



Death is our eternal companion. It is always to our left, at an arm's length... It has always been watching you. It always will until the day it taps you.

How can anyone feel so important when we know that death is stalking us?

The thing to do when you're impatient is to turn to your left and ask advice from your death. An immense amount of pettiness is dropped if your death makes a gesture to you, or if you catch a glimpse of it, or if you just have the feeling that your companion is there watching you.

Death is the only wise adviser that we have. Whenever you feel, as you always do, that everything is going wrong and you're about to be annihilated, turn to your death and ask if that is so. Your death will tell you that you're wrong; that nothing really matters outside its touch. Your death will tell you, 'I haven't touched you yet.'

Abstracts of Carlos Castaneda's JOURNEY TO IXTLAN (Vol. 3)

Based on the biblical verse: LEV 10:16

<p>טז וְאֵת שְׂעִיר הַחֲטָאִת, דָּרַשׁ דָּרַשׁ מֹשֶׁה--וְהִנֵּה שְׂרָף; וַיִּקְצַף עַל-אֶלְעָזָר וְעַל-אִיתָמָר, בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן, הַנּוֹתָרִים, לֵאמֹר.</p>	<p>16 And Moses diligently inquired for the goat of the sin-offering, and, behold, it was burnt; and he was angry with Eleazar and with Ithamar, the sons of Aaron that were left, saying:</p>
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The Talmud (Kiddushin 30a) discusses various halfway points in the Torah, and lists the vav in the word gachon as the middle letter:

Because of this reason, the early sages were called soferim, “those who count,” for they counted all the letters of the Torah scroll.

They used to say: The letter vav of the word gachon represents the midpoint of the letters of the Torah scroll.

The words darosh darash (from Leviticus 10:16) represent the midpoint of the words of the Torah.

The very license of the rabbis to interpret the laws of mourning are all served from this verse:

תורה תמימה על התורה, בראשית נ'י:ה'

גמורה מדאורייתא, רק אסמכתא בעלמא, דלדעת רוב הפוסקים הוי ענין אבילות מדרבנן, ואפילו אבילות יום ראשון, ורק אנינות הוי מדאורייתא, כמש"כ הרא"ש פ"ג דברכות ופ"ג דמו"ק, ולפנינו יתבאר זה אי"ה בפ' שמיני בפסוק דרש...דרש משה, ואפילו הרי"ף ורמב"ם דס"ל דאבילות מדאורייתא גם הם מודו דרק יום ראשון הוי מדאורייתא, וגם זה רק ביום המיתה, אבל אבילות שבעה לכו"ע הוי מדרבנן, ורק סמכו זה אלשון התורה.

The Torah T'mima connects the words of this verse with the intriguing Halacha as to whether mourning is derived from a biblical source or rabbinic.

אבל שבעת ימים. א"ר חסדא, נפשו של אדם מתאבלת עליו כל שבעה, שנאמר (איוב י"ד) ונפשו עליו תאבל, וכתוב ויעש לאביו אבל שבעת ימים. יא ר"ל הפסוק הזה מגלה על הפסוק ונפשו עליו תאבל ששיעור האבילות שבעת ימים. ועין בירושלמי מ"ק פ"ג ה"ה דתלתא יומין נפשא מטייסא על גופא, סברא דחזרה לגופא, כיון דחמית ליה דאשתני זיו אפיה שבקא ליה ואולא, ואחר תלתא יומין הכרס נבקעת על פניו וכו', וצ"ל דמ"ש כאן מתאבלת כל שבעה הוא מ"ש בירושלמי מן תלתא יומין ולהלן וכו', אבל על כרחיך צ"ל דגם הבבלי ס"ל דיש חילוק בין השלשה ימים הראשונים לארבעה האחרונים, מדמצינו חילוק בגמרא לענין שלשה ימים הראשונים דחמירי מימים האחרונים, כמו לענין מלאכה ושאר דברים, וכ"מ בירושלמי שם, דעל הא דאמרו שם אבל ג' ימים אסור במלאכה אפילו בצנעא מביא הא דנפשא מטייסא על גופא. – ועל יסוד זה הירושלמי שהבאנו קי"ל בבבלי יבמות קכ"א א' אין מעדין על המת אלא עד שלשה ימים, משום דאחר ג' ימים אשתני זיו הפנים, ועי' באה"ע סי' י"ז. – גם י"ל ע"פ דברי הירושלמי שהבאנו מקור וסמך למש"כ ביר"ד הלכות מליחה סי' ס"ט סעיף י"ב, הורו הגאונים [כך הלשון בטור] בשר ששהה ג' ימים בלא מליחה נתייבש דמו בתוכו ולא יצא עוד ע"י מליחה ולכן אין לאכלו מבושל אלא צלי וכו', יע"ש, וכתבו הפוסקים שאין כל מקור ויסוד להוראה זו, ולפי הירושלמי הנ"ל י"ל דהטעם שאחר ג' ימים משתני זיו אפיה, הסברא נוטה שהוא מפני קלקול והצטמקות הדם, ולפי"ז מבואר דאחר ג' ימים מצטמק הדם ואינו ראוי לצאת עוד אפילו ע"י מליחה, ודו"ק. .

(שבת קנ"ב א')

Mourning for days – is not Biblically-mandated per se but it have a precedent in Torah: mourned his Jacob for days (see 50:10 – “... mourned his seven days” – Talmud Yerushalmi Moed Katan 3:5).

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מניין לאבל מן התורה שבעה (בראשית נ) ויעש לאביו אבל שבעת ימים.

Where is there a source in the Torah for the 7 days of mourning? (Although this period is Rabbinically required, the Sages would not have decreed it if there was no mention of it in the Torah.) The Pasuk states (Breishis 50, 10) "He (Yosef) made mourning for his father (Yaakov) for seven days."

One might fulfill the Biblical obligation to mourn by doing so for a single day but according to the Talmud Yerushalmi (Kesubos 1:1), it was Moshe who instituted that we should mourn for seven days as Joseph did. (Moshe also institutionalized the week of wedding celebration – “sheva brachos” – which likewise has precedent, in Genesis 29:27.)

We will return to the notion of the rabbinic precedence for mourning seven days after the Degel Machane Efraim's dazzling torah.

The Degel machine Efraim resolves the two halves of the Torah by insisting on the very split between the two halves meaning something more profound than letter counting...

His dazzling insight allows for a hyper literal midship reading of the text and its shape and letter counting based on the work of the sophism, the scribes, yet grafting onto this a highly spiritualized reading of the notion of Torah...

Torah becomes this organic living breathing spirituality that unfolds both historically with the advent of the oral law but also synchronically as a complimentary and valid tradition.

The radical nature of this exegesis is the equal standing of the oral tradition and further, the dependance of the Witten law upon the goal tradition to reveal its secrets.

“Here is the halfway point of the Torah if counting with letters and so we need to understand what difference does it make and the significance of this idea. One could say that both the written and oral law is one whole, and either cannot be separated from the other at all for one cannot be without the other. For the written law reveals its hidden through the agency of the oral law and the written law without the oral law is not a complete (integrated) Torah remaining only half a book until chapel came and interpreted the written law and enlighten us by revealing her mysteries and matters that were hitherto hidden and

עוד ירמוז ע"ד דאיתא במסורת דרש דרש כאן חצי אותיות שבתורה וצריך
 להבין מאי בעי בזה ולמאי נ"מ הוא וי"ל לפע"ד כי ידוע תורה שבכתב
 ותורה שבע"פ הכל א' הם ואין אחד מהם נפרד מחבירו כלל כי א"א לזה
 בלא זה דהיינו התורה שבכתב מתגלה צפונותיה ע"י תורה שבע"פ ותורה
 שבכתב בלא תורה שבע"פ אינה תורה שלימה והוא רק כמו חצי ספר עד
 שבאו חז"ל ודרשו התורה והאירו עינינו וגילו מסתוריה ודברים הסתומים
 ונעלמים ופעמים היו עוקרים דבר מן התורה כמו בענין מלקות שכתוב
 בתורה ארבעים יכנו ובאו רבנן ובצרו חדא והכל ע"י הופעת רוח קדשם
 שהופיע עליהם האדון ב"ה לראות שורש כל דבר הכתוב בתורה לאמיתתו
 והיה יכולת בידם לעשות זה נמצא תלוי שלימות התורה שבכתב בתורה
 שבע"פ ולכן האומר אין ק"ץ זה מן התורה או שחולק על מאמ' אחד
 מחז"ל כאלו כופר בתור' מרע"ה כי הכל תלוי בדרושי חז"ל והם עיקר
 שלימות תורה שבכתב וזה י"ל שבא הרמז בתורה בתיבת דרש דרש הם
 חצי אותיות שבתור' היינו עד דרש דרש חז"ל התור' קודם שדרשוה אינה
 אנא חצי אותיות חצי פי' חלק היינו שהוא רק חלק ואינה שלימה ובדרושי
 מאמרי חז"ל נשלמה התורה להיות נקראת ספר שלם והבן:

conflicting. At times they uprooted a matter from the written law for instance the

law of 40 lashes, ¹

“Through the holy spirit that the divine manifested through them to see the root of all matters written in the Torah, to their innermost truth, giving them the capability to see this. It turns out that the completion (integration) of the written law depends upon the oral law. (Therefore he who says there is no kal va’chomer in the written law is like he who disbelieves.²

ולכן האומר אין קל וחומר מן התורה, או שחולק על מאמר אחד מחז"ל כאילו כופר בתורה משה רבינו ע"ה (סנהדרין עט).

Because all depends upon the derushim/interpretations of chazal. And they are therefore the main focus of the completion/integration of the written law.

“And this is what is hinted (remez) by the words darosh/darash being half way point in the written law, meaning until the repetition of darosh/darash as the halfway point where the Rabbis were able (given the license) to interpret, the Torah prior was only half (not one the letters but also) only partial and not yet whole, but with the interpretations of chazal it was completed and finally become a complete “sefer”.”

¹ דברים פרק כה

ב וְהָיָה אִם-בָּן הַכּוֹת הֶרְשַׁע וְהִפִּילוֹ הַשֹּׁפֵט וְהִכָּהוּ לִפְנֵי כַּדֵּי רִשְׁעוֹתוֹ בְּמִסְפָּר:
ג אַרְבָּעִים יִכְנוּ לֹא יִסִּיף פְּנֵי-יִסִּיף לְהַכְתּוֹ עַל-אַלֶּה מִכָּה רַבָּה וְנִקְלָה אַחֲרָיָהּ:
לְעֵינֶיךָ:

Makkos 22a: (Mishnah): One who is lashed receives 39 lashes. "B'Mispar Arba'im" means the number followed by 40; R. Yehudah says, he receives a full 40 lashes; (The Mishnah on 22B teaches that the lashes are evenly divided among three places.) The extra (40th) lash is between his shoulders. We estimate (how many lashes he can survive) only a number divisible by three.

If we estimated that he can survive 40 (really, 39) and after he was lashed some of them we estimate that he cannot bear them, he is exempt (for he was already humiliated).

If we estimated that he can survive 18, and after he was lashed 18 we estimate that he can bear 40, he is exempt.

Even though the verse says the Bais Din administers 40 lashes, nevertheless our tradition is that Bais Din only administers 39 lashes.

²Another [Baraita] taught: Because he hath despised the word of the Lord — this refers to him who maintains that the Torah is not from Heaven. And even if he asserts that the whole Torah is from Heaven, excepting a particular verse, which [he maintains] was not uttered by God but by Moses himself, he is included in 'because he hath despised the word of the Lord.' And even if he admits that the whole Torah is from Heaven, excepting a single point, a particular ad majus deduction (kal vachomer) or a certain gezerah shawah, — he is still included in 'because he hath despised the word of the Lord'. Sanhedrin 99a

The Degel suggests that the very license allowing for Rabbinic law and the oral tradition comes from the brokenness of the written law which hides meanings and mysteries and requires them to be unlocked by the rabbis of the oral tradition. Until then it remains incomplete precisely because the meanings in the literal written law remain opaque.

Following the mystical notion in the zoharic tradition that the Torah is likened to a princess whose consort alone can open her mysteries.³ He sees the oral tradition as doing the same thing as the lover, opening the hidden secrets within the written law.

These two words darosh// darash, and the space between them, upon which the entire Torah can be seen to "hinge" or the halfway mark...as if were you to weigh the the letters on one scale with half the Torah on one side and the other on the opposite, then the fulcrum would be the space between these two identical words...of "blimah" (the greek iota) the space between which is of course empty...allowing us to be doresh....allowing us to become Torah she'be'al peh...in this very space where the Torah is fractured in half, broken, there precisely we can make our human moves...and there we are told by the Torah T'mimah, in this space of darosh// dorash we learn that it is chazal who authorized all we do for aveilus....as if mourning and its laws and customs originate from this lacuna, the broken space between the two halves of Torah, its fault line, its very brokenness....

So the rabbis use this very literary literal fractured Torah and brokenness to derive the laws of counting the seven days of mourning.

³ *"This may be compared to a beloved maiden, beautiful in form and appearance, concealed secretly in her palace. She has a single lover unknown to anyone—except to her, surreptitiously. Out of the love that he feels for her, this lover passes by her gate constantly, lifting his eyes to every side. Knowing that her lover is constantly circling her gate, what does she do? She opens a little window in that secret place where she is, reveals her face to her lover, and quickly withdraws, concealing herself. None of those near the lover even sees or notices, only the lover, and his inner being and heart and soul go out to her. He knows that out of love for him she revealed herself for a moment to arouse him.*

So it is with words of Torah: she only reveals herself to her lover. Torah knows that one who is wise of heart circles her gate every day. What does she do? She reveals her face to him from the palace and beckons to him with a hint, then swiftly withdraws to her place, hiding away. None of those there knows or notices—he alone does, and his inner being and heart and soul follows her. Thus Torah reveals and conceals herself, approaching her lover lovingly to arouse love with him". Zohar II 99a Saba d'Mishpatim

I am moved by his dazzling reading of the space between, the fulcrum, the openness to interpretation and the validation and supremacy given to those who interpret.

And in a stroke of brilliance it is the very words that the talmud licenses the act of mourning in ritual and Halacha.