⁶עיניהם ב עליהם לנ ובניהם
⁹⁴⁷בה לישראל אור ישראל
⁹⁴⁸ותבן מ' ודיבן (?): (תוקן ע"פ מ')
⁹⁴⁹שנבנתה אונ(?)ר שבנתה
⁹⁵⁰תרא לחסר נ טרם (?)
⁹⁵¹[כי ירושלים] תשב מ בירושלים תשב ב כי ירושלים יושב נ
 כי תשב (תוקן ע"פ אדולפר)
⁹⁵²וישב ממזר אבדונר וישב ל ממזר
⁹⁵³ר' יהודה ב חסר
⁹⁵⁴לגוי אולנר גוי
⁹⁵⁵שהוא ממזר מהעריות א שהוא מזמר ממהעריות
⁹⁵⁶והיו אולנר יהיו
⁹⁵⁷לירושלים ל אל ישראל
⁹⁵⁸השפלים ד שפלים

שומעים⁹²⁵ דברי השם ותניחו⁹²⁶ דברי האבות,
 מאשר תשמרו דברי האבות, הם הצדיקים
 הגמורים.⁹²⁷ (כ) כה.⁹²⁸ עוד - גם זאת הנבואה
 דבקה. (כא) והלכו יושבי עיר אחת - יאמר⁹²⁹ כל
 אחד: אלכה גם אני! ובאו להתפלל אל הבית
 (ע"פ מ"א ח, מב). (כג) כה.⁹³⁰ עשרה - סך
 חשבון, והטעם: רבים; כמו "מעשרה"⁹³¹ בניס"
 (ש"א א, ח). אמי' יפת כי זאת⁹³² לעתיד; והנכון,
 כי הנבואה דבקה.

זכריה פרק ט

(א) משא. חדרך⁹³³ - שם מלכות [ארם],⁹³⁴ או
 שם מלך. ומנוחת המשא תהיה בדמשק, כי שם
 תתקיים. גם זאת הנבואה דבקה בבית שני.
 וטעם כי ליי' עין אדם⁹³⁵ - שישבו לעבוד יי'
 רבים מאנשי דמשק, ולסור [אל]⁹³⁶ משמעת
 ישראל שהיו בירושלים, והם יהודה ובנימן ואשר
 שבו מאשור, ככת' בעזרא "כי שמחם"⁹³⁷ יי' והסב
 לב מלך⁹³⁸ אשורי" (עז' ו, כב). ולמ"ד 'ליי' תשרת
⁹²⁵שומעים אולר שומרים
⁹²⁶ותניחו ל והניחו
⁹²⁷הגמורים ו הגבורים
⁹²⁸כה ל חסר
⁹²⁹יאמר ל אמר
⁹³⁰כה ל הזה
⁹³¹מעשרה ו העשרה
⁹³²זאת אור זה ל זאת הנבואה
⁹³³משא חדרך ו משא הדרך ל חדרך
⁹³⁴[ארם] מדונפ אדם ר אדום (תוקן ע"פ אבל(?))
⁹³⁵אדם ב ארם! אדם?
⁹³⁶[אל] מבפ את (תוקן ע"פ אדולנר)
⁹³⁷שמחם בד שמחתם
⁹³⁸לב מלך אור למלך

עתה במראות⁹⁷⁶ בעיני⁹⁷⁷ הנבואה. (ט) **גילי** -
 זאת תחלת פרשה, והמפרשים התחלקו בה: יש
 אומי, כי זה המלך הוא משיח⁹⁷⁸ בן דוד, ויש
 אומי: משיח⁹⁷⁹ בן יוסף. ור' משה הכהן אמר,⁹⁸⁰
 כי [הוא]⁹⁸¹ נחמיה התרשטא, וכת' בעזרא עליו
 "מלך ביהודה" (נחמי ו, ז); על כן אמי "כי אם
 הבהמה"⁹⁸² (נחמי ב, יב), ולא⁹⁸³ הזכיר סוס -
 מבלי יכולת, כי עני הוא.⁹⁸⁴ ולא דבר נכונה (ע"פ
 איוב מב, ז-ח); כי פחה הוא,⁹⁸⁵ ולא בקש לחם
 הפחה⁹⁸⁶ מישראל (ראה נחמי ה, יד), ובכל יום
 יאכלו רבים על שולחנו (ראה שם, יז) - ואיך [לא]
 היה⁹⁸⁷ לו סוס? ועוד: מה טעם "על בניך יונ"
 (להלן, יג), ובזמן⁹⁸⁸ נחמיה לא משלו יונים על
 ירושלם? ולפי דעתי,⁹⁸⁹ כי זה המלך - יהודה בן
 חשמונני; שהיה גיבור ככת' "ושמתוך כחרב
 גיבור" (שם) וידו גברה על היונים,⁹⁹⁰ ובתחלתו
 לא היה לו⁹⁹¹ עושר ולא סוס; וכת' בדברי

והנבזים⁹⁵⁹ שבישראל הם ישבו [בדד בערי]⁹⁶⁰
פלשתים, שלא יתחשבו בין הכשרים.⁹⁶¹
 וה' **פלשתים** יכרת⁹⁶² גאונם מעליהם, כי מעם
 יש' הם. (ז) **והסירותי דמיו** - שהיה אוכל דם
 הרוגים; ישוב לעבודת⁹⁶³ השם. **ושקוציו** -
 הטומאה שהיה עם פלשתים אוכל. או רמז לע"ז.
ונשאר גם הוא - הטעם: לא ישאר מפלשתים,
 רק⁹⁶⁴ מי שיעבד [השם]⁹⁶⁵ בפרהסיא. **כאלוף**
ביהודה - כמובחר **שביהודה** לעבודת השם.⁹⁶⁶
ועקרון⁹⁶⁷ תתן מס **כיבוסי**⁹⁶⁸ שהיה בירושלם
 בימי דוד ואחריו, שנתנו מס למלכי יהודה.
(ח) וחניתי מצבה - בה"א תחת אל"ף; והטעם:
 אחנה ואנוח⁹⁶⁹ מצבא שיבא **ומעובר**⁹⁷⁰; והטעם:
 כי אין איש שיבא⁹⁷¹ להרע לירושלם, כי כל
 סביבותיה עובדי⁹⁷² השם ועבדי⁹⁷³ ישראל.
 וטעם⁹⁷⁴ **כי עתה** - הוא⁹⁷⁵ דברי הנביא, שראה זה

⁹⁷⁶ עתה במראות פ עתה כמראות ר במראות (?)
⁹⁷⁷ בעיני לחסר
⁹⁷⁸ משיח ל המשיח נ מלך משיח
⁹⁷⁹ משיח אור כי הוא משיח
⁹⁸⁰ ור' משה הכהן אמר ו ורמ"א (= "ור' משה אמר" בלי
 "הכהן")
⁹⁸¹ [הוא] מבפ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אדולנר)
⁹⁸² כי אם הבהמה או עני ורוכב על חמור ד עני ורוכב על
 חמור כי אם הבהמה ל כי אם הבהמה אשר אני רוכב בה ר
 עני ואביון ורוכב על חמור
⁹⁸³ ולא ד לא
⁹⁸⁴ הוא ל היה נ הוא דבר
⁹⁸⁵ פחה הוא אדור פחה היה ל פחת (?) הוא
⁹⁸⁶ לחם הפחה ל לחם הפחת נ לרום (?) הפחה
⁹⁸⁷ [לא] היה מ היה ל לא יהיה (תוקן ע"פ אדולנר)
⁹⁸⁸ ובזמן אור ובימי
⁹⁸⁹ דעתי ד ידעתי
⁹⁹⁰ היונים נ יונים
⁹⁹¹ לו אדור לו לא

⁹⁵⁹ והנבזים לנ הנבזים
⁹⁶⁰ ישבו [בדד בערי] מבפ ישבו בהר אור יושבי בדד בערי ל
 ישבו בדד בעיר (תוקן ע"פ דג)
⁹⁶¹ בין הכשרים ל עם הכשרים נ בין הכשרים
⁹⁶² יכרת ב יכתת
⁹⁶³ לעבודת אור לעבוד
⁹⁶⁴ רק ל כי אם
⁹⁶⁵ [השם] מבפ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אדולנר)
⁹⁶⁶ לעבודת השם לנ לעבודה
⁹⁶⁷ ועקרון א ועיקרון כיבוסי ור ועקרון כיבוסי (המשך
 הפסוק)
⁹⁶⁸ כיבוסי נ היבוסי
⁹⁶⁹ ואנוח ו שינוח (?)
⁹⁷⁰ ומעובר נ ומעובד
⁹⁷¹ כי אין איש שיבא אור אין איש בדנפ אין איש שיבוא ל
 אין שיש (?) שיבא
⁹⁷² עובדי לנ עתה עובדי
⁹⁷³ ועבדי בדר ועובדי
⁹⁷⁴ וטעם נ חסר
⁹⁷⁵ הוא ל חסר

[בהתגברם על יון.]¹⁰⁰⁹ **(יב) שובו** - אומר הנביא :
שובו לירושלם,¹⁰¹⁰ שהיא **בצרון** כי שם
 החשמונאים. **גם היום מגיד** אחר מגיד - זהו
משנה -[**אשיב**] **לך**.¹⁰¹¹ והטעם : כשליח הבא¹⁰¹²
 לראות מה וזה¹⁰¹³ יגיד המגיד. **(יג) כי**¹⁰¹⁴ **דרכתי**
לי... קשת... - הטעם¹⁰¹⁵ כפול. **ועוררתי בניך**
ציון על [בניך]¹⁰¹⁶ **יון. ושמתיד** - את שעוררתיך,
כחרב גיבור. (יד) ויי - וכבוד יי' **יראה** על
 יהודה ואפרים. וטעם **כברק חצו** - בעבור
 שהזכיר¹⁰¹⁷ "קשת"¹⁰¹⁸ מלאתי אפרים" (לעיל, יג).
 וטעם **בשופר** - ישמע זה,¹⁰¹⁹ שיקבץ ישראל אל
 החשמונאים. [בסערות **תימן** - רוח דרומית. יי'
עליהם - על החשמונאים.]¹⁰²⁰ **(טו) וכבשו**¹⁰²¹ -
 מבצרים, ולא יועילו להם לאויבים **אבני קלע**
 [במבצריהם].¹⁰²² וטעם **אבני קלע**:¹⁰²³ שרי יון.
 וטעם **ושתו** - שישפכו¹⁰²⁴ דמי הקולעים **במזרק**

קדמונינו⁹⁹² דבר⁹⁹³ המנורה,⁹⁹⁴ כי בעוני⁹⁹⁵ נעשה
 עד שהעשירו. **(י) והכרתי** - שלא היה להם⁹⁹⁶
 בהיותם תחת מלכות יון. וטעם **מאפרים** - הם
 הבאים מאשור, כאשר פירשתי (זכ' ח, ז, וט, א;
 וראה י, ו). ואומר⁹⁹⁷ [על זה]⁹⁹⁸ המלך⁹⁹⁹ שיהיה
 באחרונה: דובר **שלום לגוים, ומשלו** - ממשלתו
 על **ים סוף ועד ים פלשתים** (ע"פ שמי' כג, לא),
ומנהר פרת עד אפסי ארץ; הוא¹⁰⁰⁰ המדבר
שלום לגוים.¹⁰⁰¹ וזה גבול ארץ ישראל. גם אמר
 בתחלה על זה המלך כי הוא¹⁰⁰² "צדיק"
 (לעיל, ט), על כן הוא "נושעי" (שם). **(יא) ושב**
 ואמר לישי:¹⁰⁰³ **גם את**¹⁰⁰⁴ - בעבור **דם**¹⁰⁰⁵ הברית
 אשר כרת¹⁰⁰⁶ השם עם יוצאי מצרים. ויש אומ':
 בעבור מצנת המלה.¹⁰⁰⁷ והטעם: שיצאו
 האסירים¹⁰⁰⁸ מכל מקום להתחבר אל החשמונאים

¹⁰⁰⁹ [בהתגברם על יון] **מבפ** בהתגבר אדם עליון ר
 בהתגברם אל יון (תוקן ע"פ **אדולנ?**)
¹⁰¹⁰ לירושלם ל אל ירושלם
¹⁰¹¹ [אשיב] לך מ אגיד לך לנ אשיב (תוקן ע"פ **אבדופר**)
¹⁰¹² הבא **אבור** בא
¹⁰¹³ וזה **אור** זה **בד חסר**
¹⁰¹⁴ כי **ל חסר**
¹⁰¹⁵ הטעם **אור** הנה הטעם
¹⁰¹⁶ [בניך] מ בני **אור** בניך את (תוקן ע"פ **בדלנפ**)
¹⁰¹⁷ שהזכיר ר הזכיר
¹⁰¹⁸ קשת ב קצות קשת
¹⁰¹⁹ ישמע זה **אולר** שישמע זה או **בד** שישמע זה
¹⁰²⁰ [בסערות תימן רוח דרומית יי' עליהם על החשמונאים]
מבפ חסר (השמטת הדומות) ד בסערות תימן רוח דרומית
 ויי' עליהם על החשמונאים (תוקן ע"פ **אולנר**)
¹⁰²¹ וכבשו א¹ וינשו (תוקן ע"פ א²) ור וירשו
¹⁰²² [במבצריהם] מר במצריהם (תוקן ע"פ **אבדופ**)
¹⁰²³ [במבצריהם] וטעם אבני קלע לנ חסר (השמטת
 הדומות)
¹⁰²⁴ שישפכו ב שישפכנו

⁹⁹² קדמונינו לנ קדמונו ז"ל
⁹⁹³ דבר **אור** דברי
⁹⁹⁴ המנורה ד המנוד' (?)
⁹⁹⁵ כי בעוני ב כי בעוני (?) נ בעוני
⁹⁹⁶ להם **בד** להם סוס
⁹⁹⁷ ואומר **אדור** ואמר
⁹⁹⁸ [על זה] **מבפ חסר** (תוקן ע"פ **אדולנר**)
⁹⁹⁹ המלך ו המלך
¹⁰⁰⁰ הוא ל הם
¹⁰⁰¹ ומשלו ממשלתו על ים סוף ועד ים פלשתים ומנהר
 פרת עד אפסי ארץ הוא המדבר שלום לגוים **אור חסר**
 (השמטת הדומות)
¹⁰⁰² הוא ל חסר
¹⁰⁰³ ושב ואמר לישי לנ(?) וישב ישראל
¹⁰⁰⁴ את **בד חסר**
¹⁰⁰⁵ **דם אור** יום
¹⁰⁰⁶ אשר כרת **אולנר** שכרת
¹⁰⁰⁷ מצות המלה א זאת המילה ו זאת המלה
¹⁰⁰⁸ שיצאו האסירים **אדו** שיצאו האסורים ל שיצא
 אסירים

בהתגבר יד החשמונים¹⁰³⁶ יהיה¹⁰³⁷ להם שבע¹⁰³⁸
גדול (ע"פ בר' מא, כט). (ב) **כי**. האומרים : לא
יבא מושיע¹⁰³⁹ לישראל, **הבל** ינחמו¹⁰⁴⁰ צרי¹⁰⁴¹
ישראל. **על כן נסעו** ישראל וברחו¹⁰⁴² מירושלם
לפני מלחמות¹⁰⁴³ החשמונים ; ויענו לשואלים
'למה תברחו?': **כי אין רועה** לישראל¹⁰⁴⁴
מישראל. (ג) **על** - הפרשה¹⁰⁴⁵ דבקה היא ;
והרועים הם מלכי יון, שהיו מושלים על
ישראל.¹⁰⁴⁶ **כסוס** - נודע, שיראה¹⁰⁴⁷ הודו.
(ד) **ממנו** - המשיל יהודה לעץ חזק, שממנו פנה
ויתד¹⁰⁴⁸ וקשת ; והטעם : כי לא¹⁰⁴⁹ ימשל זר
בהם. (ה) **והיו כגיבורים**. רוכבי סוסים¹⁰⁵⁰ - כי
הם לא היו רגילים לרכוב על סוס, כאשר הזכיר
כי יכרת הסוס¹⁰⁵¹ מירושלם (ראה זכ' ט, י).
(ו) **וגברתי**. יהודה ויוסף - הם הבאים מאשור
אל בית שיני. [והושבותים]¹⁰⁵² - מלה מורכבת מן

שבו¹⁰²⁵ יזרק הדם על המזבח, כזויות
מחוטבות¹⁰²⁶ (ע"פ תה' קמד, יב) ; והטעם כפול.
(טז) **והושיעם ... כצאן עמו** - ביד משה בעמדו על
הים. ובעבור שהזכיר "אבני קלע" (לעיל, טו),
אמר כי אלה החשמונים הם **אבני נזר** ותפארת
מתנוססות - שהם נראות כנס על אדמת
השם.¹⁰²⁷ גם נכון הוא להיות **אבני קודש** (ע"פ
איכה ד, א)¹⁰²⁸ - רמז להיותם כהנים גדולים.
(יז) **כי** - אז ישמחו **הבחורים**¹⁰²⁹ והבתולות לנגן
ולשתות יין אחרי סעודתם ; וזהו **כי מה טובו** -
שב אל "ביום ההוא" הנזכר¹⁰³⁰ למעלה (פס' טז).
דגן ותירוש ינובב בחורים ובתולות¹⁰³¹ - מגזרת
"ינובון בשיבה" (תה' צב, טו) ; והנכון - מגזרת
"ניב שפתים"¹⁰³² (יש' נז, יט), והפועל יוצא. כמו
"ישובב" (תה' כג, ג) ; "יקומם" (מ"י ב, ח).

זכריה פרק י

(א) **שאלו**.¹⁰³³ **עושה חזיזים** - כמו¹⁰³⁴ "לחזיז
קולות" (איוב כח, כו ולח, כה). והטעם :¹⁰³⁵

¹⁰²⁵ שבו ר שלו שבו
¹⁰²⁶ כזויות מחוטבות אדו(?) ר בזויות ל בזויות (?)
מחוטבות
¹⁰²⁷ השם נ ישראל
¹⁰²⁸ קודש בד חסר
¹⁰²⁹ הבחורים ל הבחורים והזקנים
¹⁰³⁰ ביום ההוא הנזכר א בית הנזכר ור ביום הנזכר ל יום
שהוא נזכר נ יום הנזכר
¹⁰³¹ דגן ותירוש ינובב בחורים ובתולות ד דגן בחורים
ותירוש ינובב בתולות (לשון הפסוק) ל דגן ותירוש בחורים
ינובב בחורים ובתולות
¹⁰³² ניב שפתים ו כי בשפתי
¹⁰³³ שאלו ל חסר
¹⁰³⁴ כמו ל מגז'
¹⁰³⁵ והטעם אבדולנר הטעם

¹⁰³⁶ החשמונים ב חשמונים
¹⁰³⁷ יהיה ל היה
¹⁰³⁸ שבע אלנ שובע
¹⁰³⁹ מושיע ב חסר
¹⁰⁴⁰ ינחמו לנ ינחמו (לשון הפסוק)
¹⁰⁴¹ צרי נ צבי
¹⁰⁴² וברחו ו וברחו (?)
¹⁰⁴³ מלחמות לנ מלחמת
¹⁰⁴⁴ לישראל לנ חסר
¹⁰⁴⁵ על הפרשה אר על הרועים הפרשה ו על הרועים
¹⁰⁴⁶ על ישראל ב חסר
¹⁰⁴⁷ שיראה ל יראה
¹⁰⁴⁸ ויתד אר (?) ויתד
¹⁰⁴⁹ כי לא לנ שלא
¹⁰⁵⁰ סוסים ו הסוס
¹⁰⁵¹ הסוס אור סוס
¹⁰⁵² [והושבותים] מ ושבתיים אונפ' ר והושבתים (תוקן ע"פ
בדלפ²)

כתוב: "ותהיה¹⁰⁶⁶ מסלה לשאר עמו אשר ישאר מאשור" (השווה שם, טז). **והורד גאון¹⁰⁶⁷ אשור** - שלא ימשלו בישראל, כי יפול פחד החשמונים עליהם; וככה **מצרים**. **(יב) וגברתים** - יתן גבורה לאלה הבאים, ויתברכו¹⁰⁶⁸ **בשמו** בלי [פחד].¹⁰⁶⁹

זכריה פרק יא

(א) פתח.¹⁰⁷⁰ זאת תחלת פרשת¹⁰⁷¹ מקונן¹⁰⁷² על החשמונים שתאבד מלכותם. והטעם, כי החשמונים הם הארזים. **(ב) הַלֵּל בְּרוּשׁ** - שרי ישראל. **כי נפל הארז¹⁰⁷³** - מלכי החשמונים. **אלוני בשן¹⁰⁷⁴** - הנותנים פרי. **כי ירד יער הבציר** - שהוא נכבד מהם. **(ג) קול. הרועים** - הם המלכים, **ואדרתם** הם החשמוני. **קול שאגת כפירים** - כי הכפיר הוא מלך החיות.¹⁰⁷⁵ ומלת **כפירים¹⁰⁷⁶** [תשרת]¹⁰⁷⁷ בעבור אחרת - כמו "כסאך אלהים" (תה' מה, ז), שהוא 'כסאך כסא אלהים'¹⁰⁷⁸ - וככה זה:¹⁰⁷⁹ **כי שדד כפיר שהירדן**

והשיבותים' והושבתים';¹⁰⁵³ כמו "שבועות ימים" (יח' מה, כא) מן 'שבועי וישבעתי';¹⁰⁵⁴ ורבות ככה. **(ז) והיו** - בני **אפרים** יהיו **כגיבור**.¹⁰⁵⁵ **יין** - כמו 'ביין', והבי"ת חסרה; כמו "כי ששת¹⁰⁵⁶ ימים" (שמי' כ, יא). **(ח) אשרקה** - לנשארים באשור ובמצרים. **ורבו** - בגלותם בארץ נכריה, כמו **רבו** בימים הקדמונים¹⁰⁵⁷ בארצם; והנה זה כמו "כגאון¹⁰⁵⁸ ישראל" (נח' ב, ג). ומלת **כמו רבו** - זרה,¹⁰⁵⁹ כי המשפט: 'כאשר רבו'. **(ט) ואזרעם** - ארבה זרעם. **את בניהם** - עם.¹⁰⁶⁰ **ושבו¹⁰⁶¹** - לארצם.¹⁰⁶² **(י) והשיבותים. ולא ימצא להם** - לא יספיק¹⁰⁶³ להם היישוב, כי רבים הם.¹⁰⁶⁴ **(יא) ועבר רוח צרה** - הטעם: כי יבש הים, גם יאור מצרים, להיות דרך לעבור גאולים מאשור; כי **בים** יבואו אל **היאור** [אל]¹⁰⁶⁵ **מצרים**, ומשם אל ארץ ישראל. וככה אמר ישעיה: "והחרים יי את לשון ים מצרים והניף ידו על הנהר" (יא, טו) - זהו יאור מצרים. ושם

¹⁰⁶⁶ ותהיה **דלנר** והיתה (לשון הפסוק)
¹⁰⁶⁷ גאון **ר** מגאון
¹⁰⁶⁸ ויתברכו **לנ** ויתהלכו
¹⁰⁶⁹ [פחד] **מחסר** (דמיון למילה הבאה; תוקן ע"פ **אבדולנפר**)
¹⁰⁷⁰ פתח **אבדופר** חסר (דמיון למילה הקודמת)
¹⁰⁷¹ זאת תחלת פרשת **ל** תחלת זאת הפרשה
¹⁰⁷² מקונן **ו** ויקונן **נ** תקונן (?)
¹⁰⁷³ הארז **אור** ארז **בלפ** מין הארז
¹⁰⁷⁴ אלוני בשן **אור** אלוני הבשן **לנ** אילי (?) אכלי? אנלי?
בשן
¹⁰⁷⁵ החיות **נ** על החיות
¹⁰⁷⁶ כי הכפיר הוא מלך החיות. ומלת כפירים **ב** חסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹⁰⁷⁷ [תשרת] **מבפ** חסר (תוקן ע"פ **אדולנ(נ)?**)
¹⁰⁷⁸ שהוא כסאך כסא אלהים **ל** חסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹⁰⁷⁹ זה **ר** חסר

¹⁰⁵³ והשיבותים והושבתים **אור** והשיבותים **פ** והשיבותים והושבותים
¹⁰⁵⁴ שבוע ושבועת **בד** שבעת ושבוע **ל** שבעה ושבוע **נ** שבועה
¹⁰⁵⁵ כגיבור **לנ** כגבורים
¹⁰⁵⁶ כי ששת **א** כי שבעת (?) שבת? **לנ** ששת
¹⁰⁵⁷ בימים הקדמונים **או** בימי הקדמונים **ר** בימי גלות הקדמונים **ד** בימי קדמונים
¹⁰⁵⁸ כמו כגאון **אור** כמו בגאון (?) **ב** כי בגאון (?) **פ** כגאון (תוקן ע"פ **פ**)
¹⁰⁵⁹ זרה **או** מלה זרה
¹⁰⁶⁰ את בניהם עם **אדור** את בניהם עם בניהם **ל** את בניהם **נ** בניהם
¹⁰⁶¹ ושבו **אבד** ישבו (?)
¹⁰⁶² לארצם **ב** אל ארצם
¹⁰⁶³ לא יספיק **און** (?) **ר** (?) לא יספוק **נ** ולא יספיק
¹⁰⁶⁴ רבים הם **אבופר** רבים היו **נ** הם רבים
¹⁰⁶⁵ [אל] **מאור** חסר (תוקן ע"פ **בדלנפ**)

ממצא - כמו "וימצא" (וי, ט, יב). **וכתנו את הארץ** - לברח,¹⁰⁹⁹ **ולא אציל מידם**. או:¹¹⁰⁰ **וכתנו [האויבים]**¹¹⁰¹ **את יושבי הארץ**.
(ז) וארעה - הנה הטעם: כי השם ירעה אותם עתה, לפני בא עת עמידת¹¹⁰² החשמונים. ועתה יספר¹¹⁰³ דרך משל. גם נכון הוא שקראם 'צאן ההרגה' כי כן¹¹⁰⁴ היו בגלותם אל בבל,¹¹⁰⁵ על כן יספר הרעות שעברו עליהם; ועתה, בשוכם לירושלם,¹¹⁰⁶ ירעם.¹¹⁰⁷ וטעם¹¹⁰⁸ **לכן עניי הצאן** - בעבור שיש בצאן עניים,¹¹⁰⁹ הצרכתי לקחת שני **מקלות**;¹¹¹⁰ ואלה הם: זרובבל פחת יהודה ונחמיה התרשתא. וכתנו על נחמיה אחרי מות זרובבל:¹¹¹¹ "גם... אותי¹¹¹² צוה להיות פחות¹¹¹³ בארץ יהודה" (השווה נחמי' ה, יד). וקראו 'נועים' - מגזי,¹¹¹⁴ "נעים" (תה' פא, ג), **וחובלים** - מגזי "תחבולות" (משי' א, ה). ונקראו 'מקלות' ולא 'רועים', כי לא היו מלכים. והנה **ארעה**¹¹¹⁵

היה¹⁰⁸⁰ מתגאה בו, שלא יוכל אדם לעבור את¹⁰⁸¹ **הירדן** מפחדו. ואם פרשנוהו כי יבש הירדן - אין לו טעם. ויפת אמר: **כי שדד גאון ארץ**¹⁰⁸² ישראל מעבר לירדן. גם נכון הוא בעיני.¹⁰⁸³ **(ד) כה** - עתה יחל פרשה אחרת, לספר איך יהיו ישראל אחרי קום¹⁰⁸⁴ החשמונים. ואומר **אלהי** - בעבור¹⁰⁸⁵ כי יראה במראות נבואה¹⁰⁸⁶ כי הוא יהיה הרועה. ופירש טעם¹⁰⁸⁷ **צאן ההרגה**:
(ה) אשר... ולא יאשמו - כפי מחשבותם.¹⁰⁸⁸ **ואעשיר** - תנועת¹⁰⁸⁹ האלי"ף שבה אל הוא"ו, על כן נעלמה, כהתעלם¹⁰⁹⁰ אלי"ף "ואענה" את¹⁰⁹¹ זרע דודי (מ"א יא, לט). **ורועיהם** - הם מלכי הגוים.¹⁰⁹² **(ו) כי**.¹⁰⁹³ הנכון בעיני, כי **(ה) רועיהם**¹⁰⁹⁴ הוא השם; **והעד**: **(ו) כי לא אחמול עוד**. ואל תתמה על "רועיהם",¹⁰⁹⁶ לשון רבים - כמו¹⁰⁹⁷ "ישמח ישראל בעושיו" (תהי' קמט, ב); "אם בעליו עמו",¹⁰⁹⁸ (שמי' כב, יד).

¹⁰⁹⁹ לברח ד לכרוה (? לכדוה?) ל פי נ לכרם (? לבדם)
¹¹⁰⁰ וכתנו את הארץ לברח ולא אציל מידם או וחסר
 (השמטת הדומות)
¹¹⁰¹ [האויבים] מפ¹¹⁰¹ את האויבים (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
¹¹⁰² עמידת א חסר
¹¹⁰³ יספר אר נספר
¹¹⁰⁴ כן ל חסר
¹¹⁰⁵ אל בבל אור חסר
¹¹⁰⁶ לירושלם ל אל ירושלם
¹¹⁰⁷ ירעם ו רעם
¹¹⁰⁸ וטעם ל ועתה (?)
¹¹⁰⁹ עניים ר חסר
¹¹¹⁰ מקלות נ המקלות
¹¹¹¹ פחת יהודה ונחמיה התרשתא. וכתנו על נחמיה אחרי מות זרובבל לנ חסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹¹¹² אותי לנ אותנו
¹¹¹³ פחות אדר פחה בו פחת ל פחם (כנה"מ)
¹¹¹⁴ מגזי נ כמו
¹¹¹⁵ ארעה אולנר וארעה

¹⁰⁸⁰ שהירדן היה אור שהיה ירדן
¹⁰⁸¹ את ל חסר
¹⁰⁸² ארץ נ(?) ר חסר
¹⁰⁸³ בעיני אור חסר
¹⁰⁸⁴ קום אר קנס ו נקם
¹⁰⁸⁵ אלהי בעבור ל אלה (?)
¹⁰⁸⁶ נבואה נ הנבואה
¹⁰⁸⁷ ופירש טעם נ ופירוש
¹⁰⁸⁸ מחשבותם אול(?) מחשבתם
¹⁰⁸⁹ תנועת אור חסר
¹⁰⁹⁰ כהתעלם אנפ בהתעלם
¹⁰⁹¹ [ואענה] מ ואתענה (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
¹⁰⁹² הגוים אור גוים
¹⁰⁹³ כי ל חסר
¹⁰⁹⁴ כי רועיהם ר חסר
¹⁰⁹⁵ השם אדור השם הנכבד
¹⁰⁹⁶ ואל תתמה על רועיהם ו חסר
¹⁰⁹⁷ כמו אור כי כמוהו
¹⁰⁹⁸ עמו אור חסר

את ¹¹¹⁶ **הצאן** בראשונה, כי ישראל עם זרובבל
 [באו]. ¹¹¹⁷ וטעם **וארעה את הצאן** - עד זמן ידוע,
 (ח) שמתו שלשה רועים. ¹¹¹⁸ **ואכחיד** - מנהג
 הרועה ¹¹¹⁹ להיות תחת ידו רועים קטנים. ¹¹²⁰
 ואלה השלשה שמתו **בירח אחד** - אולי רמז לכהן
 גדול, שהוא יהושע, וכהן משוח מלחמה וכהן
 משנה. ¹¹²¹ או שמתו חגי, [זכריה, ומלאכי], ¹¹²²
 ונפסקה הנבואה; כי הנביא ¹¹²³ - כמו רועה. ¹¹²⁴
ותקצר נפשי בצאן - להושיע. ומלת ¹¹²⁵ **בחלה בי**
 - אין [לה] חבר. ¹¹²⁶ ופי' כמו 'קצרה', כפל
 מלת ¹¹²⁷ **ותקצר**; והעד: מלת **וגם**. (ט) **ואומר** -
 בלבי. **לא** ¹¹²⁸ **ארעה אתכם** - אחרי מות הנבאים,
 או הכהנים החסידים. (י) **ואקח** - אז מת זרובבל
 שהוא [נועם] ¹¹²⁹ שהיה לו ברית ¹¹³⁰ **את כל** הגוים
 סביבת ירושלים, ¹¹³¹ ברית שלום; וזהו **ואגדע**
אותו. ¹¹³² וטעם **בריתי**, ¹¹³³ - בעבור שהארץ
 שנשבעו הגוים לזרובבל היא ארץ השם.

את ¹¹¹⁶ **הצאן** בראשונה, כי ישראל עם זרובבל
 [באו]. ¹¹¹⁷ וטעם **וארעה את הצאן** - עד זמן ידוע,
 (ח) שמתו שלשה רועים. ¹¹¹⁸ **ואכחיד** - מנהג
 הרועה ¹¹¹⁹ להיות תחת ידו רועים קטנים. ¹¹²⁰
 ואלה השלשה שמתו **בירח אחד** - אולי רמז לכהן
 גדול, שהוא יהושע, וכהן משוח מלחמה וכהן
 משנה. ¹¹²¹ או שמתו חגי, [זכריה, ומלאכי], ¹¹²²
 ונפסקה הנבואה; כי הנביא ¹¹²³ - כמו רועה. ¹¹²⁴
ותקצר נפשי בצאן - להושיע. ומלת ¹¹²⁵ **בחלה בי**
 - אין [לה] חבר. ¹¹²⁶ ופי' כמו 'קצרה', כפל
 מלת ¹¹²⁷ **ותקצר**; והעד: מלת **וגם**. (ט) **ואומר** -
 בלבי. **לא** ¹¹²⁸ **ארעה אתכם** - אחרי מות הנבאים,
 או הכהנים החסידים. (י) **ואקח** - אז מת זרובבל
 שהוא [נועם] ¹¹²⁹ שהיה לו ברית ¹¹³⁰ **את כל** הגוים
 סביבת ירושלים, ¹¹³¹ ברית שלום; וזהו **ואגדע**
אותו. ¹¹³² וטעם **בריתי**, ¹¹³³ - בעבור שהארץ
 שנשבעו הגוים לזרובבל היא ארץ השם.

¹¹¹⁶ את לחסר (?)
¹¹¹⁷ [באו] מבלי ובאו נחסר (תוקן ע"פ אדור)
¹¹¹⁸ שלשה רועים אולנר שלשת הרועים
¹¹¹⁹ הרועה ור הרועים
¹¹²⁰ קטנים אור הטעם
¹¹²¹ וכחן משנה או משנה ר ומשנה
¹¹²² [זכריה ומלאכי] מ זכר' מלאכי (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
¹¹²³ הנביא ל הנבואה
¹¹²⁴ רועה אור הרועה
¹¹²⁵ ומלת אור חסר
¹¹²⁶ [לה] חבר מפ לו חבר נ לה להתחבר (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)
¹¹²⁷ כפל מלת א בכל מלה ור כפל מלה
¹¹²⁸ לא ר חסר
¹¹²⁹ [נועם] מפ טעם (תוקן ע"פ אב(?) דוי(?) לנר(?))
¹¹³⁰ לו ברית לנ ברית לו
¹¹³¹ ירושלים נ ישראל
¹¹³² וזהו ואגדע אותו א וזהו ואקדע אותו ל ואגדע נ ואגדע
 אות
¹¹³³ בריתי לנ ברית

¹¹³⁴ אז ר או (?)
¹¹³⁵ דברי הנביא ל דברי השם אל הנביא נ דברי השם
 הנביא
¹¹³⁶ והטעם לנ הטעם
¹¹³⁷ בעלות נ כעלות (?)
¹¹³⁸ לירושלם ב בירושלם
¹¹³⁹ ועתה ל ויאמר עתה נ ויאמר ועתה
¹¹⁴⁰ ואלה השלשים כסף אולי היו שלשים צדיקים ל ואלה
 הלי כסף אולי היו לצדיקים 'ילצדיקים' במקום 'לי
 צדיקים' נ ואל השלשים אולי היו צדיקים 'יואל
 השלשים' = פיסוק מוטעה של 'ואלה השלשים'
¹¹⁴¹ ומשוחי נ ומשוח
¹¹⁴² היוצר נ החצר (?)
¹¹⁴³ היקר א ויקרי (?)
¹¹⁴⁴ נבון לנ ונבון
¹¹⁴⁵ הוא לנ חסר
¹¹⁴⁶ שם כבודי לנ כבודי שם
¹¹⁴⁷ אשר יקרתי הבית היקר ששכן שם כבודי בתחלה וזהו
 אור חסר (השמטת הדומות)

יון, על כן כתוב¹¹⁶⁵ (טז) בארץ - על¹¹⁶⁶ ארץ ישראל; והנצבה - שלא תוכל לרעות.¹¹⁶⁷ והנה כל זה ימי הגלות¹¹⁶⁸ עד היום. הנער - שה אובד (ע"פ תהי' קיט, קעו) הקטן¹¹⁶⁹ - לא יבקש. (יז) הוי. הגלות תארך¹¹⁷⁰ ותעמד עד כרות זה מלכות - המלכות¹¹⁷¹ הרשעה - עד בא קצה, חרב על זרועו ועל¹¹⁷² עין ימינו. וטעם 'זרועי'¹¹⁷³ - הכח שיסור,¹¹⁷⁴ וה'עין' - עין החכמה¹¹⁷⁵ והעצה; והנה יאבדו גיבוריו וחכמיו.

זכריה פרק יב

(א) משא. זאת הפרשה דבקה היא. בעבור שהזכיר "חרב"¹¹⁷⁶ על זרועו" (זכ' יא, יז) - הזכיר מתי יהיה זה,¹¹⁷⁷ ואנה יהיה. ועתה יפרש, כי זה יהיה¹¹⁷⁸ בשוב ישראל עם משיח בן יוסף אל ירושלים. ועתה זאת הנבואה - על ישראל. וטעם להזכיר עתה נוטה¹¹⁷⁹ שמים ויוסד ארץ - כי לולי

¹¹⁶⁵ כתוב לנ חסר
¹¹⁶⁶ על ר אל
¹¹⁶⁷ לרעות אדולנר ללכת לרעות
¹¹⁶⁸ זה ימי הגלות ל ימות זה הגולה נ ימי זה הגלות
¹¹⁶⁹ הקטן לנ קטן
¹¹⁷⁰ תארך ל בארץ
¹¹⁷¹ זה מלכות המלכות א זו המלכות בו זה מלכות ד זו מלכות לנר זה המלכות
¹¹⁷² ועל ר על
¹¹⁷³ חרב על זרועו ועל עין ימינו וטעם זרוע ל החרב על זרועי ועל עין ימיני וטעם זרועי
¹¹⁷⁴ שיסור לנ יוסר שיסור
¹¹⁷⁵ החכמה בד חכמה ל כל החכמה
¹¹⁷⁶ חרב לנ חסר
¹¹⁷⁷ זה ל זאת
¹¹⁷⁸ יהיה לנ חסר
¹¹⁷⁹ נוטה נ אטה (?)

מעליהם¹¹⁴⁸ - שסר הכבוד מעליהם¹¹⁴⁹ בבית [שיני].¹¹⁵⁰ (יז) ואגדע את מקלי - הוא¹¹⁵¹ נחמיה. והנה נשחתו ישראל ושבו להריב זה עם¹¹⁵² זה ולהרע, כי אין להם פחה; וזהו להפר את¹¹⁵³ האחוה בין יהודה. ואחוה - שם מגזרת 'אחי'; כמו "שלוה" (תהי' קכב, ז). (טו) ויאמר - תחלת פרשה.¹¹⁵⁴ כי מלך ירושלים הוא ארתחשש¹¹⁵⁵, שלנחמיה, הוא הנקרא בלשון פרס 'דריוש', הוא¹¹⁵⁶ שהרגו אלכסנדרוס.¹¹⁵⁷ ועתה¹¹⁵⁸ החל מלכות יון הרשעה, שהיא נמשכת עד היום,¹¹⁵⁹ [כאשר]¹¹⁶⁰ פירשתי בספר דניאל (ב, לט בפ' הארוך), כי יון הגלה ירושלים, לא אדום.¹¹⁶¹ וזהו: כלי רועה אוילי - כמו: רועה אויל; אוילי¹¹⁶² - כמו "אכזרי",¹¹⁶³ (יש' יג, ט). ובעבור זה שנפסקה מלכות ובאה¹¹⁶⁴ על מלכות

¹¹⁴⁸ מעליהם אולנ בעיניהם
¹¹⁴⁹ מעליהם אר שסר מעליהם
¹¹⁵⁰ [שיני] מבפ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אדולנר)
¹¹⁵¹ הוא אור את
¹¹⁵² עם ל את
¹¹⁵³ את ב עם
¹¹⁵⁴ פרשה נ ספר (?)
¹¹⁵⁵ הוא ארתחשש אור היא ארתחששתא ב הוא ארתחששתא ד הוא ארתחששתא ל² הוא ארתחשפתא (?)
¹¹⁵⁶ הוא לנ חסר
¹¹⁵⁷ אלכסנדרוס אבדנפר אלכסנדרוס ו אלכסנדרוס ל אליכם צדדום (?) צררום?)
¹¹⁵⁸ ועתה אור והנה עתה
¹¹⁵⁹ עד היום ר חסר
¹¹⁶⁰ [כאשר] מ כי (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
¹¹⁶¹ כי יון הגלה ירושלים לא אדום לנ כי היון הגלה ירושלים לאדום
¹¹⁶² כמו רועה אויל אוילי א רעה אויל אוילי ד כמו רועה אוילי אוילי ו רועה אוילי לנ חסר (השמטת הדומות) ר רועה אויל
¹¹⁶³ כמו אכזרי א אכזרי ור חסר
¹¹⁶⁴ מלכות ובאה ל מלכות החשמוניים ובאת נ מלכות החשמוניים ובאה

(ה) **ואמרו אלופי יהודה** - גדוליהם¹¹⁹⁸ שהם במחנה האויב.¹¹⁹⁹ **אמצה לי**¹²⁰⁰ - תפלת **ירושלם**,¹²⁰¹ כי הם התפללו בעבורינו¹²⁰² תפלה חזקה. והנה כל אחד¹²⁰³ יאמר: **אמצה**¹²⁰⁴ [לי]¹²⁰⁵ - בעבורי;¹²⁰⁶ כמו "אמרי לי אחי הוא"¹²⁰⁷ (ברי כ,ג). (ו) **ביום** - אז¹²⁰⁸ יתקיים "חרב על זרועו ועל עין ימינו" (זכי יא,יז). [והנה]¹²⁰⁹ הוא ענר, גם סוסו כן¹²¹⁰ (ראה לעיל,ד), על כן יאכלום **כאש**.¹²¹¹ **ככיוור אש** - ככירת¹²¹² **אש**. **וישבה** - הטעם: וישבו אנשיה. (ז) **והושיע... את אהלי**¹²¹³ **יהודה** - הבאים עם האויב. כי כן דרך¹²¹⁴ המחנות, שוכנים באהלים סביב העיר.¹²¹⁵ **בית דוד** - עוד היום בעיר בגדאד,¹²¹⁶ עיר מלכות ישמעאל; והם ראשי הגולה,¹²¹⁷ משפחה רבה וגדולה,¹²¹⁸ ולה¹²¹⁹ ספר היחש¹²²⁰

ישראל לא נבראו. וטעם **ויוצר**¹¹⁸⁰ **רוח אדם בקרבו** - שהוא עולם קטן [כנגד שמים וארץ].¹¹⁸¹ וזה הדבר¹¹⁸² צריך פירוש ארוך. (ב) **הנה** - בהתחבר ישראל [לירושלם]¹¹⁸³ יעלו יְנִיָּים¹¹⁸⁴ להלחם עליה. **סף** - כמו "מן הדם"¹¹⁸⁵ אשר בסף" (שמי יב,כב); "משכב וספות"¹¹⁸⁶ (ש"ב יז,כח). **וגם**¹¹⁸⁷ **על יהודה** - שהגויים יכריחו ישראל¹¹⁸⁸ העומדים בארצם, שהם רחוקים מירושלם¹¹⁸⁹ ולא באה גאלתם,¹¹⁹⁰ ללכת עמהם לצור על¹¹⁹¹ **ירושלם**. והנה צרה¹¹⁹² תעבר עליהם בלכתם. (ג) **והיה**¹¹⁹³ - המשל ידוע, כי להרע לנפשו יקח **אבן מעמסה**, שיפול תחתיה. (ד) **ביום**. **אכה כל סוס** - שלגויי הארץ. ועל¹¹⁹⁴ **בית יהודה** - שהלכו עמהם בעל כרחם. **אפקח**¹¹⁹⁵ - לשמרם ולהצילם. **וסוס העמים** - לא סוס היהודים שיהיו¹¹⁹⁶ במחנה, **אכה בעורון**, והנה מיד יכשל הסוס.¹¹⁹⁷

¹¹⁹⁸ גדוליהם ל הם גדוליהם
¹¹⁹⁹ האויב אור חסר
¹²⁰⁰ אמצה לי ל אמצא לי נ אמצה לו
¹²⁰¹ ירושלם לנ יושבי ירושלם
¹²⁰² בעבורינו אור בעדינו
¹²⁰³ אחד אור אחד ואחד
¹²⁰⁴ אמצה ל אמצא
¹²⁰⁵ [לי] מלנ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אבדו)
¹²⁰⁶ בעבורינו תפלה חזקה והנה כל אחד יאמר אמצה [לי]
¹²⁰⁷ אחי הוא אולר חסר
¹²⁰⁸ אז ר חסר
¹²⁰⁹ [והנה] מ והוא (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)
¹²¹⁰ כן בד חסר
¹²¹¹ כאש בד חסר
¹²¹² ככיוור אש ככירת ל בכיוור אש בכירת
¹²¹³ אהלי ל מלכי נ מלכי אהלי
¹²¹⁴ דרך ר חסר
¹²¹⁵ סביב העיר ל¹ סביבה עוד ל² סביב עוד
¹²¹⁶ עוד היום בעיר בגדאד ו שם היום בעיד בגד או (?)
¹²¹⁷ הגולה ד הגלות
¹²¹⁸ וגדולה ו גדולה
¹²¹⁹ ולה ל ולזה

¹¹⁸⁰ ויוצר אור יוצר
¹¹⁸¹ [כנגד שמים וארץ] מחסר (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)
¹¹⁸² הדבר ו דבר
¹¹⁸³ [לירושלם] מנדפ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אולנר)
¹¹⁸⁴ יְנִיָּים ר היוונים
¹¹⁸⁵ מן הדם ל בדם נ הדם
¹¹⁸⁶ משכב וספות א משבב (?) וספות ל ומשכב וכפות (?) נ ומשכב וספות
¹¹⁸⁷ וגם לנ גם
¹¹⁸⁸ יכריחו ישראל ל יהודה וישראל נ יכריחו ישראל ויהודה
¹¹⁸⁹ מירושלם לנ חסר
¹¹⁹⁰ גאלתם א גלותם ו גדולתם
¹¹⁹¹ לצור על אר לצור אל ו אל
¹¹⁹² צרה או ציה (?) צוה(?)
¹¹⁹³ והיה ל והנה
¹¹⁹⁴ הארץ ועל ד וכל
¹¹⁹⁵ אפקח בדלנ אפקח עיני
¹¹⁹⁶ שיהיו בד שיהיה
¹¹⁹⁷ הסוס אור בסוס

אשפוך¹²³⁹ רוח חן ותחנונים על יושבי ירושלים.
 טרם זה תעבר עליהם בתחלה¹²⁴⁰ צרה, כי משיח
 בן יוסף יהרג; אז יכעס¹²⁴¹ השם (ט) וישמיד
 את¹²⁴² כל הגוים הבאים אל¹²⁴³ ירושלים. וזהו (י)
 והביטו אליי¹²⁴⁴ - אז¹²⁴⁵ יביטו כל הגוים אלי¹²⁴⁶
 לראות מה אעשה לאלה אשר דקרו¹²⁴⁷ משיח בן
 יוסף. וספדו עליו - אנשי¹²⁴⁸ (יא) כמספד
 הדדרימון¹²⁴⁹ - מספד אדם גדול היה בימים
 הקדמונים בבקעת מגדו,¹²⁵⁰ ואנחנו לא ידענו כל
 הקורות; ולהיותו¹²⁵¹ רמז לאחאב ויאשיה, דרך
 דרש הוא זה. (יב) וספדה.¹²⁵² הזכיר משפחת
 בית דוד הנכבדת,¹²⁵³ ומשפחת בית נתן - בדרך
 נבואה ידע, כי גם זאת בימים¹²⁵⁴ ההם תהיה
 ידועה. ולהיותו¹²⁵⁵ בית נתן¹²⁵⁶ אחי שלמה (ראה

משנים קדמוניות. וככה פירושו: כי בראשונה,
 קודם ישועת בני¹²²¹ ירושלים, יושיע השם
 אהלי¹²²² יהודה שהם מחוץ לעיר עם מחנות
 האויב; כדרך שאמר למעלה "ועל בית יהודה
 אפקח...¹²²³ עיני וכל סוס העמים אכה בעורו"
 (לעיל, ד). ולמה בראשונה אושיע את אהלי
 יהודה? למען לא תגדל - בעבור¹²²⁴ שלא יוכלו
 להתפאר בית דוד¹²²⁵ ויושב¹²²⁶ ירושלים, שהם¹²²⁷
 בתוך העיר עם משיח בן יוסף,¹²²⁸ ולא תגדל
 תפארתם על בני יהודה: ידינו¹²²⁹ הושיעה אתכם
 (ע"פ שופ' ז, ב).¹²³⁰ (ח) ביום.¹²³¹ הנכשל בהם -
 גיבור¹²³² כדוד.¹²³³ כאלהים - מלאכים.¹²³⁴ וככה
 [פירושו]:¹²³⁵ כמלאך יי' לפניהם במלחמה.
 (ט) והיה ביום ההוא¹²³⁶ - כאשר¹²³⁷ אבקש
 להשמיד את כל הגוים.¹²³⁸ (י) ושפכתי -

¹²³⁹ ושפכתי אשפוך ל ושם כתי (?) ואשפוך נ ושפכתי
 ואשפוך
¹²⁴⁰ בתחלה או בתחלת
¹²⁴¹ יכעס ל יכעוס
¹²⁴² את אולר חסר
¹²⁴³ אל בדל על
¹²⁴⁴ אליו אולר אלי (כנה"מ)
¹²⁴⁵ יכעס השם וישמיד את כל הגוים הבאים אל ירושלים
 וזהו והביטו [אלי] אז נ חסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹²⁴⁶ יביטו כל הגוים אלי יבואו כל הגוים נ יביטו השם
 כל הגוים אלי (מילת "השם" נשתרבה לתוך נ בגלל
 השמטת הדומות בשורה הקודמת)
¹²⁴⁷ דקרו ל דקרו את
¹²⁴⁸ אנשיו ל אנשים (! אולי תוקן ע"י ל²)
¹²⁴⁹ הדדרימון אור הדרמון (!) ל הדרכמון (!)
¹²⁵⁰ מגדו אזור מגדון (כנה"מ)
¹²⁵¹ ולהיותו אולר ולהיות
¹²⁵² וספדה ד וספדו
¹²⁵³ משפחת בית דוד הנכבדת ל משפחות בית דוד
 הנכבדות
¹²⁵⁴ ידע כי גם זאת בימים ב לא ידעתי גם זאת ובימים
¹²⁵⁵ ולהיותו אור ולהיות
¹²⁵⁶ בדרך נבואה ידע כי גם זאת בימים ההם תהיה ידועה
 ולהיותו בית נתן ל חסר (השמטת הדומות)

¹²²⁰ היחש אבונר היחס ל ורחש (?)
¹²²¹ בני בד חסר
¹²²² אהלי ל את אהולי
¹²²³ אפקח אבדונר אפקח את (המשך נה"מ)
¹²²⁴ לא תגדל בעבור ל שתגדל בעבורה
¹²²⁵ בית דוד ד ביד דוד נ בית ישראל
¹²²⁶ ויושב אור ויושבי
¹²²⁷ שהם ר חסר
¹²²⁸ בן יוסף בד חסר
¹²²⁹ דינו אור לאמר ידינו לנ ידוע
¹²³⁰ אתכם ר אתם
¹²³¹ ביום ל כיום
¹²³² גיבור א חסר
¹²³³ כדוד ו ברור (! בדוד?)
¹²³⁴ כאלהים מלאכים ב אלים מלאכים ל כאהליהם
 כמלאכים נ כאלהים כמלאכים
¹²³⁵ [פירושו] מ פירוש ל חסר (תוקן ע"פ אבדונר)
¹²³⁶ והיה ביום ההוא לנ ביום
¹²³⁷ כאשר אור חסר
¹²³⁸ ביום ההוא כאשר אבקש להשמיד את כל הגוים לנ
 הוקדם לפני פסוק ח (בגלל הדמיון בד"ה: "ביום")

לשואלו¹²⁷⁰ 'מה מלאכתך? (ע"פ יונה א, ח): **כי אדם הקנני מנעורי**¹²⁷¹ - הנחילני **אדמה**,¹²⁷² ומנעורי¹²⁷³ אני **עובד** אותה. (ו) ואם ישאלוהו **מה המכות**¹²⁷⁴ שדקרוהו¹²⁷⁵ אביו¹²⁷⁶ ואמו, אז יאמר: **בית מאהבי**¹²⁷⁷ שחקתי, או **הוכיתי**¹²⁷⁸ שם על דרך שחוק. (ז) **חרב** - יתנבא עוד על מלחמות¹²⁷⁹ רבות תהיינה¹²⁸⁰ בכל הארץ, בַּמּוֹת משיח בן יוסף. וטעם **רועי**¹²⁸¹ - כל מלך מהגויים¹²⁸² שהמשילו השם על הארץ, והוא חושב על עצמו כי הוא¹²⁸³ כאלהים; על כן: **ועל גבר עמיתי**¹²⁸⁵ - הטעם כפול, כי הוא¹²⁸⁶ חושב על עצמו שהוא **גבר עמיתי**.¹²⁸⁷ **הך את הרועה**¹²⁸⁸ - השם יכרית כל מלך, ו**תפוצינה**¹²⁸⁹ צאנו. על כן כתו¹²⁹⁰ בפרשה האחרת הדבקה בזאת: "והיה יי למלך על כל הארץ" (זכ' יד, ט). אמר יפת, כי

ש"ב ה, יד) אין צורך, **כי בית דוד**¹²⁵⁷ שם כולל לשניהם.¹²⁵⁸ (יג) וככה בית **השמעי** אינו מהלויים (ראה שמות ו, יז), או הוא קצתם **מבית לוי** בפנים ומקצתם בחוץ, כמו "בית דוד" (לעיל, יב) ויהודה, שהם בפנים ובחוץ.

זכריה פרק יג

(א) **ביום** - גם זה הכת' לאות כי הנבואה לעתיד. ויהיה **מקור**¹²⁵⁹ **נפתח**¹²⁶⁰ - כמשמעו. ור' משה הכהן¹²⁶¹ אמר כי הוא דרך משל, כמו "וזרקתי עליכם¹²⁶² מים טהורים וטהרתם" (יח' לו, כה); על כן אחריו: (ב) **והיה**...¹²⁶³ **ורוח**¹²⁶⁴ **הטומאה** - הפך לרוח הקדש. (ג) **והיה** - הטעם: כל ככה¹²⁶⁵ יהיו אוהבי השם, כי על אהבתו ידקרו¹²⁶⁶ האבות [את הבנים].¹²⁶⁷ (ד) **והיה. אדרת שער** - להראות האדם שהוא עובד¹²⁶⁸ השם ומתאבל על עונו וחוגר שק למען שלא¹²⁶⁹ יכירוהו. (ה) **ואמר** -

¹²⁷⁰ לשואלו או לשואלו
¹²⁷¹ מנעורי אולנר חסר
¹²⁷² הנחילני אדמה ל אדמה הנחילני
¹²⁷³ ומנעורי א ומנעורו
¹²⁷⁴ המכות ל המקות
¹²⁷⁵ שדקרוהו ר שקדרוהו (! שקרוהו?)
¹²⁷⁶ אביו לנ בית אביו
¹²⁷⁷ מאהבי א מאבי
¹²⁷⁸ או הוכיתי בד והוכיתי
¹²⁷⁹ מלחמות א מלמות
¹²⁸⁰ תהיינה אור שתהיינה
¹²⁸¹ רועי לנ חסר
¹²⁸² מהגויים ו הגויים
¹²⁸³ כי הוא בד שהוא
¹²⁸⁴ כאלהים לנ האלהים
¹²⁸⁵ עמיתי א עמיתו
¹²⁸⁶ כי הוא אבדולנר שהוא
¹²⁸⁷ הטעם כפול כי הוא חושב על עצמו שהוא גבר עמיתי ד חסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹²⁸⁸ הרועה ב כל הרועה
¹²⁸⁹ מלך ותפוצינה ל¹ מלך ותפוצינו (?) ל² המלך ותפוצינו (?) (אולי ל² ידע שיש להוסיף אות ה אך טעה במיקומו)
¹²⁹⁰ כתו' ל כמו

¹²⁵⁷ דוד הנכבדת ומשפחת בית נתן בדרך נבואה ידע כי גם זאת בימים ההם תהיה ידועה ולהיותו בית נתן אחי שלמה אין צורך כי בית דוד נחסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹²⁵⁸ לשניהם אור שניהם
¹²⁵⁹ מקור א מקום (ייתכן שא¹ כתב "מקור" וא² הגיה בטעות "מקום")
¹²⁶⁰ מקור נפתח א נפתח מקום נפתח ו נפתח מקור נפתח ר נפתח
¹²⁶¹ הכהן ל חסר
¹²⁶² עליכם ר עליהם
¹²⁶³ והיה בדלנ חסר
¹²⁶⁴ ורוח ל רוח
¹²⁶⁵ כל ככה אלנר כל כך ו על כן
¹²⁶⁶ ידקרו נ יקדרו
¹²⁶⁷ האבות [את הבנים] מ האבות והבנים בד האבות הבנים ל אבות על הבנים (תוקן ע"פ אונר)
¹²⁶⁸ עובד ל העובד
¹²⁶⁹ שלא בדלנר לא

הצוערים - הפך הרועים, והם צעירי הצאן. והנה¹²⁹¹ **צוערים** - תואר, כמו "אובדים"¹²⁹² (יש' כז, יג); "יצערו בניו ולא ידעו" (השווה איוב יד, כא). **(ח) והיה** - שתי שלישיות¹²⁹³ העולם כולו, גם **השלישית** יבחן. והנמלט הוא יהיה עובד השם, הוא שיבא מדי שנה [בשנה]¹²⁹⁴ (ראה זכי יד, טז). ועתה יפרש, איך **יכרתו פי¹²⁹⁵ שנים בכל הארץ:**

זכריה פרק יד

(א) הנה - בבא היום שיתקבצו אל ירושלים כל הגוים, אחרי מות הנדקר הנזכר¹²⁹⁶ (ראה זכי יב, ג). **וחלק...**¹²⁹⁷ - עם ירושלים ידבר. והאומר¹²⁹⁸ כי שלל האויב יחולק, אם כן למה אחריו¹²⁹⁹ **(ב) ויצא חצי העיר בגולה?** ועוד: ¹³⁰⁰ **ונשסו הבתים?** **ונשסו** - מפעלי¹³⁰¹ הכפל; כמו "ונמקו [כל]¹³⁰² צבא השמים"¹³⁰³ (יש' לד, ד); כמו "נסבו" (ברי יט, ד) - מן 'סבב'. **תשכבנה** - דרך כבוד,¹³⁰⁴ כי

¹³⁰⁵ המעשה **אדור** כינוי המעשה נ דרך המעשה
¹³⁰⁶ אז ו או
¹³⁰⁷ מהשמים **לנ** או מהשמים
¹³⁰⁸ שבאו **לנ** שיבואו
¹³⁰⁹ כתי' **ל** כמו
¹³¹⁰ במצרים **ל חסר**
¹³¹¹ ועמדו **א** אחרי
¹³¹² הנה **לנ** זה
¹³¹³ מזרחו ומערבו **ל** ממזרחו ומערבו
¹³¹⁴ גיא **ר חסר**
¹³¹⁵ בן עוזיאל **ו חסר**
¹³¹⁶ ואסתתם **ד** ויסתתם
¹³¹⁷ ונסתם אל אצל שם מקום ויונתן בן עוזיאל תרג' ונסתם גיא הרי ואסתתם וכל אנשי מזרח קוראים **ל חסר** (השמטת הדומות)
¹³¹⁸ [ובא] **מב** ובאו (תוקן ע"פ **אדולנר**)
¹³¹⁹ וזהו **אולר** וזה

הצוערים - הפך הרועים, והם צעירי הצאן. והנה¹²⁹¹ **צוערים** - תואר, כמו "אובדים"¹²⁹² (יש' כז, יג); "יצערו בניו ולא ידעו" (השווה איוב יד, כא). **(ח) והיה** - שתי שלישיות¹²⁹³ העולם כולו, גם **השלישית** יבחן. והנמלט הוא יהיה עובד השם, הוא שיבא מדי שנה [בשנה]¹²⁹⁴ (ראה זכי יד, טז). ועתה יפרש, איך **יכרתו פי¹²⁹⁵ שנים בכל הארץ:**

זכריה פרק יד

(א) הנה - בבא היום שיתקבצו אל ירושלים כל הגוים, אחרי מות הנדקר הנזכר¹²⁹⁶ (ראה זכי יב, ג). **וחלק...**¹²⁹⁷ - עם ירושלים ידבר. והאומר¹²⁹⁸ כי שלל האויב יחולק, אם כן למה אחריו¹²⁹⁹ **(ב) ויצא חצי העיר בגולה?** ועוד: ¹³⁰⁰ **ונשסו הבתים?** **ונשסו** - מפעלי¹³⁰¹ הכפל; כמו "ונמקו [כל]¹³⁰² צבא השמים"¹³⁰³ (יש' לד, ד); כמו "נסבו" (ברי יט, ד) - מן 'סבב'. **תשכבנה** - דרך כבוד,¹³⁰⁴ כי

¹²⁹¹ והנה **לנ** והיה
¹²⁹² אובדים **ל** אויבכם **נ** אויבים
¹²⁹³ שלישיות **ל** שלישית
¹²⁹⁴ [בשנה] **מ** משנה (תוקן ע"פ **אדולנר**)
¹²⁹⁵ יכרתו פי **או** יכרת כי **ר** יכרת פי
¹²⁹⁶ הנה בבא היום שיתקבצו אל ירושלים כל הגוים אחרי מות הנדקר הנזכר **ל חסר** **נ** הנה
¹²⁹⁷ וחלק **ל** וחלק שללך (המשך הפסוק)
¹²⁹⁸ והאומר **נ** והאומרים
¹²⁹⁹ אחריו **לנ** אמר אחריו
¹³⁰⁰ ועוד **לנ** חסר
¹³⁰¹ ונשסו מפעלי **בד** מפעלי **לנ** מבעלי
¹³⁰² [כל] **מ** וכל **ל** כמי (תוקן ע"פ **אדולנר**)
¹³⁰³ צבא השמים **ל חסר**
¹³⁰⁴ כבוד **ל** ברור (נקוד מלמעלה, אולי לסמן תיקון ע"י ל²)

נוסף; ומצאנו אל"ף נוספה¹³³⁹ באמצע המלה:
 "והאזניחו נהרות" (יש' יט, ו). או היא תחת אות
 הכפל,¹³⁴⁰ כמו "אשר בזאו נהרים"¹³⁴¹ (יש' יח, ב).
 (יא) **וישבו**.¹³⁴² **לבטח** - עם השכינה; אז יבא
 משיח בן דוד,¹³⁴³ כאשר יפרש. (יב) **וזאת** - שב
 לפרש מה היא המלחמה שילחם¹³⁴⁴ השם עם
 הגויים שהוציאו חצי העיר בגולה (ראה לעיל, ב).
המק - שם הפועל מהבניין¹³⁴⁵ 'הכבד'. 'בניין
 כבד',¹³⁴⁶ - כל מלות הבאות בלשון 'הפעיל'.
 והבאות בלשון 'דבר', 'שבר',¹³⁴⁷ יקראו 'בניין
 הדגושי'. **תמקנה** - מבניין 'נפעל'. ושניהם
 מפעלי¹³⁴⁸ הכפל; והעד: "ימקו בעונם" (וי'
 כו, לט) - כמו "וימסו אסוריו"¹³⁴⁹ (שוי' טו, יד).
 (יג) **והיה. ועלתה** - כמשמעו; או כמו¹³⁵⁰
 'ונכרתה', וככה "יצועי עלה" (בר' מט, ד) - כרת
 ופסק¹³⁵¹. **(יד) וגם יהודה** - הם¹³⁵² "יתר העם"

ידבר תחלת הפרשה. (ו) **והיה. לא יהיה** ישרת
 בעבור אחר;¹³²¹ ומלת **יקרת** - תאר,
 והמתוארות¹³²² הם עבות; וככה¹³²³ **לא יהיה אור**
 ולא יהיה¹³²⁴ עבות **יקרות. וקפאון** - דבר עב,
 כדרך (ז) **לא יום ולא לילה. והיה** - לא ידעו בני
 האדם בבא¹³²⁵ **יום** השם או¹³²⁶ **יום** הוא¹³²⁷ או
לילה, וסמוך **לערב** יתברר זה. והמפרשים אותו
 דרך משל על הגלות והישועה - איננו¹³²⁸ נכון; רק
 הוא כמשמעו. (ח) **והיה** - זה אות¹³²⁹ לעתיד,
 ובעבור זה¹³³⁰ נבקע ההר (ראה לעיל, ד): בעבור
 שנבקע¹³³¹ ההר מחציו, **יצאו מים חיים** דרך¹³³²
 הגיא, ולא יעכבם מעתה ההר, כי יבקע.¹³³³
 (ט) **והיה. למלך** - ישרת בעבור המלה
 האחרת;¹³³⁴ וככה הוא: **ביום ההוא יהיה יי'**
למלך אחד ושמו אחד¹³³⁵ - הוא השם הנכבד
 הנודע על יד¹³³⁶ משה עבדו, ויקרא בפי כל
 ככתבו.¹³³⁷ (י) **יסוב** - הישוב. אל"ף **וראמה**¹³³⁸ -

(הדפיס "ב" בסוף השורה הקודמת כדי להתחיל תיבת
 "בפי" אבל בשורה הבאה הדפיס "כפי") ר מקרא בפי כל
 ככתבו

1338 וראמה אור(?) ורמאה ל ווי אמה
 1339 נוספה ל חסר נ נוסף
 1340 הכפל אור כפל
 1341 נהרים לנ נהרים ארצו (המשך הפסוק)
 1342 וישבו אדולנר וישבו בה
 1343 בן דוד ל בן יוסף דוד
 1344 מה היא המלחמה שילחם ל המלחמה מה היא שלחם
 נ המלחמה מה היא כי לחם
 1345 מהבניין לנ מבניין
 1346 בניין כבד אדולנר חסר
 1347 והבאות בלשון דבר שבר ו והבאות בלשון עבר שיבר ל
 מהבאות בלשון זכר עבר נ והבאות בלשון דבר עבר ר
 והבאות דבר שבר
 1348 מפעלי ל מבעלי
 1349 בעונם כמו וימסו אסוריו ל כמי ימסו אסורין
 1350 כמו אור חסר
 1351 כרת ופסק אור כרת ונפסק בד הכרת ופסק נ יכרת (?)
 ופסק
 1352 הם אונ(?) והם

1320 עמם אולנר עמה
 1321 אחר בד אחרת
 1322 והמתוארות בד והמתואר
 1323 וככה ל ובניה
 1324 יהיה אור חסר
 1325 האדם בבא ז האדם בבואו לנ אדם בבא
 1326 או אדו אם
 1327 הוא ב חסר
 1328 איננו א אינו
 1329 אות לנ לאות
 1330 זה אור חסר
 1331 שנבקע ו חסר
 1332 דרך ל מדרך
 1333 יבקע ל נבקע
 1334 ישרת בעבור המלה האחרת לנ תשרת בעבור אחר
 1335 אחד ושמו אחד ל וכו'
 1336 יד אולר ידי
 1337 ויקרא בפי כל ככתבו או מקרא כפי כל מכתבו לנ
 ויקרא כפי (?) כל כת (?) בת?) ככתבו ז ויקרא כפי כל ככתבו

יכולת באדם לפרש זאת¹³⁶⁸ בלשון אחרת, כי לא ימצא זה הלשון כי אם בלשון הקדש ובלשון ישמעאל.¹³⁶⁹ וטעם הגשם - בסכות (ראה לעיל, טז) - כאשר העתיק,¹³⁷⁰ חכמי¹³⁷¹ להזכיר גבורות גשמים ולבקש רחמים¹³⁷² עליהם. (יח) ואם. הזכיר משפחת מצרים - בעבור שלא ירד שם גשם לעולם,¹³⁷³ כי היאור ישקה אדמתם, ולא יחושו אם לא עליהם יהיה הגשם (ראה לעיל, יז): אע"פ שלא יחושו לעצירת הגשם¹³⁷⁴ מפני היאר, תבא¹³⁷⁵ עליהם מגפת "כל העמים" (לעיל, יב). ולא עליהם יהיה הגשם - פורענות תבוא לאשר לא יעלה (ראה לעיל, יז); ומלת עליהם תשרת בעבור אחרת: עליהם¹³⁷⁶ תהיה המגפה - "המק בשרוי" (לעיל, יב). (יט) וזאת¹³⁷⁷ חטאת - עונש; כמו¹³⁷⁸ "מחטאת סדום" (איכה ד, ו). וחטאת כל הגוים¹³⁷⁹ - שיהיה להם נהרות¹³⁸⁰ שישקו אדמתם, לא ינצלו מן המגפה. גם¹³⁸¹ אני ראיתי ארצות ככה.

(לעיל, ב) שנשאר¹³⁵³, תעשה מלחמה¹³⁵⁴ בירושלם עם האויב להכרית זכרו. אז¹³⁵⁵ ימצאו אנשי ירושלם זהב וכסף ובגדים מאוספים, והנה טעם "ואספתי את¹³⁵⁶ כל הגוים אל ירושלם"¹³⁵⁷ (לעיל, ב). (טו) וכן תהיה מגפת הסוס - "המק בשרו... ועיניו..." (לעיל, יב). (טז) והיה כל הנותר - זהו "השלישית" שהזכיר (זכ' יג, ח). בעבור שאמר למלך בשוא¹³⁵⁸ תחת הלמ"ד,¹³⁵⁹ ולא נפתח הלמ"ד, נראה כי הוא סמוך; והט': למלך השם - הוא¹³⁶⁰ המשיח; כדרך "ואני נסכתי מלכתי" (תהי' ב, ו); וכת'¹³⁶¹ "וישתחו לו... כל גוים"¹³⁶² (השווה תהי' עב, יא) - על שלמה, או על משיח בנו.¹³⁶³ (יז) והיה. ו"ו"¹³⁶⁴ ולא עליהם יהיה הגשם - כפ"ה¹³⁶⁵ רפה בלשון ישמעאל; וכמהו "ביום השלישי וישא אברהם את עיניו"¹³⁶⁶ (בר' כב, ד); "ויעזב את עבדיו" (שמי' ט, כא); "והאבן הזאת"¹³⁶⁷ (בר' כח, כב). ואין

¹³⁵³ שנשאר לנ שנשאר

¹³⁵⁴ מלחמה א מלמה

¹³⁵⁵ אז ולנ או

¹³⁵⁶ את ל חסר

¹³⁵⁷ אל ירושלם בד בירושלם

¹³⁵⁸ בשוא א כשוא (?) ל בשבא נ השם בשוא (תוספת

מהפסוק)

¹³⁵⁹ הלמ"ד ו למי"ד

¹³⁶⁰ הוא נ שהוא

¹³⁶¹ וכת' ל וכמי

¹³⁶² גוים ל הגוים

¹³⁶³ או על משיח בנו אנד או המשיח בנו ב הוא משיח בנו ד

או על המשיח בנו ול או המשיח

¹³⁶⁴ ו"ו ר חסר

¹³⁶⁵ כפ"ה ארנ (?) בפה ו כפא

¹³⁶⁶ את עיניו ל חסר

¹³⁶⁷ והאבן הזאת ו חסר

¹³⁶⁸ זאת ר זאת המלה

¹³⁶⁹ בלשון הקדש ובלשון ישמעאל בד בלשון ישמעאל

ובלשון הקודש

¹³⁷⁰ העתיק' לנ הזכירו

¹³⁷¹ חכמי' אור החכמים לנ חכמים ז"ל

¹³⁷² רחמים לנ בהן

¹³⁷³ שם גשם לעולם אור שם גשם לנ לעולם שם

¹³⁷⁴ הגשם ו גשמים

¹³⁷⁵ תבא ל הבא

¹³⁷⁶ עליהם ל חסר

¹³⁷⁷ וזאת ד זאת (כנה"מ)

¹³⁷⁸ כמו ל חסר

¹³⁷⁹ כל הגוים ד אל הגוים ל גוים

¹³⁸⁰ נהרות ל נהרות (?)

¹³⁸¹ גם לנ חסר

(כ) [ביום].¹³⁸² מצלות – מגז,¹³⁸³ "תצלנה" (מ"א
 כא, יב) - צלצלים תלויים¹³⁸⁴ בצואר [הסוסים]¹³⁸⁵
 העולים¹³⁸⁶ לחוג. יעשו הכהנים מהם סירות
 לבשל בהם, ויהיו רבים¹³⁸⁷ כמזרקים לפני
 המזבח - לזרוק הדם. (כא) והיה. כנעני - סוחר;
 והטעם:¹³⁸⁸ שלא ימכר אחד¹³⁸⁹ מן הסירות.
 והמפרש¹³⁹⁰ כנעני ממש - אין לו טעם,¹³⁹¹ כי זאת
 המשפחה אינה¹³⁹² ידועה היום.

והנה כל אלה הפרשיות שהן בסוף זה הספר¹³⁹³
 הם לעתיד. והאומר כי כבר עבר – נראינו המים
 החיים היוצאים מירושלם בקיץ ובחורף (ראה
 לעיל, ח)!

¹³⁸² [ביום] מ בית (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)
¹³⁸³ מגז' לנ כמו
¹³⁸⁴ תלויים אור תלויה
¹³⁸⁵ [הסוסים] מ הסוס (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנר)
¹³⁸⁶ העולים או העמים ר חסר
¹³⁸⁷ רבים ל רבים מהם
¹³⁸⁸ והטעם ב וטעי'
¹³⁸⁹ אחד אור אחת
¹³⁹⁰ והמפרש נ והמפרשים (?)
¹³⁹¹ לו טעם ל טעם לא נ טעם לו
¹³⁹² אינה בדלנ איננה
¹³⁹³ הספר ל הספרים נ¹ הספר זה (אולי תוקן ע"י ל² שניקד
 מעל תיבת "זיה")

ס פרמלאכ י, פיר ושרגיל

"בריתי אקים את יצחק" (בר' יז, כא); ואני
אהבתי את¹⁴⁰⁶ יעקב, ונתתי לו ארץ כנען אשר
נשבעתי¹⁴⁰⁷ לאבותיו לתת לזרעם; ¹⁴⁰⁸ (ג-ד)
וגרשתי את¹⁴⁰⁹ עשו מארץ השם ונתתי לו הר
שעיר בעבור כבוד אביו, ובעבור רשעו שמתו הריו
שממה; ¹⁴¹⁰ וכן קראהו¹⁴¹¹ גבול רשעה. והנה
אתם,¹⁴¹² בני יעקב, הנה שבתם אל ארץ הברית.
(ג) לתנות מדבר. תנות - נקבות; "תנים" (יש'
יג, כב) - זכרים. (ד) כי. רששו - מגזי "רש'
ועושר" (מש' ל, ח). וקראו להם¹⁴¹³ -
הקוראים. ¹⁴¹⁴ (ה) ועיניכם ראות¹⁴¹⁵ זאת, והיה
ראוי שתודו השם ותאמרו: יגדל יי! ויתכן
להיות מעל לגבול¹⁴¹⁶ ישראל דבק עם ואתם,¹⁴¹⁷
וככה הוא: אתם,¹⁴¹⁸ השוכנים מעל לגבול¹⁴¹⁹
ישראל,¹⁴²⁰ אתם¹⁴²¹ תאמרו: יגדל יי! (ו) ואחר
שפירש איך אהב השם¹⁴²² את יעקב, החל

ספר מלאכי

יש אומי שהוא עזרא ולפי דעתי שהוא שמו כאשר
הוא כתוב; והוא סוף הנבאים, ובעבור זה
הזהיר¹³⁹⁴ "זכרו תורת משה [עבדי]"¹³⁹⁵ (מל'
ג, כב), כי במותו נפסקה הנבואה מישראל.

מלאכי פרק א

(א) משא - נבואה. והאומר כי על ישראל
התנבא,¹³⁹⁶ טרם¹³⁹⁷ גלו אשורה, כי לא היה
[בבית שני],¹³⁹⁸ לא דבר נכונה (ע"פ איוב מב, ז);
כי הנה¹³⁹⁹ בעזרא "ויעשו בני ישראל" (השווה עז'
ו, טז) - והם רובם יהודה ובנימן. ועוד כתי' "כי
חלל יהודה קדש יי"¹⁴⁰⁰... ובעל בת אל נכר" (מל'
ב, יא); וזהו דבר¹⁴⁰¹ "נשים נכריות" שכתוב
בעזרא (י, ב). ועוד: שאמר על אדום "ואשים את
הריו שממה" (להלן, ג) - וזה היה¹⁴⁰² אחר חרבן
ירושלם. (ב) אהבתי - הטעם: בני אב אחד
[היו]¹⁴⁰³ עשו ויעקב, ואני נשבעתי¹⁴⁰⁴ כי¹⁴⁰⁵

¹⁴⁰⁵ כי אור ואת (כלשון הפסוק)
¹⁴⁰⁶ את בד חסר
¹⁴⁰⁷ אשר נשבעתי אבדולנר שנשבעתי
¹⁴⁰⁸ לאבותיו לתת לזרעם ל לאבותם לתת להם ולזרעם נ
לתת לאבותם ולזרעם
¹⁴⁰⁹ וגרשתי את אבור וגרשתי לנ ואת וגרשתי
¹⁴¹⁰ שממה א שמתיו
¹⁴¹¹ קראהו א קראנוהו ולנר קראוהו
¹⁴¹² אתם ל חסר
¹⁴¹³ להם נ חסר
¹⁴¹⁴ הקוראים ר הקוראים
¹⁴¹⁵ ראות ל חסר
¹⁴¹⁶ לגבול ל גבול
¹⁴¹⁷ ואתם ל ואתה
¹⁴¹⁸ אתם ר חסר
¹⁴¹⁹ לגבול בחסר ל גבול
¹⁴²⁰ ישראל ד חסר
¹⁴²¹ אתם ל ואתם
¹⁴²² אהב השם ל השם אוהב נ השם אהב

¹³⁹⁴ הזהיר ל הספר (?)
¹³⁹⁵ [עבדי] מ רבינו וחסר לר עבדו (תוקן ע"פ אבדנ)
¹³⁹⁶ התנבא אור נתנבא
¹³⁹⁷ טרם ל קודם
¹³⁹⁸ [בבית שני] מב חסר (תוקן ע"פ אדולנר)
¹³⁹⁹ הנה ל הוא
¹⁴⁰⁰ קדש יי אדור קדש יי אשר אהב (המשך הפסוק)
¹⁴⁰¹ דבר ר חסר
¹⁴⁰² וזה היה לנ וזהו
¹⁴⁰³ בני אב אחד [היו] מב בני אב אחד אור אב אחים היו ד
בני אב אחד אחים היו (תוקן ע"פ לנ)
¹⁴⁰⁴ ואני נשבעתי ל ואני נשבעתי ואני נשבעתי

"וּיִקְנֵא יְיָ לְאַרְצוֹ" (שם, יח). ¹⁴⁴³ **ועתה חלו נא פני אל** ¹⁴⁴⁴ - על המַאֲרָה אשר אנו נֶאֱרִים, ¹⁴⁴⁵ כאשר כתוב ¹⁴⁴⁶ עוֹי, ¹⁴⁴⁷ (ראה מל' ב, ג, ט), ויחננו - כי בעבורכם באה זאת הרעה; וזהו **מידכם היתה זאת** לכם. (י) ¹⁴⁴⁸ **מי** יתן אחרים, או אחד מכם - לו יהיה ¹⁴⁴⁹ כן, שאחרים או אחד מכם - **ויסגר** ¹⁴⁵⁰ דלתי העזרה. **ולא תאירו** - תבעירו, מגז' "ראיתי אור" ¹⁴⁵¹ (יש' מד, טז); והכל מגז' 'אור'. ¹⁴⁵² **(יא) כי ממזרח שמש** ¹⁴⁵³ - מקצה הארץ **ועד** קצה הארץ; כן ¹⁴⁵⁴ הוא היישוב. **ובכל מקום** - לו ¹⁴⁵⁵ ציויתי, היו מקריבים: ¹⁴⁵⁶ דבר ¹⁴⁵⁷ **מוקטר** היה ¹⁴⁵⁸ **מוגש** לפני **ומנחה טהורה**; או **מוקטר** - שם, כמו 'קטרת'; והיו שומעים בקולי לגדל **שמי** ¹⁴⁵⁹ **הגדול**. אחר ¹⁴⁶⁰ כן אמר לי הרב החכם ¹⁴⁶¹ על זה הפסוק

להוכיח הנכבדים ¹⁴²³ מהם, ¹⁴²⁴ שהם ¹⁴²⁵ מורי התורה, והם כהנים. ¹⁴²⁶ **בן יכבד אב** - בשכל הלב ידוע, כי **הבן חייב** ¹⁴²⁷ **לכבד האב**, ¹⁴²⁸ **והעבד מוכרח** לילא **מאדוניו**. ¹⁴²⁹ ותשובת ¹⁴³⁰ **במה בזינו**: (ז) **מגישים** ¹⁴³¹ - שאתם **מגישים**. ולמה תאמרו **במה גאלנוך?** זהו ¹⁴³² הגאול, ¹⁴³³ [וזה] ¹⁴³⁴ עשיתם בעבור היות מזבחי **נבזה** בעיניכם; ¹⁴³⁵ והוא **השולחן**. וביחזקאל כתוב על המזבח: "זה" ¹⁴³⁶ השלחן אשר לפני יי"י" (מא, כב). (ח) **וכי רע** ¹⁴³⁷ - בעיניכם. ¹⁴³⁸ **לפחתך** - כמו "פחת יהודה" (חגי א, א). **הירצך** - שיאהבך בלבן, ¹⁴³⁹ **או הישא פניך** - לעשות בקשתך? (ט) **ועתה** - משפט כהני צדקה ¹⁴⁴⁰ היה ¹⁴⁴¹ להתפלל בעד ישראל, ככת' בספר יואל "יבכו הכהנים" (ב, ז), ושם כת' ¹⁴⁴²

¹⁴⁴³ ועתה אור וטעם ל והטעי' נ והטעם
¹⁴⁴⁴ אל בדל יי"י
¹⁴⁴⁵ אשר אנו נֶאֱרִים שאנו נֶאֱרִים ל נוסרים ר שאנו נראים
¹⁴⁴⁶ כתוב לנ חסר
¹⁴⁴⁷ עוֹי אדור חסר
¹⁴⁴⁸ מי אור מי מי (התיבה הראשונה מסומנת בכתה"י כד"ה והשנייה היא חלק מהפירוש)
¹⁴⁴⁹ לו יהיה או לי יהיה ר ויהיה
¹⁴⁵⁰ ויסגר בד יסגור
¹⁴⁵¹ ראיתי אור ל חמותי ראיתי אור נ חמותי ראיתי עוד
¹⁴⁵² והכל מגז' אור ל חסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹⁴⁵³ שמש בד השמש
¹⁴⁵⁴ כן א כי
¹⁴⁵⁵ לו אול לא
¹⁴⁵⁶ מקריבים אדולנר מקריבים לי
¹⁴⁵⁷ דבר אדור דבר נכבד
¹⁴⁵⁸ היה או יהיה
¹⁴⁵⁹ שמי אבדולר את שמי
¹⁴⁶⁰ אחר א חסר
¹⁴⁶¹ הרב החכם ול החכם הרב

¹⁴²³ הנכבדים נ את הנכבדים
¹⁴²⁴ מהם אבדולנר בהם
¹⁴²⁵ שהם אור שהמה
¹⁴²⁶ כהנים אדולנר הכהנים
¹⁴²⁷ חייב נ חסר
¹⁴²⁸ האב אור את האב ל אב
¹⁴²⁹ מאדוניו לנ את אדוניו
¹⁴³⁰ ותשובת ב ותשובתם
¹⁴³¹ מגישים ל חסר
¹⁴³² זהו א והנה הוא ולר וזהו נ וזה
¹⁴³³ הגאול א הגואל
¹⁴³⁴ [וזה] במלנ וזהו (אולי הושפע מתיבת "זהו" לפני ב' תיבות; תוקן ע"פ אדור)
¹⁴³⁵ בעיניכם ל בעינים
¹⁴³⁶ זה אור זהו על
¹⁴³⁷ רע אבדור אין רע (תחילת הפסוק)
¹⁴³⁸ והוא השולחן וביחזקאל כתוב על המזבח זה השלחן אשר לפני יי וכי רע בעיניכם לנ וכי (השמטת הדומות)
¹⁴³⁹ בלבן ל כל כך
¹⁴⁴⁰ משפט כהני צדקה אדו משפט כהני צדק לנ משפט ר כהני משפטי צדק
¹⁴⁴¹ היה נ היא (! הוא)
¹⁴⁴² כת' ל כמו

טוב שיהיה **מגואל**.¹⁴⁷⁸ **וניבו נבזה אכלו** - הטעם כפול: **וניבו** הוא 'לחמו', מגז' "תנובה" (יש כזו); וככה "ניב שפתים" (יש' נז, יט), שהוא פרי השפתיים;¹⁴⁷⁹ כי כל דבר יש לו פרי כפי עניינו. **(יג) ואמרתם. מתלאה** - חסר ה"א, כמו "מזה בידך" (שמי' ד, ב): מה זאת התלאה? בעבור המאָרה¹⁴⁸⁰ (ראה מל' ב, ב) אין לחם לשום בשולחן!¹⁴⁸¹ **והפחתם**¹⁴⁸² **אותו** - שהוא כמו פִּיח,¹⁴⁸³ ואין בו כדיי. **והבאתם** - הנה¹⁴⁸⁴ השולחן רק, ועל המזבח **מנחה**, איננו¹⁴⁸⁵ כאשר רציתי. **(יד) וארור נוכל ויש בעדרו**¹⁴⁸⁶ - חושב, מגז' "בנכליהם" (במ' כה, יח), דרך מרמה. **זכר** שהוא תמים. **ומשחת**¹⁴⁸⁷ - כמו 'מושלך'.

מלאכי פרק ב

(א) ועתה¹⁴⁸⁸ דברתי¹⁴⁸⁹ **אליכם. (ב) אם. וארותי את ברכותיהם** - כדרך "יגיה חשכיי" (תה' יח, כט). **וגם ארותיה** - מפעלי¹⁴⁹⁰ הכפל. והטעם: הברכה.

פירוש נכון מאד, והוא דבק אל¹⁴⁶² העניין, כי הנביא [מוכיח]¹⁴⁶³ על הבזיון ועל הגיאול שהיו מחללים את השם. על כן הוא אומר: **כי**¹⁴⁶⁴ בכל היישוב, **ממזרח שמש ועד מבואו**,¹⁴⁶⁵ **גדול שמי בגוים** ונכבד; ובכל מקום שבעולם יחשב¹⁴⁶⁶ בעיני הדבר הזה, שהם מכבדים [ומגדלים]¹⁴⁶⁷ את¹⁴⁶⁸ **שמי**, כאילו הם **בכל מקום**¹⁴⁶⁹ יביאו¹⁴⁷⁰ לפני, **לשמי**,¹⁴⁷¹ כל דבר מקדש **מגש**¹⁴⁷² הראוי לכבודי, **ומנחה טהורה**. לא כאשר אתם עושים, להגיש לפני "לחם מגואלי" (לעיל, ז) ו"עור" ו"פסח וחולה" (לעיל, ח), ואיננו¹⁴⁷³ רע בעיניכם. ולמה לא תשימו על לב **כי גדול שמי בגוים, (יב) ואתם מחללים אותו?**¹⁴⁷⁴ **ואתם.**¹⁴⁷⁵ **מגואל הוא**¹⁴⁷⁶ - והטעם: למה נשמור עצמינו להיות¹⁴⁷⁷ קדושים לאכול לחם הפנים, כי לא יספיק לנו!

¹⁴⁶² אל **בדלנ** על

¹⁴⁶³ [מוכיח] **אבדומר חסר (תוקן ע"פ לנ)**

¹⁴⁶⁴ **כי ר חסר**

¹⁴⁶⁵ ממזרח שמש ועד מבואו א ממזרח ועד _____ יש רוח כשיעור תיבת "מבואו" או "מערב" ולנר ממזרח ועד

¹⁴⁶⁶ מערב

¹⁴⁶⁷ יחשב **לנ** נחשב

¹⁴⁶⁸ [ומגדלים] **מ** ומגדלים (תוקן ע"פ **אבדולנר**)

¹⁴⁶⁹ **את ל חסר**

¹⁴⁷⁰ בכל מקום **לנ חסר**

¹⁴⁷¹ יביאו א ציפו (?)

¹⁴⁷² לשמי **אור** שמי

¹⁴⁷³ מקדש מגש **אבור** מוקטר מוגש ד מוקטר ומוגש ע"פ

(הפסוק)

¹⁴⁷⁴ ואיננו **ב** איננו

¹⁴⁷⁵ **אותו אור** אותי

¹⁴⁷⁶ **ואתם ל** ואמר

¹⁴⁷⁷ מגואל הוא א הגואל אותי ל מגואל ההוא

¹⁴⁷⁸ להיות **אור** להיותינו **לנ** להיות לו

¹⁴⁷⁸ והטעם למה נשמור עצמינו להיות קדושים לאכול לחם הפנים כי לא יספיק לנו טוב שיהיה מגואל ד חסר

(השמטת הדומות)

¹⁴⁷⁹ השפתיים ל שפתיים ר המשפתיים

¹⁴⁸⁰ המאָרה ר המראה (שיכול אותיות)

¹⁴⁸¹ לשום בשולחן ל על השולחן נ לשום על השולחן

¹⁴⁸² והפחתם ל והפחתי

¹⁴⁸³ פִּיח לנ פִּיח הכבשן (המשך הפסוק בשמי' ט, י)

¹⁴⁸⁴ הנה ל היה

¹⁴⁸⁵ איננו **אלנר** איננה ו ואיננה

¹⁴⁸⁶ ויש בעדרו **לנ חסר**

¹⁴⁸⁷ ומשחת **אר** מושחת ו משחת

¹⁴⁸⁸ ועתה **ל חסר**

¹⁴⁸⁹ דברתי **ב** דברתי

¹⁴⁹⁰ מפעלי ל מבעלי נ מבעלי

ישראל, שהשם ¹⁵¹³[נתנם] ¹⁵¹⁴לו שייראו ממנו,
 והוא ¹⁵¹⁵ירא השם. ¹⁵¹⁶נחת הוא - מבניין ¹⁵¹⁷
 'נפעל', והשם: ['נחתת'], ¹⁵¹⁸כמו "לב נשבר
 ונדכה" ¹⁵¹⁹(תה' נא, יט); מגזי "תראו חתת" ¹⁵²⁰
 (איוב ו, כא). והטעם כפול. ויש אומי, כי ואתנם
 לו ¹⁵²¹- מצות וחוקים, והם תורת כהנים.
 (ו) תורת ¹⁵²²- אמר יפת: זה אמר ¹⁵²³על אהרן;
 ורבי [ישועה] ¹⁵²⁴אמר: ¹⁵²⁵על פנחס. והנכון כי
 על ¹⁵²⁶שניהם אמר ¹⁵²⁷ועל כל ¹⁵²⁸בניהם
 הקדושי, כי ככה ראוי להיות כהן ¹⁵²⁹גדול.
 היתה בפיהו - איננו ¹⁵³⁰מקבל שחד. ועולה -
 לשאת פנים. בשלום ¹⁵³¹- עם ישראל; ומישור -
 לעשות מצותי. (ז) כי - דבק: כי בהיות הכהן

וגם ככה עשיתי ¹⁴⁹¹עד עתה, כי ארותי את
 הברכה, מפני שלא שמתם על לב. (ג) הנני
 אגער ¹⁴⁹²בזרע ¹⁴⁹³- שלא יצמח, בעבור היות
 שולחני רק. ומלת חגיכם - כמו "אסרו" ¹⁴⁹⁴חג
 בעבותים" (תה' קיח, כז). והנה [פרש] ¹⁴⁹⁵חגיכם
 - קרבנותיכם, אזרה ¹⁴⁹⁶אותם ¹⁴⁹⁷על פניכם.
 והטעם: ¹⁴⁹⁸ארחיקכם ¹⁴⁹⁹מעל פני, שלא אראה
 אתכם. ¹⁵⁰⁰ונשא אתכם הנושא, הוא ¹⁵⁰¹האויב,
 אליו. ¹⁵⁰²(ד) וידעתם - אז תדעו, אם לא תשמעו
 אלי. ¹⁵⁰³עתה ידבר עם ישראל, שהם חייבים
 לכבד הכהנים ¹⁵⁰⁴משרתי השם; ועשו כאשר ¹⁵⁰⁵
 יורו אתכם, ולא תביאו מנחה בעל ¹⁵⁰⁶מום.
 (ה) בריתי - כרתי ברית עמו, ¹⁵⁰⁷כי בעבורו,
 שהוא ¹⁵⁰⁸מקריב קרבני, ¹⁵⁰⁹יהיה לישראל
 החיים והשלום. ¹⁵¹⁰וטעם ¹⁵¹¹ואתנם ¹⁵¹²- על

והוסיף ביאור ואמר ויראיני ומפני שמי נחת הוא, רוצה בו
 מפני שמי נחת, מפני אחר לא יחת (קטע זה מועתק עם
 שינויים קלים מספר מלמד התלמידים לרי' יעקב ב"ר אבא
 מרי אנטולי, פרי פנחס, דף קמט:)
¹⁵¹¹וטעם אנ והטעם
¹⁵¹²ואתנם ל ואתנם לו מורא נ ואתנם לו
¹⁵¹³שהשם ל שהם
¹⁵¹⁴[נתנם] מ נתנה (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
¹⁵¹⁵והוא ל ויראיני והוא
¹⁵¹⁶השם ל את השם
¹⁵¹⁷מבניין ו מהבניין
¹⁵¹⁸['נחתת'] מבפ נחת ב² נחת (תוקן ע"פ אולנר)
¹⁵¹⁹ונדכה ד ונדכא
¹⁵²⁰חתת לנ חתת ותיראו
¹⁵²¹לו נ לו מורא
¹⁵²²תורת לנ תורת אמות (המשך הפסוק)
¹⁵²³זה אמר אלנפר זה נאמר ו נאמ'
¹⁵²⁴[ישועה] מר ישעיה (תוקן ע"פ אבדולנפר)
¹⁵²⁵אמר א אומי
¹⁵²⁶כי על ר על כי
¹⁵²⁷אמר לנ נאמר
¹⁵²⁸כל בד חסר
¹⁵²⁹כהן לנ כל כהן
¹⁵³⁰איננו ל אינו
¹⁵³¹בשלום נ ושלום

¹⁴⁹¹ככה עשיתי אור עשיתי ככה לנ וככה עשיתי
¹⁴⁹²אגער ר גוער אגער
¹⁴⁹³בזרע אור בצמח ב¹ בזרוע (תוקן ע"י ב²)
¹⁴⁹⁴אסרו ו יסרו
¹⁴⁹⁵[פרש] מאור פירש ד פרוש ל פירו' נ פירוש (תוקן ע"פ
 ב)
¹⁴⁹⁶אזרה בחסר
¹⁴⁹⁷אותם ל אתכן נ אתכם
¹⁴⁹⁸והטעם ד וטעם
¹⁴⁹⁹ארחיקכם א אזרה אתכם ור ארחיק אתכם נ ארחיקם
¹⁵⁰⁰אתכם נ אותם אתכם
¹⁵⁰¹הוא ל או
¹⁵⁰²אליו ל אלי (!)
¹⁵⁰³אלי אור לי
¹⁵⁰⁴הכהנים לנ הכהנים שהם
¹⁵⁰⁵ועשו כאשר לנ אשר ר יעשו כאשר
¹⁵⁰⁶בעל ל בעולת (!) נ בעלת
¹⁵⁰⁷ברית עמו נ עמו ברית
¹⁵⁰⁸בעבורו שהוא אור בעבור שהיה
¹⁵⁰⁹קרבני ל חסר נ קרבנו
¹⁵¹⁰והשלום א והשלום ורי יעקב בר אבא מקריב קרבני
 במאמרו וסיבת מתן החיים היתה יראת השם כמו שקדם,
 והוא שאמי ואתנם לו מורא ויראיני רוצה בו גמול המורא

התורה.¹⁵⁵¹ **(יא) בגדה. קדש השם** – לישי,¹⁵⁵²
 בנים ובנות, ככת' "מכעס בניו ובנותיו" (דב'
 לב, יט). **ובעל** – מגזי "כי יבעל בחור"¹⁵⁵³ (יש'
 סב, ה). **בת אל [נכר]** – עובדת [ע'יז];¹⁵⁵⁴ והטעם:
 שאינה מאב אחד¹⁵⁵⁵ ומאל¹⁵⁵⁶ אחד (ראה
 לעיל, ג). **(יב) יכרת. ער ועונה** – מטעם העניין: בן
 נכד. ויפת אמר:¹⁵⁵⁷ כאשר תלין נפשו יהיה בנו
ער ועונה, כי לא נכרתה משפחתו. ואם העושה
 זאת התועבה, כמו **אשר יעשנה**, הוא כהן, לא
 יהיה לו בן **מגיש מנחה**. **(יג) וזאת**. טעם
שנית:¹⁵⁵⁸ כי האחד¹⁵⁵⁹ – הגזול¹⁵⁶⁰ ובעל מום
 (ראה מל' א, יג), והשני – כן [מזבחי]¹⁵⁶¹ מכוסה
דמעה, בכי ואנקה בעבור בנות ישראל הבוכות
 (ראה לעיל, ג). ולא אפנה עוד¹⁵⁶² אל מזבחותיכם,
 ואין לי¹⁵⁶³ רצון בה. **(יד) ואמרתם**.
 והתשובה: **על כי השם יְד**¹⁵⁶⁵ **בינך ובין כל אחד**
 ואחד, **ובין אשת נעוריו**.¹⁵⁶⁶ **(טו) ולא אחד**¹⁵⁶⁷
 מכס **עשה כדת**, ונשארה רוחו לו. ואם תאמרו:

ישר,¹⁵³² ירבו [הישרים].¹⁵³³ והנה **שפתי כהן**
 דבק¹⁵³⁴ עם אשר למעלה. **כי מלאך** – שליח¹⁵³⁵
 השם הוא בינו ובין ישראל. **(ח) ואתם**. יוכיח
 ישראל¹⁵³⁶ שלא¹⁵³⁷ ישמעו אליהם, להביא
 הגזול¹⁵³⁸: ושבתם¹⁵³⁹ אתם, מורי¹⁵⁴⁰ התורה, וגם
 אתם בזיתם אותי, לאמר, כי מזבחי בזוי הוא.
(ט) עתה יוכיח הכהנים, שהם נושאים¹⁵⁴¹ **פנים**
 לגדולים. **(י) הלא** – פרשה אחרת, להזכיר עון
 אחר¹⁵⁴² – שהיו מגרשים¹⁵⁴³ נשיהם,¹⁵⁴⁴ והם
 בוכות, בעבור נשים נכריות, ככתו' בספר עזרא
 (עז' ט-י; נחמ' יג, כג-ל). והיה להם לשום¹⁵⁴⁵ לב
 לאמר: **הלא אב אחד** – הוא יעקב; אם כן,
 אחר¹⁵⁴⁶ שאבינו אחד ובוראנו אחד,¹⁵⁴⁷ למה נבגד
איש באחיו או¹⁵⁴⁸ באחותו? כי בעבו' זאת¹⁵⁴⁹
 הפרשה – לחלל ברית אבותינו, שקיבלו¹⁵⁵⁰

¹⁵³² ישר ל ישראל
¹⁵³³ [הישרים] במפ השרים (תוקן ע"פ אדולנר)
¹⁵³⁴ דבק בחסר
¹⁵³⁵ שליח מ' פ שליח שליח (הכפלת התיבה; תוקן ע"י מ'²)
¹⁵³⁶ ישראל אור את ישראל ד את ל הכהנים על ישראל
¹⁵³⁷ שלא ל שהיה ראוי שלא ר חסר
¹⁵³⁸ הגזול א גזול ור גזול ל הגזול והם לא עשו כן אלא סרו
 מן הדרך... (המשך הפירוש חסר; השווה פירוש בע"פ:
 "והם סרו מן הדרך הטובי")
¹⁵³⁹ ושבתם אדור הכשלתם (כלשון הפסוק)
¹⁵⁴⁰ מורי ו סורי (?)
¹⁵⁴¹ נושאים נ חסר
¹⁵⁴² אחר נ חסר
¹⁵⁴³ מגרשים א מגרשיהם ו מגורשים (?) פ' מישרים (?)
 (תוקן ע"י פ'²)
¹⁵⁴⁴ נשיהם בד נשותיהם
¹⁵⁴⁵ לשום אר לשוב
¹⁵⁴⁶ אחר בד חסר
¹⁵⁴⁷ ובוראנו אחד ו חסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹⁵⁴⁸ או נ ואיש
¹⁵⁴⁹ זאת אבונפ' ר זאת היא
¹⁵⁵⁰ שקיבלו בד שקיבלו את

¹⁵⁵¹ התורה ו אבות
¹⁵⁵² לישי אור ישראל נ ישראל נקראו
¹⁵⁵³ בחור בדנר בחור בתולה (המשך הפסוק)
¹⁵⁵⁴ [נכר] עובדת [ע'יז] מ ____ עובדת ____ (ענזורה? א
 עבודת?) ע"י (תוקן ע"פ אבדנפ)
¹⁵⁵⁵ אחד ר חסר
¹⁵⁵⁶ מאל פ מאם
¹⁵⁵⁷ אמר נ אמר כי
¹⁵⁵⁸ טעם שנית נ הטעם השנית
¹⁵⁵⁹ האחד בדור האחת נ אחת
¹⁵⁶⁰ הגזול אור הגזול
¹⁵⁶¹ [מזבחי] מ לא שמזבחי (תוקן ע"פ אבדנפ)
¹⁵⁶² עוד נ שם
¹⁵⁶³ לי או חסר נ (?) ר לו
¹⁵⁶⁴ בה נ בהם
¹⁵⁶⁵ יְד אדונפ' ר היה עד ב היה
¹⁵⁶⁶ נעוריו א נעוריק
¹⁵⁶⁷ אחד ר אחת

(א) הנני¹⁵⁷⁹ שולח מלאכי - יתכן [להיותו]¹⁵⁸⁰
 משיח בן יוסף. האדון - הוא הכבוד, הוא מלאך
 הברית; כי הטעם כפול. (ב) ומי מכלכל - יכפולי,
 כמו "יכילי" (מ"א ז, כו); "מטלטלך" (יש' כב, יז)
 מן¹⁵⁸¹ "ויטילו" (יונה א, ה). כי הוא כאש מצרף -
 והנה זאת הנבואה כנבואת¹⁵⁸² זכריה: "והבאתי
 את השלישית באש" (זכ' יג, ט). וכבורית¹⁵⁸³ -
 סמוך שלמכבסים. (ג) וישב כמצרף ומטהר כסף
 - מכל פסול. וטהר את בני לוי - הם¹⁵⁸⁴ הכהנים;
 ולא יעשו¹⁵⁸⁵ כאשר הם עושים עתה.¹⁵⁸⁶
 (ד) וערבה. כימי עולם¹⁵⁸⁷ - בהיותם בבית
 ראשון. (ה) וקרבתי אליכם - שיהיו בימים ההם.
 והייתי עד¹⁵⁸⁸ - שאגלה לכל מה שעשה.¹⁵⁸⁹
 ומטי¹⁵⁹⁰ - משפט גר.¹⁵⁹¹ (ו) כי. לא שנית - לא
 יקרה¹⁵⁹² לי שינוי; כמו "שונות"¹⁵⁹³ מכל עם"
 (אס' ג, ח). ואתם בני יעקב לא כליתם - כי אם
 מת האב, נשאר הבן. (ז) למימי - הלמ"ד נוסף,
 כמו "השלישי לאבשלום בן מעכה"¹⁵⁹⁴ (דה"א

מה האחד הוא מבקש? - זרע אלהים כמצות¹⁵⁶⁸
 השם. וטעם ונשארה רוחו לו¹⁵⁶⁹ - שלא להתערב
 עם בת אל נכר (ראה לעיל, יא); על כן כתוב:
 ונשמרתם ברוחכם, [ובאשת נעוריתכם]¹⁵⁷⁰ אל
 יבגוד רוחכם. (טז) כי¹⁵⁷¹ השם ישנא שישלח
 איש את אשתו הטהורה, ושנא אשר יכסה;¹⁵⁷²
 או: השם יראה חמסו, שהוא בסתר.
 (יז) הוגעתם - פרשה אחרת; ידענו כי השם¹⁵⁷³
 לא ייגע, ואיך יגעהו מעשיו? רק הוא כלשון¹⁵⁷⁴
 בני אדם, שלא יסבול עוד. כל עושי רע, לולי
 שהוא¹⁵⁷⁵ טוב בעיניו, לא היה מניחו לעשות.¹⁵⁷⁶
 ואם תאמרו: עוד יעשה משפט - מתי היה¹⁵⁷⁷ זה,
 ואיה הוא? למה לא יעשה משפט? וזאת הנבואה
 - לעתיד. ובתחלה יבא אליהו,¹⁵⁷⁸ כאשר הוא
 כתוב בסוף הספר (מל' ג, כג).

מלאכי פרק ג

¹⁵⁷⁹ הנני א הננה
¹⁵⁸⁰ [להיותו] מנפ להיות (תוקן ע"פ אבדור)
¹⁵⁸¹ מן ד חסר
¹⁵⁸² כנבואת דפ בנבואת (?)
¹⁵⁸³ וכבורית ו וכברות (?)
¹⁵⁸⁴ לוי הם אור חסר
¹⁵⁸⁵ יעשו נחסר
¹⁵⁸⁶ עתה אר חסר
¹⁵⁸⁷ עולם א ההם
¹⁵⁸⁸ עד אור עד ממהר (המשך הפסוק)
¹⁵⁸⁹ שעשה אבונר עשה א² אעשה (?)
¹⁵⁹⁰ ומטי א ומטה (אולי ע"פ דב' כז, יט)
¹⁵⁹¹ משפט גר ב חסר
¹⁵⁹² יקרה א יקרא
¹⁵⁹³ כמו שונות נ חסר
¹⁵⁹⁴ בן מעכה אונר חסר

¹⁵⁶⁸ כמצות אדו במצות
¹⁵⁶⁹ לו ואם תאמרו מה האחד הוא מבקש זרע אלהים
 כמצות השם וטעם ונשארה רוחו לו נחסר (השמטת
 הדומות + "לוי")
¹⁵⁷⁰ [ובאשת נעוריתכם] במפ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אדונר)
¹⁵⁷¹ כי אור כי שנא ב² כי שנא שלח (המשך הפסוק)
¹⁵⁷² יכסה נ יכסה חמס (ע"פ משי' י, יא, או המשך הפסוק
 כאן - [כשה חמס] פ¹ יכבה (?) תוקן ע"פ פ²)
¹⁵⁷³ השם ב השם הנכבד
¹⁵⁷⁴ כלשון ו(?) פ בלשון
¹⁵⁷⁵ שהוא ר חסר
¹⁵⁷⁶ לעשות נ חסר
¹⁵⁷⁷ היה אור יהיה
¹⁵⁷⁸ אליהו נ אליהו הנביא ע"ה

ג,ב). **שובו** - אומר לדור ההוא, שהיה בזמנו.¹⁵⁹⁵
 ותשובת: ¹⁵⁹⁶ **במה נשוב?** **(ח-י) היקבע**¹⁵⁹⁷ - הנה
 הוא: **המעשר והתרומה**; כי תאמרו: איך נתן
 עין¹⁵⁹⁸ יפה מזה המעט?¹⁵⁹⁹ וזה לא טוב, שאתם
**קובעים אותי מפני המארה והחסרון אשר אתם
 נארים וחסרים.**¹⁶⁰⁰ כי אם כה תעשו: **הביאו**
[את]¹⁶⁰¹ **כל המעשר - והריקותי לכם ברכה,**¹⁶⁰²
 ולא ישחת עוד. ופי' **קובעים** - כמו משכון:
 ממשכנים ומעכבים¹⁶⁰³ אתם¹⁶⁰⁴ את הראוי
 לי.¹⁶⁰⁵ **היקבע**¹⁶⁰⁶ - הנה הוא: **המעשר והתרומה,**
 שלא יתנו בעין רעה. **במארה** הוא¹⁶⁰⁷ ראוי
 שתתייסרו, ולא תקבעו אותי; ועתה **הביאו.**
אפתח ארובות השמים, והריקותי לכם - דרך
 משל על רוב ברכות.¹⁶⁰⁸ **עד בלי די - לא די**¹⁶⁰⁹
 לבדו,¹⁶¹⁰ רק יותר. **(יא) וגערתי... באוכל - שלא**
 יבא עליו¹⁶¹¹ מין קללה, כמו ארבה וצלצל.

(יב) ואשרו - כי אני חפץ בכם ובארצכם.¹⁶¹²
(יג) חזקו - זאת הנבואה לעתיד, כי עמה¹⁶¹³ דבק
 "כי הנה יום"¹⁶¹⁴ בא" (ראה להלן, יט).
(יד) אמרתם. קדורנית - כמו "קודר שחותי"¹⁶¹⁵
 (תה' לה, יד) - מיראת השם. **(טו) ועתה** - אלה
 דברי אנשי העולם, שלא יבינו דרכי השם.¹⁶¹⁶
(טז) אז נדברו¹⁶¹⁷ - המשכילים. וטעם **ויכתב** -
 כתוב¹⁶¹⁸ בשמים מכתב לא ימחק.¹⁶¹⁹ **ליראי**
השם - הם הצדיקים. **ולחושבי שמו** - חכמי
 הלב,¹⁶²⁰ יודעי סוד השם הנכבד והנורא.
(יז) והיו. מלת סגלה - דבקה עם **והיו לי. אשר**
אני עושה - משפט. **(יח) ושבתם** - לאנשי הדור
 ההוא,¹⁶²¹ כי זה הוא סוף¹⁶²² הנבואות.
(יט) זדים ועושי¹⁶²³ **רשעה** - הטעם כפול. **ולהט**
 - כמו "ואת"¹⁶²⁴ להט החרב" (ברי' ג, כד).
(כ) וזרחה - עיקר היום הוא **השמש**: "כחם
 היום" (ברי' יח, א) - השמש;¹⁶²⁵ "והיום רד מאד"
 (שוי' יט, יא) - השמש; וככה "היום הבא"¹⁶²⁶

¹⁵⁹⁵ שהיה בזמנו ד שהוא בזמנו נ שיהיה בזמנינו
¹⁵⁹⁶ ותשובת ב ותשובתם אור ותשובה
¹⁵⁹⁷ היקבע א הי קע (אולי כתב היבקע כמו להלן הערה
 1606 ואז מחק אות "ב" כדי לתקן את הטעות)
¹⁵⁹⁸ עין אור חסר
¹⁵⁹⁹ המעט נ הטעם
¹⁶⁰⁰ וחסרים נ חסר
¹⁶⁰¹ [את] מ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אבדונפר)
¹⁶⁰² ברכה נ ברכה עד בלי די (המשך הפסוק)
¹⁶⁰³ ומעכבים נ ומערבים נ ומערבין
¹⁶⁰⁴ אתם נ אותם
¹⁶⁰⁵ לי נ לו
¹⁶⁰⁶ היקבע א היבקע
¹⁶⁰⁷ הוא המעשר והתרומה שלא יתנו בעין רעה במארה
 הוא ו הוא... במארה היה נ חסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹⁶⁰⁸ ברכות נ ברכותי
¹⁶⁰⁹ לא די א די פ די לא
¹⁶¹⁰ לבדו ו לבד (! לבדי?)
¹⁶¹¹ עליו נ אליו

¹⁶¹² ובארצכם ו ובארצם
¹⁶¹³ עמה אור עתה
¹⁶¹⁴ יום אור היום (כלשון הפסוק)
¹⁶¹⁵ קודר שחותי נ קודרים אותי
¹⁶¹⁶ ועתה אלה דברי אנשי העולם שלא יבינו דרכי השם ד
 חסר (השמטת הדומות)
¹⁶¹⁷ נדברו אדור נדברו יראי השם (המשך הפסוק)
¹⁶¹⁸ ויכתב כתוב ב ויכתוב כתי (יש קוויים תחת "כתי")
¹⁶¹⁹ ימחק אור ימחה
¹⁶²⁰ חכמי הלב אדונר הם חכמי לב (כך גורס רד"ק בדברי
 ראב"ע) נ חכמי הלב
¹⁶²¹ ההוא נ ההוא ידבר
¹⁶²² הוא סוף אור סוף כל ד הוא סוף כל
¹⁶²³ ועושי ד וכל עושי ו ועושה (קרוב לנה"מ)
¹⁶²⁴ ואת נ את
¹⁶²⁵ השמש אור הוא השמש
¹⁶²⁶ היום הבא אר היום בא ו הוא בא

ועתה אחתום פירוש זה הספר¹⁶⁴³ בדבר¹⁶⁴⁴ אליהו :
 מצאנו שהיה בימי אחזיהו בנו של אחאב (ראה
 מ"ב א, ב-ג); ומצאנו כתוב כי יהורם בן אחאב
 ויהושפט שאלו אלישע¹⁶⁴⁵ הנביא, וכתוב שם
 "פה¹⁶⁴⁶ אלישע בן שפט אשר יצק מים על ידי
 אליהו" (מ"ב ג, יא) - וזה לאות, כי כבר עלה
 בסערה השמימה¹⁶⁴⁷ (ע"פ מ"ב ב, יא), כי לא אמר
 הכת'¹⁶⁴⁸ יוצק מים; ועוד: כי לא נפרד
 אלישע¹⁶⁴⁹ מעל אליהו אחר ששרתו, עד עלותו
 (ראה שם). והנה מצאנו אחרי מות יהושפט, בימי
 אחזיהו בנו, כתו' "ויבא אליו מכתב מאליהו
 הנביא"¹⁶⁵⁰ (דה"ב כא, יב). וזה יורה כי אז כתבו
 ושלחו אליו.¹⁶⁵¹ ואילו היה כתוב לפני עלותו, היה
 כתוב 'וימצא' או 'ויובא אליו מכתב שהניח
 אליהו'. ואין ספק, כי בימי חכמינו הקדושים¹⁶⁵²
 נראה. והשם¹⁶⁵³ יקיים נבואתו וימהר קץ
 ביאתו.¹⁶⁵⁴

בנליכואע"י (=ברוך נותן ליעף כח ולאין אוניים עצמה

ירבה. -ע"פ יש' מ, כט)¹⁶⁵⁵

¹⁶⁴³ פירוש זה הספר ו זה הספר נ זה הפירוש
¹⁶⁴⁴ בדבר נ בדברי (?)
¹⁶⁴⁵ שאלו אלישע אר שאלו לאלישע ו לאלישע
¹⁶⁴⁶ שם פה ב שספר
¹⁶⁴⁷ השמימה ב חסר נ השמים
¹⁶⁴⁸ הכת' נ חסר
¹⁶⁴⁹ אלישע אור חסר
¹⁶⁵⁰ מאליהו הנביא אור אליהו
¹⁶⁵¹ אליו נ אליו כתב
¹⁶⁵² הקדושים נ זכרונם לברכה
¹⁶⁵³ והשם אדו והשם ברחמי נ והשם יתעלה
¹⁶⁵⁴ ביאתו א נבואתו ו ביאתו אמן
¹⁶⁵⁵ בנליכואע"י אבדונר חסר (כת"י מ האות השני איננו ברור ; ייתכן שכתוב בנליכואע"י בשביל "ברוך חטותן

(לעיל, יט). וזאת השמש לא תזיק¹⁶²⁷ אנשי השם,
 רק תהיה¹⁶²⁸ מרפא. טעם בכנפיה - האור היוצא
 מהשמש, הפרוש¹⁶²⁹ על פני הארץ¹⁶³⁰ כמו כנפים.
ויצאתם - לאור השמש. **ופשתם** - פרשתו (נח'
 ג, יח). **(כא) ועסותם**¹⁶³¹ - מגזרת "עסיס" (יואל
 א, ה), על שם שמעסיס¹⁶³² הענבים¹⁶³³ ברגל, או
 בכל דבר המעסה; ¹⁶³⁴ כי אז תגבר יד הצדיקים
 על הרשעים. **ביום אשר אני עושה** - זה
 שהזכיר: ¹⁶³⁵ "שמש צדקה" (לעיל, כ). **(כב) זכרו**
תורת משה עבדי¹⁶³⁶ - ושמרוה, כי היא תלמדכם
 דרך יראת השם, ובבא¹⁶³⁷ היום הנזכר,¹⁶³⁸ אז
 תמלטו. **(כג) הנה** - דברי השם. **ויום** - הוא
 הנזכר (ראה לעיל, יט, כא). **(כד) והשיב** - כדרך
 "יהיה לי עליכם לבב יחד"¹⁶³⁹ (השווה דה"א
 יב, יח); והפך זה "בן מנבל אבי" (מי' ז, ו). והנה
 כולם יהיו **לב אחד**¹⁶⁴⁰ לשוב אל השם, **אבות**
ובנים, בטרם בא¹⁶⁴¹ היום¹⁶⁴² הגדול (ראה
 לעיל, כ"ג).

¹⁶²⁷ תזיק אור יזיק נ תזיק את
¹⁶²⁸ תהיה ד חסר
¹⁶²⁹ הפרוש ו הפי' (הפיר:?) (ר חסר
¹⁶³⁰ הארץ אונר כל הארץ
¹⁶³¹ ועסותם נ ועשותם
¹⁶³² שמעסיס נ שמעסס
¹⁶³³ הענבים אור את הענבים
¹⁶³⁴ המעסה נ המעסס
¹⁶³⁵ שהזכיר ו הזכיר
¹⁶³⁶ עבדי אור חסר
¹⁶³⁷ ובבא ו ובא
¹⁶³⁸ הנזכר אור חסר
¹⁶³⁹ לבב יחד אדור לבב אחד נ לב אחד
¹⁶⁴⁰ יהיו לב אחד ר לב אחד יהיו
¹⁶⁴¹ בא פ תבא
¹⁶⁴² היום אבודר יום (כלשון הפסוק)

נשלם פירוש ספר¹⁶⁵⁶ תרי עשר, והודות¹⁶⁵⁷ לאלהי הרוחות
לכל בשר (ע"פ במ' טז, כב).¹⁶⁵⁸

פירשתיו¹⁶⁵⁹ אני המחבר, אברהם ב"ר מאיר בן עזרא
הספרדי, שנת ארבעת אלפים ותשע מאות ושבע עשרה
בראש חודש טבת בעיר [רדום].^{1660 1661}

אמר המעתיק הספר הזה: ואני, יוסף ב"ר יעקב ממודויל,
העתקתיו ממכתב יד המחבר. גם הוספתי קצת פירוש על
לשונו, כאשר הוא פרש לי בעת חברו; רק בעבור שהוא
פירושי,¹⁶⁶² סמנתי הטורים הנוספים בשתי נקודות בראש
הטור ובסופו, ובכל מקום שימצאו השתי נקודות בין מלה
[למלה]¹⁶⁶³ היא תוספת פירושי מפיו.¹⁶⁶⁴

וכו'. בכת"י פ כתוב "נותן" בלי קידומת ה' וכלשון הפסוק
בישעיהו, ועל פיו קבעתי את נוסח הפנים. וע' בשינויי
נוסחאות לפירוש בע"פ בסוף מלאכי, שגם שם אין קידומת
ה' לפני תיבת "נותן")

¹⁶⁵⁶ ספר אב חסר

¹⁶⁵⁷ והודות אר תהילה ב הודות

¹⁶⁵⁸ נשלם פירוש ספר תרי עשר והודות לאלהי הרוחות

לכל בשר ו תם ונשלם שבח לבורא עולם לחסר

¹⁶⁵⁹ פירשתיו נ פירשתי

¹⁶⁶⁰ בעיר [רדום] מפ בעיר רדוס (? רדום? דרוס? דרוס?)

בר(?) בעיר דרוס ז בעיר רודוס נ בדיסורוס (? בדיסורוס?)

ראה בהערות לתרגום האנגלי

¹⁶⁶¹ פירשתיו אני המחבר... בעיר [רדום] אוכל הקטע חסר

¹⁶⁶² פירושי בפ לשון פירושי

¹⁶⁶³ [למלה] מפ מלה (תוקן ע"פ ב)

¹⁶⁶⁴ אמר המעתיק הספר הזה... היא תוספת פירושי מפיו

אדור כל הקטע חסר נ ברך אל חי לעד וקיים לנצח ברוך

הוא אמן נצח והיתה השלמת העתקת הספר (!) הלז בשנת

חמשת אלפים וקנ"ז לבריאת עולם (1397 CE) בחדש סיון

כ"ג בו וכתבתיו (לא ברור) ב"ר משה י"י ה... (לא ברור)

כקרא דכתיב לא ימושו מפיד

חגי פרק ב

(א) ובחדש השביעי בעשרים ואחד לחדש, היה דבר יי' ביד חגי הנביא לאמר. (ג) הלא כמהו - כלומר: כמו⁵ שראיתם אותו עכשיו, כאיין הוא בעיניכם. (ו) עוד אחת מעט היא - כלומי עוד יבא זמן מועט, ואני מרעיש את השמים, (ז) ומלאתי את הבית הזה⁶ כבוד - פי': ממון. ודמיו: ⁷ "עשה את כל הכבוד הזה" (בר' לא,א). (יב) הן ישא איש בשר⁸ קדש בכנף בגדו ונגע אחר כך כנפו אל הלחם ואל הנזיד ואל היין ואל שמן ואל כל מאכל, [היקדש]⁹ כל אלה כמו שהוא קדוש הבשר? ויענו הכהנים ויאמרו: לא. (יג) ויאמר חגי אם יגע טמא נפש בכל אלה היטמא? ויענו הכהנים ויאמרו: ¹⁰ יטמא. פי': אומר, כי על כן¹¹ הוצרך הנביא לזכור הנה דבר קדוש¹² ודבר טמא, לפי שהוא כמו משל. כי כל זמן שהיה הקב"ה ביניכם, ¹³ שהוא קדוש, ¹⁴ אתם לא נתקדשתם; ובעת שהרעותם¹⁵ לפניו, הוא הלך.

⁵ כמו א מה⁶ את הבית הזה א הבית הזה ל הבית⁷ ודמיו' א והדמיון⁸ בשר ל את בשר⁹ [היקדש] זפ הקדש (תזקן ע"פ אל)¹⁰ ויאמרו פ ויאמר¹¹ על כן אל חסר¹² קדוש אל קודש¹³ ביניכם ל בעיניכם¹⁴ שהוא קדוש א שהיה קודש¹⁵ שהרעותם ל שרעותם

ס פרחג יפיר ושבעל פה

חגי פרק א

(א-ב) בשנת שתים לדריוש המלך בחדש הששי ביום אחד לחדש היה דבר יי' ביד חגי הנביא אל זרובבל בן שאלתיאל פחת יהודה ואל יהושע בן יהוצדק הכהן הגדול¹ לאמר: לא עת בא עת בית יי' להבנות כלומי לא הגיע עדיין זמן² להבנות בית יי'. (ד) העת לכם אתם לשבת בבתיכם? כלומי: זה העת בא לכם שאתם יושבים בבתיכם, והבית הזה יהיה חרב, יען כי כן אמרתם. (ו) זרעתם הרבה והבא מעט, אכול ואין לשבעה,³ שתו ואין לשכרה לבוש ואין לחום לו; והמשתכר משתכר אל צרור נקוב, כלומי: דבר שאינו שוה כלום. (ז) כה אמר יי': (ח) עלו ההר והבאתם עץ ובנו הבית, וארצה בו ואכבדה אמר יי'. (ט) ואם לא תעשו כן, דעו כי תפנו אל הרבה - והנה מעט. ואפי' אותו מעט, כשתביאו אותו בבית - ונפחתי⁴ בו. (יג) במלאכות יי' - פי':

בשליחות שלהקב"ה. (יד) ויבאו ויעשו מלאכה

בבית יי' צבאות אלהיהם (טו) ביום עשרים

וארבעה לחדש, בחדש הששי.

¹ הגדול לחסר² לא הגיע עדיין זמן ל עדיין לא הגיע זמן³ לשבעה ל לשבוע⁴ ונפחתי (כנה"מ) אל נפחתי פ נפתחו

(טז) מהיותכם¹⁶ בא אל ערמת עשרים – פי':

קודם שתבנו הבית, היתה מאירה מצוייה
בבתיכם, שהייתם באים על¹⁷ ערימת שלחטים,¹⁸

ואתם חושבים שהיא עשרים מדות, והיתה

עשרה. (יט) העוד הזרע במגורה – פי': עדיין

הזרע באוצר ולא נזרע, והגפן והתאנה והרמון

ועץ הזית לא נשא פרייו.¹⁹ מן היום הזה אברך –

כלומי': מעת שתתחילו²⁰ לבנות הבית, אברך כל

מעשה ידיכם.

נשלם פירוש חגי.

¹⁶ מהיותכם אל מהיותם (כנה"מ)

¹⁷ על א אל (כנה"מ)

¹⁸ שלחטים א חטים

¹⁹ נשא פרייו א נשאו פריין ל נשא פריין

²⁰ שתתחילו א שיתחילו (?)

ישבו חוץ לחומה, ויתראה²⁶ ירושלים כמו פרזות,
 שאין להם²⁷ חומה סביב. (ט) והקב"ה יהיה לה
 חומת אש סביב. (י) הוי הוי ונסו מארץ צפון –
 פי': לישראל יאמר, שהם בגלות בצפון; כלומר:
 הוי ישראל, נסו מארץ צפון. (יב) כי כה אמר יי'
 צבאות אחר כבוד שלחני - פי': אמר הנביא, כי
 אחר כבודו נגלה אליו הקב"ה, בשביל שילך אל
 הגוים השללים את ישראל. והוא כמו שאמר
 למשה: "וראית את אחוריי" (שמי' לג, כג). (טו)
 ונלוו גוים רבים - כמו "וילוו עליך וישרתוך"
 (במ' יח, ב). (טז) ונחל יי' את יהודה חלקו פי':
 יש מפרשים: הנחיל יי' יהודה²⁸ בחלקו; ויש
 מפרשים: כי נחל יי' את יהודה חלקו שליהודה
 באדמת הקדש.²⁹ (יז) הס כל [בשר מפני יי' -
 פי': ישתוק³⁰ כל בשר]³¹ מפני יי'. כי נעור – יש
 מפרשי' כי הנו"ן אינה עיקר, ופתרון המלה כך
 היא: כי יעור, כמו "עורי עורי לבשי עזך" (יש'
 נב, א). ויש מפרשי' כי הנו"ן אינה טפילה;³²
 ופתרוני³³: כי ישאג ממעון קדשו; ודמיו': "נערו
 כגורי אריות" (יר' נא, לח).

ספ ה'ז כריה, פיר ושבעל פה.

זכריה פרק א

(א) בחדש השמיני בשנת שתים לדריוש היה
 דבר יי' אל זכריה... הנביא לאמר. (ו) אך דברי
 וחוקי הרעים, אשר צויתי²¹ את עבדי הנביאים
 להביא על ישראל, הלא השיגו²² אבותיכם. (ח)
 ואחריו סוסים אדומים - פי': [מלאכים]²³,
 שהם²⁴ רוכבים על סוסים אדומים ועל סוסים
 שרוקים, כמו "ולשרקה בני אתנה" (בר' מט, יא).
 (יא-יב) ויען מלאך יי' ויאמר יי' צבאות עד מתי
 אתה לא תרחם את ירושלים - כלומר, שכל זמן
 שהארץ ישבת ושקטת, לא נוכל לבנות ירושלים.
 (טו) אשר אני קצפתי מעט עליכם, והמה²⁵ עזרו
 לרעה. (יז) עוד תפוצנה ערי מטוב - פי': מרוב
 טוב.

זכריה פרק ב

(ח) פרזות תשב ירושלים - פי': מרוב אדם
 ובהמה שיהיו בירושלים ולא יוכלו לישוב בתוכה,

²⁶ ויתראה א ותיראה

²⁷ להם אל לה

²⁸ יהודה אל את יהודה

²⁹ חלקו שליהודה באדמת הקדש אל חלקו באדמת

הקודש, כלומי' שיהיה חלקו שליהודה בהר הקודש

³⁰ ישתוק ל ישתאו

³¹ בשר מפני יי' פי' ישתוק כל בשר זפ חסר (השמטת

הדומות עם השמטת המילה "בשר" לגמרי)

³² טפילה אל תפילה

³³ ופתרוני א ופתרונו כמו

²¹ צויתי א ציוויתני

²² השיגו אל השיגום

²³ [מלאכים] זפ מלכים (תוקן על פי אל; השווה תנחום,

להלן ג, ד – "מלאכים איצ'א רוכבים על סוסים")

²⁴ שהם אל שהיו

²⁵ והמה אל והם

זכריה פרק ג

מופתים בימיהם. **כי הנני מביא את עבדי צמח** - והוא זרובבל. (ט) **כי הנה האבן אשר נתתי לפני יהושע על אבן אחת שבעה עינים** - פי': ז'⁴³ **האבן** היא שיבנו בה בית המקדש. ופעמים יאמר **לפני יהושע**, ופעמים יאמר לזרובבל, כאשר נאמר "וראו את אבן הבדיל ביד זרובבל" (זכ' ד, ו), לפי ששניהם בנו בית המקדש. וזה שיאמר⁴⁴ **על אבן אחת שבעה עינים** - הם עינים שלהקב"ה, כאשר נאמר אחר כך "שבעה אלה עיני יי' המה משטטים⁴⁵ בכל הארץ" (שם). **הנני מפתח פתוחה** - שלזה האבן, **נאם יי' צבאות. ומשתי** - פי': ואסיר; ודמיו': "לא ימיש" (שמי' יג, כב).

זכריה פרק ד

(ב) **ויאמר אלי מה אתה רואה ואמר ראית ונהנה מנרת כולה שלזהב**.⁴⁶ **וגולה על ראשה** - פי': צנור; ודמיו': "גלת עליות ואת גלת תחתיות"⁴⁷ (יהו' טו, יט). **שבעה נירתיה על ז'**⁴⁸ **המנורה, ושבעה נירות**⁴⁹ אחרות שמוצקות **לנירות אשר על ראשה**. (ו) **ויען ויאמר אלי**

(א) **והשטן עומד על ימינו**³⁴ - יש מפרש³⁵ כי זה שטן³⁶ היה מלאך; ויש מפרש', כי זה שטן היה אדם, כמו אותו שלשלמה, שני "ויקם יי' שטן לשלמה" (מ"א יא, יד). ויש מפרש', כי לא היה אלא עון שעשה בנו; כי מצאנו שנשא בנו, שהיה כהן גדול, בתו שלסנבלט החרני. ויתראה כי עון היה, כאשר נאמר (ג) **ויהושע היה לבוש בגדים צואים**, וכשסרו הבגדים הצאים מעליו, נאמר לו (ד) **ראה העברתי מעליך**³⁸ **עונך**. (ב) **ויגער יי' הבוחר בירושלם, בך. הלא זה אוד מוצל מאש** - כלומר, שבא מן הגלות. (ה) **ואמר ישימו צניף** - פי': ואמרת בלבי, אולי היה מי שישים צניף **טהור על ראשו** - וישימו. (ו) **ויעד** - פי': והעיד³⁹ **מלאך יי' ביהושע לאמר**. (ז) **כה אמר יי' צבאות אם בדרכי⁴⁰ תלך ואם את משמרת תשמר ואם תדין את ביתי ואם תשמר את חציריי, ונתתי לך מהלכים בין המלאכים האלה** - כמו "ויתהלך חנוך"⁴¹ (ברי' ה, כד). (ח) **שמע נא יהושע הכהן הגדול אתה וריעיד הישבים לפניך כי אנשי מופת המה** - פי': כי אנשים הם⁴² שראוי שאעשה

³⁴ ימינו אל ימינו לשטנו (המשך הפסוק)

³⁵ מפרש' אל אומי

³⁶ שטן לפ השטן

³⁷ היה לחסר

³⁸ מעליך ל עליך

³⁹ והעיד א העיד

⁴⁰ בדרכי אל בחקי

⁴¹ ויתהלך חנוך א ויתהלך חנוך את האלהים (המשך הפסוק)

⁴² אנשים הם א הם אנשים

⁴³ זו אל זה

⁴⁴ שיאמר א שאמי ל שיאמי

⁴⁵ המה משטטים ל המשטטים

⁴⁶ מנרת כולה שלזהב א מנורה כלה זהב

⁴⁷ גלת עליות ואת גלת תחתיות א גלת עליות ואת גלת תחתיות

(?) ואת גלת תחתיות לערבוב של פסוקי יהושע ושופטים

⁴⁸ זו ל זה

⁴⁹ נירות א הנירות ל הנרות

ואמר "אדין ששבצר די⁶³ שריו למבנא" (השווה עז' פרק ה'), ואמר **ידי זרובבל יסדו**.⁶⁴ (י) **כי מי בז ליום קטנות? פי'**: על ישראל נאמר, כי ביזו ואמרו: ישועה קטנה היא זו. עכשיו ישמחו, **וראו את האבן**⁶⁵ **הבדיל בידי זרובבל**. (יד) **ויאמר אלה שני בני היצהר - פי'**: הם זרובבל [ויהושע]⁶⁶ הכהן, **העומדים לפני אדון כל הארץ**.

זכריה פרק ה

(א-ב) **ואשוב ואשא עיני ואראה והנה מגלה עפה - יש מפרשי עפה - פרוסה, ויש מפרשי עפה - כפולה**. והפי'⁶⁷ הנכון: **עפה**⁶⁸ - כמו "ויעף אלי" (יש' ו,ו). וכך⁶⁹ נראה לו בחלוס, כאילו ראה **מגלה עפה, וארכה עשרים אמה ורחבה עשר באמה**. (ג) **ויאמר אלי זאת האלה היצאת - פי'**: **זאת המגילה אשר תראה, היא האלה היוצאת**;⁷⁰ כלומר: שבועה. וכן כת' לשם: **כל הגונב מזה כמוה נקה - כמו "ונקתה לארץ תשב" (יש' ג,כו)**. (ד) **הוצאתיה - זאת**⁷¹ **האלה, נאם יי' צבאות**

לאמר זה דבר יי' - פי': זו המנורה שראית, היא⁵⁰ **דבר יי' אל זרובבל לאמר לא בחיל ולא בכח כי אם ברוחי - פי'**: בנביאים שיתנבאו⁵¹ **ברוחי, והם חגי וזכריה**;⁵² כי הם ניבאו בזה הבית שיבנה, כאשר נאמר "והתנבי חגי נביא וזכריה בר⁵³ עדוא⁵⁴ נביאה⁵⁵ על יהודאי די ביהוד⁵⁶ ובירושי בשום אלה⁵⁷ ישראל עליהון" (השווה עז' ה,א). (ז) **מי**⁵⁸ **אתה הר הגדול לפני זרובבל תהיה למישור, והוציא את האבן הראשה - פי'**: ויוציא את האבן, ויבנה אותה בראש. **תשואות חן חן - תהיה תשואות, מ"קול שאון" (יש' יג,ד)**. (ט) **ידי זרובבל יסדו הבית הזה**⁵⁹ **וידין ישלימו אותו**;⁶⁰ ודמיו': "והיה כי יבצע יי' את כל מעשהו"⁶¹ (יש' י,ב). **וזרובבל הוא ששבצר**. וכמו שקראו הכשדים לדניאל בלטשצר (דני' א,ז), כך קראו ל**זרובבל** - ששבצר. וראייה לדבר, כי בספר חגי נאמר "אל זרובבל בן שאלתיאל פחת יהודה" (חגי ב,ב), ובספר עזרא נאמר על ששבצר "די פחה⁶² שמיה" (ה,יד);

⁶³ די אל דך (כלשון עזרא ה, טז)
⁶⁴ יסדו א יסדו הבית
⁶⁵ האבן א אבן
⁶⁶ [ויהושע] ז וישוע ז² ויהושע (תוקן ע"פ אל)
⁶⁷ והפ' אל ופ'
⁶⁸ עפה ל חסר
⁶⁹ וכך אל וכן
⁷⁰ פי' זאת המגילה אשר תראה היא האלה היוצאת אל חסר (השמטת הדומות)
⁷¹ זאת אל זו

⁵⁰ היא א היה
⁵¹ שיתנבאו אל אשר יתנבאו
⁵² וזכריה אל זכריה
⁵³ בר א בן
⁵⁴ עדוא פ חסר
⁵⁵ נביאה אל נבואה
⁵⁶ יהודאי די ביהוד א יהודאה דיביהוד ל יהודאה דיביהוד
⁵⁷ אלהה אל אלה (כמו נה"מ שם)
⁵⁸ מי ל מה
⁵⁹ הזה א חסר
⁶⁰ אותו ל אורו (?)
⁶¹ מעשהו אל מעשה
⁶² פחה ל פחת (?)

מלכיות, שהם יושבים⁷⁹ בארבע רוחות השמים ויוצאות מהתייצב על אדון כל הארץ, ועושים רע בעולם. (ו) אשר בה⁸⁰ הסוסים השחורים - פי': המרכבה אשר בה הסוסים השחורים והמרכבה אשר בה הסוסים הלבנים. יוצאים אל ארץ⁸¹ צפון - לבבל; והם מלך פרס ומלך מדי. (ח) ויזעק⁸² אותי וידבר אלי לאמר: ראה מלך פרס ומלך מדי⁸³ היוצאים אל ארץ צפון, והיא בבל, הניחו את⁸⁴ רוחי - כלומר: עשו רצוני בארץ צפון, והיא⁸⁵ בבל. (י) לקוח מאת הגולה - פי': מאת אילו אנשי הגולה: מחדלי ומטוביה ומידעיה; ותבא ביום ההוא בית יאשיה בן צפניה. (יא) וזה תקח מהן: כסף וזהב; ועשית עטרות ושמת בראש יהושע. (יב) ואמרת אליו לאמר כה אמר יי' צבאות... הנה איש צמח שמו - והוא זרובבל. וממקומו יצמח, ובנה את היכל יי'. (יג) והיה כהן על כסאו - נאמר על יהושע. ועצת שלום תהיה בין שניהם - פי': בין זרובבל ובין יהושע. (טו) ורחקים יבאו - פי': ועמים רחוקים יבאו ובנו בהיכל יי'... אם שמוע תשמעו בקול יי' אלהיכם.

ובאה אל בית הגנב ואל בית הנשבע לשמי⁷² לשקר ולנה⁷³ זאת האלה בתוך ביתו, ותכלה אותו ואת עציו ואת אבניו. (ו) ויאמר זאת האיפה היוצאת - פי': המדה. ויאמר זאת עינים⁷⁴ בכל הארץ - כלומר: עיני כל הארץ על זאת המדה. (ז) והנה ככר עפרת נשאת - זאת האיפה (לעיל, ו), וזאת אשה אחת יושבת בתוך האיפה. (ז-ח) ויאמר זאת הרשעה - פי': היא מלכות בבל. כלומר: זאת האשה - אשר ראית שהיא יושבת בתוך האיפה, היא מלכות בבל. (ט) ואשא עיני וארא והנה שתים נשים יוצאת - והם מלך פרס ומלך מדי. ותשאנה את⁷⁵ המדה בין השמים ובין הארץ.⁷⁶ (יא) ויאמר אלי לבנות לה בית בארץ שנער - פי': לשלם לה המדה, כאשר עשו הם⁷⁷ לישראל. וכן מצינו שמלך פרס ומלך מדי הם הלכו לבבל ותפשוה.

זכריה פרק ו

(ג) סוסים ברודים - דמיו: "עקודים נקודים וברודים" (ברי' לא, ל). (ה) ויען המלאך ויאמר אלי אלה ארבע⁷⁸ רוחות השמים - כלומר: ארבע

⁷⁹ שהם יושבים ל שהשם ישבום (?)

⁸⁰ בה ל בא

⁸¹ ארץ פחסר

⁸² ויזעק א ויזעק (?)

⁸³ מלך פרס ומלך מדי א מלך מדי ומלך פרס

⁸⁴ את אל חסר

⁸⁵ והיא אל והוא (?)

⁷² לשמי אל בשמי

⁷³ ולנה א ולנה בתוך ביתו

⁷⁴ עינים אל עינים

⁷⁵ את אל זאת

⁷⁶ בין השמים ובין הארץ אל בין הארץ ובין השמים

(כנה"מ)

⁷⁷ הם א חסר

⁷⁸ ארבע אל ארבעה

זכריה פרק ז

(ב) **וישלח ביתאל שראצר ורגם מלך ואנשיו** - פי': זה שראצר ורגם מלך היו אנשים מישראל, ונשארו לבבל ולא עלו עם הגולה. ושלחו אנשיו⁸⁶ לביתאל, והוא בית המקדש, לחלות את פני יי'.
 (ג) ושלחו אל הכהנים אשר לבית יי' צבאות ואל הנביאים לאמר: האבכה בחדש החמישי - הוא חדש אב, על חרבן הבית הראשון; או שמא עכשיו אין אנו צריכין, כי כבר נבנה הבית?⁸⁷ הנזר - פי': נפריש עצמינו מן האכילה, כמו שעשינו זה כמה שנים. הנזר - דמיונו: "וינזרו... בני ישראל" (וי' כב,ב); תרגי: "ויפרשו" (אונקלוס שם) (יד) **ואסערם** - פי':⁸⁸ פיזרתי אותם על כל הגוים.

שכר האדם לא נהיה - כאשר נאמר⁹¹ בחגי "והמשתכר משתכר אל צרור נקוב" (חגי א,ו).
 (יב) **כי זרע השלום** - כלוי: כי יהיה שלום ותזרעו, והגפן תתן פרייה, והארץ תתן את יבולה. (יד) **כה אמר יי' צבאות** - (טז) אם תעשו את הדבר הזה: **דברו אמת איש את רעהו, אמת משפט**⁹² **שלום שפטו בשעריכם** - (יט) **צום הרביעי וצום החמישי וצום השביעי וצום העשירי יהיה לבית יהודה לששון ולשמחה**. פי': אמר בתחילה: אני לא צויתי אתכם להתענות,⁹³ כי אם לעשות חוקי. ואתם אכלו ושימו אלה התעניות לששון ולשמחה, והאמת והשלום אהבו.

זכריה פרק ט

זכריה פרק ח

(ב) **כה אמר יי' צבאות: עכשיו קנאתי לציון קנאה גדולה**. (ו) **כה אמר יי' צבאות כי יפלא בעיני שארית העם הזה** מזה שאעשה, שימלאו רחובת העיר ילדים וילדות⁸⁹ (ראה לעיל,ה), **גם בעיני יפלא נאם יי' צבאות? בתמיה**.⁹⁰ (ז) **כי לפני הימים ההם** - פי': קודם שיבנה הבית.

(א) **משא דבר יי' - פי': זו הנבואה**⁹⁴ **דבר יי' בארץ חדרך ובדמשק** שהיא מנוחתו של חדרך, שכולם ישובו להקב"ה. **כי ליי' עין אדם עם כל שבטי ישראל** - כאשר נאמר "בימים ההמה"⁹⁵ אשר יחזיקו עשרה אנשים מכל לשונות הגוים והחזיקו בכנף איש יהודי לאמר נלכה עמכם כי שמענו אלהים עמכם" (זכ' ח,כג). (ב) **וגם חמת תגבל בה** - פי': **וגם חמת** תעשה גבול עם חדרך

⁹¹ נאמר אל יאמר

⁹² משפט אל ומשפט (כמו נה"מ)

⁹³ להתענות ל להתבנות (?)

⁹⁴ זו הנבואה א נבואה זו

⁹⁵ ההמה ל המה

⁸⁶ אנשיו לחסר

⁸⁷ נבנה הבית א הבית נבנה ל הבית

⁸⁸ פ' אל חסר

⁸⁹ וילדות א וילדות

⁹⁰ בתמיה א בתמיה (?)

אפסי ארץ. ונחמיה, אע"פ שבנה ירושלים, תחת ארתחששתא היה. (ט) ויאמר¹⁰⁵ ר' אברהם ב"ר מאיר, כי זה שנאמר הנה מלכך יבא לך - לא הוא¹⁰⁶ היה, אלא יהודה בן חשמוניי, כי הוא עשה נקמה גדולה ביון. ולא מצינו בבית שיני שהיתה סררה לישראל, אלא בימי חשמונים; ועל כן נאמר "ועוררתי בנייך ציון על בניך יון" (להלן, יג). והוצרכתי לבאר הנה,¹⁰⁷ היאך בנו ישראל הבית, ובאו תחת יון. בתחלה בא נבוכדנצר והגלה ירושלי; ואמר הקב"ה "לפי מלאת לבבל שבעים שנה אפקד אתכם" (יר' כט, י). ובעת שנשלמו שבעים שנה בא כורש מלך פרס על בבל ותפשה, והמליך לשם דריוש;¹⁰⁹ שני "ודריוש מדאה קביל מלכותא" (דני' ו, א) - שקיבל המלכות מכורש. ומלכו שניהם בזמן אחד: כורש ודריוש. וזהו דריוש הראשון, לא זהו¹¹⁰ דריוש שנתנבאו בזמנו חגי וזכריה.¹¹¹ כי זה היה מדי, ואותו¹¹² היה פרסי. והעיר הקב"ה רוחו שלכורש (ע"פ עז' א, א), וצוה שיבנה הבית. ועלה יהושע בן יהוצדק וזרובבל בן שאלתיאל ואחיו, "ויבנו את מזבח אלהי ישראל" (שם ג, ב). ולא יכלו לבנות יותר בימי כורש, כי עם הארץ היו מרפים ידי עם

(ראה לעיל, א) לחזור להקב"ה. וצר וצידן, אע"פ שחכמה מאד, (ג) שבנה לה מצור,⁹⁶ וצבר כסף כעפר ומרגליות כטיט חצות - מה יועיל לה? (ד) הנה יי' יורישנה - כלומר: יגרשנה, והכה בים החיל שלה. (ה) ותרא אשקלון [ותירא; ועזה]⁹⁷ כמו כן תראה אילו המכות ותחיל מאד. ועקרון כי הוביש מבטה - כלומר: אנה היתה⁹⁸ מבטת. (ז) והסירתי דמיו מפיו - פי': ממלך פלשי, ושיקוציו מבין שניו. ואחר כך נשאר גם הוא לאלהינו, ויהיה⁹⁹ כמו אלוף ביהודה. ועקרון כיבוסי - שהוא מארץ ישראל. (ח) וחניתי לביתי מצבא¹⁰⁰ - פירוש: ואחנה¹⁰¹ לביתי, שלא יבא עליה עוד¹⁰² צבא שלאויב. (ט) גילי מאד בת ציון הריעי בת ירושלים הנה מלכך יבוא לך - פי': יש מפרש' כי זו הנבואה על משיח נאמרה.¹⁰³ ולא יתכן, כי הכתי' יאמר: "ועוררתי בנייך ציון על בנייך יוון" (להלן, יג), ומלכות יון אין לו כח עכשיו. ובא ר' משה ואמר, כי זו הנבואה לא נאמרי אלא על נחמיה בת חכליה, כי הוא בא ובנה את ירושלים, כאשר מפורש בספר עזרא. וגם זה לא יתכן. כי נאמר, כשיבא זה המלך, (י) ידבר שלום לגוים¹⁰⁴ ומשלו מים עד ים ומנהר עד

¹⁰⁵ ויאמר אלפ(?) ואמר
¹⁰⁶ הוא אל חסר
¹⁰⁷ לבאר הנה א הנה לבאר
¹⁰⁸ אפקד אתכם אל חסר
¹⁰⁹ דריוש אל דריוש המדי כמו
¹¹⁰ זהו אל הוא זה
¹¹¹ וזכריה א זכריה
¹¹² ואותו אל וזה

⁹⁶ מצור אל חסר
⁹⁷ [ותירא ועזה] זפ ותיראי עזה (תוקן ע"פ אל)
⁹⁸ אנה היתה אל היא
⁹⁹ ויהיה אל ויהי
¹⁰⁰ מצבא אל מצבה (כמו נה"מ)
¹⁰¹ פירוש ואחנה אל ואנחה
¹⁰² עוד אל חסר
¹⁰³ נאמרה אל נאמר
¹⁰⁴ לגוים ל לגוים (! לגוים: לגורים?)

כורש – ארתחש', ואחר ארתחש' - דריוש השני,
 ואחר דריוש¹²⁴ – ארתחש' השיני. ובימי זה
 ארתחשש' בא מלך יון ותפש הכל, כאשר נאמר
 "ואני בשנת אחת לדריוש המדי עמדי למעוז
 ולמחזיק¹²⁵ לו. ועתה אמת אגיד לך הנה עוד
 שלשה מלכים עומדים לפרס, והרביעי" - הוא
 ארתחשש' - "יעשיר¹²⁶ עושר גדול... וכחזקתו¹²⁷
 בעשרו יעיר הכל את מלכות יון" (השווה דני
 יא, א-ב). (י) **והכרתי רכב מאפרים וסוס
 מירושלם** - פי': שלא היה צריך ליהודה בן
 חשמוני לא סוס ולא רכב, שהיה לו שלום מכל
 סביביו לאחר שעשה נקמה ביון. **ומשלו מים עד
 ים פי': מים סוף עד ים פלש'**, כי לא היתה¹²⁸
 ארץ ישראל יותר, כאשר נאמר "ושתי את גבולך
 מים סוף ועד ים פלשתים" (שמי' כג, לא). (יא) **גם
 את¹²⁹ בדם בריתך שלחתי אסיריך¹³⁰** - פי':
 בשביל המצות שתשמרו **שלחתי אסיריך**; ¹³¹כי
 בשביל המצות כרתי עמכם¹³² ברית, כאשר נאמר
 "הנה דם הברית אשר כרת יי'¹³³ (שמי' כד, ח).
 (יב) **שובו לבצרון אסירי התקוה** - פי': לישראל

יהודה מלבנות, כאשר נאמר "ויהי עם הארץ
 מרפים ידי עם¹¹³ יהודה ומבהלים אותם
 לבנות"¹¹⁴ ושכרו "עליהם יועצים להפר עצתם כל
 ימי כורש מלך פרס ועד מלכות דריוש מלך פרס"
 (שם ד, ד-ה).¹¹⁵ ומת כורש, ומלך אחריו
 ארתחשסתא והוא אחשורוש. וקמו האויבים
 והלשינו את ישראל למלך, ונתבטל הבניין, כאשר
 נאמר "אדין מן די¹¹⁶ פרשגן נשתונא¹¹⁷ די
 ארתחשסתא מלכא קרי קדם רחום ושמשו
 ספרא וכנותהון¹¹⁸ אזלו בבהילו לירוש' על
 יהודיא ובטילו המו באדרע וחיל. באדין בטילת
 עבדת בית אלהא די בירוש' והות בטלה עד שנת
 תרתין למלכות דריוש מלך פרס" (עז' ד, כג-כד).
 ומת ארתחשסתא, ומלך אחריו דריוש הפרסי;
 ובימי זה דריוש נתנבאו חגי וזכריה.¹¹⁹ וקם
 זרובבל אחר כך¹²⁰ ובנה הבית כולו, ולא בנה
 יותר מן הבית, ומת. ואחר כך מת זה דריוש,
 ומלך אחריו ארתחשסת¹²¹ השיני; ובימיו עלו
 עזרא ונחמיה,¹²² ובנו את העיר כולה. ומן הכתוב
 ראייה כי די' מלכים היו: דריוש המדי וכורש -
 אחד הן,¹²³ כי בזמן אחד מלכו שניהם. ואחר

¹²⁴דריוש א דריוש השיני
¹²⁵למעוז ולמחזיק אל למחזיק ולמעוז (כנה"מ)
¹²⁶יעשיר אל עשיר
¹²⁷וכחזקתו אז(?) ובחזקתו (ברוב כתי"י קשה להכריע
 אם יש ב' או כ' בתחילת המילה. קבענו את נוסח הפנים
 ע"פ נה"מ לדני שם)
¹²⁸היתה אל היה
¹²⁹את א חסר
¹³⁰אסיריך א אסיריך מבור
¹³¹בשביל המצות שתשמרו שלחתי אסיריך כי א חסר
 (השמטת הדומות)
¹³²עמכם ל אתכם
¹³³יי' אל יי' עמכם

¹¹³עם ל חסר (?)
¹¹⁴לבנות א חסר
¹¹⁵ועד מלכות דריוש מלך פרס אל חסר
¹¹⁶די ל חסר
¹¹⁷נשתונא אל כשתונא (?)
¹¹⁸וכנותהון א וכנותיהון
¹¹⁹וזכריה א זכריה ל זכריה ומלאכי
¹²⁰אחר כך פ אחכך (?) אחוד? אחיך?)
¹²¹ארתחשסת א ארתחשסתא
¹²²ונחמיה ל חסר
¹²³אחד הן אל הם אחד

(א) **שאלו מיי' מטר** - [פי': ובאותו הזמן ישאלו מיי' מטר]¹⁴⁴ **בעת מלקוש**. והקב"ה יתן כל כך **מטר** עד שישבע הארץ, ואחר כך תעשה **חזיזים**, והם¹⁴⁵ 'פולי' בלעז. **ומטר גשם**¹⁴⁶ יתן עד שיהיה **לאיש עשב בשדה**. (ב) **כי התרפים דברו און** - פי': ובאותו הזמן ידעו, **כי התרפים דברו און**.¹⁴⁷

(ג) **כסוס הודו במלחמה** - פי': **כסוס** שהוד שלו **במלחמה**. (ד) **ממנו פנה** - פי': **פנה** הוא סלע. וזהו כמו משל; כלוי¹⁴⁸ מיהודה **יצא המלך** והשרים ודרכי **קשת מלחמה**. (ה) **בסיס** - דמיו':¹⁴⁹ "בוססו את נחלתי" (השווה יר' יב, ג).

(ח) **ורבו כמו רבו** - פי': **כמו שרבו** מקודם שגלו. (י) **ולא ימצא להם** - פי': **ולא יספיק להם**; ודמיו': "הצאן ובקר¹⁵⁰ ישחט להם¹⁵¹ ומצא להם" (במ' יא, כב). (יא) **ועבר בים צרה** - פי': **ועבר** במלך **אשור צרה**; כי כן דרך המקרא שידמה המלכים לימים ולנהרות. **והובישו כל מצילות**¹⁵² **יאר** פי': זה מלך **מצרים**; שכך כתוב: "כי¹⁵³ לי יארי ואני עשיתי" (השווה יח' כט, ג).

יאמר, שישבו לערים בצורות. שהם היו אסורים, והיו מקווים, מתי יבא הגואל שלהם. **גם היום מגיד משנה אשיב לך** - פי': **אשיב פי** שנים ממה¹³⁴ שהגדתי לך. (טו) **ואכלו וכבשו** - פי': **ואכלו** ישראל - האויבים;¹³⁵ וכבשו אותם כמו שיכבוש¹³⁶ אדם **קלע**. **ושתו** - הגוים, והמו **כמו** אדם שהוא שכור מין; **ומלאו** משכרון¹³⁷ כמו **מזרק** כשהוא מלא, וכמו **זוית שלמזבח**, שהוא מלא מן ההזאות. (טז) **כי אבני נזר** - פי': כך ישראל, כמו האבנים שישים אדם **בנזר**, והוא הכתר, בשביל שייקראו לכל, כמו הנס שייקרא על¹³⁸ האדמה. ויש מפרש' כי **אבני נזר** - על מתתיה כהן גדול נאמר, בשביל האפוד; כי לשם היו קבועים¹³⁹ האבנים. והיו נראים האבנים כמו הנס שיראה על האדמה. (יז) **כי מה טובו ומה יופיו** - פי': **כי מה טוב ומה יופי** יהיה באותו הזמן,¹⁴⁰ כי יהיה **דגן**¹⁴¹ שיאכלו¹⁴² **הבחורים**, **ותירוש** ששותות¹⁴³ **הבתולות** עד שמדברות. **ינובב** - דמיו': "ניב שפתים" (יש' נז, יט).

זכריה פרק י

¹⁴⁴ פי' ובאותו הזמן ישאלו מיי' מטר **זפ חסר** (השמטת הדומות, תוקן ע"פ אל)
¹⁴⁵ והם **אל חסר**
¹⁴⁶ גשם **פ חסר**
¹⁴⁷ פי' ובאותו הזמן ידעו כי התרפים דברו און **אל חסר** (השמטת הדומות)
¹⁴⁸ כי **אל חסר**
¹⁴⁹ דמיו' **אל כמי**
¹⁵⁰ ובקר **ל והבקר**
¹⁵¹ להם **ל להם להם**
¹⁵² מצילות **אל מצולות** (כמו **נה"מ**)
¹⁵³ כי **אל בו פ חסר**

¹³⁴ ממה **ל מה**
¹³⁵ האויבים **א את** האויבים
¹³⁶ כמו שיכבוש **אל** כאשר יכבוש
¹³⁷ משכרון **אל** משכרון
¹³⁸ על **אל על פני**
¹³⁹ קבועים **ל קבועים**
¹⁴⁰ הזמן **ל זמן**
¹⁴¹ דגן **אל הדגן**
¹⁴² שיאכלו **פ שיאכל**
¹⁴³ ותירוש ששותות **ל ותירוש** שאותות (?)

זכריה פרק יא

לישראל, וכך עתיד לבוא עליהם. (ו) **כי לא אחמל עוד על יושבי הארץ** - פי': על כל האומות¹⁶⁵ יאמר.¹⁶⁶ (ז) **וארעה את צאן ההריגה** - פי': זה הוא לשעבר. כי לא היה בימי זכריה, אלא כך הראה לו, כי רעה את צאן ההריגה. **לכן עניי הצאן** - פי': **לכן שמעו עניי הצאן** כי לקחתי **לי שני¹⁶⁷ מקלות**. **לאחד קראתי נועם**, והוא מלך ישראל; **נעם** – מלשוי "נעים" (תהי' פא, ג). **ולאחד קראתי חבלים**, וזהו מלך יהודה; **חבלים** - כמו "כי בתחבולות תעשה לך מלחמה" (משי' כד, ו). (ח) **ואכחיד את שלשת הרעים בירח אחד** - פי': והכרתי את שלשת הרעים: מלכות ישראל ומלכות יהודה ומלכות כהונה¹⁶⁸ **בירח אחד** - בזמן אחד, **ותקצר נפשי בהם**. **וגם נפשם בחלה בי** - לזו המלה אין לה¹⁶⁹ דמיון במקרא, ופתרונו כפי עניינו: **וגם נפשם קצרה בי**. (ט) **ואמרתי: לא¹⁷⁰ ארעה אתכם; המתה תמות וגו'.** (י) **ואקח את מקלי את נעם** - פי': ולקחתי את מלכות ישראל והכרתי אותו בשביל שהיפרתי את בריתי אשר כרתי את כל העמים, כאשר נאמר למעלה "כי לא אחמול עוד על כל יושבי הארץ" (לעיל, ו). (יב) **וישקלו את שכרי שלשים כסף** - פי': הם

(א) **פתח לבנון דלתיך** - פי': נתנבא הנביא על חרבן הבית השני.¹⁵⁴ (ב) **[הליל ברוש]¹⁵⁵ כי נפל ארז** - פי': הלילו הברושים כי נפלו הארזים. וזהו כמו משל כי ילכו כולם בגלות: המלכים והשרים. (ג) **והכל כי שדדה אדרתם** - פי': אדר שלהם. (ד) **כה¹⁵⁶ אמר יי¹⁵⁷... רעה את צאן ההריגה** - אמר כי דרך הנביאים, שיראה להם הקב"ה¹⁵⁸ בנבואתם כמו משל. פעמי' מה שעתיד¹⁵⁹ לעשות לאומה, ופעמי' מה שעשה. וכאשר הראה ליחזקאל שאמר לו "שכב על צדך השמאלי... ש' וצ' יום" (יח' ד, ד-ה), והוא על דרך משל, שעתיד להחריב¹⁶⁰ הבית הראשון¹⁶¹ כמינין שבתות¹⁶² השנים שמרדו. וחזר ואמר לו שכב "על צדך הימני¹⁶³ [שיניתי]¹⁶⁴... מ' יום" (שם, ו). והוא על דרך משל, מ' שנה שחטא יהודה: ב' שנים שמלך אמון (מ"ב כא, יט), וי"א מיהויקים (מ"ב כג, לו), וי"א מצדקיה (מ"ב כד, יח), וי"ו ממנשה - כי בשאר השנים עשה תשובה, כאשר מפורש בדברי הימים (דה"ב לג, יב-טז). וזה שראה זכריה - לשעבר ולעתיד הוא; והראה לו כי כך אירע

¹⁵⁴ הבית השני אל בית שיני

¹⁵⁵ [הליל ברוש] זפ הלילי כחש (?) (תוקן ע"פ אל)

¹⁵⁶ כה אל כי כה

¹⁵⁷ יי' אל יי' אלהי (כלשון הפסוק בלי דילוג)

¹⁵⁸ הקב"ה א הבורא ל הקי'

¹⁵⁹ שעתיד אל שהוא עתיד

¹⁶⁰ להחריב פ להחריב

¹⁶¹ הראשון אל ראשון

¹⁶² כמינין שבתות א כמינין שכתוב ל כמין שבתות

¹⁶³ הימני ל הימני (כמו הכתיב ביח' שם לעומת הקרי)

¹⁶⁴ [שיניתי] זפ שנות (תוקן ע"פ אל)

¹⁶⁵ על כל האומות פ מחוק (צנזורה)

¹⁶⁶ יאמר אל אמר

¹⁶⁷ שני אל שתי

¹⁶⁸ ומלכות יהודה ומלכות כהונה ל מלכות יהודה מלכות כהונה

¹⁶⁹ לה ל לו

¹⁷⁰ לא א לו

יהודה יהיה במצור בירושלם. (ג) **אבן מעמסה**¹⁷⁹
 – דמיו: "ויעמס איש על חמריו" (בר' מד, ג),
שרט ישרטו – [דמיון - "לא ישרטו"]¹⁸⁰ שרטת"
 (וי' כא, ה). (ה) **ואמרו אלופי יהודה בלבם**¹⁸¹
אמצה לי יושבי ירושלם - פי': ויאמרו ביום
 ההוא **אלופי יהודה** שהם חוץ לירושלם,
בלבם:¹⁸² **אמצה לי יושבי ירושלם** - כלומר:
 יותר יהיו תקיפים **יושבי ירושלם** בשביל תפארת
 בית דוד, ותפארת יושב¹⁸³ **ירושלם על יהודה**. (ו)
ככור אש בעצים - פי': כמו **כור מלא מאש**,
 שאם תשים אותו **בעצים**, תאכלם;¹⁸⁴ וכמו **לפיז**
שלאש, שאם תשים אותו **בעמיר**, יאכלנו. כך
 יאכלו **אלופי יהודה על ימין ועל שמאל את כל**
העמים סביב. (ח) **והיה הנכשל בהם** -
 במלחמה, **ביום ההוא יחשב**¹⁸⁵ **כדוד**. (י) **ושפכתי**
על בית דוד ועל ישב¹⁸⁶ **ירושלם רוח חן ותחנונים**
והביטו אליו את אשר דקרו - פי': לאחר שיביטו
 למשיח בן אפרים¹⁸⁷ שדקרוהו¹⁸⁸ האויבים,
אשפוך על בית דוד ועל יושב ירושלם רוח חן
ותחנונים, וספדו על משיח בן אפרים כמספד על
היחיד. (יא) **ביום ההוא יגדל המספד על משיח**

שלשים אנשים¹⁷¹ שעלו לבנות את¹⁷² הבית:
 [י"א]¹⁷³ עם עזרא וי"ט עם זרובבל.¹⁷⁴ (יג)
השליכהו אל היוצר - פי': השלך זה השכר אל
היוצר, והוא הבית שהוא **אדר היקר אשר יקרתי**
מעליהם. (יד) **ואגדע את מקלי השני** - פי':
 והכרתי את מלכות יהודה, והפרתי את האחזה
 שהיה לי¹⁷⁵ בין יהודה ובין ישראל. (טו) **ויאמר**
י"י אלי עוד קח¹⁷⁶ **לך כלי רעה אוילי** - פי': על
 מלכי האומות¹⁷⁷ יאמר, שהם אוילים. ואשיב¹⁷⁸
 להם גמול בשביל שהגלו את ישראל. (טז)
הנצבה לא יכלכל - פי': אותה שאינה יכולה
 לילך ברגלה.

זכריה פרק יב

(א) **משא דבר יי' על ישראל** - פי': כל זו
 הפרשה עד "ביום ההוא יהיה מקור נפתח לבית
 דוד" (זכ' יג, א), על משיח בן אפרים נאמר. (ב)
סף רעל לכל העמים. פי': סף שם כלי הוא,
 שהוא מלא מיין התרעלה (ע"פ תה" ס, ה);
 ודמיו: "מן הדם אשר בסף" (שמי' יב, כב). וגם

¹⁷⁹ מעמסה אל מעמסא
¹⁸⁰ [דמיון לא ישרטו] זפ חסר (השמטת הדומות) ל דמיון
 ולא ישרטו (תוקן ע"פ א)
¹⁸¹ בלבם אל חסר
¹⁸² בלבם אל חסר
¹⁸³ יושב א יושבי
¹⁸⁴ תאכלם ל יאכלם
¹⁸⁵ יחשב א חסר ל יהיה
¹⁸⁶ ישב א יושבי
¹⁸⁷ אפרים אל יוסף
¹⁸⁸ שדקרוהו אל שנדקר מן

¹⁷¹ שלשים אנשים ל אנשים ל
¹⁷² את אל חסר
¹⁷³ [י"א] זפ חסר (תוקן ע"פ אל)
¹⁷⁴ [י"א] עם עזרא וי"ט עם זרובבל **אולי צ"ל** י"ט עם עזרא
 וי"א עם זרובבל (ראה עז' ב, ב, נח' ז, ז, ועז' ח, ב-יד)
¹⁷⁵ לי א לו (?)
¹⁷⁶ קח פ חסר
¹⁷⁷ מלכי האומות פ מחוק (ענזורה)
¹⁷⁸ ואשיב אל והשיב

שציערו אותי. (ח) פי¹⁹⁹ שָׁנִים... יְכַרְתּוּ ויגועו –
שני שלישים²⁰⁰ יכרתו ויגועו.

זכריה פרק יד

(א) וחלק שללך בקרבך - פי': בקרב ירושלים. וזה
יהיה "ביום בוא גוג²⁰¹ על אדמת ישראל" (יח)
לח, יח). (ג) כיום הלחמו ביום קרב - פי': כמו
שנלחם בימי יהושע. (ד) ועמדו רגליו ביום
ההוא²⁰² על הר הזתים אשר על פני ירושלים
מקדם ונבקע הר הזתים מחציו מזרחה וימה -
פי': חציו שלהר יבקע למזרח וימה, ויעשה²⁰³ מן
ההר גיא גדולה מאד, וימוש חצי ההר הנשאר
ויבקע לצפונה ונגבה. וזה דבר ברור בכמה
מקומות, כשהקב"ה יגלה בעולם, ירעש כל
העולם מפניו, ההרים והגבעות, הימים והנהרות.
(ה) ונסתם בגיא ההר, ²⁰⁴ כי יגיע גיא ההר²⁰⁵ אל
אצל - פי': כשיבקע הר הזתים [יגיע ראשו]²⁰⁶
אל²⁰⁷ אצל - כך שם מקום. (ו) והיה ביום
ההוא²⁰⁸ לא יהיה אור - פי': לא יהיה אור²⁰⁹

בן אפרים, כמספד אחאב אשר הרגו הדרמון¹⁸⁹
וכמספד יאשיהו אשר נהרג בבקעת מגדון¹⁹⁰
(ראה דה"ב לה, כב-כה).

זכריה פרק יג

(א) ביום ההוא יהיה מקור נפתח לבית דוד –
פי': זה יהיה בימי משיח בן דוד. לחטאת ולנדה -
פי': למי חטאת ולמי נדה¹⁹¹ שיטהרו בו. ¹⁹² (ה)
כי אדם הקנני מנעוריי - לעבוד אדמה, ולא
להנבא. (ו) ואמר: ¹⁹³ מה המכות האלה בין ידיך
פי': המכות שהכוחו אביו ואמו בשביל שניבא¹⁹⁴
לשקר. ואמר: אשר הכתי בית¹⁹⁵ מאהבי, ואינו
רוצה לומי: אשר¹⁹⁶ הוכיתי בשביל שניבאתי
לשקר. (ז) חרב עורי על רועי - פי': על המלך
יאמר, ¹⁹⁷ שיחשב בלבו שירעה את ישראל בטוב
ויהיה כמוני. עמיתי – [כמי]¹⁹⁸ "איש את עמיתו"
(וי' כה, יז). על הצערים - פי': על אותם הרעים

¹⁹⁹ פי אל חסר
²⁰⁰ שני שלישים אל פי' שני שלישים
²⁰¹ גוג ל גוג ומגוג
²⁰² ביום ההוא אל חסר
²⁰³ ויעשה אל ונעשה
²⁰⁴ ההר אל הרי (כלשון הפסוק)
²⁰⁵ ההר א הרים (כלשון הפסוק)
²⁰⁶ [יגיע ראשו] זפ יגיע במצרים אוי להם אם לא כי תהיה
עליהם המגפה ראשו (אולי התוספת "במצרים... המגפה"
שייכת להלן, פסוקים יז-יח, ונשתרבה לכאן בטעות.
הניסח כאן תוקן ע"י אל).
²⁰⁷ אל אל עד
²⁰⁸ ההוא ל חסר

¹⁸⁹ הדרמון אל הדרמון (השווה נה"מ)
¹⁹⁰ מגדון אל מגדו (כלשון דה"ב לה: כב לעומת לשון
הפסוק כאן)
¹⁹¹ למי חטאת ולמי נדה ל למי נדה ולמי חטאת
¹⁹² בו אל אותו
¹⁹³ ואמר ל יאמר (!)
¹⁹⁴ שניבא פ הניבא
¹⁹⁵ בית ל חסר
¹⁹⁶ אשר א כי
¹⁹⁷ על המלך יאמר אל יאמר על המלך
¹⁹⁸ [כמי] זפ חסר (הושלם על פי אל)

תלויים בצוארי הסוסים, שהם עושים קולות;
 ודמיו: "לקול צללו שפתיי" (חב' ג, טז). (כא)
 ולא יהיה עוד כנעני, יש מפרשי: כנעני - ממש;
 ויש מפרשי: סוחר, בבית יי' צבאות ביום ההוא.

נשלם פירוש זכריה.²¹⁷

בלבד, אלא יהיה עם האור אבני יקרות וקפאון.
 פי' קפאון - מיני אבנים הם,²¹⁰ שירדו עם השלג.
 (ז) והיה יום אחד - פי': "ביום בא גוג" (יח'
 לח, יח), אותו היום יודע²¹¹ ליי'. ואותו היום לא
 יהיה לא יום ממש ולא לילה ממש;²¹² והיה לעת
 ערב יהיה²¹³ אור. (י) יסב כל הארץ כערבה מגבע
 לרמון²¹⁴ נגב ירושלים; וראמה - ירושלים, וישבה
 תחתיה. (יג) והחזיקו איש יד רעהו ועלתה ידו
 על יד רעהו - פי': ונהרגין זה בזה. (יד) וגם
 יהודה תלחם בירושלים - יש מפרשי: תלחם - הם
 בעצמם, בשביל²¹⁵ השלל. ויש מפרשי: תלחם - מן
 האויבים. (טז) להשתחות למלך יי' צבאות - יש
 מפרשים: להקב"ה; ויש מפרשי: למשיח. (יז)
 ולא עליהם יהיה הגשם - פי': ולא עליהם יהיה
 השובע. (יח) ואם משפחת מצרים לא תעלה ולא
 באה ולא עליהם כמו כן יהיה השובע. ותהיה
 המגפה אשר יגף יי' את הגוים אשר לא יעלו
 לחג את חג הסוכות.²¹⁶ (כ) ביום ההוא יהיה על
 מצילות הסוס - פי': אותם הפעמונים שהם

²⁰⁹ אור אחר

²¹⁰ הם א הרד(! הסד! אולי התחיל הסופר לכתוב "ירד"
 וחזר והגיה ל"הם" ומחק הדי')

²¹¹ אותו היום יודע אל ואותו היום ידוע

²¹² לא יום ממש ולא לילה ממש ל לא יום ולא לילה (כלשון
 הפסוק בלי הביאור)

²¹³ יהיה ל והנה

²¹⁴ כערבה מגבע לרמון א כמערבה שלגבע רימון (!)

²¹⁵ בשביל ל בעבור

²¹⁶ ד'אה לעיל, הערה 206. אם התוספת שנשתרבה לשם

שייכת באמת לכאן, אז יש להשלים כאן לפי זפ: "ואם

משפחת מצרים לא תעלה ולא באה ולא עליהם כמו כן

יהיה השובע ותהיה המגפה [במצרים]. אוי להם אם לא כי

תהיה עליהם המגפה] אשר יגף יי' את הגוים אשר לא יעלו

לחג את חג הסוכות." אם מדובר בתוספת קדומה, ייתכן
 שחסרה באל מפני השמטת הדומות.

²¹⁷ נשלם פירוש זכריה ל נשלם זכריה

ס פרמלאכ י, פיר ושבעל פה .

ועיניכם תראינה - כשאעשה זה באדום, ואתם
 תאמרו: יגדל יי'. (ו) בן יכבד אב ועבד אדוניו²³¹
 - כי²³² מנהג העולם, שהבן יכבד האב²³³ ועבד
 ירא אדוניו.²³⁴ עכשיו, אם אני אב²³⁵ - איה כבודי
 ואם אדונים אני איה מוראי אמר יי' צבאות,
 לכם הכהנים בוזי שמי²³⁶ - פי': אליכם
 הכהנים אומר זה הדבר, שתבוזו שמי. ואם
 תאמרו: ²³⁷ במה בזינו את שמך? (ז) שתגישו על
 מזבחי²³⁸ לחם מגואל. ואם²³⁹ תאמרו: במה
 גאלנוך? כשתאמרו: שולחן יי' נבזה²⁴⁰ הוא. (ח)
 וכי תגישון עיור לזבח, תאמרו,²⁴¹ כי אין רע לפני
 הקב"ה;²⁴² וכי תגישו פסח וחולה²⁴³ תאמרו, כי
 אינו²⁴⁴ רע. הקריבהו נא לפחתך - פי': לנשיא
 שלך. (ט) ועתה חלו נא פני אל - פי': לכהנים
 יאמר. (י) מי גם בכס ויסגר דלתים - פי': אולי
 יש בכס אחד שיסגר דלתים, ולא תבעירו מזבחי
 חנם. (יא) ובכל מקום מוקטר מוגש לשמי
 ומנחה טהורה - פי': לפי שבכל מקום גדול שמי

(א) משא דבר יי' אל ישראל ביד מלאכי - פי': זו
 הנבואה²¹⁸ ניבא מלאכי על יהודה ועל אותם
 מישראל²¹⁹ שחזרו בבית שיני. (ב) אהבתי אתכם
 אמר יי' - פי': יאמר הנביא, כי אמר הקב"ה על
 ישראל: אהבתי אתכם.²²⁰ ואם תאמרו: במה
 אהבתנו? התשובה - [כי בזה]²²¹ אהבתי אתכם:
 הלא אח עשו ליעקב ואהב את יעקב; שאע"פ
 שהגליתי אותם, החזרתי אותם ובנו הבית.²²² (ג)
 אבל עשו, לאחר שהגליתי אותו²²³ לא
 החזרתיו,²²⁴ אלא שמתי הריו שממה ואת
 נחלתו²²⁵ לתנות מדבר - פי': 'תנין'; ובלשי זכר
 יקראו 'תנינים',²²⁶ ובלשי נקבה: תנות. (ד) כי
 תאמר אדום רוששנו - פי': אם תאמר אדום:
 אע"פ שרוששנו, נשוב ונבנה חרבות - כה²²⁷ אמר
 יי': המה²²⁸ יבנו ואני אהרוס. והעם אשר זעם
 יי' - כי²²⁹ הם עם אשר זעם יי',²³⁰ עד עולם. (ה)

²³⁰ כי הם עם אשר זעם יי' לחסר (השמטת הדומות) פ כי
 הם עם אשר זעם יי' כי הם עם אשר זעם יי' (הכפלת
 המשפט)

²³¹ ועבד אדוניו למ חסר

²³² כי אלמ פי'

²³³ האב אל אב (כלשון הפסוק)

²³⁴ אדוניו א את אדוניו

²³⁵ אני אב ל אב אני (כלשון הפסוק)

²³⁶ בוזי שמי פמ חסר

²³⁷ תאמרו א תאמר

²³⁸ מזבחי אל שולחני

²³⁹ ואם אל וכי

²⁴⁰ נבזה ל מגואל (כמו פסוק י"ב להלן)

²⁴¹ תאמרו א תאמר

²⁴² וכי תגישון עיור לזבח תאמרו כי אין רע לפני הקב"ה ל

חסר (השמטת הדומות)

²⁴³ וחולה א או חולה ל וחולה אין רע

²⁴⁴ אינו אל אין

²¹⁸ זו הנבואה ל נבואה זו

²¹⁹ מישראל מ מיש' אל מירושלם

²²⁰ על ישראל אהבתי אתכם אל אהבתי אתכם על ישראל

²²¹ [כי בזה] זפ בזה כי (תוקן ע"פ אלמ)

²²² הבית אל את הבית

²²³ שהגליתי אותו ל שהגליתיו

²²⁴ החזרתיו פ החזרתי

²²⁵ ואת נחלתו אל ונחלתו

²²⁶ תנינים ל תנים

²²⁷ כה א כי כה

²²⁸ המה אל הם

²²⁹ כי אמ פי'

– פי': עם הכהנים. **ואתנם לו מורא** - על ישראל.
ויִרְאֵנִי - והם²⁵⁵ הכהנים ייראו מלפני, ומפני
שמי²⁵⁶ **נחת הוא**. נחת – דמיו': "ויהי חתת
אלהים" (בר' לה,ה). (ו) **תורת אמת היתה בפיהו**
– פי': כך ראוי שיהיה הכהן, שתורת **אמת**
יהיה²⁵⁷ **בפיהו, ועולה לא ימצא בשפתיו; בשלום**
ובמישור ילך אתי, ורבים ישיב מעון. (ח) והם
סרו **מן הדרך הטוב, והכשילו רבים בתורה,**
ושחתו **ברית הלוי**. (ט) על כן **נתתי אותם**
נבזים²⁵⁸ **ושפלים לכל העם, בשביל שאינם**
שומרים את דרכי ואינם נושאים פנים בתורה.
(יא) **כי חלל יהודה קודש יי' אשר אהב ובעל בת**
אל נכר – פי': שנשאו נשים נכריות, כאשר
מפורש בספר עזרא (ראה עז' ט,א ואי'). (יב)
יכרת יי' לאיש אשר יעשנה – פי': **יכרת יי'**
לאיש אשר יעשה הזמה, שלא יהיה לו מי²⁵⁹
שיעורר אותו ויענה לו. אם הוא מישראל, **יכרת**
אותו מאהלי יעקב, ואם הוא מן הכהנים יכרת
אותו שלא יהיה לו מגיש מנחה ליי' צבאות. (יג)
וזאת שנית תעשו – פי': וזו²⁶⁰ רעה **שנית תעשו,**
שתיכסו **את מזבח יי' דמעה מבכי ואנקה, לפי**
שאיך עוד שיפנה אל המנחה²⁶¹ שלכם ויקח

בגוים, כאילו יעשו קטרת והגשה לשמי ומנחה
טהורה כי גדול שמי בגוים אמר יי' צבאות. (יב)
ואתם מחללים אותו כשתאמרו: שלחן יי' מגואל
הוא וניבו נבזה אכלו – פי': [והתנובה]²⁴⁵ שלו,
והוא לחם הפנים, **נבזה מי שיאכל אותו.** (יג)
ואמרתם²⁴⁶ **הנה מתלאה**²⁴⁷ **והפחתם אותו** – פי':
כשיביאו אליכם הכבש הטוב, **הפחתם אותו**
ברוחכם, ותאמרו: למה תלאו אותנו? כי הוא רע!
וזה הדבר תעשו אותו בערמה, לפי שתקחו אותו
לעצמכם;²⁴⁸ ותביאו **הגזול, והפסח, והחולה.**
(יד) **וארור נוכל** – פי': חושב; ודמיו':²⁴⁹
"ויתנכלו אותו"²⁵⁰ (בר' לז,ח); תרגו': "וחשיבו"
(ת"א). וכך²⁵¹ **יאמר הנביא: ארור מי שחושב**
זאת המחשבה הרעה,²⁵² **שיש בעדרו זכר תמים**
ונודר וזובח דבר משחת ליי', והוא בעל מום.

מלאכי פרק ב

(ג) **וזריתי פרש** – דמיו': "ואת פרשו" (וי)
ח,יז). **ונשא אתכם אלי** - פי': אעשה זה הרע²⁵⁴
לכם בשביל שתשובו אלי. (ה) **בריתי היתה אתו**

²⁴⁵[והתנובה] זפ והתבונה (תניקן ע"פ אלמ)

²⁴⁶ואמרתם א ואמי ל ואמי

²⁴⁷מתלאה ל מה תלאה

²⁴⁸לעצמכם א לעצמיכם (?)

²⁴⁹ודמיו' ל דמי' לו

²⁵⁰אותו ל אותו להמיתו (המשך הפסוק)

²⁵¹וכך אל וכן

²⁵²זאת המחשבה הרעה אל זו המחשבה רעה

²⁵³דמיו' ל דדומי' לו

²⁵⁴הרע ל הרעה

²⁵⁵והם אל פי' והם

²⁵⁶ומפני שמי אל ומשמי

²⁵⁷יהיה א תהיה

²⁵⁸נבזים ל נבזים ומאוסים

²⁵⁹מי א איש

²⁶⁰וזו ל וזאת

²⁶¹המנחה פ המנחה

(א) עכשיו דעו, כי הנני שלח מלאכי ופנה דרך לפני, ²⁷⁵ ופתאם יבא ²⁷⁶ אל היכלו האדון, אשר אתם מבקשים. ²⁷⁷ (ב) ומי מכלכל את יום בואו, ומי הוא שיכול ²⁷⁸ לעמוד בהראותו? כי הוא כאש שיצרף בו אדם את הכסף, ²⁷⁹ וכבורית שיכבס בו אדם. ²⁸⁰ (ג) וישב הקב"ה כמו מצרף שיטהר הכסף, ²⁸¹ וטהר את בני לוי כזהב וכסף, והיו ליי' מגישי מנחה בצדקה; (ד) וערבה ליי' מנחת יהודה. (ה) וקרבתי אליכם ²⁸² למשפט – פי': בשביל שאמרתם "או איה אלהי המשפט" (לעיל ב, יז), על כן וקרבתי אליכם למשפט והייתי עד ממחר במנאפים ובמכשפים. (ו) כי אני יי' לא שניתי – כלומר: אני הוא שהייתי, ולא שניתי מעולם, ואתם בני יעקב לא כליתם. (ז) וזה הדבר הרע שעשיתם: שמימי אבותיכם סרתם מחוקיי ולא שמרתם אותם. עכשיו, שובו אלי ואשובה אליכם אמר יי' צבאות. ואם תאמרו: במה נשוב? (ח) התשובה: ²⁸³ היקבע אדם אלהים? פי': היגזל אדם אלהים, כמו ²⁸⁴ שתגזלוני? ואם תאמרו: במה גזלנו אותך?

אותה ²⁶² ברצון מידכם. (יד) ואמרתם: על מה אירע לנו זו? ²⁶³ הרעה? על כי יי' העיד בינך ובין אשת נעוריך אשר אתה בגדתה ²⁶⁴ בה ולקחת אשה אחרת בזמה. (טו) ולא אחד עשה – פי': ולא הקב"ה שהוא אחד עשה אותנו, ושאר כל הרוחות שלו הם? כלומר: ברשותו ²⁶⁵ הם. ומה האחד מבקש – פי': ומה הקב"ה שהוא אחד, מבקש? ²⁶⁶ אלא שתהיו זרע אלהים ונשמרתם ברוחכם ובאשת נעוריך ²⁶⁷ אל תבגוד. ²⁶⁸ (טז) כי שנא שלח – פי': כי שנא ²⁶⁹ הקב"ה מי ²⁷⁰ שישלח את אשתו ויקח אשה אחרת בזנות, ויכסה חמס על לבושו, אמר יי' צבאות. (יז) הוגעתם יי' בדבריכם – פי': יגעיתם הקב"ה בדבריכם ²⁷¹. ואם תאמרו: במה הוגענו? ²⁷² כשתאמרו: כל עושה רע טוב הוא בעיני יי', ובהם הוא חפץ. כי אם אינו חפץ בהם ²⁷³ איה המשפט שיעשה בהם הקב"ה? ²⁷⁴

מלאכי פרק ג

²⁶² אותה א אותם

²⁶³ זו ל זאת

²⁶⁴ בגדתה א בגדת ל בגתה

²⁶⁵ ברשותו א בשירותו

²⁶⁶ שהוא אחד מבקש א מבקש שהוא אחד

²⁶⁷ נעוריך אל נעוריים

²⁶⁸ תבגוד א יבגד (כנה"מ) ל יבגוד

²⁶⁹ כי שנא א כשישנא ל כי ישנא

²⁷⁰ מי א את מי

²⁷¹ פי': יגעיתם הקב"ה בדבריכם א חסר (השמטת הדומות)

²⁷² הוגענו ל הוגענוהו

²⁷³ בהם אל חסר

²⁷⁴ בהם הקב"ה א הקי' בהם

²⁷⁵ לפני אל לפניו

²⁷⁶ אל יבוא (כנה"מ)

²⁷⁷ האדון אשר אתם מבקשים אל חסר

²⁷⁸ שיכול א שיוכל

²⁷⁹ אדם את הכסף א אדם הכסף ל האדם את הכסף

²⁸⁰ אדם א האדם ל האדם את בגדיו

²⁸¹ מצרף שיטהר הכסף ל המצרף שמטהר את הכסף

²⁸² אליכם פ אתכם

²⁸³ התשובה אל תשובה

²⁸⁴ כמו א חסר

²⁸⁵ שתגזלוני ל שגזלוני

התשובה: ²⁸⁶ בשביל המעשר והתרומה שלא הבאתם. (ט) ועל כן במארה ²⁸⁷ אתם נארים ואתי אתם חשבים לגזל הגזל. כלוי: ²⁸⁸ לעצמכם תעשו הרע. (י) עכשיו זאת עשו: הביאו את כל המעשר אל בית האוצר ויהי טרף בביתי; ובחנוני נא בזאת ²⁸⁹ הדבר, ²⁹⁰ אמר יי' צבאות, אם לא אפתח לכם את ארובות השמים. (יא) וגערתי לכם באוכל – פיי: בארבה. (יב) ואשרו אתכם – דמיו: "באשרי כי אשרוני בנותי" (בר' ל, יג). (יג) חזקו עלי דבריכם – פיי: תקפו עלי דבריכם אמר יי'. ²⁹¹ ואם תאמרו: במה דברנו עליך? (יד) התשובה: כשאמרתם שוא הוא שנעבוד להקב"ה, ומה הועיל כי שמרנו משמרתו ²⁹² וכי הלכנו קדרנית? פיי: ²⁹³ בחשך. (טו) ואמרו: ²⁹⁴ אנחנו מאשרים זדים – דמיו: "ואשרו אתכם" (לעיל, יב). גם נבנו עושי רשעה – שלא ראו רע. גם בחנו אלהים – שאמרו: נראה אם ישלם לנו הקב"ה רע ²⁹⁵ ממה שחטאנו לו, וימלטו. (טז) אז נדברו יראי יי' ²⁹⁶ – פיי: יאמר הנביא: כשהרשעים יאמרו "אנחנו מאשרים זדים" (לעיל, טו), אם באותו הזמן יהיו יראי יי' –

שמדברים איש אל רעהו מיראתו שלהקב"ה - הוא יקשב וישמע אותם, ויכתב ספר זכרונות ²⁹⁷ לפניו. (יז) והיו לי אמר יי' צבאות ליום שאני עושה סגולה – פיי: ליום שאני עושה נקמה, יהיו המיראים אותי ²⁹⁸ סגולה. (כ) וזרחה לכם ²⁹⁹ יראי שמי – פיי: לפי שנאמר ברשעים ³⁰⁰ "ולטה אותם היום הבא" (לעיל, יט), נאמר בצדיקים וזרחה לכם יראי שמי שמש צדקה ומרפא ³⁰¹ - שלא יזיקם. ופשתם – דמיו: "כי תפושו" (יר' נ, יא). (כא) ועסותם ³⁰² רשעים – פיי: [ותרמסו] ³⁰³ רשעים. (כג) הנני שלח לכם את אליה הנביא קודם שיבא יום יי' הגדול והנורא, (כד) וישיב לב אבות על בנים ולב בנים על אבותם. ועל כן אשלח לכם את אליה הנביא קודם פן אבא והכיתי כל ³⁰⁴ הארץ חרם. הנני ³⁰⁵ שלח לכם את אליה הנביא לפני בא יום ה' הגדול והנורא. ³⁰⁶

נשלם פירוש מלאכי וכל פירוש תרי עשר לרבינו ישעיה ³⁰⁷ תהילה לעזרה הישנה כבודך יי' ³⁰⁸

²⁹⁷ ספר זכרונות א בספר הזכרון ל ספר זיכרון
²⁹⁸ אותי אל אותו (!) לי
²⁹⁹ וזרחה לכם אל וזרח
³⁰⁰ ברשעים לחסר
³⁰¹ ומרפא אל ומרפא בכנפיה
³⁰² ועסותם אל ועשותם
³⁰³ [ותרמסו] זפ ותרסמו (תוקן ע"פ אלמ)
³⁰⁴ כל הארץ אל את הארץ (כלשון הפסוק) מ את כל הארץ
³⁰⁵ הנני מ הנה אנכי (כלשון הפסוק)
³⁰⁶ את אליה הנביא לפני בא יום ה' הגדול והנורא א את אליה הנביא וגומר ל את אליה הנביא לפני בא יום ה' הגדול והנורא וגוי' מ את אליה הנביא

²⁸⁶ התשובה א תשובה
²⁸⁷ במארה פ במראה
²⁸⁸ כלוי אל כלה
²⁸⁹ בזאת א בזה
²⁹⁰ הדבר לחסר
²⁹¹ אמר יי' לחסר
²⁹² משמרתו לחסר
²⁹³ פיי לחסר
²⁹⁴ ואמרו א ואמרתם
²⁹⁵ רע אל גמול רע
²⁹⁶ יראי יי' א יראי יי' איש את רעהו ל אראי (אולי תוקן ע"פ ל?) יי' איש את רעהו

³⁰⁷ לרבינו ישעיה פ לאבן עזרא מ לר' אברהם בן עזרא
³⁰⁸ נשלם פירוש מלאכי וכל פירוש תרי עשר לרבינו ישעיה
תהילה לעזרה הישנה כבודך יי א נשלם פי מלאכי ברוך
נותן ליעף כח ולאין אונים עצמה ירבה ל נשלם פי מלאכי
שבחי ותהילתי לאל יוצר צפיוני (! אפיוני?) ונשמה שם
בקרבי ברוך שחזק כחי ואמץ אוני וסמך קולמוסי
בנלכואעי"י