A Conceptual Commentary on Midrash Leviticus Rabbah

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PART THREE

Chapter XXI

XX.1 (473:2)

[1] אני הורשע... ובורדי להט (7f.)

The concepts here are conceived of Pharaoh as unwittingly uttering decrees against himself, unwitting prophesies. (See other examples, again with Pharaoh as the subject, in CA, pp. 242f.)

(474:4) — The spoils at the Red Sea is here referred to. This is never spoken of in the Bible itself.

XXI.2 (475:1 ff.)

[1] ר אבוא... שלמר... אבות Nhậtב (4:4) — The concept of נט. Of course, the event is really declared to be such in the Bible itself, but that is underlined here. The narrative in the Bible does relate Goliath's death to an act of David's, but here there is direct intervention of God.


[3] ר יוכפ... תמהרותה (3) — Goliath was a pederast, a fairly common sin among Roman soldiers.

[4] והאמר... לפקינ (477:2) — The idea in the manuscript commentary quoted by Margulies is that of corporate personality,
David and his ancestor Judah being regarded as links in the same personality. David trusts in God's help by reason of Moses' plea for Judah, and written by him in the Torah. The concept of (מִשְׁמַרְתּוּן) is an abiding concept, but here we see that it may be strengthened. The concepts bearing on it here are Torah, (מִשְׁמַרְתּוּן) (Moses), and prayer.

**XXI.3** (477:4f.)

**XXI.4** (478:7ff.)

1. Whatever their “origin” may have been, as they are found in rabbinic literature, they are angels. Now the function of “angels” in rabbinic literature is to bring into bolder relief, frequently, the concept of God's love and other rabbinic concepts. Here the complaints of these angels bring into relief God's love for Israel on Yom Kippur when He forgives Israel's sins.

2. The three cardinal sins are given probably to imply that the accusations against Israel are exaggerations, since Israel, for one thing, are not idol-worshippers.

3. This is usually a hereafter concept as it is here, apparently. Nevertheless, it may not be a dogma.

**XXI.5** (480:3f.)

1. The “battle” is that of the (מִשְׁמַרְתּוּן) against the (עֲבָרִים). The (מִשְׁמַרְתּוּן) is done by the same organ of the body that had earlier done an (עֲבָרִים), and the assumption seems to be that it will now be at least more difficult to do the (עֲבָרִים).
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is thus given an additional function, namely, to make it more difficult to commit specific ethical transgressions. Since no indication is given as to just how this is achieved, we do not have here a form of קרבנות.

In Kiddush Ha-Shem, the martyr testifies to the present that God alone is holy.

[2] מַצָּה here refers to an ethical מַצָּה, for only such a מַצָּה requires one to be especially alert for it. Continuous alertness is the idea involved in the image of קְבֵרָנֵט.

[3] תַּחַלַּת (.:3)—It apparently refers simply to the need to be careful in the observance of the law in Exod. 22:25, for a busy man is apt to neglect it.

[4] מָשָׁנָה (.:4)—The text is interpreted to mean “bundles” of מָשָׁנָה, and the study of these is referred to by the symbol of "battle" (see also מִשְׁמַרְיָא; on the symbols of Torah, see RM, p. 118).

XXI.6 (482:1)

[1] Here the וּלְיָדָה (:1) is regarded not simply as High Priest, but as the representative of Israel. The בַּעַל, except for the בַּעַל (:7) on יִדְחָך, are those observed by all Israel, and the block of other matters (שבטם, ידשך) [the sons of Jacob, etc.] are national in character.

[2] בֵּנוֹת יִדְחָך (:5)—Perhaps the term here relates to the掩饰, a descendant of Judah.

XXI.7 (482:8 f.)

[1] This midrash is an interpretation of Lev. 16:2 and is thus associated with the preceding midrash which interprets Lev. 16:3.

[2] מַמְחַזְיוֹת (488:2)—Refers to the phenomenon of הבָּקָשָׁה in the Holy of holies. הבָּקָשָׁה is in a particular locale.
While the term here is concerned with time, in accordance with the other measures of time here, it is apparently limited to

This is an interpretation of בְּכֵל (Lev. 16:2). Although imposing the condition בְּכֵל (484:3), the rabbinic interpretation is an example of the rabbinic emphasis on God’s love, for it is just the opposite of the simple meaning—it is an expression of God’s love for Aaron. cites Elijah Gaon who says that this applied only to Aaron, only he being permitted to enter the holy of holies when-ever he wished, whereas his descendants were limited to once a year on Yom Kippur.

A in response to a מֶשֶׁה לָמוֹת. The other concept embodied in the statement is study of Torah.

Involved here are matters of ethical שְׁאולֵיָה (see מֶשֶׁה). That is crystallized in a concept, בְּכֵל (see מֶשֶׁה).

The concept embodied is respect, בְּכֵל. It is thus not merely a warning of one’s presence.

The conceptions of both corporate personality and individual personality are involved here. Corporate personality: the eighteen successive descendants of Aaron are regarded as though they were Aaron himself. Individual
personality: each of them exhibited a quality that can be projected only by a functioning individual, namely, the quality of האמנות (א) or האמנת, “faithfulness, trustworthiness.” In this statement both conceptions are combined and neither dominates.

[2]Apparently, according to our text, the high-priesthood was bought only after מצה ותריס (2) and also, apparently, only he served באמה and hence was called ותריס. This tradition about the indifferent character of the High Priests of the Second Temple seems to be the basis of calling them משים (489:5).

XXI.10 (489:6f.)

[1]אל אובר ומילה והות (1)—The numbers of the garments is here given an interpretation whereas in the Bible, it is not. Underlying the interpretation is the idea that the High Priest is the representative of the people rather than just a high functionary, an emphasis on ישראל ומצהר.

ברית (1)—The interpretation utilizes a different meaning of the word, the covenant of circumcision, and what in the text is limited to the priest is now related to the folk.

[2]ר סמנו (2) does not object to gold as such, as do the two authorities who follow, but he regards gold as the symbol of the golden calf.

לסטן (3)—Notice that in the parallels given by Margulies the שינות is not mentioned. Belief in the שינת (שתן) is thus seen to be indeterminate, since the same idea is taught without taking him into account.

[3]של ישראל (4)—Integration of Halakah and Haggadah. The linen garments could not be used again, and the reason given is haggadah, embodying the concepts of God’s love and Israel in combination.

[4]מלך, pride, is a negative value concept, and מלך refers to God.
XXI.11 (490:7 ff.)

[1] The passage involves the conception of corporate personality, and the concept embodied is אבות. The sacrifices brought by the High Priest recall the deeds of the Patriarchs, the idea being that atonement for Israel is merited because of the deeds of the אבות.

[2] The conception of corporate personality allows Jacob to "provide" atoning sacrifices for his descendants.

[3] The merit of the אמות (491:2) is not specified as in the case of the Patriarchs here. Recalling the general merit of forebears is not an uncommon theme.

XXI.12 (492:4 ff.)

[1] Concretization of קדושה in halakah. Halakah and Haggadah are related, both being concretizations of the same value concepts.

[2] The angels show כבוד to the High Priest. There is also the implication that the angels are less holy than the High Priest. They are regarded in tannaitic sources as less holy than Israel (see WE, p. 224, 279n.).

[3] A section in the Mekilta II (ed. Lauterbach, pp. 31–32) gives instances of מלח רבמטיפות. Here, too, it is...
evidently the same figure, for יִשְׂרָאֵל כפּוֹר is the occasion when the sins of Israel are forgiven by God. The concept of גֵלַח שִׁכְנָה, though so different from the other value concepts, is part of the complex for it interweaves with the other concepts, as here where it interweaves with מְדָר רַחֲמִים.

גֵלַח שִׁכְנָה (וּכְבָּרָה) (5)—Refers to גֵלַח שִׁכְנָה.

Chapter XXII

XXII.1 (494:1 ff.)

[1] The concepts are God's love, man and עָלָם. God so made the world that there is nothing which man cannot find useful in some measure. This is not teleology, a philosophical idea, for in the examples given there is no element of design by God, the ends to which the things are put being left to man.

מלך הוה (495:1)—The overwhelming importance of agriculture. The concept here is דִּרְךָ אֲדֻמָּה, first phase (see WE, pp. 39 ff.).

[2] Both the concepts מֶשֶׁחַ חוֹרְדָה (:4) and מָתַן חוֹרְדָה (:4) are involved here. The details of מָתַן חוֹרְדָה (:4) are עַמָּה, תְמוּנָה חוֹרְדָה and are recognized as such, yet they are also regarded as having the force of מֶשֶׁחַ חוֹרְדָה, are included in that event.

There is certainly an awareness that the student's statement is contemporary. The concept of Torah, like other concepts, has new concretizations. The concept of מֶשֶׁחַ חוֹרְדָה supplies authority for these new concretizations.

—Refers to מֶשֶׁחַ חוֹרְדָה (497:1). The concept of מֶשֶׁחַ חוֹרְדָה is embodied here. This concept connotes both studying and teaching. Notice that it is felt that if studying does not lead to teaching, nothing has been achieved.
XXII.2 (498:4 f.)

[1] הרבעין (4:)

The insects appear to you superfluous. The point in this passage is that you need not justify their existence; they are part of the created world. This is almost like saying that you need not look for teleology.

[2] מלח (6)—Notice that this is an independent midrash, not connected with the one preceding; concept of God's love here.

XXII.3 (499:5 ff.)

[1] שליחים (.5)—The function of the prophet is that of a נביא-שלום, as Y. Kaufmann says; association of ideas with what follows.

[2] את (6)—This refers to acts, not to a message and hence it does not contradict the preceding statement. It interprets וה.stdin (:5), and teaches that what seems to a person superfluous in creation may be used by God as His agent.

[3] והרשע ובו (7 f.)—God punishes him not through the mighty sea but through the little flea.

XXII.4 (503:1 ff.)

[1] More examples of how God uses all kinds of things as His agents. Most of the instances are apparently examples of God's punitive justice even though this is explicitly indicated only in the cases of the רומא (505:8) and the בולదר (506:5), stories about Romans. These stories are all נסים. They indicate that נסים of this character and folklore belong to the same category. The stories about the various
grasses and also their relations to snakes are obviously folklore and are found probably among other groups as well. Folklore is to be differentiated from folklore science. In folklore science, the grasses would be identified and perhaps even deliberately employed.

[2] תוחית מיתות דארא וישראל (509:3)—Reflects the idea that תוחית מיתות will take place in Israel. His intention was presumption and therefore sin.

**XXII.5** (511:5 f.)

[1] דויד אמותי העולם...موتוע (512:2)—Integration of Halakah and Haggadah. Often the haggadah involved consists, as here, of a "reason" for the halakah. (See CA, p. 26 and the examples there.)

**XXII.6** (512:5 ff.)

[1] הרונן... (5 f.)—He who robs from or steals from a person is accounted as though he has thereby murdered that person. This is not a matter which is rationalized by saying that the robberies, etc., may lead to the death of the victim. By means of concepts, the valuation of the act is changed, the act becomes not שלמות גוונל but שלמות פרוטה. The case of the Gibeonites (513:1) is stigmatized in this manner. The case of the Gibeonites, however, is in a different category for they were prevented from obtaining their livelihood.

[2] סנדה ודה (514:4)—This refers to סנדה ודה (5) as the sequel clearly indicates, and not to ירח.

In סנדה ודה (5 f.), only the person who worships an idol is involved, but in שלמות השם (6), an act affects other persons by lowering, in some manner, their regard for God (see WE, pp. 132 f.). The Name of God is thus profaned in שלמות השם but not in שלמות השם.

An aspect of שלמות השם (514:6) which involves Gentiles. When the Gentiles' opinion of God is
lowered as the result of Israel’s actions, Israel commits an act of דַּעְלוֹת הָשָׁם. Integration of Halakah (איסור בָּהּ, 515:2) and הָגָּזְדָּה (וְלַפּוֹת הָשָּׁם).

XXII.7 (515:6 ff.)

According to the opinion of R. Ishmael, Lev. 17:3 ff. forbade בֵּשַׂר תַּאֲדוֹת and hence the halakic passage here. The halakic concepts constitute a distinct group in themselves although they are part of the complex as a whole. They are not connotative and are often defined. איסור והוריה (6) are denotative, “permitted” and “forbidden,” and do not possess a penumbra of meanings. Some of the halakic concepts are defined (such as פִּינוֹל). At the same time, this halakic discussion is concerned with value concepts, for value concepts are common to both Halakah and Haggadah. Some of the value concepts here are: מָצוּות (קרבן), 516:4; (concretized in laws of שְׁוָיִית here, 516:2); and בֵּשַׂר תַּאֲדוֹת (בֵּעֲרֵית שְׁוָיִית here, 516:2); also בֵּשַׂר מָצוּות (:5), which is an aspect of בֵּשַׂר, but has halakic implications.

R. Ishmael and R. Akiba can differ because, despite the denotation of halakic concepts and the definitions, the setting, the framework of value concepts, is organic and thus allows for differing views.

XXII.8 (517:3 f.)

There is a real difference between the reasons given by Maimonides for the sacrifices and the midrash here. In the midrash, centralizing the sacrifices in the אֲוָדֵל מִית has the effect of separating Israel from the עָבְרָד דְּרוֹז they had previously worshipped, whereas that is not the point made by Maimonides. Nevertheless, the similarity is strong enough to characterize the idea in the midrash as a rationalization. There is, occasionally, a rationalistic tendency to be recognized among the Rabbis, and Maimonides utilizes it. This is certainly the case with the rabbinic rationalizations concerning a number of בֵּשַׂר (see RM, pp. 153 ff.).
XXII.9 (518:4 ff.)

This is another halakic passage, and it demonstrates how value concepts are concretized by Halakah.

[1] Concept of הָדָמָה, a halakic concept; קָרָא, a value concept.
[2] Concept of בֹּדֶר, a value concept, also a sub-concept of מְלֶא לָכוּי אֶת לָכוּי.
[3] Indicating how a קְנֵי is permitted to override the laws.
[4] Violations of halakot informed by the value concept of עֶבֶד הָרָדַע עֶבֶד הָרָדַע.
[6] Підведений, як показує (520:2)—There is a difference of opinion. This difference of opinion and the others here are characteristic of Halakah. The value concepts are organismic, permitting difference of opinion.

XXII.10 (521:1 ff.)

Another halakic passage in which halakot concretize value concepts.

[1] This statement, here and in the following sections of the passage, contains the halakic concepts of הָדָר and קָרָא, as in the preceding passages, but now the very halakic concepts are employed in a concretization of the concepts of God's love, a value concept. Because of God's love, the self-same things prohibited elsewhere are, in other situations, permitted.
[3] בְּהֹדוֹת הָרָדַע (523:1)—Referring to לָיתָהּ (523:2, etc.) and אֲלֵיה (6), the three being food for the דְּרוֹק וְיָשָׁנו; embody also the concept
of God’s love and (probably the Days of the Messiah)—integration of Halakah and Haggadah.

[3] ш'" (523:6-526:1)—Each opinion differs from the others with respect to the food eaten by the animal האם and likewise, the opinions differ concerning the source from which it drinks. What is the reader or hearer to believe then? His belief can only be indeterminate. Indeed, through an instance such as this we can demonstrate the existence of indeterminacy of belief and its character. This indeterminacy of belief applies not to details alone but to the itself, and if it applies to האם, it must also apply to what is the food of the ליחות, i.e., to and as well.

[4] א"ח (526:2)—This certainly contains the idea of God’s omnipotence but it serves the concept of God’s love whereby these foods are provided. The idea of God’s omnipotence is not crystalized in a rabbinic term and remains an auxiliary idea (see RM, p. 55).

Chapter XXIII

XXIII.1 (526:9f.)

[1] רמי (527:2, :3), (6)—A negative value concept.

[2] ליצח (and ) has an ethical connotation, being the opposite here of . Notice that the concept is applied to women as well as to men: in spiritual character, both are equal.

[3] ב" (6)—Implied is the interpretation of Cant. 2:2. Jacob was not affected by the wickedness of his new environment—the mark of the .
XXIII.2 (527:7 ff.)

[1] The concepts embodied here are: Israel, The Nations of the World (Egypt), ואנשה, and הנב規劃, and the people of Israel practiced the same customs as the Egyptians and thus committed what were, for Israel, עבירה, and hence did not deserve redemption. Margulies points out that this view differs from that of Bark (XXXII.5, 747:4 f.) who says that Israel was redeemed because of the מצוות they practiced. But variety of opinion is characteristic of Haggadah since each haggadic statement is an independent entity. This is so because the organismic character of the value concepts allows the same situation to be interpreted by different value concepts. Thus, in our midrash, one of the concepts describing the conduct of the people of Israel in Egypt is עבירה, whereas the opposite concept, מצוות, interprets their conduct in the view of Bark (see RM, p. 78.)

[2] ד"א עלי"ז — There is emphasis here on God’s love; it was preordained, so to speak, to overcome מות הדיח in this instance.

[3] ד"א יי"ז — Theodor in his commentary on Bereshit R., p. 442, points out that the midrashic literature does not contain any explanation of this name of God. מותרי ישיא at Ber. R. XLIV.19 says that this name has an esoteric meaning of which he has no knowledge. It is certainly not a matter that has to do with normal mysticism and apparently is an element in an esoteric tradition which was an eddy alongside the main current of rabbinic thought. Its mathematical character probably indicates that it is related to some aspect of theosophy.

XXIII.3 (529:3 ff.)

[1] והעולם — Here it means “the world,” including mankind.

[2] ד"א וי"ז — Because of the merit of Israel, the whole world כולם והולם כולם מוכות, is to be saved. How can the merit of Israel extend to all of mankind if Israel and the rest of mankind constitute two distinct entities?
The answer is that they are not two entities. Mankind is conceived as possessing a corporate personality. The merit of Israel accrues, therefore, to mankind as a whole. We have here an instance of the emphasis on universalism, one of the great emphatic trends of rabbinic thought. (See WE, pp. 29 f.)

XXIII.4 (530:5 ff.)

[1] דִיָּון מֵמַנִּים (:5)—Here this value concept is used in relation to the leader’s role in corporate liturgical acts. These acts are themselves characterized by value concepts.

[2] דָּשָּׁר שְׁבָנָה לְבֵית הָכְנָסָה וּכְזָרָה (:5)—The “ten” constitute a face-to-face with the. When only one of them knows how to lead in these corporate acts of worship, he is the benefactor of the rest.

[3] דָּשָּׁר עַל שְׁמֹעַ (:6)—On the public recitation of the Shema’ as a corporate act, see WE, p. 136. The value concepts embodied in the Keri’ at Shema’ are מַלְכוּת שֵׁם הַלֹּא חַד and הַלֹּא חַד והַלֹּא חַד. The two introductory בְּרֵחַת were doubtless included.

[4] דָּשָּׁר לְפַל מִזְהָבִית (:6)—On the Tefillah as a corporate act, see WE, p. 143. Tefillah itself is a value concept.

[5] ... בְּרֵחַת הַתֹּנִים ... לְבֵית הָכְנָסָה ... (לְעַשָּׁר) (:6)—The and the רֶבֶן מַלְכוּת תּוֹסִים (531:2) are acts of incumbent on the corporate as a whole. That is how these acts differ from the acts of worship in [2] above here, wherein the benefactor was an individual. Of course, here too, the knowledgeable leader is the benefactor of the “ten” who do not know these תּוֹסִים בְּרֵחַת, even though these תּוֹסִים are incumbent on the בְּרֵחַת as a whole. Besides מַלְכוּת מָלָא and תּוֹסִים, these acts are concretizations of בְּרֵחַת.

[6] ... כָּרָה ... כָּרָה ... (531:2 f.)—This story indicates that the folk were obliged to rely primarily on the Rabbis to lead in corporate liturgical acts. The prayers and the תּוֹסִים were still fluid, i.e., the content was more or less fixed but not the language, and the leader was, therefore, to a degree, creative. See J. Heinemann המַעֲלָה, p. 34. On the other hand, many Rabbis, as in the case of R. Elazar, did not feel that it was their function also to act
They felt that it was sufficient for them to be scholars, teachers and judges. They may also have felt that they did not have stylistic gifts or the quasi-poetic ability to inspire a mood of prayer or thanksgiving. Notice how R. Elazar appears simply to accept the forms given him by R. Akiba, for he certainly must have known the Keri'at Shema' and the content of the Tefillah.

[5] The word אֶפֶלּוּ (ם,): ר' נחמן indicates that he taught them the forms, for, again, they must have known the content of the Tefillah, etc., though evidently the בָּרַכָּת חוֹניָּם (ם,): ר' and the בָּרַכָּת אָבִלִּים (ם,): ר' were not familiar.

XXIII.5 (532:3 f.)

[1] The burden of the various taxes imposed was so great that it made for hopelessness. Only a steadfast trust in redemption by God could overcome such hopelessness, a feeling that this redemption might come in their day. But the tax burden was no doubt a cause for emigration from Palestine.

[2] The concepts are: God's love, אָבִדָה, and אָבָדָה. Awareness of God's love despite present conditions is expressed in the term אָבָדָה, and trust in redemption in the latter part of Ps. 25:15.

[3] involvs first the punishment or extermination of neighboring enemies. The concepts are: מַדְרֶשֶׁת, מַדְרֶשֶׁת, מַדְרֶשֶׁת and מַדְרֶשֶׁת.

XXIII.6 (533:8 f.)

The joy of doing a מ祖先 does not contradict the legal principle that מ祖先 were not given as a means of acquiring enjoyment.
The fragrance of the flower is associated with the entire flower, and so because of the metaphor (534:1) Israel as a whole will be redeemed. The metaphor completely expresses the idea that the וַיִּדְרִיס and Israel as a whole are a single corporate personality.

**XXIII.7 (535:1)**

This interpretation of Cant. 2:2 patently contradicts the interpretation of the same verse at 527:7, an instance of the organismic character of rabbinic thought. The concept of הָדוֹס is embodied at 527:7 but not here.

The parable inserts the idea of the danger inherent in an evil environment.

**XXIII.8 (536:7 f.)**

A halakic interpretation of Job 37:21, but following this is a haggadic interpretation of the same verse. An instance of the interrelation of Halakah and Haggadah.

**XXIII.9 (538:5 ff.)**

Interprets עליה in Lev. 18:2 and in ibid., 4, to refer to מֵדֶר הָדוֹס. It operated in the past and will do so in the future.

Relates to Israel. The source in Sifra, ed. Weiss, 85c, reads here: לִפְרוּ לִפְרוּ כָּנָשִׁיםּ. There is here the emphasis on the universality of God’s justice.

The same formula as at 539:1, but now it is applied to individuals, and further, not only in punishment but also in reward—emphasis on the individual.
XXIII.10 (542:1 f.)

[1] There is a new idea here, and hence it probably is an independent midrash connected with the preceding one through association of ideas.

[2] The midrash here is an instance of indeterminacy of belief. There are other instances of this kind of belief also involving midrashim at variance with the Bible. See, for example, CA, pp. 212 f. On indeterminacy of belief, see RM, pp. 131 ff.

XXIII.11 (543:5 ff.)

[1] —Stands for יְצֵר הָרְעָה, the personification of the evil impulses. Here the יְצֵר הָרְעָה is personalized with respect to the different individuals named. For the full term, see 544:3 and subsequently in this passage; the biblical antecedent is: יְצֵר לְבֵן הָאָדָם רֹעַ מְנוּנָיו (Gen. 8:21). The good impulses are personified in the term יְצֵר הָטָה (see Jastrow, Dictionary, s.v. יְצֵר), but see our next comment.

[2] —This phrase implies that the personification of the יְצֵר הָרְעָה goes so far as to be conceived as a being. The יְצֵר הָגָד, however, is seldom so vividly personified.

[3] —So vivid is the personification that the words of the oath itself to the יְצֵר הָרְעָה are discerned in Gen. 39:9.

[4] —An even stronger indication that the קִסְּרוּת לֶבַע יְצֵר הָרְעָה, was conceived of as a being, for one authority regards the oath as primarily having been given to a human being. The personification is an imaginative means of making vivid a strong temptation. It is a dramatic, even poetic metaphor so often employed as to take on an almost casual character, and yet not an altogether prosaic literalness. Other personifications are Middat Raḥamim, Middat Ha-Din and Keneset Yisra'el.
XXIII.12 (545:5 ff.)

[1] . . . למדת (545:5)—This is perhaps an extreme example of the rabbinic emphasis on the inward life. There is an emphasis on the inward life in the sphere of morals, not only in religious experience (on the latter, see OT, p. 224; RM, p. 167.)

[2] תרנוזו . . . למדת (546:1)—The child has facial features testifying to the sin of the adulterous couple; their sin is hence publicized and thus is a manifestation of God's justice. The concepts here are: sin, God's justice, and וס.

[3] למדת . . . למדת (547:2)—This is a striking instance of a parable which is not a real analogy. The referent says that the facial features of the child publicize the adulterer's sin. The parable, however, indicates that it is the sinner who is confronted with his sin. Since the referent or general statement is also given here: והי הנהו צר (547:4) as the conclusion, the parable adds to this idea that the sinner himself is made to face his sin. (On the character of parables, see CA, pp. 51, 252.)

[4] חותמה . . . חותמה (547 f.)—The teaching here is that the conception and development of the embryo are וס, not only the changing of the features of the child to publicize the sin of the adulterer.

[5] מחותם חותם שלימיו (548:2)—Notice that this idea is involved with the concept of וס here, characterizing the conceiving of the child a וס by God, which is then to be altered by another וס. It is an auxiliary idea having only a specific function, and it is absorbed, so to speak, by the concept of וס. Incidentally, the parable (נתחוס המלך, 547:7) is again not altogether at one with the ומשל.

[6] ענית נגדי (4)—The husband, since he is, after all, the father of the child, and the adulterer, since the child's facial features do resemble his features (Lieberman in a conversation).
XXIII.13 (548:6)

[1]  תורת ארץ . . . מתיישב ותוחלת עיניך—Isa. 33:17 continues with and that is taken to refer to the World to Come; the promised reward of גליי שבים is to be in the World to Come. Refraining from illicit sight will be rewarded ultimately by blissful sight.

Chapter XXIV

XXIV.1 (549:2 ff.)

[1]  המרת הדין . . . עמל הרשעין במשפת . . . הינו . . . נשמה (:2 f.)—The concepts of קרוש השם קרוש השם קק in which God Himself sanctifies His Name when He punishes the רשע (:4). That manifestation of God’s justice magnifies His Name in the world, i.e., He is acknowledged everywhere and everybody recognizes His holiness.

[2]  התנכלתיו והתקדשתי (:3)—The two words here are taken as equivalents. On the close relation of these biblical verses to the crystallized rabbinic concept, see CA, pp. 247 f.

XXIV.2 (550:3 ff.)

[1]  רכתי . . . בצלושונ : (3 f.)—An instance of the interrelation of Halakah and Haggadah, the halakah being in Ber. IX.5.

[2]  On מיר הפורענות (:6) and מיר הפורענות (551:1), see RM, p. 219, n. 73. This is followed by interpretations of other verses in Psalms in a similar vein; all such interpretations are instances of the same interrelation of Halakah and Haggadah. This haggadah attributes the ideas contained in these berakot to David.

[3]  אמר ר', תחתום . . . בך כר (:5) דרר . . . אמר (551:4)—Assumed here is the rule of interpretation in which מרת הדין (:5)
and מְדַבֶּר רְוָאִים (:6). However, this is not an ironclad rule, as can be seen in the succeeding and in the preceding interpretations where מְדַבֶּר רְוָאִים מְדַבֶּר הָודִין refers to both מְדַבֶּר רְוָאִים and מְדַבֶּר הָודִין.

[4] יד וו... וו אַמָּר רִי הָודִין (:9 f.)—Here the rule of interpretation is applied. God’s love is given added expression here in the idea that He took counsel with His court of justice and He did this so that someone might, perhaps, make a plea in defense (see our next comment).

[5] רהו... עֶיֶר (552:1)—In view of the teaching of Abot IV.8, 22 that God is the sole judge, the notion of a heavenly court is a matter of indeterminacy of belief (but see also Duran, מְדַבֶּר אֵבוֹת on Abot IV. 8.)

[6] קרַשֶּׁה (553:2)—קרַשֶּׁה is not only distinctiveness, high status, but also the imitation of God in acts of love (see RM, pp. 169 f.)

**XXIV.3** (553:4 ff.)

A folklore story despite the fact that it is told as the experience of an individual. It is unusual in two respects: The demon originally dwelling there is not a harmful one, whereas demons usually are. Furthermore, a value concept, מְדַבֶּר רְוָאִים, is embodied in the idea of divine help, and this idea is the concluding thought of the entire story. Usually demons are not brought into the category of significance. The bit of dried blood (חרם ורַמָּה, 554:7) reflects a belief in the physical constitution of demons; also that demons may engage in combat with one another.

**XXIV.4** (555:6 f.)

[1] מַכֵּרַשׁ... עֵיתֵי (556:6 f.)—This midrash refers to the Days of the Messiah (בדא עִיתֵי, :6) since one of the things that will take place will be the sounding of the shofar (556:2).

[2] מַכֵּרַשׁ וְעֶיִּשָּׁה (556:4-5)—The commentaries differ on the meaning of these two phrases (comp. מַכֵּרַשׁ וְעֶיִּשָּׁה and מַכֵּרַשׁ וְעֶיִּשָּׁה). Does not the passage itself, however, continue with an explanatory
statement? Both phrases refer to the imitation of God, and the two phrases thus relate to the two aspects of holiness implied in קדושת יוהו (7):

Michelle מְצוּיעָה מְצוּיעָה (4) is explained by the word מְצוּיעָה (6), that is, by requiring that Israel “separate” themselves from what is impure and defiling (among them the cardinal sins); and מְצוּיעָה מְצוּיעָה (5) relates, apparently, to the positive acts implied in מְצוּיעָה יוהו, namely, to imitation of God in acts of loving kindness. Cf. Schechter, “Aspects of Rabbinic Theology,” pp. 203 ff., and WE, p. 228.

XXIV.5 (557:1 f.)

[1] הב . . . תニー (1)—This פְּרֵשׁה (Lev. XIX) was taught by Moses to Israel, according to this interpretation, in such a way as to differentiate between it and other sections, פְּרֵשׁה (1) (see ראְבִּיד on the parallel in Sifra, ed. Weiss, 86c). The presentation in an “all-inclusive assembly” is obviously a device for emphasizing the laws thus taught. We have, then, a form of emphasis we have not hitherto discussed. (On emphasis as a feature of organismic thought, see WE, pp. 11 ff., 26 ff.) But emphasis, especially in Halakah, does not rule out what is not emphasized. The other laws were also regarded as having been taught by Moses to the people, although not in an all-inclusive assembly. The concepts are: ישראל; תהלמו תורה; יהוה.

[2] ראְבִּיד (2)—According to ראְבִּיד, l.c., this section is so characterized: מְצוּיעָה הב מצוה תורה תורה צוֹעֵשׁ שֶׁל שִׁלשֶׁשׁ רֹשֶׁשֶׁת—thus the reason for the all-inclusive assembly was not only the major character of the laws but also their large number (see also David Halivni, Mekorot Umsorot, II, 591 f.).

[3] כַּמָּר (2 f.)—Another reason for the all-inclusive assembly. יִפְרֶשׁ explains that just as the Ten Commandments were given by God at an all-inclusive assembly, so this section containing them was so taught by Moses; but the manner of giving them originally was obviously an emphasis. The concepts here are: ישראל; תהלמו תורה; מֶּתֶנ תְּוָדָה; יהוה.
The same number of מִצְוֹת in the three sections apparently implies that no one of these sections is emphasized more than the others. Thus, this midrash seems to say that the section on קרֵשֶׁת חָוִי (:4) was not given a special emphasis, contrary to the point made in the preceding midrashim.

XXIV.6 (559:1 f.)

[1] One of the aspects of the idea of קרֵשֶׁת (:2) is “separateness,” to separate oneself (see 556:6-7, קרֵשֶׁת ...). In the present section this aspect of the idea is established on the basis of biblical verses that concern refraining from unchastity or prohibited sex relations (חרתו, :2). The concepts involved are: מִצְוֹת (חרתָו) and קרֵשֶׁת. This demonstration also allows us to recognize that this idea of קרֵשֶׁת is already inherent in the biblical meaning of the word.

[2] The lesson is drawn from the contiguity of the biblical section on מִצְוֹת (:1) to the section on קרֵשֶׁת (:1). If such contiguity occurs in various contexts, the demonstration of contiguity is really a demonstration that the contexts indicate that refraining from מִצְוֹת is characterized as קרֵשֶׁת, and this is the case with the juxtaposition of verses introduced by the phrase נַעֲרָי מִצְוֹת (560:4).

[3] This characterization is not only rabbinic but was prevalent among the folk at large, as is to be seen from the instance מִצְוֹת וּמִצְוָה (560:1) and its implication. (On מִצְוָה, see מִצְוָה.)

[4] The various contexts here reveal that the Bible itself links the prohibitions of prohibited sexual relations with קרֵשֶׁת; in other words, that one aspect of קרֵשֶׁת is related to separateness, to abstention from some act. Already in the Bible, then, קרֵשֶׁת has an ethical connotation, whatever other connotations it may have. That is, the ethical is not something developed later.
XXIV.7 (561:1ff.)

[1] Ami, R. Shemot (2:561:1 ff.)—This midrash interprets Deut. 23:15 as can be seen in the sequel, and it is given here because of an association of ideas.

The printed editions have, correctly, הבט או ירוש המ. The idea of ירוש in the parable suggests or implies that ונין: The parable adds something to the interpretation itself; it puts more explicitly the idea that God may leave them.

ננינל המ ונין המ (562:2)—The word ירוש indicates that this was regarded as ונין (on moral ונין, see WE, p. 228). ונין המ is the regular value concept.

XXIV.8 (562:9ff.)

[1] Two midrashim on Lev. 19:2 and ibid., 20:7 by the same authority. Even the same authority can teach different interpretations of the same verse, and even consecutively. Thus, no interpretation is more authoritative than another. In Haggadah the text is a non-determining stimulus (cf. RM, pp. 71 ff., especially p. 72 f.). However, in the present case, as we shall see, in both midrashim by בה וה, the interpretations of Lev. 19:2 and Lev. 20:7 are practically the same.

[2] בה וה (9)—The parable indicates that the קרישה involved is that of self-control, withdrawal. In contrast to the application, however, it emphasizes reward, thus suggesting, too, that the קרישה is also of an added, mystical kind, a kind that is itself a reward.

In hierarchical holiness, the awareness that one thing possessed more of קרישה than another almost gave to קרישה a character of substantiality. The idea that Israel possessed two קרישה (563:7) has a similar connotation, for here too, the thought is that Israel has more of קרישה, is holier than the angels, the latter having only קרישה את (6). Unlike the purely mystical hierarchical holiness, however, קרישה here also has a moral connotation, namely abstaining, withdrawal.
Here then, two phases of קדושה reinforce each other. Though possessing several phases, קדושה is, after all, a single concept. (See who suggests that the second קדושה relates to abstaining from what is legally permitted.)

(564:3) - The angels praise God by proclaiming daily שלש קדושת and these prayers are called "crowns" (comp. דּוּלָה, p. 175, on "ב”). They do not, of course, thereby create קדושה. However, when God confers two of these "crowns" on Israel, the crowns are no longer simply praises but mystical קדושה, as in the preceding midrash by the same authority, . That is why the prooftexts of Lev. 19:2 and 20:7 are appropriate here as well.

XXIV.9 (564:6 ff.)

[1] מַנְפֵּרֵך אָתָץ (6 f.) - This is a daring passage. It teaches that there is a status relationship between God and Israel, and that this status relationship consists of the hierarchical relationship of קדושה in which God's holiness is greater (קדושת לְמַעֲלָה מֵכְרַשְׁתַּבכּו, 565:5). But this teaching also indicates how wrong it is to speak of the remoteness of God to man in rabbinic thought. This midrash is, of course, characterized by indeterminacy of belief, for in the two preceding midrashim it is God who confers holiness upon Israel and no status relationship is involved. The derivation of the idea of status relationship from the words employed in the description of the relation of Pharaoh to Joseph serves almost in the same manner as a parable about a king and his minister.

[2] לְמַעֲלָה אֲנֵי שלחביי - There will be 글ָלי שְׁבוּעָה when there will be the עצהל. The other concepts are: מְרוּד, נְבֵר, יְשָׂרַיָּל, יְמֹת הָמשׁי, יְמֹת הָיְמִים (the period of redemption and exaltation of Israel).
Chapter XXV

XXV.1 (566:6 ff.)

[1] עַלְעוֹת בַּהֲדָתָה וּלַמְּזוּצוֹת (566:6 ff.)—In this interpretation לָמְזוֹזוֹת refers to those who themselves study Torah.

[2] וְהָקַשְׁתָּן (567:2)—The keeping of the מִזְמוֹת constitutes the מֵתוֹת. The words of Torah are taught by God, but you must deserve such teaching by keeping the מֵתוֹת מִזְמוֹת. Note מִזְמוֹת (2) here is merit acquired by oneself, and thus there is an emphasis on the individual, whereas in מֵתוֹת זָכַר מֵתוֹת אבֵי מֵתוֹת the Merit of the Fathers, the מֵתוֹת is that of the ancestors. However, because of being united with them in a corporate personality, we are rewarded for their deeds.

[3] הָקַשְׁתָּן (567:4) and מִזְמוֹת (567:5)—The parable speaks of an amulet but that does not mean that the words of Torah are likened to an amulet. The מִזְמוֹת “gives” automatic protection and is magic or perhaps is folklore science. It is the idea of protection that prompts the parable, but no more than that.

[4] עַלְעוֹת בַּהֲדָת (568:2 ff.)

Doubling the amount of Torah does not act as a talisman. By studying Torah more than was his wont, a man is indeed likely to repent sincerely, for study of Torah implicates conduct and molds character, and repentance, always avails.
By being a civic leader and a dispenser of public charity he can be the one who helps to support those who are engaged in study of Torah, and thus, in a sense have a share in such study. Apparently the consciousness of vicarious study also leads to true repentance and makes him committed to proper conduct. Note that the words נמיים (569:2) and מזוהים (3) are taken to mean “to support” or “maintain” (see רדיל). The concepts are: נמי and זקה.

Outweighing study of Torah and teaching it and observing מצוה is the failure to protest against wrong deeds and to support scholars. Support of scholars concretizes a combination of the concepts of זקה and תלוים. The concept concretized in admonition or protesting against wrong deeds is מזוהה (or תוהה; the denigration of the failure to concretize מזוהה or תוהה emphasizes them.

XXV.2 (570:1 ff.)

This is connected with the previous midrashim because here, too, those who maintain or support scholars studying Torah are extolled. Again, the emphasis is on the combination of the concepts of תלוים וזרקה.

On מצוה in the sense of זרקה, see דברים רבה, ed. Lieberman, p. 36, n. 10.

 REGARDED as existing in the present, apparently, and not a sub-concept of מדרד; also here, the concept of עולם הנאת.

Difficult, for he did not say so in the name of his brother (see the suggestion of רדיל).

Concept of מזר.

The verse is addressed to מבולן (571:3)—The concept here is מזר. The concept is ביוולן.

The word is taken to refer to the tents of מבולן since the verse is addressed to him. מבולן here may well be a symbol for study of Torah, something made possible by מבולן and hence attributed to him.
PART THREE: CHAPTERS XXI–XXIX

[4] Based on the preceding midrash which tells of the support of הרכה for בכר, thus enabling רכש to study Torah. Here, however, the reward is military victory, even when they are only half-hearted.

[5] This is an independent interpretation of Lev. 19:23, the verse with which the preceding section begins. There is really no connection between this midrash and the preceding midrashim. As we have shown at the beginning of this commentary, unless a compositional form of some kind unites interpretations, every interpretation is a unit in itself. The preceding interpretations here too are independent of each other intrinsically, although several emphasized the same combination of the concepts of מזרחי and עזרה. The concepts here are: ממ (those given Adam), and now יי and ישראל.

XXV.3 (572:5 f.)

[1] We have here the idea of the otherness of God, not strictures on anthropomorphism. Had the Rabbis here exhibited an aversion to anthropomorphism, they could not have gone on to say that God engaged in planting trees, surely an anthropomorphism. The idea of God’s otherness is taught here to indicate that something is conveyed by Deut. 13:8 that is not the literal meaning of the verse (see RM, pp. 303 ff., especially pp. 320 f.)

[2] Israel is to imitate God in planting trees immediately after entering the Land, before doing anything else, just as God planted trees in Eden before creating the world.

Often the idea of imitation of God is the imitation by man of God’s acts of lovingkindness, but here, in fact, all this is gratuitous for God’s act was to plant trees in Eden first, before the creation of the world, and it was this act of planting trees first which Israel was to imitate on entering the Land. If the planting took place
before the creation of the world, it was not ֶנֶתֶל הָטֶרֶם toward
the world. The concept here is ֶדֶרֶךְ אֲרֵץ, specifically its second
phase concerned with practical wisdom (see WE, p. 40). Fruit
trees do not bear fruit for a number of years after planting, and
hence it is wise to plant them immediately upon entering the
Land. The idea of the midrash is related to the familiar one that
תורָהּ אֲרֵץ.

XXV.4 (573:7f.)

[1] ֶלַאֹבָתה הָדָרָשְׁתִים (574:1)—Referring to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as
indicated in Deut. 6:10. The phrase implies that others after these
are also called ֶאָבָות.

XXV.5 (575:3ff.)

[1] ֶהָדְרִים וְתֵעֲדוֹת (:3 f.)—Again the same verse, Lev. 19:23, is
interpreted as teaching that when Israel enters the Land, they are
to do the planting themselves. In the Wilderness, all their needs
were supplied by God, the midrash points out. The concepts here
are: God’s love, Israel, and ֶדֶרֶךְ אֲרֵץ (in its first phase). The parable
implies that God supplied Israel’s needs in the Wilderness because
their own efforts could not have availed them.

[2] ֶלֶא . . . ֶאָדָרִים (576:5-579:7)—The story is given here because
it enlarges not only on the need for planting trees, but because it
exalts that activity. Here the concept of ֶדֶרֶךְ אֲרֵץ is linked with
גֶּפֶן הָטֶרֶם, for the old man plants for his descendants.

ֶדֶרֶךְ אֲרֵץ (577:5)—The first phase of ֶדֶרֶךְ אֲרֵץ is
thus here given an ethical turn. The concept of God’s justice is
embodied in the reward given the old man, he himself being
enabled to eat of the fruit of the trees he planted in his old age,
and in the gift given him by the king. The incident of the neighbor
apparently is told to indicate that it was not the gift of fruit by the
old man that counted but his fine conduct in general. The role
played by the wicked Hadrian here is puzzling for his relations to
the old man express the attitude of a pious man.
XXV.6 (579:8 ff.)

[1] This material is given here because Lev. 19:23 is a factor in the interpretation. The section illustrates the fact that midrashim are intrinsically independent. Concerned with Abraham, the “proper” place of this midrash would be with the interpretations of the verses relating to Abraham. However, since it is an independent entity, it can be placed anywhere, so long as there is some association of ideas. Here, the two kinds of עֵרֶל הָאָדָם constitute the association.

[2] כלין ... (580:2)—On the other hand, there is also the idea that Abraham observed “even the Rabbinical injunctions.” (See Ginzberg, Legends, I, p. 292.)

[3] עִלְיוֹן ... על בין ... (4)—Always associated with כָּדוּרָה (4) is the concept of כָּדוּרָה, and had Shem been the person from whom כָּדוּרָה descended it would mean that holiness would not be limited in mankind to Israel alone. Abraham, as Patriarch, is regarded as being within Israel. But כָּדוּרָה has an ethical as well as a mystical character. Shem is described here as lacking in proper reverence for God.

XXV.7 (582:8 f.)

XXV.8 (583:3 ff.)

[1] מִצְוָטִים ... (4)—Since no explanation is given, this can only be a mystical idea in which the words of Torah are felt to be the very foundation of the world. This idea is related to Abot I.2.

[2] פָּרָשָׁה שֵׁל הַתּוֹרָה נָרָתוּר לָפִינָנוּ לֶאַהֲרִימְנָנוּ (584:3)—A connection is to be found between a given passage and the one preceding it; likewise, another connection between the given passage and the one following it. This principle does not really limit the character of the Bible text as a non-determining stimulus to haggadic interpretations, for the passages by themselves can give rise to any number of interpretations.
[3] לְעֵתִי לַבּוֹא (585:3)—Apparently refers here to the term מִיתָה (notice the term at 587:1). Since they are not punished בַּעֲלֶם הָוהֵיה (587:2), this means that רְיָיוֹן, the place of such punishment, will be not after death but לְעֵתִי לַבּוֹא (587:3).

[4] עֹבֵרָה מְצוֹה... שִׁמְעַה רְדוֹחַ (586:7)—The concepts here are: עֹבֵרָה, מְצוֹה, and קְרֵשֵׁת (נְדוֹד). By implication also תָּמְאָא, the holiness of the fruits of the fourth year. The observance of עֲרָלָה points up Israel’s dereliction in analogous matters.

[5] רְבּוֹן... לַמְּסִיָּה לְרָבָּן (586:4)—As against the opinion of רְבּוֹן... לַמְּסִיָּה implies that Saul was not worthy enough to have God Himself provide him (Saul) with a sword; two different opinions of Saul.

[6] לְעֵתִי לַבּוֹא... יְרוּם (587:1)—As we have pointed out, there is a close bond between the prophets and the Rabbis (RM, 291 f., 299, 300). The Rabbis crystallize here in a single term לְעֵתִי לַבּוֹא, what the prophets speak of more concretely. These definite details indicate that the Rabbis had in mind מִיתָה מְמַשֵּׁה.

Chapter XXVI

XXVI.1 (587:5 ff.)

[1] מַהֲרָה יָמָה... מְלֹךְ עֲלָם (588:4)—Since His power is eternal, what He says will come to pass. The concept is מַהֲרָה (588:4). “Truth” here means that what He says will be actualized, will prove to be true.

[2] שִׁוְרוֹתוֹ. רִיָּרוּ... פֶּרֶשׁ הָוהָא (588:5 f.)—The concept here is an aspect of purity, since the word in the verse being interpreted is בָּעָדַרְדָּה (588:5). Even in ordinary description or conversation, “unseemly” words ought to be avoided. Also, begin with the “pure” even if you must also speak of the impure or unclean—there is extreme sensitiveness in speech. The concept of שִׁוְרוֹת, so often ritualistic, extends here to a kind of moral sensibility. We
take it that what they say of God here implies an ideal for man. We thus have here an indication of how necessary it is for the understanding of a midrash to be aware of the concept informing it. By identifying the concept embodied in these homilies as מְצוּיָה, we learn that an aspect or phase of this concept concerns moral sensitivity, though usually the concept has a ritualistic connotation. We show elsewhere that there is no real dichotomy between the ritualistic and the ethical (OT, pp. 102 ff.).

XXVI.2 (589:6 ff.)

[1] Purity in study of Torah and keenness in studying are outweighed by ר"מ דר ו"טיט .. . בימי דוד .. . מברכים .. 

[2] Tattoo (Ps. 12:7).  נו תינב  תיבה י"טרכינ  (590:1)—Not only informers fell in battle but also those who were free from לֹשֶׁךְ הָרֶעֶשׁ, an instance of corporate justice in which the righteous of the generation were punished too, along with the wicked. Corporate justice implies a corporate personality. The concepts here are: בַּהוּא שְׁכִינָה .. . וָכַהוֹת שְׁכִינָה .. . שְׁכִינָה מְבָנִינוֹת (7:7)—Pure from sexual sin, hence the study is characterized as אמַרְתָּת צְרָחְרָת (Ps. 12:7).

[3] Idolatry is a heinous sin, yet here it is outweighed by the refraining from ו"זרכו  ע"ז .. . ו"זרכו  ע"ז (8:8)—This further emphasizes ethical conduct and now extols refraining from לֹשֶׁךְ הָרֶעֶשׁ and from acting as informers. The emphasis on the ethical is an emphatic trend in rabbinic thought (see OT, pp. 245 f.).

[4] Folklore-like parallel between א"ר שְׁמוֹאֶל .. . ו"זרכו  ע"ז (591:3 ff.)—Folklore-like parallel between and the poisonous snake preceded, through an association of ideas, by other folklore-like notions about the snake.

In folklore, analogies play an important role, even if the
analogy is the result of a metaphor, as here. The metaphor of דרו
עור בעל טל (591:4) is an imaginative analogy to the literal שעה
(5:3), a mixture of biblical narrative and folklore, for “they” hold
converse with the snake.

אמרו (5)—The snake accounts for his peculiarity by asserting that he is the instrument of God’s justice, a rabbinic idea.

ברא ... מפרי (:7 f.)—Now there is a parallel between the bite of a snake and עלות, a parallel drawn by the snake. He implies that the בעל שלוש (592:1) is more reprehensible.

יהלמה נקראת (2)—Here the parallel becomes a kind of characterization. עלות is called the “third tongue,” a reference to the snake who was regarded as having a three-forked tongue (see Lieberman here, p. 878, and his Hellenism etc., pp. 191 f.). This anatomical “observation” is folklore science as is evidenced from its use in Targum Jonathan, a Targum intended for the Aramaic-speaking masses. However, this term is interpreted here and given valuational content: עלות הרעה slays three—the victim, him who utters it and him who accepts it, and God’s justice punishes the latter two.

והוא מיתת (593:1 f.)—Four concretizations of God’s justice are given here, each one accounting for the slaying of נבר. The first one embodies also the concept of שפוחת דמי; the second, the concept of כבוד, honor; the third, the concept of פיסת (593:5). The last one is connected tangentially to ועלות, for his sin was that he should have protested to Saul against the killing of the inhabitants of נבר, but did not do so.

XXVI.3 (594:3 f.)

ההו הרעה (595:1)—The concept is הרעה, for the verse interpreted declares נבר אמורו פרשת דמח (Ps. 12:7). Notice that here הרעה refers, as usual, to ritual matters, whereas the concretization of the concept at 588:4 f. is an ethical matter (see our comment at 588:5).
XXVI.4 (595:3 ff.)

1. In contrast to the order “above” in which, at a certain season, the day borrows from the night and at another season, the night borrows from the day, and all this by a “word” alone, without discussion, the borrowing by men incurs making and validating promissory notes and much discussion. The ideal is represented by the order “above,” and men are manifestly inferior. The concepts here are: דַּרְךָ אָרֶץ (first phase of it, WE, p. 39) and יד.

XXVI.5 (596:5 ff.)

1. Epilepsy was treated by the doctors with an amulet, and those affected were also warned to keep away from cemeteries. Because of the involvement of doctors and psychological factors, this treatment ought probably to be regarded as folklore science, rather than magic.

2. Though very much akin to the two midrashim at 562:9 ff., this passage has a different character. There the concept of קרושה plays a large role; here it is not even embodied. As a result, there is no implication here that Israel is holier than the angels. The omission here of the concept of קרושה in the thought of the midrash seems to be deliberate, for the text containing the concept, Dan. 4:14, is used here as well as above. The concepts emphasized in the present passage are: מלואות and man.
[1] Although related to III.6 (pp. 70 f.), this midrash has not been affected by it since the concepts are different.

[2] "רואת עת (=8)—The concept is רואת עת. The verse here is sufficient to teach that he possessed רואת עת.

רשע (8)—The concept is רשע, referring to the content of the רshaw; his reward for רשע.

נֵנָּנָה שֵׁמֶשׁ (598:1) — An instance of corporate personality for it was the merit of Aaron alone that was thus rewarded. The concepts here are: מַרְתֶּךָ מְדָרָת חָיִים combined with מַרְתֶּךָ רְשֵׁעָה.

נֵנָּנָה וּנְמוּת (8)—The concept is נֵנָּנָה, and this concept has two obverses, נֵנָּנָה and נֵנָּנָה וּנְמוּת. The need for נֵנָּנָה implicates here the concept of נֵנָּנָה וּנְמוּת. The priests are obliged to observe נֵנָּנָה since they are holy and not to be defiled by נֵנָּנָה וּנְמוּת. Their holiness thus does not depend on their primary function as priests at the Temple worship and hence their distinction is basically related to נֵנָּנָה וּנְמוּת (8). This distinction remains even though the Temple worship no longer exists.

XXVI.7 (598:3 ff.)

[1] This section is devoted largely to Saul’s recourse to אוב ודיעני (599:1, 600:9). The concept that interprets אוב ודיעני is אוב ודיעני, or rather, a phase or an aspect of it, for there is no idol involved. Furthermore, this phase or aspect of אוב ודיעני is regarded as having efficacy. Both the biblical and the rabbinic narratives tell of how Samuel is “brought up” and holds converse with Saul, whereas idols are usually characterized as powerless (see CA, p. 95). In the Bible, the prohibition against Moloch worship is followed by a similar prohibition against אוב ודיעני, obviously because they are regarded as of the same character (Lev. 20:2–6). The injunction is not limited to these two things. In a list of prohibited practices and practitioners which includes Moloch-practice and אוב ודיעני, the מַעָּשֶׁה, sorcerer, is also included (Deut.
18:10–11). However, the Rabbis employ not only this term but the abstract noun בישות, as well (e.g., Sanh. 56b), and this means that they possessed a conceptual term for a form of ברזים, sorcery, is thus a sub-concept of ברזים רוח in our nomenclature. (On the distinction between a phase and a sub-concept, see RM, pp. 16–17.)

[2] בהנה (3) — The conjunction of Lev. 20:27 and Lev. 21:1 is here accounted for. They are related for they are made to refer to two of Saul’s sins, the former to his traffic with ברזים, and the latter, to his killing of the priests of יהוה. Involved also is God’s omniscience, His foreknowledge, an auxiliary idea, since it does not possess a rabbinic term (see RM, pp. 53 ff., p. 220) and is always in the service of a genuine value concept. In this case it serves the value concepts of sin and God’s justice.

[3] תמיד עשה (600:1) here is practical wisdom. The lesson is: do not set out on a journey accompanied by only one person (a servant).


[5] מנה ייעו (601:4) — These details suggest that this form of necromancy was regarded as genuine even though illegitimate. Additional details are given at 59 f. (לאה שלשה ... אל שמדה ראור). Evidently it gave rise to its own folklore.

[6] רבי חזון (602:6 f.) — All the verses quoted embody the concept of חוות.

[7] עלית בלשנה (605:6 f.) — Saul could have escaped and, indeed, could have been victorious in battle, but he chose death and defeat, thereby demonstrating his repentance and acknowledging God’s justice. He also earned the reward, therefore, of being, together with his sons, in Samuel’s division in חנף. At the end of his life Saul thus emerges as a זריך.

[8] חוות ודע (8) — Concept of חכום, acknowledging God’s justice. Involved in this acknowledgment is חשון, repentance.
Hence God forgave him for “that sin” (see ‘Erub. 53b and Rashi there). God’s forgiveness is an aspect of the resurrection. The passage utilizes here this earlier midrash, and this also implies that the entire idea of the passage is early. God’s forgiveness reflects a belief that the souls of the righteous ascend after death to עליי נין, and that there are divisions there according to degrees of merit. The hereafter concepts are beliefs rather than value concepts (see RM, pp. 364 f.).

The angels serve as background against which God’s love is stressed, as they often do elsewhere. Angelology has the function of supplying value concepts with vivid concretizations.

Here it means fear of the evil eye, but it also often means avoiding even the semblance of wrongdoing (see Jastrow s.v. מאריאת).

“Joy” here means whole-hearted acceptance of God’s punishment being visited upon him. Implied is whole-souled תשובה. Compare the way in which “joy” affects obligatory matters.

Five sins are enumerated by the midrash, whereas the verses (I Chron. 10:13-14) apparently mention only two (see רדומך). The midrash stresses the concept of God’s justice, Saul’s death and defeat being thus fully deserved. This is an example of the combination of value concepts. If Saul’s sins and punishment are all foreseen by God, were then his sins not foreordained? In a religious philosophy this would be a major problem. But rabbinic thought is not philosophy; it is concerned with experiential concepts, and God’s omniscience is not a value concept, not a crystallization of experience. Not represented by a conceptual term, it is an auxiliary idea serving here the value concepts of הרימש and הרמימ. Furthermore, since rabbinic thought is not philosophy but is concerned with experience, it is experience which is decisive and not logic. Thus, though there are “contradictory” concepts such as הרימש and הרמימ, both are crystallized representations of experience, and none of these
matters are built up by logical casuistry. The pattern of value concepts is indifferent to logical contradictions in Haggadah. In other versions of this midrash, it is Adam, not Moses, to whom God shows all the generations that are to come, their leaders, etc. There the idea of God's foreknowledge is in the service of the concept of Man, ד"ר (see Ber. R. XXIV.2, ed. Theodor, p. 231, and the notes there; see also Nahmanides, Commentary on Gen. 5:2).

XXVI.8 (608:4 ff.)

[1] ויהי Rousse ... כל ומכו ... (4)—This is one of a number of similar statements implying that Midrash Haggadah is already inherent, as a method, in the Bible. Notice that it is not confined to any one book. (Compare our remarks above on 1:4.)

[2] זדה (609:1)—An act of charity. It was needed not on his own behalf, of course, but to carry out the command.

Angelology, as we have pointed out, is always background for a value concept. Here, as often, it brings into relief God's love. Gabriel waited patiently while the coals were being dimmed in his handfuls, for six years, thinking that Israel might do תשובה, and decided finally, when they had not, to throw the still glowing coals on them and to destroy them utterly. But God made him desist, saying that there were among them men who do זדה with one another.

Only some men among them do זדה with one another, but all are to be spared. Another instance of corporate personality as all of Israel is spared because of the virtuous acts of some.

ד"ר (610:1)—Charity, is regarded here as a quality or activity of God which not only man but also angels are expected to imitate, for it is as necessary for relations among עלונים (609:8) as for relations among men. Ps. 71:19 is given in answer to בהו (:1).

The זדה of God is expressed in His charity or mercy as it overcomes מות והדין (:2). Notice that in...
our midrash here is regarded as the expression of God since it is God Himself who overcomes.

[3] The midrashic interpretation tells that Ahab disobeyed God, something not stated in the biblical narrative, and it thus indicates that the punishment contained in the prophecy of I Kings 20:42 was deserved. At the same time, the miraculous character of the defeat of Tzippor in the biblical narrative, and particularly the parable there in vv. 39–40, do suggest that Tzippor was not Ahab’s captive with whom he could do what he pleased. In concretizing the concept of sin, therefore, the midrashic interpretation makes explicit what is implied in the biblical narrative.

[4] The value concepts here are: יוחית or יוחית, and also יוחית (611:1), the latter referring here to the people and hence a subconcept of ישראיל.

[5] An ethical mission is thus an overriding concept. The ethical concept here is הבת הדlarıyla.

XXVI.9 (611:8f.)


[2] All the priests are equally holy and the רבך is no holier than the ordinary priests. In the רבך before blessing the people, the priests say, “Who has made us holy with the קדושה of Aaron” (Sot. 39a [Num. R. XI.4]), but the term קדושה suggests that he is superior in some manner to the other priests, and if not by being more holy, then in other ways. The phenomenon in which several value concepts are concretized at one time is a feature of rabbinic thought. Situations and statements usually embody a number of value concepts (OT, pp. 192–6; RM, pp. 110 f.). An act as a whole may be interpreted by two concepts at once, as in the case of an ethical mission (WE, pp. 209 f.).
Another instance in which people have been “grasped,” so to speak, by two value concepts at once is the rabbinic statement that the former generations were recognized (RM, p. 39).

All of these concepts belong to the first phase of consisting of phenomena or modes of behavior characteristic of mankind, a purely descriptive phase (WE, pp. 19 f., 51 f.). is no exception for it refers to the counting of years, a human characteristic. A better reading is in the Tosefta, l.c., which has , since it certainly is not a matter of his being older than all the other priests.

—Read , as in Tosefta Mo’ed, l.c., and see , IV, p. 728.

The concept emphasized here is royalty.

A took place and David grew taller so that the armor fit him. David is regarded by the Rabbis as the epitome of kingship in Israel, and were his stature to remain shorter than Saul’s he would thus be inferior. Notice that Saul’s excellence was symbolized in his being taller than all his people (I Sam. 9:2).

see OT, p. 132 f., 135, 303.)

Chapter XXVII

(613:2 ff.)

—He acts toward them with “towering” love; that is, their recompense is far beyond justice. (Ps. 36:7) is taken as “Thy love.” (On as love, see OT, p. 132 f., 135, 303.)

—He acts toward them with precise, thorough-going justice.

—He acts with precise justice toward both. Another concept is also emphasized, the concept of
A CONCEPTUAL COMMENTARY ON MIDRASH LEVITICUS RABBAH

לעוהי לובא (:3, 4), for there the דיקרים (:2) will receive a “good reward” and the רענים (:3) their full punishment. The teachings of R. Ishmael and R. Akiba represent only some of the ideas of the Rabbis concerning the workings of divine justice. There are a number of other ideas on that subject expressed, for example, in the concepts of התוספות, Merit of the Fathers, and vicarious atonement, the latter two involving the idea of corporate personality.

[2] משלו (614:5)—The righteous and the wicked are designated metaphorically by their respective future dwelling places. The idea of reward, or more likely, love, is conveyed by the metaphor of the verse (Ps. 36:7) and, of punishment by the metaphor of the verse, whereas the metaphorical designations are respectively תודר העוהי, the reward itself, and רענים, the punishment itself. The concepts here are: the righteous and the wicked, לעוהי לובא, God’s love, God’s justice.

[3] גננים (615:3)—Interprets נאולה of Ezek. 31:15. This midrash reflects the kinship between valuation and art, both being aspects of the category of significance (see RM, pp. 111 f.). The cover of a גנין (615:1) is made of earthenware just as the vessel itself is made of that material, and the reason given is מפי השואא (2). The cover and the vessel are thus of the same kind, an aesthetic, not a utilitarian criterion. Similarly, it is fitting that הדור (:3) which is “darkness,” should cover the רענים (:3) who are “darkness,” in דורות (:3), which is “darkness.” The word הדור (:3), darkness, characterizes all three with a negative valuational connotation, taking on the connotation of מפתי והנני and רענים, although by itself it is a cognitive concept. The idea of fittingness is taken from the realm of art in this midrash, and employed in the realm of valuation.

[4] מעשות מבך (:6)—Since this interprets דקך (:6) of Ps. 36:7, it must refer at once to the deeds of דקך and to God’s love which is the steady concomitant of those deeds.

[6] נוהי על הפורטרנד (616:1)—The deeds of the righteous prevent what would otherwise be the effect of the deeds of the wicked. There is thus implied the idea of corporate personality, for the whole world benefits from the deeds of the righteous. In
this midrash the benefit is here and now. Compare our remarks on the workings of God’s justice at 614:1.

(1) "The world” refers to all, not only Israel apparently, as is suggested by the analogy. There are also Ḥazakim among the Gentiles.

[5] הָלְמָה (2)—The limitless reward of the righteous; interprets Ḥazak of Ps. 36:7, and hence the statement embodies a combination of God’s justice and His love.

תַעֲשֵׂה (5)—Punishment, not reward.

[6] מַעְשֶׂה שְׁלַעֲדֵיָם . . . (7)—But how is מַעְשֶׂה שְׁלַעֲדֵיָם (8) related to מַעְשֶׂה שְׁלַעֲדֵיָם (7), and how is מַעְשֶׂה שְׁלַעֲדֵיָם (9) related to מַעְשֶׂה (5) of the verse being interpreted? In the two midrashim preceding there is a relationship, since both tell of reward and punishment for deeds. This midrash, apparently on the basis of those interpretations, makes of “deeds” alone the teaching of the verse, but this means that all three midrashim were taught as they are given here. In other words, these are not fragments of sermons at all, but demonstrate that Midrash Haggadah was taught as such, probably to scholars.

(7) Based on (617:4)—By calling attention to the others, including the animals, also “remembered” by God, the midrash emphasizes God’s love.

[8] עֵלֶּה חֲנוּנִי וְשָׁם (618:2)—The pillars are given personality and thus treated “poetically”—a form of indeterminacy of belief. Poverty was regarded often, but not always, as punishment for sin (see OT, pp. 140, 196, 314 n. 56.) Again, divine justice is felt to be present also in this world. (Compare our remarks at 614:1 and at 616:1.)

[9] מַעְשֶׂה . . . (5 f.)—Embodies the concept of wisdom, a trait of man, belonging to the first phase of דָּרְךָ אֲדֻנֵי (see WE, pp. 39 f., 52).

דָּרְךָ אֲדֻנֵי (620:4 ff.)—The concepts are דָּרְךָ אֲדֻנֵי. The latter is given its full force as a negative concept. (On negative value concepts, see WE, p. 25.)
Rain falls and the sun shines when these are deserved (God’s justice), but their laws reveal that the people of the land are wicked. These things do take place in that land, however, only because of the merit of the small cattle (apparently because they harm no one) and thus, you too are saved (. . . מְפִי תַּפּוּרָה הַמֶּרֶם וְתֵשֵׁעַ הָאָרֶץ). A very unusual use of תַּפּוּרָה, since it always implies a corporate personality, and perhaps the word here, therefore, means that “you” are saved incidentally, i.e., because the cattle on the land deserve the rain and the sun. A MS reading: אָרֶץ מְפִי (623:1). The text is difficult. See also the parallel in Pesik. de R. Kah., ed. Mandelbaum, pp. 149f.

Although conscious of our sinfulness, we long for Thee. Involved here is the concept of יֵשַׁבְתָּךְ, a longing for direct experience of God.

If, indeed, our wilful sins are taken by Thee as unwitting sins (בְּהַמָּהוֹד וְתֵשֵׁעַ, :2), then we shall behold Thee in עַד (3).
PART THREE: CHAPTERS XXI-XXIX

Now Job 41:3 is interpreted as a rhetorical question: Who has performed מָצָה before I had recompensed him for doing them? No one. This is in contrast to the כְּלָל תְּבֵא (:4), and in consonance with the statement (:1) above. This statement assumes that God’s justice is manifest in the here and now, in this world. Furthermore, its very purpose is to contradict the statement on the כְּלָל תְּבֵא and to stress the latter’s inadequacy, so to say. This can be recognized also in the distinction between רוח הקדוש (:6), standing here for God’s word (see the beginning of the speech in Job 40:6), and כְּלָל תְּבֵא (:4), a distinction which is made even more strongly elsewhere. (See RM, p. 261.)

The verse (Job 41:3) continues with כְּלָל תְּבֵא כְּלָל מְצוּה, a clause taken to embody the concept of כְּלָל מְצוּה and thus to emphasize that the gifts to be mentioned come from God. Also embodied in the verse as a whole, as here interpreted, is a combination of God’s justice recompensing the individual beforehand, and God’s love, His giving these things to the individual in the first place.

Although most of the מְצוּה in this list are ritualistic, מֵ Roose (:2) and מֵ Roose (:4) are ethical. This intermingling of the two types of מְצוּה bespeaks a common bond. Indeed, the ritualistic מְצוּה of מְצוּה מְצוּה (625:5) and מְצוּה מְצוּה (625:6) had the ethical function of providing the priests and the Levites with food (see the discussion in OT, p. 102 ff.). It is in the very character of the מְצוּה, something done at God’s behest, that an ethical מְצוּה is not something done for man alone but, so to speak, for God as well. Notice: מֵ Roose מֵ Roose (:4), although מֵ Roose concretizes the concept of charity.

XXVII.3 (625:8 ff.)

God does not want symbols of Israel’s sin of the golden calf to be seen or used. The same emphasis is employed in regard to the reminders of their other sins also—the heinous sins of adultery and buggery—and hence the reason behind all the occasions for the use of this expression must be the same. The reason is God’s regard for the honor of the
persons involved, as is stated elsewhere, specifically in the case of buggery (see Pesik. de R. Kah., ed. Mandelbaum, p. 36 and the references there). The concepts involved are: God's love, honor (of Israel or man), and sin.

ןליעי שביהו (1, 2)—The concept here is קקך, a visible manifestation of God.

השופורת ... שלטנלו (4)—Israel in the present must not employ a reminder of the sin of Israel in the wilderness, for the sounds of the שופר are a plea for forgiveness of sins now, implying Israel's corporate personality in time.


XXVII.4 (627:8 ff.)

Introduction: An important aspect of rabbinic thought is indeterminacy of belief. A haggadic interpretation can even be taught and then be brushed aside for a later idea. The attitude toward a whole series of interpretations is indeterminacy of belief when such interpretations are preceded by the term דיבור אחר, "another interpretation." Sometimes a rabbinic interpretation obviously contradicts a biblical narrative, and that is possible only because of indeterminacy of belief (see CA, pp. 212 ff.). Again, indeterminacy of belief makes possible divergent representations of the Shirah of the angels. But there are some beliefs which have a dogmatic character, notably the hereafter concepts that point to events in the future which will occur in a consecutive order. These future events are successively the Days of the Messiah, the Resurrection of the Dead, and the World to Come. These hereafter concepts, though combining organismically with the value concepts, are not of an experiential character, but are beliefs to which all must subscribe. They differ from the value concepts, therefore, in demanding an assent of the mind. On the one hand, the hereafter concepts, like the other concepts with which they interweave, leave room for difference of opinion despite their dogmatic quality, and, on the other hand, because they require assent of the mind, their concretizations may be supported by what are regarded
as relevant arguments. The future events of which the concepts are generalizations will be נסים, and support for belief in them consists of pointing to similar נסים described in biblical narratives.

[1] In the statements of both ר יוחנן (8-629:7) and מזד שוחרי (629:4), there is first a reply to a question raised regarding a matter related to a נס in the future. The statement goes on to tell of a נס which will take place in the future and to point to a similar נס described in a biblical narrative. The purpose of the question and the reply is to supply a background of נס in the past and in the present for the specific נס that will occur in the future. After all, the questions, including those about the future נסים, do not reflect genuine doubt but really invite an affirmative reply.

[2] This passage is connected with the preceding one by an association of ideas. Most of the נסים of the future mentioned here are quotations from the Book of Isaiah and these quotations are taken as so many concretizations of the concept of the Days of the Messiah or perhaps of another hereafter concept. The kinship here exhibited between rabbinic thought and the Prophets is another indication of the bond uniting the Rabbis with the Prophets. (For other examples, see RM, pp. 291 f., 299, 300; WE, pp. 176 f.)

The Munich MS reads עלם הובא, a more likely reading since the midrash goes on to speak of תחיית המתים, usually conceived as a stage before the עלם הובא. Moreover, what follow are matters foretold in Isa. 43:2, things that are certainly more appropriate to עלם הוהי than to עלם הובא, a perfect state presumably in no need of such נסים.

XXVII.5 (631:5 f.)

[1] The Paris MS explains the term יבשש by the words מבッシュ את הנורחפים וה Tradable, that is to say, those who are persecuted elicit, by that very fact, a manifestation of God's love. (See below here on the use of the word בחר, on 632:5.)
2. Even though the verse is altogether unworthy and the penalty may be justified. Emphasizes here God's love, since it disregards the merits of the case otherwise.

3. This is an independent interpretation of Koh. 3:15, and is an interpolation here. Unlike the other interpretations, it is a concretization of God's justice, not of God's love.

(632:5) — The rabbinic connotation of the word here and also of בחר (7), of יברזר (9), of בחר (10) and of בחר (11) is primarily "love," for only God's relation to the persecuted matters here. This connotation may be, indeed, the basic rabbinic connotation of the root בחר. (See RM, pp. 56 f.; WE, pp. 90 f., 140; see also E. Garfinkel, The Service of the Heart (New York, 1958), p. 154.)

XXVII.6 (633:1 ff.)

[1] — The three midrashim here are united by a single theme, and hence it is sufficient for only one of them to be an application of Micah 6:3, the application being the second midrash (634:1).

(633:3; 634:1; 635:1) — The Nations, all of them, are the enemy of Israel and rejoice in the expected annihilation of Israel by God. The world is divided into Israel, on the one hand, and the rest of the Nations regarded as a unit, on the other.

(635:5 f.; 634:3; 635:2) — An emphasis on God's love. That love changes a stricture or a chiding into what is only playfulness. The hatred of the surrounding nations, the Rabbis felt, calls forth God's compassion toward Israel.
PART THREE: CHAPTERS XXI–XXIX

[2] The concept of, בות, merit, implies the idea of corporate personality. Were it not for these three, Israel would not have had these things. The merit of these leaders made possible the survival of the entire people.

[3] In limiting the animals that may be sacrificed to the three kinds near at hand, and hence not imposing on Israel the hardships involved in procuring the other kinds, God manifested His love for Israel. Animal sacrifices are thus not only offerings to God but are themselves also manifestations of His love for Israel.

XXVII.7 (638:5 ff.)

[1] There is a dichotomy here between Israel and the Nations of the World. Israel alone is God’s nation but this may be the result of Israel’s character as against the character of the other nations.

[2] The good things happening to Israel are reward for their unequivocal acceptance of the Torah; the concept of God’s justice.

XXVII.8 (640:6 ff.)

[1] The mixed multitude, the converts made the golden calf and even taunted Israel with it. A remarkable emphasis on Israel, in view of the biblical account, and a denigration of נרימ.

[2] Connected with
the preceding passage by an association of ideas. When the prophets say that Israel did not know God, it was really the case that Israel rebelled against Him. The concept here is מְשַׁע, rebellion. (On the entire idea, see RM, p. 342.)

XXVII.9 (642:5 f.)

The sacrifices are a privilege given Israel because of the deeds of the Patriarchs. The concept here is נְבֵהַ אֵלֶּה, implies the idea of corporate personality.

XXVII.10 (643:3 f.)

[1] קָרָב . . . דְּבַרְתֶּה תַּשְׁבִּיתָ—This is a Halakah interrelated with a haggadah which latter is introduced by אָדָם (:6). The concept here is קָרָב (:4). It is also one of the concepts in the haggadah which follows (:9).

[1] קָרָב . . . בַּלָּא שְׁבִיתָ יִרְצֶה—This haggadah, however, is not only interrelated with the halakah preceding it but is also integrated with halakot taught in the very same midrash, the haggadah supplying the reason for those halakot. The parable has the effect of characterizing בַּשְּׁבִית (:9) as a מְשַׁע (:8), a haggadic characterization. Now the בַּשְּׁבִית is objectified and differentiated from other holy days by the Halakah, and especially by those halakot which prohibit anything classed as “labor.” These halakot certainly engendered the feeling of קָרָב, but the haggadic characterization adds an emotional quality that is projected only by a person, and here by a personification. The parable, as usual, is not a complete parallel. We do not think that it extends to a mystical relationship between God and the Sabbath.

XXVII.11 (644:4 f.)

[1] אֲבוֹדֶה . . . רָפָא—An emphasis on God’s love; in contrast to the wicked who have no compassion for anyone, God shows compassion even towards birds and animals. The concepts are אֲבוֹדֶה (644:6; 645:3). אֲבוֹדֶה is a negative
value concept, i.e., a type of value concept stigmatizing immoral acts (see WE, p. 25).

[2] The aim of all the wicked men is to destroy Israel, and each of them prides himself on his being more realistic in such destructiveness than his predecessor. Their treatment of Israel is thus not a test of their wickedness, for they are all equally wicked, but of their vicious efficiency. It has remained for the Nazis of our day, utilizing scientific methods, to prove to be the most diabolically efficient of all. R. Levi’s insightful appraisal has, alas, been confirmed by the unspeakable events of our times.

[3] R. Levi concludes with a fantasy projected into the future in which Gog, feeling himself to be more realistic than all his predecessors, declares that he will first do battle with Israel’s Patron in heaven and after that, with Israel. The point here is that to destroy Israel, the wicked must first overcome God—that is to say, Israel will never be destroyed.

[4] The concepts embodied are: ימוא ועשת and כלה זמח in combination. Isa. 42:13 and Zech. 14:3 state the ideas of the prophets used here to concretize the concepts of ימוא ועשת and כלה זמח in combination, and this indicates again the bond between the Rabbis and the prophets.

XXVII.12 (647:3 f.)
Chapter XXVIII

XXVIII.1 (648:2 ff.)

[1] מַהְיָה הָעֵדֶר ... אֲרֵי בָּנָמוּן (:2)

This is not heresy in the sense of denying prescribed doctrine; it is denying a relation to God which had at one time been actually experienced (see RM, pp. 341 f.). This denial often takes the form of a מַהְיָה מַלּוֹת (648:3; 649:1) declaring that there is no divine justice, “no judgment and no Judge,” (649:4).

בְּעָנָכָל ... בָּעָמָל (:6)—Labor in the study of Torah does bring reward. The concepts are: מַדָּת חֳדָשׁ חוֹרָה and מַדָּת חוֹרָה.

เมֵדָת חוֹרָה ... אין שומואל (:7 f.)—An affirmation, ultimately, of God’s punitive justice.

[2] והָאָדָם ... לֵלָה אָמִר (649:8 f.)—The light of the sun is the reward for engaging in מַכָּר וּמַעֲשָׂה תּוֹבִים (:8). The first part of Koh. 1:3 is taken as a question, and תְּהוֹת הַשְּׁמָשׁ (648:5) as an answer.

נַהֲרֵר ... נַהֲרֵר (650:1)—Koh. 1:3 is again taken as a question and an answer. The reward of the מַכָּר (1) for their מַכָּר וּמַעֲשָׂה תּוֹבִים (2) is the light of their faces לֵלָה (2), a light as great as the sun. The concepts are: מַכָּר וּמַעֲשָׂה תּוֹבִים, לֵלָה, the world to come, and the combination of the concepts of God’s love and His justice. Evidently the reward in [2] above is for those who do only a modicum of מַכָּר and Good Deeds, and is strictly God’s justice alone.

[3] אֵיךְ הָעֵדֶר ... אֵיךְ הָעֵדֶר (:3)—God’s love as evident in what He does to provide plant food for man.
XXVIII.2 (650:7 ff.)

[1] Because the midrash is introduced by a haggadic statement, we have here an instance of the interrelation of Haggadah and Halakah.

[2] The metaphor here regards the act of offering the omer as a prayer for the success of the barley crop, for the proper conditions that assure its growth. The figure is of a cook or baker who tastes of the dish he is preparing so as to know what is still needed. The omer-offering is thus a prayer to God to do what is still required for the crop. Another instance of an act having the function of prayer is the blowing of the shofar (see 674:1 and our comment there). The concept involved is תפלת.

[3] The metaphor here regards the act of offering the omer as a thanksgiving for the safeguarding of the crop from harm. The concept here is חזרה. The act of offering the omer can be given different, though related, meanings.

[4] This world a person shares with all the rest of men, whereas in ירא ת"ו (655:1) each person is given a world for himself (see 397:2.)

[5] Even after plowing, reaping, etc., there is still need for the wind to winnow the harvest, and the omer-offering is the “price” for the wind. Dropping the metaphor, the offering is thanksgiving to God (זוהי) for the winnowing wind. Even in the very last process of the harvest, you are the recipient of God’s love.

XXVIII.3 (655:6 f.)

[1] The interpretation here of Lev. 23:10 is not directly led up to by the long ותימר which precedes it. However, like the various state-
ments in the nrPJIQ concerning the omer-offering and embodying the concept of God’s love, the interpretation here also concerns the omer and tells of God’s love. In contrast to the gift of manna by God which involved an omer to every individual Israelite, this single omer offered up by the entire people is very meager and of poor quality, but it must be offered at the appointed time. The emphasis is on the omer-offering as a קרבן and as such it must be offered at the appointed time.

XXVIII.4 (656:4 ff.)

[1] תמטות והﺛונותים (פנ_6) (and in other interpretations in this section)—But through prayer and supplications that God answered by performing a נט. The concept is not only תמטות but also נט.

[2] תמטות והﺛונותים (פנ_6) —The reward for the good deeds was the נט of the defeat of סטארא.

XXVIII.5 (658:11 f.)

[1] תונן את תטילם תטיש (פנ_11 f.)—Waving the omer is a prayer to God to dispel bad winds and harmful dew. The same act is interpreted in the following statement in valuational terms and as an act of thanksgiving, and hence we have good reason to assume that the present statement interprets it as an act of prayer, thus maintaining the pairing of prayer and thanksgiving characteristic of the interpretation of the omer-offering in general. The alternative is to regard the present statement not as embodying a value concept but as a technique for dispelling undesirable dew and winds, a meaning the act perhaps may have had in very early days but certainly did not have in the biblical-rabbinic context (see OT, p. 218; RM, p. 158 n.).

[2] תטיש . . . שלם (פנ_659:2) —It is interpreted as a thanksgiving for the harvest, expressed by acknowledging that the world belongs to God. This is, of course, similar to the acceptance of על מלכות קריאת שמם, except that the latter is the daily practice of the individual. The concept of מלכות שמם, thus implied in the act, parallels its inclusion in the words ברוך מלך העולם of the
formula. The waving of the omer is hence an act constituting a kind of ברכה in itself. The passage exemplifies the integration of Halakah and Haggadah.

XXVIII.6 (659:6 ff.)

[1] ... שבות (659:6 and on 660:2)—The omer-offering was the first new מצות performed by Israel after coming to the Land and it was in reward for this future act that Abraham inherited the Land (מָרוֹד). The concepts here are: קורשות, מצות, קרבן, זכאות (the Land of Israel), אבות (Abraham), God's justice. What is involved here is the idea of corporate personality; the Israelites who came to the Land and Abraham constitute links in a single personality, and Abraham is rewarded for the act of his descendants.

[2] ... שבות מצות (6 f.)—The omer-offering is here extolled by associating it with מצות (Num. 5:15 ff.), both consisting of an ixn y of barley meal and both requiring וְנָשָׁת, waving. The harmony established between man and wife is, by association, attributed to מצות ערער. The concepts are: זֶה, שָׁלוֹם, קָרָב, מצות.

The omer-offering is a קרבן ערער; yet it is associated here with a sacrifice by an individual, another illustration of the emphasis on the individual.

[3] ... מצות הַעָנִיס—(660:1)—The presence of זֶה would have saved them from the enemies; the זֶה and the folk constitute a corporate personality. The concepts here: God's justice, זֶה, the Nations, סָמָך, קָרָב, זכאות.

[4] ... מַלְוָא (661:1)—The role of the מַלְוָא deriving from the omer-offering seems to be secondary here. רָפָא explains that the merit of Ezekiel saved them from famine, and מַלְוָא אֱלֹא says that Ezekiel’s suffering atoned for Israel’s sins, and that puts the emphasis on the concept of כְּפִיר, vicarious atonement. What
saves Israel, then, is Ezekiel’s suffering rather than the merit of the omer-offering.

Here the are individuals who have not sinned, whereas the rest of the people, designated collectively as ישראלי, have sinned and suffer as a result. The mark of the רעי is that he cannot be at ease when the others suffer.

Even recites a verse from Ps. 30 so that all who are mentioned in the story participate in the recital of the Psalm. The story seems to be on the borderline between indeterminacy of belief and pious entertainment.

Chapter XXIX

XXIX.1 (668:2f.)

[1] (668:2f.)—This verse is taken to refer to God’s promise to Adam that his descendants would, like Adam himself, be placed in judgment on Rosh ha-Shanah and then forgiven (669:4).

[2] (669:4)—The twelve hours of Adam’s first day ended with forgiveness for his sin of disobedience: גן ול מרד רתמים (669:4), an emphasis on מרד רתמים at almost the beginning of the world.

(669:4)—Adam is symbolic of his descendants in that regard. On Rosh ha-Shanah, the day of the year when he was forgiven after being placed in judgment, his descendants too will be forgiven after being placed in judgment. A recurrent manifestation of מרד רתמים (see).
XXIX.2 (669:7 ff.)

[670:2]—This accords with the Rabbis’ emphasis on the individual, for the verse speaks of the people of Israel.

The angels in Gen. 28:12 were not מלחמי שיר but “princes,” guardian angels of the Nations who ruled over Israel from Babylon onwards. However they were conceived, here they merely stand for those nations. In the dream the number of rungs the ladder they climb foretells the number of years of the rule of each of them over Israel. Only the “prince” of Edom (Rome) seems to continue to climb, but God reassures Jacob that Rome will fall and then the reign of the Nations will end. The concepts are: אבות, מלחמי, גומחות überhלו (Jacob), ישראל.

671:4—Jacob was afraid and did not ascend despite God’s assurance. Having thus sinned, Jacob forfeited the opportunity Israel had of being the ruling nation of the world. The Rabbis try to account for the fact that Israel was not a ruling nation, and they relate this failure to a sin of Jacob, and thus to a moral failure. The concepts are: sin and אבות. But note: now a concept sin, has been injected into the story and an entirely different turn has thus been given to what had before been a familiar biblical story. What kind of belief could be accorded to the story as “corrected” by the midrash, a story diverging from the Bible story? An indeterminate belief.

671:6—Jacob sinned but his descendants are punished—the idea of corporate personality.

672:2—The lands or powers named here oppressed Israel on its own land.

[675:6]—A subconcept of מרת הדת. The punishments decreed for the individual are, in the long run, for his benefit, enabling him to inherit עולם.
XXIX.4 (672:8 ff.)

(See Margulies, p. 672, footnote 28, regarding the numeration.)

[1] When the 19 8 A  CONCEPTUAL COMMENTARY ON MIDRASH LEVITICUS RABBAH 4 (672:8 ff.)

(See Margulies, p. 672, footnote 28, regarding the numeration.)

[1] When the ḥomeim gather to intercalate a month, God causes His Shekinah to dwell among them and enlightens them concerning the הַלְוַח (674:1). Reflected here is the Rabbis’ experience of normal mysticism when studying and teaching Torah. As background, however, the midrash employs the concept of נְזֵה שֶבינה when it speaks of God leaving His heavenly councilors and thus emphasizes His love. The concepts involved are: קְנֵי, הַלְוַח הָוָה, גלְחָ שֶבינה, God’s love, פָּרָ广电 תַּהוּר הָוָה (673:1).

[2] The act of blowing the shofar is an act of prayer to which God responds by changing מַרְחַ חֵדַ (674:5) to מַרְחַ חֵדַ (674:6). We saw that the act of waving the omer is also interpreted as a prayer. (See our comment at 650:10 f.)

XXIX.3 (674:7 f.)

(See Margulies, p. 672, footnote 28, regarding the numeration.)

XXIX.7 (675:6 ff.)

[1] יִרְצָר חֵרֵע (676:2)—Refers to מַרְחַ חֵדַ (on that term see above at 544:1). Two ideas are apparently combined here: God prods the individual to walk in the right way, but the individual himself must make every effort to control his יִרְצָר חֵרֵע; if he gave way to it, he would lose both this world and the world to come. However, the idea about the control of the יִרְצָר חֵרֵע has no supporting verse, and hence may be a later addition.

[2] In a manifestation of His love, God Himself tells Israel to invoke מַרְחַ חֵדַ (676:6) and thereby to be acquitted in judgment on רָאשׁ חֶשְׁנָה (676:7). The three Patriarchs are named here and hence it is מַרְחַ חֵדַ literally. The concept of מַרְחַ חֵדַ involves, of course, the idea of corporate personality, and by invoking מַרְחַ חֵדַ the individual senses a direct bond between himself and the Patriarchs.
XXIX.6 (677:5 f.)

This section is an instance of the interrelation of Halakah and Haggadah. Ps. 81:4 is given a halakic interpretation which is followed by a haggadic interpretation of the same verse.

[1] בָּהֵרָה (ַּיִּנְּשֹּׁם) — Both in the biblical verse and in the subsequent rabbinic interpretations in this section תַּקָּרֵשׁ means “new moon.” In Exod. 12:2 the biblical meaning of the word is “month,” whereas a rabbinic interpretation renders it “new moon” there and in another rabbinic interpretation in another connection, renders it “month.” The word thus has the same dual meaning both in the Bible and in rabbinic usage, an indication that there was no real break between the Bible and the later rabbinic development. Similar examples are the meanings assigned to: זָרֵקַח, נִי, יִשְׂרָאֵל, עלָם, מִצְוָת, וּרְאִים, as well as כָּלָה.

[2] עֲבֹדָה לֶחָרֶשׁ (678:3 f.) — The blowing of the shofar is here regarded, apparently, as a call to Israel to improve their deeds. The concept embodied is תשובה, repentance, the blowing of the shofar a call to תשובה. In turn, if this improvement takes place, the shofar itself is a symbol of God’s forgiveness (see ры). A combination of God’s love and His justice is involved here.

XXIX.8 (678:3 f.)

[1] רְאוּת הָלוֹא (וּדְתָו) — The marriage of a man and a woman is ordained by God at their conception. It is not something agreed upon by men but a רְאוּת going back to their existence as embryos. “Marriages are made in heaven,” so to speak.

[2] הנכּרָה (679:2) — Often the concept of הנכּרָה means vicarious atonement and involves suffering or even death on the part of the person who thus atones for others. Here, however, it involves the idea of וּרְאוּת. Abraham’s merit is so great that it atones for all the sins of Israel in this world. This midrash thus brings to the fore the kinship between וּרְאוּת and הנכּרָה. Both these concepts imply the same idea of corporate personality. Elsewhere we describe the two concepts as overlapping concepts (see RM, p. 318 n. and the references there).
XXIX.5 (679:6f.)

[1] אובל ישראל (680:4)—Only Israel had laws of charity. The difference between Israel and the Nations is thus of an ethical character. There is an emphasis on the ethical in rabbinic thought (see OT, pp. 243 ff.).

XXIX.11 (680:7f.)

[1] עלטלם שבעה תבש (7)—Although usually means “world” in rabbinic literature, it also retains, as here, the biblical meaning of “time.”

[2] שבתי Tob (7)—In folklore, the number seven has a kind of magical function, but the Rabbis use it to stress significance.

[3] עלטלם שביעית תבש (7)—Assigning a heaven as a dwelling place of God serves as a negation of pantheism; it is, however, compatible with normal mysticism. (On the pantheism of Epictetus, see WE, p. 226 n.)

[4] באבות שביעיות האלהים (681:3)—There were not only three, but seven אבות, and Moses, the seventh, was the most beloved. Others are also designated as אבות. The concept of אבות, hence, like the other value concepts was an indeterminate concept.

XXIX.8b (681:10f.)

Here the number seven stresses significance by the teaching that the seventh month is the occasion for performing seven מצווה. However, the association of “seven” with significance is by no means a necessary one. In the midrash here introduced by לדר (682:2) and exhibiting the same stylistic form as the midrash it follows, the number seven is dropped in the interpretation and the word is made to convey the idea of “plentiful.”
 PART THREE: CHAPTERS XXI–XXIX

XXIX.9 (682:4 f.)

[1] These words, it seems to us, have been interpolated because of the section which follows. In the present midrash, Abraham asks God to forgive Israel’s sins on the ground of the binding of Issac—that is to say, וְהָלָךְ אֶל֖וּחַ—and hence the oath implied refers to what takes place on the familiar themes of the liturgy of that day. Again, the idea seems to be that God recalls the oath on the seventh month each year, and this patently refers to forgiveness from sins.

[2] אָמְנָה (683:2)—Abraham trusted in God; the concept of אָמְנָה. It seems to teach that neither Abraham nor Isaac expected that the sacrifice would not take place.

XXIX.10 (683:5 f.)

[1] The are punishment for the sinning.

[2] The is redemption from servitude, from וְהָלָךְ אֶל֖וּחַ (5) in rabbinic Judaism there is no “redemption” from sin; the individual himself does not.

XXIX.12 (684:8 ff.)

[1] The are first in a halakic discussion and then in a haggadah.

[2] The Rabbis felt that the study of Torah implies repentance, and thus a withdrawal from sin. Here the knowledge imparted in מַתִּן וְהָרָא has a similar effect. That is why, when they accepted the Torah, it was imputed to them as though they had never sinned.

[3] Because you have done וְהָרָא and therefore were judged favorably, you are not the same persons you were when you were sinners (מַהְרִיחַ). A person is not “twice-born” but made anew at every וְהָרָא.