



ONE TORAH FOR ALL

One Torah shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.
Exodus 12:49

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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Something Hidden - Revealed

A Lesson from the Jots and Tittles – part 5

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 9:6-7

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty El, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even forever. The zeal of YHWH Tzava'ot will perform this.

The first jot I became aware of more than twenty years ago and then studied is found in the above passage. To me, it is the surest prophetic utterance of the coming Messiah through a virgin birth.

The aleph-bet contains twenty-two characters. Five of these characters have a sofit or final form. That is, when that particular character ends a word, it takes the sofit instead of the regular character. Those five characters are כ (kaf) – ך (kaf sofit), מ (mem) – ם (mem sofit.), נ (nun) – ן (nun sofit), פ (pey) – ף (pey sofit), and צ (tzadi) – ץ (tzadi sofit). The jot found in the above passage is dealing with the ם (mem) and ם (mem sofit).

The above passage is prophetically telling us of a coming child Who shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, El Gibor, Avi-ad (pronounced – ah-vee-odd), and Sar Shalom. Some have claimed that this child was the child of King Ahaz, to whom this prophecy was given. However, this understanding presents a serious problem; namely, the child of King Ahaz (Hezekiah) was already born when this prophecy was given to the king. In fact, Hezekiah was born nine years¹ before Ahaz even became king. This prophecy was given to King Ahaz while he was king. Furthermore, after the child of King Ahaz, that is, Hezekiah, became king, he died and rested with his fathers and his reign came to an end. This prophecy clearly states that this coming king's reign shall never end. Thus, this passage is not a reference to the son of Ahaz, but rather is a prophetic reference to Mashiach who is to come.

¹ See [The Identity of the Woman](#) for a complete explanation of the timeline and how nine years is figured.

After telling us about this coming child who is to be born who shall be called all these names and titles, the names are followed with “of the increase” which is the Hebrew word למרבה (l’marbeh). Please note that this word contains a ם (mem sofit) in the middle of the word. This immediately grabs our attention, as it is out of place. One would expect to see למרבה (l’marbeh) instead with a regular מ (mem). Please note that the closed ם (mem) in the middle of the word does not change the pronunciation of the word, nor does it change its meaning. Thus, it is not translated nor indicated in any way in the English translations.

Questions begin to form immediately in our minds as to what this could mean. First, what is the meaning of a מ (mem)? This character is closely associated with water, which is the Hebrew word מים (mayim). Please note that this word contains both forms of the character מ (mem). The regular מ (mem) is referred to as an open מ (mem) and the ם (mem sofit) is referred to as a closed ם (mem).

Then by extension, it is associated with the water of the womb. So, we have pictured an open womb with the מ – (mem) and we have a closed womb pictured with the ם – (mem sofit). Please note the regular מ (mem) which has a narrow opening at the bottom of the character in much the same fashion as a woman’s womb has a narrow opening at the bottom. This represents the birth canal.

The open מ (mem) would represent a womb which has given birth while the closed ם – (mem sofit) would represent a womb which has never given birth. The open מ (mem) represents a womb from which water has gone forth through the opening.

Now, please consider the following passage about the coming “virgin” birth.

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 7:14

“Therefore YHWH Himself will give you a sign; behold, the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

From the Peshitta we find that both Matithyah (1:23) and Luqa (1:27) have the Hebrew word בתולה – (betulah), with Matithyah having the definite article ה (hey) before it. Part of the problem for some arises when this is compared to what is found in the prophet Yeshayah, which has העלמה – “ha-almah.” However, the Shem Tov Matithyah also has העלמה and is more in line with Yeshayah in this particular instance. These two words, בתולה (betulah) and עלמה (almah), must be very similar for them to be used in this manner. The question for us is: “What is the difference between them?”

עלמה (almah) means “to cover” or “to hide.” Another often used root word in Hebrew will help us understand what “almah” means. This Hebrew word is גלה (galah), which means “to reveal, make manifest, or uncover.” It is often used in matrimonial relations. So in the Torah עלם (alam), may be considered as implying the “concealment of the virgin; i.e., until lawful marriage had taken place.” A virgin was not called עלמה (almah) because she was concealed by being

kept at home in her father's house; but rather, because, as a woman, she had not been uncovered; i.e., she had not known a man in a sexual manner. This surely applies to Miriam as she states, ***"How can this be, seeing I know no man?"*** (Luke 1:34)

So, "almah" is simply a woman who has reached puberty and is now of marriageable age; whereas, בתולה (betulah) seems to indicate a younger virgin who has not yet reached the age of puberty. Please consider the following passage.

Melakim Aleph (1st Kings) 1:2

Therefore his servants said to him, "Let there be sought for my master the king a young virgin; and let her stand before the king, and cherish him; and let her lie in your bosom, that my master the king may be warmed."

When King David got old he had trouble staying warm at night. So the plan was put forth that a young virgin would sleep with him to keep him warm. The use of "young virgin" which in Hebrew is נערה בתולה (na'arah b'tulah), suggests that she had not reached puberty; which would make perfect sense considering that the king would not want to sleep with a young girl who was menstruating and thus become unclean. However, if the girl was not yet into puberty that would not be a problem.

Thus, the closed מ (mem) in the word למרבה (l'marbeh) is pointing to a young virgin, one who has not only not known a man, but a young girl who has not yet reached the age of puberty.

It seems fitting to us that the vessel chosen for Mashiach to come through, Miriam, was of such a young virgin. Not having reached her time of monthly cycles yet, although most likely very close, she had never become unclean as a result of puberty. Thus, the vessel through which Mashiach came was a clean vessel, a vessel which had never been unclean by reason of a woman's monthly cycle.

This closed מ (mem) in the middle of this word teaches us much about how Mashiach would enter into this world, if one is but willing to listen to His Voice. May each person be edified as he recognizes the awesome plan of YHWH and execution of His plan.

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