

D A V I D      D A R S H A N

A Study in the Life and Works  
of a Polish Jewish Preacher  
of the 16th Century Together  
With Some Collected Sources  
That Throw Light Upon The  
Maggid and Darshan in Poland  
Before the Partitions.

by

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Note:-

Abbreviations:-

Throughout this work the following two abbreviations will be used:-

S:- סיר הסעלוח לרור

K:- כחב החנצלוח לרשנים

## CHAPTER ONE

## Secondary Sources: Literature on David Darshan.

The secondary literature on David Darshan is rather niggardly. There are but a handful of accounts about him, none in any way complete, and none perfectly accurate. The longest and most detailed is by Wettstein, running to a little more than a page in this ~~book~~ לחולדות ישראל וחכמיו while perhaps the most succinct, based on Wettstein, Fuerst, and Ben Jacob, is in the Encyclopedia Judaica. Here the complete account takes up one paragraph, of perhaps twenty lines. ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

In the various works on bibliography of Hebrew books, he is considered when either of his two published works are mentioned. First then, we shall list and describe briefly the accounts of our writer in the numerous works on bibliography consulted, after which will follow a listing and summary of the meagre biographical accounts.

A. Bibliographical Works.

1. אשר כתב דוד דרשן -- ספרו "שיר המעלות" -- Amsterdam, 1680

This is one of the earliest bibliographical works, and, on page 76, under the listing of David Darshan's S. he has the following to say: "Shir HaMa-alot L'David: by David Darshan. Contains the specimens from all the books he wrote. Published in Cracow, 1571. Quarto. He also wrote "K'tab Hitnazzelut L'Darshanim," published in Lublin, 1548 (1); Maskil L'David -- sermons; Migdal David -- manual of letters; Tehilla L'David -- commentary on the 613 commandments." Apparently, then, Bass' account reveals the fact that he saw the title page of S. and perhaps of K. His error here, as discussed in note (1) at the end of the chapter, was borrowed by some later bibliographers, who probably never saw the books they listed.

2. BIBLIOTHECA HEBRAEA -- Johannes Christophori Wolfii -- Hamburg et

Leipzig -- 1715

On page 295, no. 486, he lists the writings of David Darshan

(concionator) as follows:

- a) ש"ר הסעלות לדוד -Cracow, 1571
- b) כתב החנצלות -Lublin, 1548
- c) משכיל לדוד
- d) סודל דוד
- e) חהלה לדוד

The latter three are mentioned of course, on the title page of S. He states that these works are listed in the ספר ישיב, and that the last named work חהלה לדוד is mentioned in the Catalogue Bibliothecae Leidensis, page 169, where the author is listed as R.Messer David, son of Messer Leo. (2)

3. BIBLIOTHECA JUDAICA -- Dr. Julius Fuerst -- Leipzig, 1849

Vol. 1, p.202. This fairly lengthy bibliographical account is, in good part, a collection of all the inaccuracies and errors of preceding bibliographers, (For detailed discussion see notes 1 and 2 at the end of this chapter). He confuses David Darshan with Messer David ben Messer Leon Hapf of Mantua. Then he lists the works as follows: a) ש"ר הסעלות לדוד Cracow 1571; כתב החנצלות נחב החנצלות לדוד Lublin, 1548. Thus far he seems to be following both Bass and Wolff. The חהלה לדוד of David Darshan, which, so far as we have been able to discover was never published, he confuses with a book of the same title that was published in Constantinople in 1577 by Messer David ben Leon. He then attributes to him a work entitled אורח אסורי צדיקים as mentioned in this 1577 edition of חהלה לדוד. Fifth on the list, which he himself admits cannot be attributed to our author, is a book by ~~the~~ the name חהלה לדוד, Prague, 1616, an attempt to harmonize the conflicting views of Mordechai Jaffe and Moses Isserles with reference to the Shulhan Arukh.

He attributes to him a manual on ritual slaughtering in Hebrew and Italian, published in Venice in 1609. Then he lists the remaining works by David as follows: 1) Maskil L'David; 2) Migdal David; 3) Magen David; 4) Nefesh David; 5) Segullat Melachim; 6) Kol Adonai Bakoach; 7) Shebha<sup>ah</sup>/Ha-naschim; 8) Nahal 'Adanim; 9) Ain Hakoray; 10) Abir Yaakov; 11) Bet David; 12) Kisse David; and 13) Ha-gebul. He himself admits that the authorship of some of these is vague.

Items 3-12 are repeated both by Wettstein and in the Judaica article. They are listed in ד'יט' נספ as follows: Abir Yaakov, -- Messer David b. Levi - book on medicine - MSS (pl); Bet David -- R. David b. Yehuda -- on philosophy (p 12); Kisse David -- R. David b. Levi: (p 33); Magen David (p 39); Nahal Adanim (p 53); Nefesh David (p 54); Segullat Melachim (p 55); Ain Hakoray (p 57); Kol Adonay Bakoah (p 67); and Shevah Ha-nashim (p 74) are listed as MSS written by Messer David. That this Messer David is our David Darshan requires considerably more evidence than Fuerst's say-so, nor are David ben Levi or David ben Yehuda definitely to be identified by our author who goes by the name of David Darshan, or David ben Manasse, Darshan.

4. CATALOGUS LIBRORUM HEBRAEORUM in Bibliotheca Bodleiana -- Mauritz Steinschneider

Berlin 1852-60

Vol 1, p.859. Steinschneider lists the שיר הסעלות לדוד which he himself examined. From it he culls some facts about David's life, which will be dealt with in greater detail in Chapter 2. For example, that in the year 1558, he spent some time with the Bordolani family in Ferrara, and that in 1568, one משה בורגלא came to Cracow with writs of excommunication against one משה דוד for permitting the members of the D'Ato family to take a case against the former into a Christian court. From the preface of the book he mentions the fact that David collected some 400 books between the age of 19 and 25. (Here Steinschneider betrays a slight misreading of the preface, for what David did write was:

"ואני אכניס לחובי... ארבע מאות ספרים נבחרים... אשר  
סרתי בעבורן בשהייתי בן יים שנה... עד שהיה כ"ה שנה  
(הקדמה, שיר הסעלות לדוד)

בנסת ישראל -- שמואל יוסף פי

p.233. Lists our author as David Darshan b. Manasse of Cracow, darshan of Lublin. Attempted to set up a private academy in Cracow but failed, and finally determined to set out for the Holy Land. He then lists David Darshan's two published works, the S., 1571, and the K., Lublin, 1574.

ספר סדר הדורות, מאת יחיאל בן שלמה ממינסק, ורשה, תרל"ו.

Under an alphabetical listing of authors, on p.273 B, we find R.

David Darshan, followed by a brief listing of his writings as follows: "ספר המעלות לרד"ק. התמצאות לדורשנים. מסביל לדוד. מגיל דוד. חתמה לדוד."

On page 289 A, under the letter W, there is a brief reference to the Cracow edition of S. The date of K. is given as 1548, and the other books, mentioned in the title page of S., are once again listed.

7. CATALOGUE OF HEBREW BOOKS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM -- S. van Straalen -- London, 1894.

p.61. Van Straalen lists the copy of K., which is found in the British Museum as item 1966.b.23. He thinks that the chronostich on title page is incorrect (see note 1) and accepts as date of the book 1571, which date he finds on fol. 5b of the book. He also lists S, Cracow, 1571, as item 1966.b.24 - with title page wanting.

8. 1880

אוצר הספרים -- יצחק אייזיק בן-יעקב 1111

p. 248. In listing K. he quotes rather fully from the title page, giving as the place and the date of publication, Lublin, 1574, mentioning also the date 1571 on fol. 5B.

p. 577. He lists the 1571 Cracow edition of S. together with the three other books mentioned on its title page, and then he lists the series of works which Fuerst lists, and which in reality should be ascribed to Messer David b. Messer Leon, as is pointed out in Note 2. Ben Jacob himself admits that some of this list are attributed to some author other than David.

9. אור החיים. חיים ב"ר יוסף סיני. פראנקפורט 1891. ג.א.

p. 323. He mentions David as darshan contemporary with R'Moses Isserles, and refers to the mention of him in Responsum 81 of the Rema. Reputation as a poet, writing laudatory poem in 1569 (cp. supra). His works:-

- a) K. - published in Lublin, in 1548;
- b) S. - Cracow 1571; and the other 3 books (Migdal David, Tehilla l'David, and Maskel l'David) as mentioned on the title page of S. Gives Bass as his source.

10. KATALOG der SALO COHN'SCHEN SCENKUNGEN, Dr. Bernhard Wachstein, Wien. 1911.

p. 46. The only other extant copy of K. that we have been able to find, besides the copy in the British Museum, is in the above collection of the Juedische Kulturgemeinde Bibliothek in Vienna. No one knows the fate of this book, as well as that of the whole library, for it was all recently confiscated by the Nazi authorities. In listing it, Wachstein also quotes from the title page, giving it the correct date of publication -- 1574. He takes specific issue with Van Straalen's date of 1571 by pointing out that the famous rabbis Moses Isserles, Solomon Luria, and Isaac b. Bezalel, are mentioned on the title page as deceased, and all of them were alive in 1571. (For fuller discussion of this point, see Note 1). On page 143, he lists the פירוש חמש מילוח רבה (Cracow, 1569) of Naphtali Herz b. Menahem, and mentions the fact that on folio 35 A is to be found the dedicatory poem by David Darshan.

11. בית דפוס ספרים -- ח.ד. פריערנער -- אנטווערפן תרמ"ח-ע"ב

In this bibliographical catalogue, on p. 296, K. is listed, with the place and date: Lublin, 1574. Under the letter ק the book S. is listed.

12. THESAURUS OF MEDIEVAL HEBREW POETRY - ISRAEL DAVIDSON, NEW YORK 1924-33

Here Davidson lists those poems of David which are extant, three of which are in S., the fourth the laudatory poem of 1569 that was attached to the first book to come off the press of Isaac of Prosstitz in <sup>that year.</sup> ~~1569~~. (See Ch. 2, note 38)

In Vol. 1, p. 110, #2320, he mentions the poetic shehita permit אומר ברנניה  
(S.16a). In vol.2, ~~2~~ #221, he mentions the Aramaic poem די דארין  
attached to his bann against Moses di Rossi (see Ch. 2) - (S.126); on p.114,  
#376, he mentions the laudatory poem which is at the end of the book by Naphtali Herz; and finally, in Vol3., p.72, #81, he mentions the poem מאיר לעולם  
in S.15a.

B. BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNTS.

How little is actually known in the extant secondary literature on David Darshan becomes clear when we glance at the references to him, not in bibliographical works, where the two printed books of his would inevitably make an appearance, and a few facts about him would be added if the bibliographer was able to glance at the title page of these books, but in those books where there is an attempt to deal with him as an individual, rather than as a name appended to some early Hebrew prints in Poland.

13. Warsaw 1886 עיר חתלה (בריסק) בדפוס ר' מאיר יחיאל האלמער

p. 165 In speaking of the commentary on the Five Megillot Rabba, published in 1569 by Naphtali Herz, the author refers to the laudatory poem composed for the occasion by David Darshan, and then, parenthetically goes on to inform us that his name is mentioned in No. 81 of the Responsa of the ReMa, and that he wrote S. and K., which were printed in Cracow. (Here he errs slightly, of course).

ספר לקורות היהודים בלובלין -- קליט ברור ניסיונות 14. 1899

p. 39 A brief paragraph, on the great personalities in the history of the Jewish community of Lublin, is devoted to David Darshan, who is here called the city-darshan (דארשן בעירנו לובלין). His decision to go to Palestine to complete his literary activity is mentioned, as well as his two printed books. Nissenbaum, however, fails to make mention of the date of the second, K. He then lists his works, as listed by Ben Jacob. In a footnote he quotes the author the אור החיים to the effect that David was a darshan in Cracow at the time of R. Moses Isserles, and that in 1569 he wrote a poem celebrating the publication of a commentary to the Five Megillot Rabba.

אוצר ישראל -- חלק רביעי -- ניו יארק חר' 15. Vol. 4

P.91 A brief article under listing Darshan. He is erroneously named here David b. Moses, Darshan ... poet and darshan in Cracow and Lublin. The statement is made that K. was published in two editions in Lublin, once in 1548, and then in 1574. He mentions the citation in the Responsa of the ReMa, the laudatory poem of 1569, the publication of S. in 1571, and the proofreading, in 1574, of part of Isaac Duran's סערי דורא. He lists the other books mentioned on the title page of S. The sources of this article are: Fuenn's ננסה ישראל and the אור החיים.

לתולדות ישראל וחכמיו בפולין (סחברת שניה) פ.ה. וועטשטיין 16.

בראש חר' 1

p. 35 This is perhaps the best and fullest account. Mentions the title אהנס הכולל given him in the "סערי דורא" and from the same source mentions the fact that his father was a martyr (הקדוש). His teachers-- Isaac b. Bezelel, Solomon Luria, and Moses Isserles. First published his K. in 1548. Falls heir to same error here, as many bibliographers. Makes mention of Resp. no. 81 of the ReMa. Speaks of his laudatory poem of 1569, then mentions, with a brief word of description, S., which was published in Cracow in 1571. Then he lists the unpublished works, (as in Ben Jacob), but does not express

doubt as to the authorship of any of these. In Lublin he republishes K in 1574, as a preface to his longer work, מסגרת 7177 and then Wettstein quotes from the title page. Refers to his proofreading of parts of Duran's book as previously mentioned, and in that year, in the middle of his work, he left for Palestine. At this point he conclusively proves that the date of the publication of the מסגרת 7177 is 1574, but this of course does not concern us here.

17. ENCYCLOPEDIA JUDAICA. Vol 9 p.843, Berlin 1930, article by S.A.Horodetsky

A brief paragraph in which David is called "preacher and liturgical poet," disciple of Rabbis Isaac ben Bezael, Moses Isserles, and Solomon Luria, who lived in Cracow in the 16th century. Identifies him (with probability) with the David ben ha-kadosh Menasche, who was the "magiha" 1574-76 of the "Shaare Dura." Settled in Palestine in 1574. Lists his works as in BenJacob, mentions the two dates (1548 and 1574) attributed to K., but offers no personal opinion on that problem. Then he lists the eleven unpublished works first attributed to David by Fuerst, and subsequently by BenJacob, adding that some of these may have been attributed to David erroneously. He mentions the responsum no. 81 in the Responsa of the ReMa, and the laudatory poem of 1569. His bibliography: Fuerst, Or Hachajim, Fuenn, Wettstein, Nissenbaum, and BenJacob.

18. מולדת הדפוס העברי ופולניא -- ח.ר. גרינבערג אומבערגן חרצ'ב

p.5 In this book on the history of the Hebrew printing press in Poland, we are informed that the first book to come off the press of Isaac of Pro<sup>s</sup>titz, who re-established a Hebrew printing house in Cracow after a lapse of some years, was the מגילת רנה by Naphtali Herz, early in 1569, and in honor of the occasion, David Darshan composed a poem that was printed at the end of the book. In a footnote he states that David was later darshan in Lublin.

p.6 He mentions publication of S. in 1571.

p.44 He mentions David as proof-reader in the publishing house in Lublin, in 1574 -- refers to his proof-reading of part of מסגרת 7177 and publication in that year of K. In the <sup>midst</sup> ~~middle~~ of his work on the proof-reading, he

set out for Palestine. In a footnote he refers to no. 81 of the Responsa of the ReMa, and also quotes from the title page of K.

19. הירושלמי כדפוסו -- שאול בה'רר סקס : ל לינרמן

ח'א כרד א ירושלים תרצ"ה

p.8 In the introduction to this book on the Yerushalmi, Lieberman mentions David as author of the פירוש הקצר in the Yerushalmi that first appeared in the Cracow edition of 1607. In a footnote he states that David resided in Cracow at that time (Refers reader to אור החיים 323). Lieberman's theory is taken up in greater detail in Chapter 1.

NOTE 1

## THE DATE OF PUBLICATION OF K.

In the body of secondary literature there is a good deal of confusion with regards to the date of publication of K., and the added question of whether there <sup>were</sup> ~~was~~ one or two editions of this book.

A careful study of the photostats of this book, obtained from the British Museum, tends to settle this question once and for all.

In the chronostich on the title page the author (or perhaps the printer) makes use of a biblical verse in which one or more of the words marked, contain the date by the value of each letter. This was a rather common practice in placing the date of Hebrew books. Thus the date on the title page of S. is

א' תתע"ז or 1571. In the title page of the apologia for darshanim K. the year is listed by the following verse. ק' ר' ה' ה' א' תתע"ז

We know that the numerical value of the YHWH is constant, i.e. 26, and we know too the reluctance of any pious Jew to write <sup>(it out)</sup> in full. Hence the abbreviation.

The Bibliographer Sabbetai Bass in his ספרי שנים of 1680 is the first to fall into error, and is hence the source of later errors especially on the part of those who did not consult the book at first hand. He lists K. as having been published in the year ק' ר' ה' (308, i.e., 1548). If he saw the book, he may have fallen into error, because the chronostich is in two lines, and the word ק' ר' comes at the end of the first line. His eye may have missed the marking over א' at the beginning of the second line.

At any rate this date is repeated by Wolf, and by Fuerst, is mentioned in a footnote by Zunz, and then it turns up regularly in the Seder Hadorot, Ozar Yisrael; Wettstein, and the Or Ha-Chayim. The article in the Ozar Yisrael, and Wettstein, would have two editions of the same work, one in 1548, and the other in 1574, since they come across indubitable mention of the latter edition.

Horodetsky in the Encyclopedia Judaica mentions both dates, but expresses no definite opinion.

Van Straalen, led astray by the  $\therefore$  is inclined to follow the date of fol. 5B, where David tells us he completed writing the book in 1571, for  $\therefore$  would be 1567 (acc. to his reckoning) and hence impossible, since a later date is mentioned later in the book.

Steinschneider questions the 1548 date, without making any special comment, while those who definitely assign the 1574 date and no other are Fuenn, Benjacob, Wachstein, and Friedberg, and Michaels.

In fol. 5B, David himself tells us that he finished writing the work in 1571. As to the  $\therefore$  being an abbreviation for the  $\text{ה'ק"ל}$  the fact that Solomon Luria, Moses Isserles, and Isaac b. Bezalel are all mentioned as deceased (and none of these three lived beyond 1573, shows that the book was published after this year. Moreover, we know from the 1574 edition of Duran's <sup>שו"ת דורא</sup> that David proof-read the first three "Gates," which is an added factor in establishing the fact that he was in Lublin at the time. And finally,  $\therefore$  is an abbreviation of  $\text{ה'ק"ל}$  <sup>(together with the word  $\text{ב'ק"ל}$ )</sup> which makes the total  $\text{ה'ק"ל}$  or 1574.

Moreover, the book itself mirrors a wealth of mature experience, and since David was born in 1527 (see ch. 1), he would have been only 21 in 1548. Besides in paragraph  $\text{ה'ק"ל}$  of the K. he speaks of his sojourn in Italy, and we know him to have been in Italy in 1558 and 1559 (see Ch.2).

Our conclusion then is that there was only one printed edition of K. so far as we have been able to discover, and that it was brought out in Lublin, in the year 1574.

NOTE 2

THE CONFUSED IDENTIFICATION OF DAVID BEN MENASSEH DARSHAN,  
WITH MESSER DAVID b. MESSER LEON, or DAVID b. JEHUDAH.

In his Bibliotheca Hebraea, published in 1715, Johannus Christophorus Wolff identifies the חהלה לדוד of which we have mention in the title page of the S. with a book of the same title listed on p. 169 of the Catalogus Bibliothecae Leidensis where the author is listed as R. Messer David b. Messer Leon, implying that the two men are identical.

This error is taken up lock, stock, and barrel by Fuerst, in his Bibliotheca Judaica, and the merger between David Darshan and Messer David b. Messer Leon is carried to its logical conclusion. As a matter of fact he lists him as Messer David b. Messer Leon ha-levi of Mantua, and only in a footnote makes the identification with David Darshan. He then mentions the books of David Darshan that we know, but confuses the חהלה לדוד with a book of the same title, by Messer David, published in Constantinople, in 1577.

Then he mentions the following 11 books, (1) אביר יעקב: 2) ביה דוד; (3) חובול; (4) כסא דוד; (5) סוף דוד; (6) נחל עדנים; (7) נפש דוד; (8) סולח מלכים; (9) עין הקורא; (10) קול יי בנה; (11) שנה הנשים.

These are repeated by BenJacob, Nissenbaum, Wettstein, Horodetsky, the first and the last admitting that some are erroneously attributed to David Darshan, but all of them hinting that the authorship of most of them is his.

We pointed out on page 6 of this chapter that all these titles are mentioned by Bass as MSS, and none are attributed to David Darshan.

The question arises: Who did write these books, which never found their way into print? Under the title Messer David b. Messer Leon or David ben Yehuda, in the Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 10, p. 787, there is an article by Umberto Cassuto, which throws considerable light on the subject. Here we learn that this Messer David was born in Italy in 1471, and therefore was long dead before David Darshan's first printed book came off the press. He was a prolific

writer, and among his works listed in the article are the following:

(Const. 1577)- חהלה לדוד  
 (Comm. to מורה - MSS Oxford 1263) עין הקורא  
 נבונים  
 MSS-Montefiore 290 - מגן דוד  
 (Neubauer-fragment REJ-X)- שבת הנשים  
 אנרי יעקב  
 סולה מלכים

Assigned to him by Bass are the above, plus the following:-

ניח דוד  
 כסא דוד  
 נפש דוד  
 קול יי נבא  
 נחל עדנים

It is rather safe to conclude, then, that none of these books should be assigned to David Darshan.

## CHAPTER TWO

## Biography

Wanderer, scholar, preacher, healer by charms, rabbi, poet, proof-reader, and father of unmarried daughters -- all these, and perhaps more, was David ben Manasse, Darshan, of Cracow. Thus far simply a name in bibliographic catalogues, a short paragraph in one encyclopedia and in a few histories of the Jews in Poland, he emerges from a careful examination of his writings with an increased stature, a heightened interest. He becomes something of a personality rather than a mere cipher on a list. And he forms a wedge for the entry into a deeper insight into the life of 16th century Polish Jewry, precisely because in an unselfconscious way he mirrors the forces and foibles at work among the more undistinguished masses of the people. And not through the eyes, say, of famous and well-known writers of history or responsa, but rather from thus far unexamined and little-known sources, sources charged full of interest.

His life span covers the period of rich growth in Polish Jewry. A generation before his birth, there were perhaps 50,000 Jews in all of Poland. A generation after his death, there were over 500,000. (1) He was born but a generation removed from the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, a calamity that filled his world with wandering refugees, and gave a great impetus to <sup>the</sup> development and spread of mysticism. In the land of his birth, Talmudism was on the rise, having been given its first great impetus by Jacob Pollack, who is credited with the development of Polish pilpulism. Pollack was succeeded by Solomon Shachna, the great rabbi of Lublin, and famous as the teacher of Moses Isserles and Solomon Luria under whom Polish rabbinism came into its great blossoming. It was early in his lifetime that the great institution of Jewish autonomy, the Council of the Four Lands, probably came into existence. (2)

David Darshan was the son of a martyred scholar and rabbi, Manasse. (3) He was born in Cracow in (or about) the year 1527. (4) Of his childhood we know nothing. He undoubtedly received the thorough education in Talmud that was rapidly becoming to be the sine qua non of any cultured Jewish home in Poland. He was not, however, a member of the growing favored class of communal leaders and officials, the "upper crust" of the community, which was vested with such power and influence in the growing development of the autonomous imperium in imperio which the Polish kings and higher nobility encouraged for their own particular interests. This is apparent in some interesting passages in that apologia for his craft, the נחם ההנצלות לדרשנים, which he deemed it necessary to publish in 1574. (5) Here he informs us that even in his youth he was driven from pillar to post. He was not permitted to study at the yeshivot, for many men doubly endowed, "both wise and rich" prevented him from applying himself to the study of the <sup>Torah</sup> ~~Torah~~, treating him as though he were an outcast. Not only that, but they tried to hinder him from making a living, depriving him of all his pupils and students. However, upon his own admission, he evaded the dire fate of illiteracy by listening to the discourses of the great rabbis of "Russia, Poland, Moravia, and Italy," who were always ready to reply to any questions put to them.

Thus among his teachers he claims Moses Isserles (6), Solomon Luria (7), and Isaac b. Bezalel (8).

It is just possible that among his fellow students at the academy of Moses Isserles were David Ganz and Abraham Halevi Horwitz. We know (9) that these two studied in Cracow under that teacher. The former, author of the נחם ההנצלות a secular historical work, and a student of astronomy and mathematics; and the latter, in his youth a keen student of philosophy and author of a commentary on the Rambam, received perhaps their prime impulse to such secular studies at the academy of the ReMa. Zinberg describes in interesting fashion how Isserles followed two widely varied interests, Talmudic studies and philosophy. Indeed Solomon Luria (9a) complained to the ReMa that he had found the "prayer of Aristotle" written in the prayer book of one of the latter's students.

David knew the מורה נבוכים of Maimonides. ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ (9b) ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
He shows some knowledge too of ancient astronomy and mathematics. (9c).

The struggle between the two factions, the anti-Maimonists and Maimonists came to a head (see note 9) in Posen where an <sup>obscurantist</sup> ~~obscurantist~~, R. Aaron, bitterly attacked all non-Talmudic learning, especially the study of Maimonides, and in a heated sermon went so far as to state that the burning of the Talmud in many parts of Italy was a direct result of the publication in 1551 of a new edition of the Guide.

To this Abraham Halevy Horowitz, then in Posen, replied with a bitter and sarcastic pamphlet (9d) attacking R. Aaron, and vigorously defending the study of philosophy.

Curious, indeed, is it that the Maimonist-Anti-Maimonist struggle made such a belated appearance in Poland. And it is interesting to know that David was one of those, who through contact with the circle around the ReMa, was touched by these influences, and, at a time when Talmudic knowledge was the be all and end all of educated Jews, had the veriest touch of what even the ל'קט so bitterly condemned - חכמות חיצוניות .

Where David got his rabbinical ordination, if he did get it, is unknown. He is given the rabbinical prefix (מה'ר"ר) on the title page of his two printed books (10) and in two other contemporary printed references (11). However, there is a question in the Responsa of the ReMa, no. 81, by David, and in his reply, the ReMa does not refer to him as a rabbi at all. (12) It may be that he sent in this particular question before he obtained any semicha, but at any rate, by 1558, when we find him in Italy, he vests one Uri b. Shlomo Hachohen Lippman with authority to act as a shochet (13). And we know too that people came to him with ritual questions (14) and that in one case he replaced the rabbi of Ferrara, Joseph Mintz, as teacher of a certain young man (15).

Early in life, as he himself relates, he gave expression to his

talents as a darshan (16). The Cabbala was an early influence in his life, and even before 1558, when he was yet in Cracow, he sold, so he relates, thousands of amulets ( י.ג.נפ ) during a plague. (17). There are records of serious plagues in Cracow in 1543, 1552, and 1556 (18). We know that the ReMa lost his first wife, the daughter of Solomon Shachna, in the plague of 1552(19), and that during the plague of 1556, he himself fled to a neighboring city to escape the scourge. (20). It is probably to one of the latter two to which David refers.

Perhaps, then, after 1552 or 1556, David set out on his wanderings, probably going from city to city, picking up what money he could by the sale of amulets, and delivering discourses to the multitudes when permitted. We do know it to be a fact that he spent some time in Posen, at the home of the well-to-do agent, Meir Levi. (21).

By 1557 we know him to be in Ferrara (22), although exactly when he arrived there is not known. It was not an uncommon thing for Polish Jews to visit Italy and vice versa. As a matter of fact, there was a good deal of intercourse between the Jewish communities of Poland and Italy. The first Jewish printing presses in Poland were set up by Jews who had come from Italy. Polish rabbis were frequently in communication with Italian rabbis. And what is perhaps more interesting is the fact that many young Polish Jews went to Italy to study medicine especially at the University of Padua, and to study at the Talmudic yeshivot as well (23). An interesting fact indicative of this is the appearance of a pentateuch in Lemberg, in 1590, with commentaries in both Yiddish and Italian (24). Many Sefardic Jews came to Poland via Italy--as physicians or apothecaries (25). The famous court physician and statesman to the Turkish court, Solomon Ashkenazi, followed a route that led from Italy to Turkey via Cracow. During his stay in the Polish city, he became rather friendly with the ReMa. Moreover, in 1559, one of the ReMa's books, the י"ב ר"מ a commentary on the book of Esther, was printed in Cremona. And we know too that the ReMa was always in close contact with the Rabbis of Italy (26).

Nor was this interplay between Poland and Italy confined to the Jews. It is sufficient, in this regard, to point out that the King himself, Sigismund August (1548-1572) married the Italian princess Bona, of the House of Sforza (27).

In Ferrara, he stayed with the apparently well-to-do Bordolani (28) family, teaching (and probably preaching) at the Bet HaMidrash sponsored and supported by this family. In the year 1557 we find that the head of one of the yeshivot in Ferrara, Rabbi Jacob Reiner, requested him to write a responsum by way of examination, which he did (29). The exact purpose of this "examination" is not exactly clear. It may have been done to establish David's right to act as a rabbi. The responsum which David wrote is of interest among other reasons for it mirrors the impact of Marranism upon the Jewish life of that day.

In the following year, Rabbi Joseph Mintz, member of that famous Italian rabbinical family whose immediate ancestor, R. Isaac Mintz, had been involved in the famous controversy with Jacob Pollack (30), requested David to write a short treatise on one of David's specialties -- amulets. The result of this request was the ספר הקסמים (31), a detailed treatise on kabbalistic charms and their prevalence, with a strong attempt to justify their use in the face of some criticism. We find in this article, as in his other writings, a rather strong predilection for the Kabbala. Both these themes will be discussed in greater detail in another connection.

A rather interesting insight into David's activities in Ferrara is included in a selection from his manual of letter writing, דרכי כתיבה which appears in the שיר המעלות לדוד. The letter is written in the name of a student who had been studying with Rabbi Joseph Mintz, who left the city in search of health. Thus the student has to look for another teacher, and apparently with some success, for he writes:

"I found a worthy man, full of wisdom. His name is R. David Darshan, and he teaches Torah at the household of the noble Bordolani family. He is indeed like a richly bedecked table - <sup>a</sup>feeling knowledge and understanding to people lacking these as do I. Who can adequately praise his attainments? His light shines forth in Talmud and Poskim... He is very able in polemics and logic... and in grammar...and he is also extremely well-skilled in the kabbala..."(32).

A worthy recommendation indeed, even if David probably wrote it himself.

We do not know precisely how long he remained in Italy, or exactly when he left, but he finally gravitated back to Poland, and he is found in Cracow by 1568. For in that year, Moses Bordolani, a member of the family which seems to have treated him with such hospitality in Italy, came to Cracow bearing written banns of excommunication signed by many rabbis against one משה די רוסי (probably Moses di Rossi, (33)) for having permitted the D'Ato family (34) to sue the Bordolanis in a Christian court. To this David adds his own bann of excommunication, together with a poem in Aramaic, chiding Di Rossi for his heretical act.

Apparently David was considered the leading poet in the community - something akin to the poet laureate. In the year 1568, though rapidly growing into one of the leading Jewish communities in Poland, Cracow still lacked a Hebrew printing press, due in large part to the defection from Judaism of the previous publisher, leaving only one printing press in the country, in Lublin. (35) To fill this gap, Isaac of Prosstitz, who had studied typography in Venice under the famous Giovanni Grypho, came to Cracow, bringing with him the famous proof-reader, Samuel of Bohemia ( סמואל בן הקרוס ה"ר יצחק פיהם). For in that year Giovanni went out of business. Isaac bought out his equipment, brought it to Cracow and set up his establishment there, receiving a special permit to do so from the King, Sig-mund Augustus II. (36).

The first book to come off the press of Isaac of Prosstitz was a commentary on the five megillot rabb<sup>a</sup> by the Rabbi Naphtali Herz b. Menahem of Lwow (37), and it was published on the first day of Elul, 1569. The appearance of this book was a red letter day in the life of the community, and David wrote a special poem (38) for the occasion, which was included in this, the first book to come off the newly established printing press in Cracow. It was, so to speak, an early Polish Jewish counterpart of Keat's "On Looking into Chapman's Homer."

Upon his return to Cracow from his extensive travels, David had brought with him a collection of 400 books, (39) a truly extensive collection for those days, consisting of talmudic, rabbinic, kabbalistic, and philosophic literature. And so, as he relates in the Introduction of S., in view of the wide-spread ignorance and illiteracy (40) he decided to establish a house of study, where all who wished to learn, and lacked the books or the knowledge, could come and so do.

Thus he writes:

".....Divine providence has seen fit to put these books in my hands, and to place me in this house of study even though I be in such a lowly position, in order to strengthen the deep faith in God and to keep the 'lifeline' (i.e., study of Torah) from snapping on account of the stress of business and occupation, taxes and troubles, and there is no time to study Torah and to become intimately familiar with the mitzvot. And some may have the time, but lack the books. And some may have the books, but lack the understanding. And so when they come into my house of study, this lack will be filled. And if some perchance should know more than do I, I shan't be too ashamed to learn from him. And if some questions be too much both for the asker and myself, I shall take the trouble to send it to greater scholars." (41)

He adds that he will always be prepared to set aside each day at least an hour to give an expository sermon or to interpret some bit of Torah. This, of course, will be of special benefit to the poor. He is prepared, too, to teach grammar to the teachers of children. This latter might well have been an acquisition of his Italian contacts, for we know what little regard was paid to this aspect in Germany and Poland. (42)

These then are the obvious benefits to the utterly unschooled. To those who know something, or as he puts it, the *נאץ 'גרי'* the following benefits will accrue:

"....coming home tired and weary from their daily tasks of eking out a livelihood, they can take book home with them and read it, and if they find difficulty in the meaning of some difficult word or passage or halacha, they can write it out on paper -- even in Yiddish and send it anonymously to the house of study, and if I don't know, I shall ask someone else." (43)

The question of David, which appears in the Responsa of the ReMa, (44) is probably the result of his being 'stumped' by one such question. The benefits of his institution to the lamdanim, the greatly learned, will be two-fold. If any question in halacha troubles them, he will send for a <sup>P</sup>resonsum to the great scholars of the day, and place all these before the head of the Yeshiva for his final decision. Moreover, if they are hunting for some particular passage of law or citation, he will be

happy to look it up for them in his collection of books. (45)

And finally, (and perhaps most important) he tries to justify his undertaking by showing the benefits that will accrue from this to the head of the yeshiva, for in this way they will not be troubled with unimportant questions, nor will they lose time with petty matters. For only the most important matters will come before him. (46)

The head of the yeshiva in Cracow at this time was none other than the ReMa, who was succeeded after his death in 1572 by his brother-in-law, Joseph Cohen, the author of the famous responsa *שוא"ת* (47). When David then wrote in the *Hakdama*, that he undertakes all this with the clear understanding that he have nothing to do with any official duties, either pertaining to the kahal or rabbinical affairs (48), he may well have done so as a result of pressure from these quarters and not through sheer modesty or self-effacement.

Thus for a short while David remained in Cracow. People did come to him for ritual or legal questions, and for special requests. Thus for when Morechai the Alchemist, leaves five unmarried daughters behind in Cracow, and betakes himself to Frankfort-am-Main, David writes a letter to the communal leaders of Frankfort asking them to persuade or coerce the aforementioned Mordechai to send, not himself, but money, to supply the five daughters with dowries. (49). And when one *פנחס*

*משה דלוי* is taken captive, David writes the plea for ransom (50). So too he writes to the rabbis of Italy on behalf of an unfortunate agunah (51).

On Purim, of the year 1571, a few weeks before he left Cracow, a little book containing specimens from books which he had written either wholly or in part, came off the press of Isaac of Prosnitz. It was his *ספר הנעלות* (52).

At the very end of this little book is a charming biographical poem, which gives us some insight into his variegated life in Cracow (53). He preached every Sabbath and, at his own modest confession, his sermons had a widespread repute. He was always prepared to answer, if he could, any questions on the Torah that might

be put to him. He was, in addition, a combination physician and healer by charms,-- a sort of pre-hassidic Guter Yid. He was prepared for all emergencies. He might be summoned at any hour of the day or night to stop a hemorrhage. He was on constant call to ease the pangs of childbirth by giving a special charm to the mother-to-be. If a bone were by chance lodged in a child's throat, they came to him. If someone threw a fit or went insane, they came to him. Evidently, sober talmudic learning alone did not meet all the needs of the common people.

Yet for all this, he ruefully reports, he received absolutely no pay. He had not yet acquired the finesse of the later princely 'Guter Yid', or the emoluments of an established rabbinical post. His only source of income stemmed from the sale of written amulets against a plague or some other calamity, and this he spent mainly in the purchase of books, which he placed at the disposal of the general community. But this impecuniosity is not the least of his woes, for he is "blessed" with many daughters. Hence he must soon take his leave of the great city of Cracow, to attempt to raise the necessary money for dowries, and he will gladly appreciate aid from whatever direction it might come.

But this was not the main reason for his leaving Cracow. He was not successful in establishing the private "midrash" in Cracow (54). As a darshan, he was constantly under fire, probably largely because of his kabbalistic method and extremely free form of interpretation. At any rate he felt it necessary to write a defence of darshanim and the art of preaching, as a preface to his book of sermons, the מסנ'ל ליד. This preface appeared in Lublin, in 1574 (55). The problem of the opposition to the darshan, and just who the opponents might have been, will be taken up in detail in the appendix to Chapter <sup>Three.</sup> ~~Four~~. He finished writing this preface just before Shabuoth of the year 1571 (56). It is fairly safe to assume, from what he wrote in his poem at the end of S. (57) that he had already left Cracow. He finally arrived in Lublin, and there he became the Darshan of the city (see title page of K.), and in the year 1574 his apologia for darshanim, the preface to his Maskil L'David, came off the printing presses. Here too he was associated with the printer, and acted as proof-reader. He proof-read the הקדמה ליד which appeared in 1574, as far as the "Fifth Gate" (58).

All writers on the subject are agreed on the fact that David left Lublin at that time to continue on to Palestine, as he hints on the title page of K., when he writes: "....and he desires to set out for Palestine to complete his writing activity there" (59).

A recent discovery which was brought to the attention of Lieberman (60) makes it possible to cast doubt on the fact that David ever got to Palestine, or to suggest, at least, that if he did go, he must have returned to Poland. In 1609 there appeared in Cracow a new edition of the Yerushalmi, with a commentary by an anonymous writer. This particular edition was reprinted much later in Krotoshin. In the edition at the Hebrew University Library, (the second edition) on the title page, beside the printed phrase describing the commentary: "אך חוסיה פ"י (העלים אה שמו)", there appears the note of some scholar who used it: "ואע"פ כן גילה אה שמו בנזיר פ"ו ה"א, נ"ד ע"ג". And in Nazir 86, (Y) in the commentary appears the phrase: "וכן נראה לי דוד דרשון". Thus Lieberman thinks it

quite likely, although the matter is subject to much deeper research, that David Darshan was the author of this commentary. And he characterises him as such in his book (61), while at the same time saying that he intends to give the matter fuller consideration in the near future.

This much seems reasonable. David was <sup>probably</sup> alive in 1609, and was perhaps in Cracow. He might have been only a proof-reader on this particular edition of the Yerushalmi, and slipped in his name in a comment on the one passage. Or perhaps he was the author of the commentary, hiding his name because otherwise it might meet the opposition of the "lamdanim" as we know from K. (62). The matter, of course, demands much more careful study, at the hands of a competent Talmudic scholar, who can familiarize himself completely with the contents and style of this particular commentary. From a careful reading of both K. and S. it is manifestly clear that David was certainly learned enough to have been capable of writing such a commentary.

But from the year 1574 to the year 160<sup>9</sup>, we are faced with an utter blank. Not one iota of information has come to our attention.

It may yet be, that in the not too distant future, David Darshan will be established not only as an interesting example of sixteenth century Polish preacher, who had a talent for writing as well as preaching, but as one who made a definite and lasting contribution too to Talmudic literature.

## NOTES ON CHAPTER TWO

1. Dubnow, History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, vol. 1, p.66.
2. See the first letter to Graetz in Dembitzer's מכתבי בקר
3. Title page of K: "מהר"ר דוד דרשן בן הגאון הקדוש מנשה ז"ל"
4. S. Hakdama: אשר סרחה בעבורן מברכותי כשהייתי י"ם שנה עד  
עשה כ"ה שנה". Thus since he wrote the Hakdama in the year 1571 (or thereabouts), and hence was 44 years old at the time of the writing, then the latest possible date for his birth was 1527 - or perhaps a year or so earlier.
5. See paragraph 14 of K, where he writes: אמר הקטן הרשום דוד  
דרשן מקראקא...אחר זאת ההקדמה. ימין ה' עלי רוססה. להודות לו בכל  
מיני הילול זרינה. שהייתי והגיעני עד הנה: מאחר שהפליא חסדו עלי  
בפלאי פלאות. והוציאני מכסא בהלות וחלאות: שהייתי מסולסל ומנודר  
מנעורי מרחי אל דחי. ונתפך עלה למשחית חודי וכחי: ואור שכלי הלך  
ונדלדל. כי סביח ישיבות החורה הייתי בעל כרחי נבדל: כי קמו עלי  
בכמה מדינות רבים בחכמה ובעושר. ובסלו ממני לעיין בחורה שעת הכושר:  
מפני שהייתי ביניהם כמנודה....ועשו עלי בחינם מריבה....ועוד גרמו  
לחם סיפוקי ופרנסתי. ובסלו ממני החלמידים לשמוע תורתי: ועשו בי  
מעשה אחז עד שלבי צלצצ בקרבי פחו. שלא אשכח ח"ו החורה לגמרי. ואמר  
לי לבי אל תפנה אל בית המרי:...וממכחני רוח נדבות. מועיר מי החורה  
ששאבתי בששון מקצת ראשי ישיבות: והם חכמי רוסיא ופולין ומעלה  
ואיסליא גאוני ישראל. שהיו מוכנים חסיד לכל שואל...."
6. Famous pupil of Shalom Shachna, b. 1520, d. 1572. Lived in Cracow. Was member of the Communal Court and head of the Talmudical Academy. Author of the "Mappa", famous commentary to Shulhan Aruh, many important works of responsa, etc. (Dubnow, vol. 1, p. 123; also Wettstein I, p. 21.)
7. Solomon Luria (MaHaRaSHaL or Solomon of Ostrog) (1510-1573) famous contemporary of the ReMa. Author of "Yam Shel Sh'lomo" and "Chochmat Sh'lomo". Critical of Shulhan Aruh. Occupied post of Rabbi in Ostrog, in middle of 16th century, where his lectures on the Talmud attracted widespread attention. Spent his last years in Lublin. (Dubnow, vol. 1, p. 125; Bieber, מזכרונות p. 31). אוסטרא

8. Isaac b. Bezael, of Lodomir, brother of the MaHaRil of Prague, fl. 16th century, contemporary of Shalom Shachna and Kalman of Worms. An important figure in the spread of Talmudism in Poland. Great halachic authority. Died in 1576. Mentioned ~~in~~ Resp. of MaHaRaSHal, 1, 15, and 35f; of Joseph Cohen, 17; of Rema, 91. (Enc. Judaica v. S, p.501).
9. Zinberg, v.5, p.58 ff
- 9a. Ibid. p.58
- 9b. S. 11a כמו עוזר הרב המורה חלק ב' פ"ר ל"ב  
and 11b, where he chides Moses of Marbonne for misunderstanding a certain portion of the "Guide."
- 9c. Ibid. Also K. par.7
- 9d. Zinberg, v.5, p.65 and Monatschrift, 1903 (where it was published by Bloch, as an anonymous document. Schipper later proved Horowitz' authorship of this pamphlet.
10. On the title pages of K and S
11. In the Commentary on the Four Megillot Rabb<sup>a</sup>, Cracow 1569 (see facsimile on p.41b of דברי דורא ספר דברי קהלה and in the דברי דורא Lublin, 1574.
12. In this responsum he writes: "אלה דברי דוד..."
13. S. 16a
14. S. 12b
15. S. 15b Joseph Mintz, a member of the famous rabbinical family of that name in Italy. Other members of this family: R.Jehuda HaLevi Mintz, rabbi in Padua (d.1509), (Wiener, p.63); his son, R.Abraham Mintz of the same city, (fl.1504-1526) (Wiener p.42) and the former's uncle, R.Moses Mintz (Wiener, p.63). Whether Joseph was Abraham's son or nephew, is not known.
16. S.Hakdama
17. S. 11a.
18. Wettstein, v.1 pp22,23.
19. Ibid. p.22
20. Ibid. p.23
21. S. 11a
22. S. 8a
23. Zinberg vol. 5, p.40
24. Ibid. footnote 19 (See also vol. 4, p.69)
25. Ibid.

26. Ibid. p.41
27. Graetz, Geschichte d. Juden, Leipzig 1877, vol.9, p.443
28. S. 10a, 12a. The Bordolani Family. In S. 15b we have mention of a Meir Bordolani, and in 12a, of a Moses Bordolani. In the LUCHOT AVANIM, part two, by S. Bernstein, Cincinnati, 1935, we have the poetic inscription by Leo Modena (no.23, p.499) of the tombstone of a Rebecca Bordolani, who died in 1610. In footnote he surmises that she was the mother of a Meir Bordolan at whose wedding, Leo Modena wrote a poem (See Diwan of Leo Modena, ed. by S. Bernstein Philadelphia 1932 -- p.171). May have been wife of Zalman Bordolani, at whose request Modena wrote **הקדמה ודיקאציון לספר רמאל ציווידאל**  
Thus ~~the~~ Meir Bordolani may have been a grandson of the Meir r Bordolani mentioned by David in S. 15b.
29. S. 8a
30. See the **פסק החרם** of Rabbi Jacob Pollack, published by Samuel Wiener, St. Petersburg, 1897. Therein is contained the text of the bann issued by the former against Rabbi Abraham Mintz, along with two nullifications of the bann by the rabbis Juda Leib of Ferrara and Asriel Deino of Sabionetta, on the grounds that Jacob was simply being vindictive, and issued the bann because he in turn had been excommunicated by Abraham's father, Yehuda HaLevi Mintz.
31. S. 10b
32. S. 15b
33. S. 12a. This particular case makes an interesting addition to history of Jewish legal autonomy. The Di Rossi family was an ancient family in Italy. Azariah dei Rossi, we know, lived in Ferrara around 1571. (See article in Jewish Encyclopedia). His father's name was Moses, and so the Moses Di Rossi, if our reading of David's **משה דיי רוסי** (he also writes it **דרוסי**) be correct, may well have been the father of Azariah. Which is an interesting and not altogether implausible theory. (Graetz, Gesch. Vol.9, p.416).
34. The D'Ato family (**דאטו**): A prominent Italian Jewish family of which perhaps the most prominent representative in David's time was the rabbi, preacher and kabbalist Mordecai ben Judah D'Ato who was born in 1527 and died after 1585. He was a pupil of Moses Cordovero. He is mentioned favorably by Azariah di Rossi in connection with a Messianic prediction (Me'or 'Enayim Ch. xliii) Some MSS of his kabbalistic writings are extant. (See Jewish Encyclopedia, vol. 4 p 448; also Encyclopedia Judaica under "D'Ato").
35. See Friedberg's **חולדון הדפוס העברי במולדניה** p.4
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid. p.5. For short comment on Naphtali Herz as head of yeshiva in Brisk see **מנחת צדק קטל** Warsaw 1886, p.165.  
**עיר חלה**

38. The introduction and poem are reproduced in the book

וכאשר ראה המסורר מהר"ר on p.418. Here is the poem: **דוד דרשן מקראקא יופי פרישת הגאון מוהר"ר הירץ. מכל חסד מגילות רבות מלוח קטוח ומעטים חירץ. וגם יופי הדפוס לא נפל ארץ. אז פתח פיו בשיר פסום וכרובה נסרץ:**

דרשו ספר.	אמרי שפר.	בלתי חפר.	עושה פירות:
ודאי גלה.	בכל מלה.	תפלא פלא.	חיבות זרות:
דרך דרך.	אין לו ערך.	החיר סרך.	שורות שורות:
דבר דבר.	עחיד עבר.	ישר חיבר.	כל אפשרות:
ראה קלות.	ה' מגילות.	מצד מלות.	דרש חומרות:
שם רב הו"א ר"ץ.	גאון הירץ.	גודר פרץ.	ראש החבורות:
נמר אוצר.	כ"ף סי"ת אב"צ.	חדוה יצר.	לפרס קצרות:

[A list of some of the interesting books in that collection mentioned in K & S. are dealt with in the appendix to this chapter.

39. S.Hakdama: **ואני אכניס לחוכו ליקר הוד חפארה אלקי השמים והארץ**  
**ארבע מאות ספרים נבחרים.....**

40. The picture <sup>(to which)</sup> David fleetingly alludes in the Hakdama of S. is in interesting contrast to Nathan Hannover's picture in his

יון מצולה (1648 - p.157, or in Dubnow, vol.1, p.116).

Unlike Hannover's account, we have here the hint of fairly widespread am haaratsut: **...וידוע שסיבת הגלות והצרות והבהלות הכל בעבור שאנו**

**בעו"ה מחרשלים בחורה ובמצות... זהנה בעונותינו חכמו צרות עלינו**  
**מכזר הגלות והמחיה והראגות ואין לנו פנאי לתפוס בחבל החיים**  
**רק אחד מעיר ושנים ממשפחה....**

41. S.Hakdama: **ומסעם זה ראחה ההשגחה האלקית להזמין על ידי אלו**  
**הספרים ולהושיבני חוך המדרש אעפ"י שאני שפל המצב כדי שיתחזק**  
**הדבקות בתש"י והחבל של החיים לא ינחק לגמרי ח"ו מרוב כוזב**  
**המדרש מהמחיה והמסים והארנוניות והצרות והגלות והחלואה שיש**  
**לנו בגלות בעו"ה ואין פנאי לעסוק בחורה לידע המצות על בוריי.**  
**ולפעמים יש לו פנאי ואין לו ספר. ולפעמים יש לו ספר ואין לו**  
**הנחת. ואם כן שיכנס לבית המדרש יחמלא חסרונו. ואם יבין יותר**  
**ממני לא אחבייט ללמוד ממנו. ומה שיקשה מהשואל וממני אני**  
**אמריה לשאול מן הגדולים....**

42. Zunz, Gottesdienstliche Vortraege der Juden cites Leo Modena's criticism of Polish Jew's bad grammar, poor schooling, and too much pilpul, quoting from his 1629. Zunz, p.446. **...הנה מוסמחם להיות מלמדים,**  
**שופטים או ראשי ישיבה.... ולא הבינו לא כחכמה חיצונית ולא**  
**בחורה נעשו צוררים לתבונות....**

43. S.Hakdama: **והחועלת לידועים קצח והם באים בערב עייפים ויגעיים מן**  
**דרך המסחה יכול כל אחד ליקח ספר בידו בתוך ביתו ויקרא בחוכו**  
**ואם יקשה לו איזה פשט או מלה חסורה יכול לציין אותו על נייר**  
**אפילו בלשון אשכנז וישלח לבית המדרש וגם השליח לא יצטרך לומר**  
**מי הוא השואל. ואני אפרשהו אם אדעהו ואם לא אדעהו אשאליהו.**

44. Responsa of the ReMa, No.81.

45. S.Hakdama: ...ועוד לפעמים אפילו חריף ומבין ונחוץ למצא איזה מאמר או דין או פסוק או לדרוש מספרי חכמות או קבלה וכדומה ואין לו אותן הספרים יכול לכתבו על נייר ולשלוח לבית המדרש ואני אטריח אחריו למצא אותו."

46. S.Hakdama: והחזעלה תגדול לראש ישיבה..... כי לא יצטרך להפסיד זמנים. בעניינים הקטנים. כי לא יבא לפניו רק דברים קשים.....

47. He was the Rema's brother-in-law. (Isserles' second wife was his sister).  
Died in 1591, almost at the age of 80, after having been rabbi and rosh  
yeshiva in Cracow for half a century. See Dembitzer, כ"ח ח"א  
5b.

48. S.Haklama: .....וכל זה בתנאי גמור שלא יהיה לי שום עסק בשום  
צד שירה וכבוד בעולם הן בעסקי הקהל הן בצד הרבנות...."

49. S. 13b

50. S. 14b

51. Ibid.

52. S. 16b: אמר יצחק מפרוסטין גבר חוקם על הדפוס פה ק"ק קראקא.  
השבת וההודאה לבעל ההודאה שסיימן להדפיס ספר קטן זה. מריש  
ועד כאן הן הן הדברים שיצאו מפי מהר"ר דוד דרשן י"ץ. ונסתיים  
יום ה' ביוםא דפורים שנה של"א לפ"ק.

[illegible]

54. K. title page: הניחו לחדשים אחרי שלא זכה להעמיד מדרש באלו  
הגלילות כמזכר בהקדמת ספר שיר המעלות."
55. K. title page.
56. K. par. 25, end: חידשתי זאת ההקדמה חוץ ג' ימי הגבלה בשנה  
יקרה היא מפנינים."
57. S. 16b (see note 52)
58. Wettstein, part 2 p. 36, footnote 29: שער דורא...הוגה בעיון רב  
על ידי החכם הכולל מה'רר דוד דרשן י"צ" (שער הספר). הוגה  
על ידי מה'רר דוד בן הקדוש מה'ר' מנשה הנזכר בתחלת הספר  
עד שער החמישי" (סוף הספר)
59. K. title page: והוא רוצה לשלם נדרו לשום פעמיו לארץ הקדושה.  
ושם רוצה אי"ה לסדר החבורים..."
60. Lieberman, in his הירושלמי בפסוקים p.8.
61. Ibid., where he writes: ר' דוד דרשן, (בעל הפירוש הקצר שנדפס  
בירושלמי דפוס קראקא וקרוסטיין)"
62. K. par. 14 (see note 4).

- F. - Friedberg, Bet Eked Sefarim  
B - Benjacob, Ozar Sefarim

Appendix A - Books Mentioned by David in S. & K.

(1) סגורת המאור

- S. 3a. Treatise on morals etc. by Isaac Aboab. first pub.  
Constantinople, 1513. Venice 1544, Mantua 1563.  
(F. p379)

(2) ספר התרומה

- S. 10b Halachic work on forbidden and permissible, by R. Baruch  
b. Isaac of Worms. Venice 1523. 2o. (B p 673)

(3) ספר מצות גדול

- S. 10b Famous homiletical work by the Spanish itinerant preacher  
Moses of Coucy. (B p 362)

(4) ספר מצות קטן

- S. 10b Abstract of (3) divided into seven parts corresponding  
to each day of the week, prepared by R. Isaac b. Joseph  
of Corbeil. Constantinople 1552. 4o. (B p 442)

(5) הגהות האשרי

- S. 11b Notations to the commentary of the Asheri, by Israel of  
of Krems 1520. (B p 130)

(6) פירוש המורה

- S. 11b well known commentary on the Guide of Maimonides by  
Moses of Narbonne

(7) רמב"ם-סגורת נבוכים  
סמנה פרקים  
ספר המדע

- S. 11b and K 20

8) רמב"ן-פירוש

Nachmanides' Biblical Commentary. S. 11b also 3b

9) זחר

S. 12a

10) מנחת יהודה

S. 12a Commentary by Jehuda b. Jacob Hayyat to the Ma'arehet Ha-elonut - a kabbalistic work, Ferrara 1558. (F. p 396)

11) שיעור קומה

S. 12a well-known Kabbalistic work.

13) ס' חפלה ר' נחוניא בן הקנה14) ס' חפלה רב הסנונא סבא15) ס' ע'ב שמוח של ממכרון

S. 12 a 13, 14, & 15 are three kabbalistic works of which are not listed in any of the major bibliographic catalogues. Nor does there appear to be any mention of them in Scholem's Bibliotheca Kabbalistica.

16) ס' אגרת חסדוה

S. 12 a MSS circulated in 16th C. Strong apology of Kabbalistic doctrines, by the physician Elijah Hayyim b. Benjamin of Genazzano. B. p 10 no. 212. See also Enc. Judaica under Genazzano.

17) נחלה אבות

Commentary to Pirke Abot by Isaac Abarbanel. Constantinople 1545. 4c. S. 12 a (B p 395 no. 108)

18) אגרת התנצלות

K. 11 Defence of science and philosophy against attack of Solomon Adret. See Bibliography & Ch. 3 p 52 note 7.

19) נחיי - פירוש עה"ה

K. 16 Commentary on the Five Books of Moses by Bahya b. Asher. Naples 1492, Pessaro, 1507. (B p 67, no. 228)

20) ס' דרך אמונה

K 16 Probably the book here mentioned is the one by Joseph Halevy, a reply to ten questions by a pupil concerning the Ten Sefirot. Padua 1563, Cracow 1577. (B p. 116)  
However, B. mentions another book by that name on faith and knowledge of God by Abraham Bibago. Constantinople 1522. 2o.

(21) ס' עקרת יצחק

K 16 Commentary and "wonderful expositions" on the Five Books of Moses, by R. Isaac b. Moses b. Meir b. Erama. Salonika 1522, Venice 1547, 1565. (B p 448 no. 561)

(22) מדרם רבונים

K 16 (B. p 493) A) Moses Cordovero, intro. and key to the knowledge of the Kabbala and comm. on parts of Zohar. Saloniki 1562. B) Comm. on diff. adagot of Talmud by Isaac b. Shaarut of Toledo. Sabionetta 1554.

(23) פירוש הרקנר (ספר הרקנאמי)

K 16 x Kabbalistic commentary on Zohar and on Nachmanides's Commentary by Menahem of Rácanati. Venice 1523, 1545

The Books herein listed are those books (excluding the Talmud -- both Jerusalem and Babylonian --, Midrashim, Poskim etc., of which David shows profuse knowledge throughout) which David mentions in K. and S., both specifically and en passant. They give us an idea of what a learned Polish Jew may have had in his library. we assume that he was in possession of all these books, although he only mentions specifically in his possession nos. 10-15. Still in view of the fact that his library consisted of 400 books, there is no reason to doubt that these are representative items from it. Of particular interest is his penchant for kabbalistic works.

## CHAPTER THREE

## THE WORKS OF DAVID DARSHAN

Though David Darshan wrote fairly extensively, only two of his books found their way into print. The other items either remained in manuscript form, or if they were printed we have been able to find no record of them. It would seem that none but his two published works have survived (1).

He collected his sermons, and intended to publish them in extensive form, under the title: **מסביל לדוד**. He wrote many responsa, and of especial note is his treatment of amulets. He composed letters in Aramaic, to leading rabbis, some of which met with the approval of Moses Isserles and Joseph Cohen. He also wrote a manual of letter-writing in Hebrew verse, for young men, two hundred such letters, and poems to form a volume which he gave the name **דודל דוד**. Then he began to compose a catechism to aid in remembering the 613 commandments, which though yet unfinished, he gave the title of **תהלה לדוד**. And then he wrote the apologia for his craft, the **כתב התנצלות לדורשנים** which was published in Lublin, in 1574.

The following then would be a complete listing of his works:-

1. **מסביל לדוד** A collection of sermons. Completed but unpublished.
2. Responsa, including the **מעם הקמיעין** Completed but unpublished.
3. **דודל דוד** Letter-writer and collection of poems. Completed but unpublished.
4. **תהלה לדוד** Catechism of 613 commandments. Partially completed by 1574.
5. **שיר התעלות לדוד** Containing specimens of the above (with exception of **תהלה לדוד**) -- as a sort of catalogue of his writings, Cracow, 1571.
6. **כתב התנצלות לדורשנים** Meant to be the Hakdama to his **מסביל לדוד** which he hopes to publish later. Lublin, 1574.
7. And possibly, **פירוש קצר** to the Yerushalmi<sup>mi</sup> of Cracow, 1601 (2).

A. שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לַדָּוִד :

The סֵפֶר שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לַדָּוִד which was published in Cracow in 1571, contains 32 pages, 40. Copies of this book can be found in the following libraries: Jewish Theological Seminary, Columbia University, and the British Museum. The latter possesses an imperfect copy, with the title page missing (3). It is really a catalogue of his various writings, to prove that he too has something to contribute to the learned world (4).

The Hakdama consists of a statement of his intention of opening up a בֵּית הַסֵּדֶרֶשׁ in Cracow, and making available to all his collection of more than 400 books. He carefully outlines the advantages of this to all classes of the population, including the head of the yeshiva, with painstaking effort to point out that he is in no way infringing upon the prerogatives of the communal officials. He opens his plea by citing the midrash (from Tanhuma--Shalah 15) wherein the study of the Torah is compared to the lifeline cast out to the drowning man. The lifeline of Israel is the collection of mitzvot and knowledge of the Torah. This must be kept strong through study, and the neglect of the people is tending to weaken the lifeline. This fact, of course leads to his expressing the need for an institution of the type which he intends to introduce. (The rest of the contents of the Hakdama have been fully treated in the text of the preceding chapter and in the notes).

His use of numerical values of words ( גִּמְטְרִיּוֹת ) throughout the book as a means of proving his point, is interesting and often amusing. For example, at the bottom of the Hakdama, as if to clinch the argument, he has the following line:

" בֵּית הַמִּדְוָשׁ בַּחֲשׂוֹן כִּפּוּן דָּוִד דִּוְשָׁן קִרְבָּן חֶסֶד חַד "

Which, of course, proves beyond all shadow of doubt, that he alone is fitted to open the בֵּית הַסֵּדֶרֶשׁ .

I. The first section of the book is the extract from the מַשְׁבִּיל לַדָּוִד, which here includes two sermons. In both these sermons, we find David's especially characteristic method of preaching which will be considered in greater detail in the

chapter. The first sermon is an exposition of a saying of Rabbi Simon b. <sup>Manassia,</sup> ~~Munssa~~, from Sanhedrin 59b, while the second is an interpretation of the first part of the Mishna<sup>na</sup> דין יבד in Hullin VI:1.

II. The next section comprises the responsa. Of these he prints three, including the interesting treatise on amulets. The first of these (page 8a) is in reply to a question put to him by Rabbi Jacob Reiner, head of the yeshiva in Ferrara, in 1557. It is interesting in that it mirrors the impact of the problem of Marranism upon Jews. The case upon which David is asked to decide is as follows: A Jew who has been converted to Christianity marries a former Jewess, likewise converted. They are married according to the Christian rites, and have a daughter who is baptised and brought up as a Christian. This daughter marries a converted Jew, and they have a son who is baptised and uncircumcised. When the child grows up, he learns of his Jewish ancestry, and determines to return to Judaism. He tells his friends this, but does not as yet undergo circumcision, nor does he openly disavow Christianity. He falls in love with the daughter of two baptised Jews, "אשר גם הם נהפדו על שתי נשים", who were also desirous of returning to their ancient faith. They summon two Jewish witnesses, and the young man marries the young woman in accordance with Jewish law. Are the nuptials valid, since the wife did not officially become a Jewess until later, and the groom, who is now in a distant land where there are no Jews, has not at yet officially returned to Judaism?

In a lengthy responsum to this question, David comes to the conclusion that the nuptials are valid. He bases his discussion on a careful analysis of Yebamoth 16b, following through all the implications, and revealing a high degree of Talmudic erudition.

Then follows the second in this group, the treatise on Amulets ( עין יקרא ) which he says he wrote in Ferrara in 1558, at the request of Rabbi Joseph Mintz (a). The treatise is based upon a thorough discussion of the reference to amulets in Sabbath 60a (in the mishna), and 61a in the Gemara. David concerns himself with considering in detail a difference of opinion between Rashi on the one

hand, and the Tossafists and the R'Osh on the other.

In explaining the phrase in the Gemara "Until both the person and the amulet have been approved (Sab.61a)," Rashi states that if a man writes an amulet that cures three people all suffering from the same disease, then the man who wrote the amulet is considered an expert (on amulets) and the amulet is considered as approved as well. Or, if a man writes three different amulets, for three people suffering from three different diseases, and in each case a cure is effected, then the man is considered expert (approved) to compose any amulet, and the formula of the amulets which effected the above cures is considered an approved formula, no matter who copies it.

But the R'Osh takes issue with Rashi in the interpretation of the phrase "the man is considered approved," in this wise. If the man writes out three copies of a certain formula, and in each case the amulet is successful in effecting a cure, that man is to be considered as an expert in that particular formula, but in no others. And his successful formula may not be copied by others [redacted]-S.10a).

Then he goes on to speak of his own experiences as a dispenser of amulets in the various districts through which he travelled, mentioning specifically Cracow, Posen, and Ferrara. Though he was successful with his amulets in many hundreds, nay thousands of cases, it sometimes happened that an amulet which he composed to cure a certain disease did not meet with success. Hence Rashi's statement that the person becomes expert for all amulets is not fully borne out. At this point he quotes the Yerushalmi to refute Rashi, wherein it is written: "A man may say: 'With this amulet have I cured three people.' But he may not say: 'I am an expert for all amulets.'" Moreover he has seen cases where great scribes wrote out tried and true amulets, with no success, showing Rashi to be wrong on his other statement. David, in other words, is inclined to be in agreement with the R'Osh. According to Rashi, he adds, if the person is considered an expert for all amulets, then conceivably he might compose one that would revive the dead, and to work many other unimaginable miracles.

David, it would appear, does not make too ambitious claims for amulets.

He quotes the Rambam and the Rashba, and finally he gives a crumb of comfort to Rashi by quoting Asheri to the effect that whereas no layman may copy the amulet formula of an approved practitioner, if such a layman should be accident compose a formula that is successful in three cases, then that formula may be copied with success by any one.

It rather seems that there is some sort of monopolistic intent behind David's disagreement with Rashi, something in the spirit of an exclusive Medical or Bar Association.

The final section of the treatise is in the nature of a blast against Moses of Narbonne, and a defense of the kabbala in general (and the use of amulets in particular). In his commentary to the "Guide for the Perplexed (40:62) the Narboni denies that amulets and kabbalistic combinations have any effect. "I am greatly surprised at the Narboni" writes David (5), "...for considering amulets and kabbalistic combinations impossible, in his commentary to the 'Guide'. He shows himself to be utterly bereft of knowledge of the Talmud...And in this case he has completely misunderstood Maimonides, who was simply referring to quacks." He then mentions the traditional ability of Bezalel to combine letters and numbers in kabbalistic fashion as stated in the Sefer Yezira. And the great book of wisdom and kabbala, the Zohar is full of such combinations. Then he quotes Nachmanides statement in the introduction to his commentary on the Torah to the effect that the letters of the Torah are an infinite permutation and combination of the divine name. Moreover he quotes a number of kabbalistic books, to prove the effect and sanctity of gematriot, such as the "She'ur Koma", in the "Prayer of R.Nehunia b. HaKana" and the "Prayer of Rav Hamnuna S'Va" and the "Seventy-Two Names of Metatron", all of which are to be found in his collection of books.

Finally he writes that the Rambam became acquainted with the kabbala only in his old age.

Between this treatise and the following responsum is interposed a brief account of the visit paid him in Cracow in 1568 by Moses Bordolani (see Ch.2, Note 28) and his bann of excommunication against Moses di Rossi, composed in Aramaic couplets,

with his own name in acrostic. To which he adds a paragraph chiding di Rossi for his reprehensible act and urging him to make prompt restitution, and to repent.

There follows the next responsum, written in 1567, when one Elijah Glatz, who had a disagreement with a judge on a point of law that concerned his wife, came to David with his problem. The problem involved is whether A may appear in court in the place of his wife who is being sued by B, since the wife possesses nothing in her own right, and if she lost the litigation the husband would be obliged to pay. Hence he wished to save her the embarrassment of a public appearance in court. One judge arose and stated that it was clearly evident that the wife must appear, and it is over this point that the disagreement arose.

David's answer is to the effect that the matter is not so clearly evident, and that the husband may appear in lieu of his wife, although if there be no other witnesses, she must appear to take an oath on her position in the matter.

The selections from the letter writing manual, מגיל דוד, is in two parts. The first section, entitled אגרות יקרות, consists of three letters to leaders in other Jewish communities, on behalf of certain individuals in Cracow. Each of these is woven in the same pattern. Each is headed by a biblical text, which in the course of skillful interpretation is tied up both with the intended recipient, and the individual involved, by means of equal numerical values of various words and names.

For example, the first letter is directed at the leaders of the community of Frankfort. It concerns a former resident of Cracow, Mordecai<sup>hai</sup> the Alchemist, who betook himself quite precipitously to that city, leaving behind in Cracow no fewer than four unmarried daughters. The leaders of the community are urged by David to bring pressure to bear upon the individual in question, to compel him by persuasion or force, to send the necessary dowry money to enable the four unfortunates to enter marital bliss. The quotation at the head of this letter is:

"מלך במשפט יעמיד ארץ . ואיש חרומות יחרסנה" (משלי כ"ט, ד)

and during the exposition, David points out that the numerical value of the first half of the quotation exactly equals the value of the phrase אלו גוונים מן



impending marriage of his brother Jacob to the sister of Meir Bordolani (S.15b), that his teacher R. Joseph Mintz, left for Cauzi Maggiore in an attempt to recapture his health, that he later studied with the able teacher David Dardian who was staying with the Bordolani family. (This, probably in Ferrara). Then he asks to hear from this relative, and the general tenor of the request implies, so it seems, that a little financial help would not go unappreciated.

This letter is followed by a poem, a sort of dun poem (S.15b) which was written close to the year 1571, as indicated in the latter part of the poem (S.16a). It is an interesting little poem, written on behalf of one Meir b. Eliezer, who has a daughter to marry off, and is indigent. It is an appeal to the well-to-do leaders of the community to contribute toward supplying the girl with a dowry. This Meir, we learn from the final lines of the poem, is David's uncle, his mother's brother. Just how the dun poem was used, is interesting to speculate. Possibly it was given to Eliezer, who went about to the various well-to-do citizens, showing them the poem, much as the impecunious hero in Agnon's "Bridal Canopy" went about trying to raise a dowry for his daughters armed with a special letter from the rabbi of his community.

Then follows a shochet's certificate, which David issued to Uri b. Shlomo Hacohen, while yet in Italy. (S.16a). It is in two parts: a) a poem with the name of the recipient of the certificate in acrostic, stating in effect that the gentleman in question has shown himself fit for the calling, and then a short statement in Aramaic, making the required stipulations of practice. For the first month he must perform the shechita at least once a day (S.16b), for the next month he must so perform at least once a week, and subsequently at least one every six months. The understanding being that if he does not do this, he will be considered to have lost his skill, and hence rendered unfit to be a shochet.

The final item in the book is the little autobiographical poem, the contents of which have been discussed in the second chapter, and for the full text of which see note 53 of the same chapter.

At the very bottom of the page is a short statement of the printer, Isaac of Prosstitz, giving the date of the completion of the printing of the book as Thursday, Purim of 1571.

B. כתב התנצלות לדרשנים

The כתב התנצלות לדרשנים was published in Lublin in 1574, and contains 16 pages, 40. It was meant to be the Hakdama to the collection of sermons מסביל לדוד, which, so far as we know, has never been published. There are copies of this book in the British Museum (see van Straalen's catalogue), and in the Bibliothek der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinde, in Vienna. The latter library having been confiscated by the Nazi regime, there is, to all intents and purposes then, only one printed copy available.

The title page (6) contains some interesting biographical data about the author, which has been discussed in Chapter Two. We learn from it, for example, that the text of the מסביל לדוד has been seen and approved by the late renowned rabbis, Moses Isserles, Solomon Luria, and Isaac b. Bezalel. We learn here that his books מסביל לדוד and מגדל דוד were already completed in manuscript form, and that his תהלה לדוד was as yet incomplete.

This book, he announces, is a reply to those who scorn and attack the darshan and his art. It brings evidence from the Talmud and Midrash to show that the preacher's art has indeed a definite form and justification. The article is also intended to show interested students how to combine the perasha with a Talmudic or Midrashic quotation into an organic whole. Hence, in addition to his careful analysis of the art of the derasha, several interpretations of the first verse in the Torah in accordance with this method are appended.

The book is not paginated after the manner of his previous publication, the *שיר המעלות לדוד*. Instead we have 33 numbered paragraphs. The apologia for darshanim covers the first 25 paragraphs, of which the 14th contains interesting biographical material which has been already considered (see Ch.2, note S). In 25 to 33 we have appended the example of his method. Into the first letter of the first 13 paragraphs, he weaves his name, acrostically: *דוד דרשן מקראקא*

Headed by the quotation *מסביל על דבר ימצא לך* (Prov.16:20) the first three paragraphs show how the same verse can be used to deduce therefrom Creation of the World, the Ten Commandments and Reward and Punishment. The method is midrashic, and the key words he employs are *לך* and *לך*. By finding these words in parallel biblical quotations which clearly refer to the above three, he makes the connection.

He then lists various types of expositions, in each case giving by way of example a talmudic, midrashic, or biblical reference. To this he appends a biblical quotation, as a mnemonic device, to aid in remembering each. They are as follows:

Par. 4 The exegetical interpretation which is meant to cheer up the listeners. He quotes from Sabbath 30B, the passage which urges the expositor of the Torah to begin with *כלתא דבריה חותמת*. Put in modern terms it involves the advice to the speaker to begin with a good story. (David had a true premonition of the secret of success of an after dinner speaker). The mnemonic device to remember this point is *דוד דרשן*, from Amos 5:4.

Par.5 If the audience seems to be falling asleep in spite of the efforts of the darshan, the next device will come in useful, dropping an agadic bombshell. As an example he cites the case of Rabbi Jochanan wakening his hearers with the statement that one woman in Egypt bore 600,000 children. When that shook the multitude out of its slumber, he blandly went on to say that it was Jochebed, mother of Moses.

Par.6 There are times when it is necessary to simplify a difficult interpretation, so that the audience may understand. This may be done even at the expense of the plain meaning of the passage.

Par.7 There are some expositions which the preacher need not elucidate in detail because of the inability of the audience to comprehend more than a generality. For example, speaking of the immensity of the universe, he may use general terms to impress upon the hearers the insignificance of man and the greatness of God. He need not give specific astronomical data.

Par.8 There are some passages that are deliberately couched in obscure terms, because of the profundity of the idea contained. Thus the darshan must make this clear by interpretation.

Par.9 It is possible for the scholar to see some new and original interpretation in a dream.

The next two paragraphs are devoted to what Maimonides and Jedaia Bedersi had to say about expositions. Thus he quotes from the introduction of Maimonides' commentary to the Tractate Zera'im, while in the case of the latter he quotes from his famous הנהגת הנביא (7) which he addressed to Solomon Adret, the Spanish anti-Maimunist, in defense of the study of the sciences and philosophy.

Maimonides, in this connection, points to the importance of the agadic expositions in the Talmud. According to him they have a definite function, and in many cases a meaning has been deliberately obscured and hidden by the masters of the agadah, which it is the duty of the darshan to expound.

The Bedaresi is concerned with the problem of interpretation of miracles, when they are to be accepted at their face value and when they are to be "explained away." David agrees with him in his four-fold division, namely, (a) where the incident, though rare in occurrence, is not contrary to any natural law, and hence can be taken at its face value; (b) miracles, as related in the Torah and the Prophets, which are instrumental in strengthening belief. These are not to be explained away but are to be interpreted at their face value; (c) Extravagant miracles (as occasionally related in an agadic portion by way of relaxation), which

must not be taken at their face value; and (d) incidents contrary to nature, which though perhaps helping strengthen faith must be explained away. He refers specifically to gross anthropomorphisms, such as the statement that God puts ~~of~~ <sup>on</sup>

Tephillin, or possesses some other human characteristics.

Par.12 There are some agadic expositions which directly contradict one another.

Par.13 There are some expositions which though not directly based on a passage in the Torah, may be artificially linked up for two reasons: a) mnemonic, b) to give the statement, worthy of it, greater status in the eyes of the audience.

The following paragraph contains some interesting biographical notes which were discussed in greater detail in the previous chapter. It is interesting that he chooses to talk about himself in the fourteenth paragraph because that is precisely the numerical value of his name 717 .

Par.15 He defends the purpose of writing books of homilies because they tend to raise the moral level of the individual.

Par.16 With this paragraph, and until par.25, he discusses and defends his own special method of exposition. He states that his triadic method of exposition (as discussed in greater detail in the next chapter), is something distinctly new and only Bahya in his commentary elucidated a few passages in this method. The other darshanim, (and he mentions such famous predecessors as R.Solomon Adret and the authors of עקדת יצחק, פרדס רמונים, מנחת כהן likewise use only one method. (8). Moreover, in his collection of sermons he will give four variations on each perasha, so that the preacher using his work will not be required to repeat himself until the fifth year. Then he proceeds to defend some of the special expository methods which he employs.

Par.17 He quotes the Recanati (9), Bereshit Rabba, Bahya and the Zohar, to show that names in both the Torah and Talmud can be interpreted to refer either to God, or to the principle of evil. His argument, briefly, is as follows: Recanati, (in his mystical commentary on the Torah) says that Laban, and Ahasuerus, refer to God. This, says David to his potential opponents, you might accept, because

you agree that the Torah has been compounded of the letters of the various names of God. But it does not apply to the Talmud. But Bahya and the Zohar interpret many words in the Torah as applying to evil things. And admittedly we can interpret the names of the Tannaim and Amoraim as applying to a divine principle. So therefore, if in the Torah application of certain words and names to evil principles is permitted, then since the Talmud is surely not superior to the Torah, the same thing must be permitted. If we observe in the following chapter how he interprets the word שׁוֹן (snake) to mean the sacred breast-plate, חֶשֶׁן, the principle of evil, and finally the messiah (מָשִׁיחַ), we can see how he must have been attacked for this approach by literalists, and the purpose of the stout defense here. (see appendix, Chapt.4).

Par.18                    There are times when the darshan does not go into details in elucidating some exposition, because he knows that there is some contradiction in what he says, and he does not wish to point it out because he knows it will destroy the point he has been trying to make. Or else there is a conflict which he could explain but does not in order to save time.

Par.19                    He takes care to point out that the injunction of the rabbis, viz., לֹא יִצְאָה מִן הַתּוֹרָה does not forbid varieties of exposition, so long as the original text is kept. If the rabbis had insisted on only one interpretation, namely the דַּבָּר, they would have framed the injunction:

לֹא יִצְאָה מִן הַתּוֹרָה. He himself is in agreement with the Rashba who criticised the Provencal Jews who went to such extremes of allegorization in exposition that they considered their allegories to be the real meaning of the passage.

Par.20                    Most of the agadic and midrashic passages contain some secret, hidden meaning, which very few mortals know, and hence this very shortcoming makes it permissible for us to make various interpretations. If the true, secret meaning were widely known, it would be manifestly sinful to make other interpretations. The line of thought contained in this particular paragraph is indeed a clever defense of the darshan.

Par.21 He quotes the Gaon Sherira as saying that most agadic passages contain within them divine secrets and wisdom, as well as instruction of morality and improvement of character.

Par.22 In this paragraph David undertakes to prove that a given agadic passage may be interpreted in more than one way, by quoting from Megilla 14b, where several of the rabbis differ in their explanation of Esther's motive in inviting Haman to the ill-fated dinner. Whereupon Elijah, who is always the supreme arbiter in such cases, states that Esther acted in accordance with the motives cited by all the Tannaim and all the Amoraim (10). He admits that in prophecy, where we have God speaking through man, only one interpretation is possible, but he injects the quotation from Baba Bathra (12b) חנם קריף מנביא and inferentially, by placing the Wise Man above the Prophet, places his craft above enslavement to literalism.

Par.23 Following directly upon the foregoing, he attempts to prove that all the utterances of חנמים are in the nature of parables or "dark Sayings," and therefore subject to exposition.

Par.24 It is permitted to make use of extra words or phrases in the Gemara or Mishna, of all the commentators, and even of numerical combinations to make an exposition so long, of course as this does not lead to heresies.

Par.25 This paragraph contains a detailed explanation of his special method of preaching, and has been dealt with in detail in Chapter Four, ending with the information, in very tiny print, that he finished writing this preface just before Shabuoth, 1571 (11).

Then from paragraph 26-33 inclusive, covering six and a quarter pages of the little book, he includes a sample of his type of exposition, taking as his texts Genesis 1:1 from the Torah, and Yebamoth 17a from the Talmud. As an example of his first method ( על דרך הפשט ) he gives one interpretation of the Genesis passage, and two of the Talmud passage. In the second method ( על דרך השכל ) he has two of each, and on the third ( על דרך המדרש ) one of each. Since in the following chapter a typical sermon of David's is dealt with, throwing light on his method in general, it is not deemed necessary to go into details of his treatment here.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

- 1) The only mention and description of his Maskil L'David, Migdal David and Tehilla L'David, occurs on the title page of S., and on the title page of K. we have the information that the first were already completed, and the third only partially written.
- 2) His authorship of this, though possible, is by no means an established fact. See also end of Chapter Two.
- 3) See Van Straalen, p. 61.
- 4) S. 3a ואחר זאת ההקדמה אולי יאמר המעתיק עלי אין בידי מאומה לעשות מסומאות מהורות הפך מה לכתן בביית הקברות וסי יעמידנו בביית מדרש הקדש הואיל ואיני יודע דבר לחדש ואין אם כן אוכל להאיר להם להולכים בעיון באפילה להדריכה ליושר המסילה על כן הוכרחתי להבאא למקדש עולות ולהדפיס קצת.

5) S. 11b

- 6) K. title page: הניחו להדפיסו אחרי שלא זכה להעמיד מדרש באלו הגלילות. כמזכר בהקדמת ספר שיר המעלות: הוא רוצה לשלם נדון לשום פעם לארץ הקדושה. וסם רוצה אי"ה לסדר החיבורים השלשה: זהם ספר משכיל לדוד וספר מגדל דוד שכבר חיבר. וספר חלה לדוד שעדיין לא נסתיים בו הדיבור: ובעבור שראה קצת מלעיגים על הדרשות. הוציא לאור חדשות: הקדמת ספר משכיל לדוד מבחר מפנינים. והוא באמת כתב התנצלות לדרשנים: יחסום פי הלצים. אשר לבאר שחת רצים: וסם ראייה מכל החלמוד וסכל המדרשים. שהדרשות נחלקו לכמה ראשים: וכולם ברורים בצהריים. כשיכוון לבו לאביו שבשמים: והראה אח"כ לחלמידים עקר ושורש. אין שיוכל לחבר הפרשה עם המאמר והמדרש: ולקח פסוק ראשון מהתורה. והוציא מסנו בקיצור כמה חדושים לאורה: וכולם מחוברים על מאמר נוסא הדרוש. כדמיון ביאור ופירוט: ויונעם למבין כיון הרקח. וישמע חכם ויוסיף לקח: ובעבר השני רשמנו בקיצור החידושים. לכל מי שיחפון יחיו דרושים:  
נדפס סמור אחר שבועות. בשנת ק"ר ז' ב'  
להחיש ישועות: פה לובלין הבירה:

- 7) Yedaya Penini b. Abraham Bedaresi (cl280-cl340), an ardent Maimunist (see Graetz vol. 4, p. 43 - Eng. ed'n), wrote a reply to Solomon Adret's bann on the study of the sciences. Adret's attack, and the Bedaresi's reply, the ~~have been published together by~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ (see bibliography). It has also been incorporated in Adret's Responsa no. 443.
- 8) See Appendix A to Chapter Two for details of these (as well as other) books ~~xxxx~~ to which David alludes in his writings.
- 9) Menahem of Ricanati, a kabbalistic commentator.
- 10) K. 22      **ראייה סחא דאמרינן במסכת מגילה: שמקשה שם בברייתא  
כשזיסנה אסתר אח הסן מה הייתה הכוונה. זה אוסר בכה  
וזה אוסר בכה ואוסר לסוף במסקנה: אשכחיה ר ב ה  
לאליהו א"ל כמאן חזיא אסתר ועבדה האי. א"ל ככולהו  
חנאי ככולהו אמוראי."**

## APPENDIX A

The fact that David Darshan found himself obliged to write a defense of his craft leads us to consider his relationship to the official Jewish community, and to the learned groups. The evidence of friction, as detected in both S. and K. is striking enough to warrant special consideration in connection with this specific chapter, dealing as it does with a clear-cut *apologia pro sua vita*.

The first indication appears in the Hakadama of S., where, as mentioned previously, in volunteering to set up a private house of study, he takes special care to show how his plans will not only not come into conflict with the head of the talmudic academy, but will also help him, freeing him of annoying details and petty questions (see Ch.2, notes 46,48).

That he found opposition among many of the learned class, we learn from the title page of K (see note 6, Ch.3), and, in Paragraph 14 of K (see also Ch.2, note 5), we see how he was hampered by many in gaining his education. Precisely why he does not say, but the extent to which he goes in defending the art of the darshan and popular exposition, might indeed point to a conflict between halachic talmudism, and growing pilpulism, which was then bursting forth into its full bloom, against the imaginative, often mystical preacher who perhaps could in that way get closer to the masses of the people.

Precisely who were these opponents of David? The head of the academy in Cracow, when David tried without signal success to inaugurate a private house of study, to which all might come, was none other than Loses Isserles, the ReMa (see Ch.2). We know from responsa no.81 of the ReMa that the latter did not recognize David as a rabbi. However, this proves nothing, since the question may have been put before David received ordination, if he did. Then too, in several places, notably the title page of K., David tells us that he studied under the ReMa.

Nevertheless, knowing as we do the extent of the Rabbi and Talmudic

Academy Head in this period and in following generations in Poland, surely the ReMa, - and he was not much older than David at this time - might have made possible the success of David's project by giving it his assent.

In Paragraph 14 of K., we learn that he was hounded from pillar to post, or, rather, from yeshiva to yeshiva, because in many places, "people, outstanding in wisdom and in wealth" rose against him. Who were these people?

There is an interesting clue to this, subtly injected in one of the sample expositions appended to K. I refer especially to paragraphs 26, 27, and 28. Here he is dealing from a passage in Jebamoth 17a, which involves the question of learning and lineage, and in commenting on various problems herein

contained, David writes (K 26):  
 וְעוֹר מִשְׁפָּטָי בְּכֹל חֲלֻמֹּדָא וְלֹא אִשְׁכַּחנָא  
 דְּנֹכַח דְּאִיָּה בְּה אִפִּילוּ רְמִיָּא דִּיכִילִין לִזְלוּל בְּאוּרִיָּחָא דְּבֵר אִוְרִיָּין  
 בְּגִין יִיחֻסָּא אִלָּא מֵאִמָּר דָּא: וְהוּא הִפֵּךְ דַּעַת הַחֹרֶה כְּמוֹ שְׂדֵרְשׁוֹ  
 בְּהוּרִיָּחָא אִפִּילוּ מִסּוּר ח"ח קוֹדֵם לַכ"ג עִם הָאָרֶץ מִפְּסוּק יִקְרָה הִיא  
 מִסְּנִינָם."

In paragraph 27, in expounding Genesis 1:1 in relation to the Talmudic text, he show that the verse "It is more precious than pearls" <sup>equals</sup> "Torah", in the numerical value of the letters. Then in the following paragraph, speaking on the Talmudic text, he point out that the study of the Torah is not dependent on aristocracy of birth ( **דינ** ). The essence of the aristocracy of the Torah is in the heart.

This line of thought, placed as it is in close proximity to his apologia, cannot but reveal a subtle shaft in David's attack against a sort of "monopoly of the Torah" which excluded from the possibility of rising to leadership those who were not favorably born or favorably placed. This surmise will naturally bear a good deal of further investigation.

We do know, for example, that the ReMa was the son of a wealthy parnass, that his first wife was a daughter of Shalom Shachna, one of the fathers of Polish Talmudism, and his second wife the sister of Joseph Cohen, who succeeded the ReMa as head of the Talmudic Academy and Rabbi in Cracow (see Wettstein, L'Toledoth, etc.).

We know too how the Polish kings encouraged the cohesive inner organization of the Jewish community under the rabbi and communal officials, and that this grew and developed with the growth of the Wa'ad Arbah Aratsot.

Hence we may have here an interesting echo of a struggle between privilege on the one hand, and unprivileged striving and ability on the other, between official communal leaders, and those unofficial leaders who, through kabbala and agadah, were able to get closer to the common people than the rationalistic, talmudic pilpulism.

But this would make a complete study in itself. We must here be content with mere mention of the possibility and the problem.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## THE HOMILETICAL METHOD OF DAVID DARSHAN

From the biographical poem that appears at the end of his סיר

לרור המעלות (1) we know that David delivered a sermon to the common people every Sabbath. By his own admission, they were good sermons, "graceful in style, clear in speech, that even women and children could without difficulty understand them, and their fame and renown spread far and wide." (2) In addition to that, as we learn from the Hakdama, he was always ready any day of the week, in his little house of study, to set aside an hour to expound some passage to the people.

He was an exegetist of lively imagination and numble mind. His was a novel and unique. He had a form which he applied to his expositions, that was (so he admits in the נחב החנצלות לדרשנים (3) that was distinctly his own.

His method was to give the passage he chose for elucidation a three-fold exposition. He would first interpret it על דרך הפשט

then על דרך השכל and finally על דרך המדרש (4).

However, פשט for him does not imply "plain meaning," סכל

does not mean "reason" in the same sense that we understand it, nor does

מדרש imply simply "exposition."

The three-fold division in his method meant precisely this: that each text, no matter what it was, was to be expounded first to show that its inner meaning applied to God, then, secondly, to be interpreted as containing references to good and evil and the moral problems of behavior, as well as the weaknesses of human flesh, and finally to be interpreted to refer to the Messiah and redemption and thus end on a note of comfort and hope. That the result in each case wreaks havoc with what we would consider the plain meaning is of little or no account.

David himself explicitly states here that he makes use of the first

... of the sheqer what on the surface looks like a

contradiction in the passage selected. Since God is a simple or perfect intelligence ( **סכל** **מסום** ) and by showing how the passage refers to get and hence is not self contradictory, he terms the first phase of his exposition

**דרך הסכל** . The second phase he terms **דרך הסכל** because it deals with Torah and Mitzvot, concerning which it is written **סכל טוב לכל עושיהם** as well as exhortations and morals of which Proverbs writes

**דרך המדקדק** . And the final phase, **דרך המדקדק** refers to the Messiah.

He refers to former exegetists, such as Bahya, Solomon Adret, the authors of **פירוש הרמב"ם** and **עקדת יצחק**, **מפר דרך אכונה** to show that whereas some of them have used one or another of these methods, none have used all three (4). Moreover, in his collection of sermons, the **מסביל לדרך** he will have four different sets of interpretations for each perasha, in order that the preacher will find no need of repeating himself for four years.

While in the first thirteen paragraphs (see Ch.3) he gives a general account of the various types of exegesis, from 17 to 24 he mentions types of exposition which he himself vigorously defends because he himself makes use of them. For example, he claims that any name in the Bible and Talmud may be interpreted to refer either to God or to the Yezer. (Par.17) Or (par.19) he defends the right of the expounder to give many meanings to a given passage if the inward motive is a lofty one, and the interpretation is not divorced from the text. Or else (as in Par.20) he maintains that it is our ignorance of the real meaning of the passage, that makes it permissible for the exegetist to make his attempt at interpretation. Or (as in 23) that most of the sayings of the rabbis in the Talmud are parables or "dark sayings."

As pointed out in a previous chapter, two complete sermons are included in his **ספר המעלות לדרך** while at the end of the **נחב החנצלות לדרך** an example of this type of exegesis applied in parallel fashion to Genesis I:1 and an Agadic passage from Jebamoth 17a.

It will best serve our purpose to understand the foregoing in clearer

fashion by examining one of his sermons, the first of the pair that we find in the

תורת משה (5). It is an exposition of the Agadic section from Sanhedrin 59b. As an appendix to this chapter we are attaching the Hebrew text of this sermon, with a translation.

The portion in question bemoans the loss of a great and useful servant from the world in the corruption of the snake. For had not the snake gone astray, each Jew would have had two serpents at his disposal. He would send one to the north and one to the south, and they would bring him back precious jewels. Moreover he would tie a cord beneath its tail, and the snake would produce soil for his garden and little farm.

It is apparent that this was the agadic text that David selected for a discourse on the first parashah, taking the story of the snake as his point of contact (b). We will see what ingenious use he makes of this passage, with interpretations bizarre to us, yet in many respects full of warmth and comfort, and genuine religiosity.

He precedes his tri-partite interpretation of his text by expatiating at some length on a verse from Pirke Aboth 3:2 to arrive at certain expository conclusions of which he intends to make consistent use. Note that particular passage reads (in what we would today consider simple, straightforward translation) as follows: "Rabbi Hanina, prefect of the priests said: 'Pray for the peace of the kingdom, since but for fear thereof we had swallowed up each his neighbor alive.'"

This, by application of his method of exegesis, discussed in detail in the previous chapter, and which of course is to a large extent midrashic, he makes to mean the following: The High Priest made many prayers for the people in the Temple. In substance, what we are urged is to so direct our prayers that there be peace between us and the kingdom of heaven. Then there follows an excursus which points out how Aaron excelled in this above all other men, and he points out how the essence of prayer lies in the heart, i.e. sincerity. Then he introduces a little discussion on the Urim and Thummim to show how the High Priest made use of them in praying for the people. Then he goes on to expatiate on the exact nature of the peace that the High Priest made between our world

namely to pray for wisdom and wealth; and the peace with the Kingdom of Heaven involves God receiving the prayers of mortals. At this point he introduces the story of the angel Sandlaphon weaving a crown for God out of the prayers of Israel.

Now, if it were not for the fear of the Kingdom, i.e. of the Kingdom of Heaven, then the priest would not pray for wisdom and wealth, and Wisdom and Wealth would swallow up the life of the body and the life of the Torah, leaving nothing but themselves.

What he is most interested in using are the words "breastplate" (the letters of which | w n as we shall see he can twist around to form the word snake and messiah) plus the words "Urim" and "Thummim," and the concept of wisdom and riches.

Thus prepared, he turns to his text, from Sanhedrin 59b, which in simple translation reads:

"R. Simeon b. Manassia said: 'Woe for the loss of a great servant, for had not the serpent gone astray, every Israelite would have had two good serpents, sending one to the north and one to the south to bring him costly gems, precious stones and pearls. Moreover one would have fastened a thong under its tail with which it would bring forth earth for his garden and wasteland.'"

In the first phase of interpretation, this passage, according to our darshan means: Woe for the loss of the High Priest, who, when the Temple yet stood prayed for the people with the breastplated ( | w n ), Urim and Thummim. But he is not really lost, for he is continuing his function in the Heavenly Temple. And if the breastplate ( | w n ) had not become corrupted into a serpent ( w n ) we would still have the Urim and Thummim which would enable us to combine letters probably (see texts of sermon in appendix) and foretell the future properly. Each Israelite would be able to pray for wisdom and walth, for that is the function of the breastplate. And from the Talmud (Baba Bathra 25b) we know to pray for wealth one must turn to the north, and to pray for wisdom, to the south. Each Israelite would receive these two things, moreover "precious stones" refers to Torah, and "pearls" to wealth. The last sentence of the passage refers to the ephod, which because of the fact that it was worn to the rear from the girdle downward, which refers to idolatry. That is to say, each Jew would be able to express

his abhorrence and disdain for idolatry, in rather indelicate terms. This is the "plain meaning" of the passage.

Now follows the second phase of interpretation. Here the same passage yields this meaning. The great servant who was lost is none other than the Evil Impulse that went astray. Now had not the body gone astray, wandering after its many lusts, every righteous one of God would have had two snakes, that is both body and soul would urge him on to do good. The word "north" means the heart, and the word "south" means mind and both mind and heart would bring him good thoughts and good qualities. The Evil Impulse would itself be put to good service. The thong would so be tied as to cover its indelicate parts and it would use its seed only to fulfill the command of "be fruitful and multiply" and that with its legal spouse only. The implication of this symbolic language is quite clear. This is the meaning

על דרך הסכל.

Now comes the interpretation

על דרך המרט . So we

find that the same Talmudic passage can, through the skill of the darshan, yield still another meaning. This time he renders the "great servant" as the messiah, and had not the snake gone astray, which is to say, that not the incident of temptation caused the snake to be cursed, the light of the messiah would have shone over the world, and each Israelite would be the recipient of two blessings, one the blessing in the world to come which is stored up for the righteous, and the other the blessing of this world. Moreover, they would witness the glory of the rebuilding of the gates of Jerusalem which would be studded with huge gems, and Israel too would live to take vengeance upon Amalek and the Cushites. And Israel, who were humbled unto the dust and would be restored to the Temple which is now in ruins. And finally he lets his hearers into the deepest secret, namely that the sin of the snake will not be wiped out until the coming of the messiah, because the words

ו ה ה

and

ה ו ה

have the same numerical value, and then Jews will merit the breast-plate

ה ו ה

which contains the Urim and Thummim. And so the sermon closed.

Naturally in cold print the sermon cannot have quite the same effect it must have had when delivered, in some tiny, dingy house of study. It needs the complementary touch of the personality of the darshan, the eager audience delighted with every new and clever turn, edified, instructed, and filled with hope and confidence for the future.







APPENDIX B

IT HAS BEEN TAUGHT: R.SIMON B. MANASSIA SAID: WOE FOR THE LOSS OF A GREAT SERVANT. FOR HAD NOT THE SERPENT GONE ASTRAY, EVERY ISRAELITE WOULD HAVE HAD TWO GOOD SERPENTS, SENDING ONE TO THE NORTH AND ONE TO THE SOUTH TO BRING HIM COSTLY GEMS, PRECIOUS STONES, AND PEARLS. MOREOVER, ONE WOULD HAVE FASTENED A THONG UNDER ITS TAIL WITH WHICH IT WOULD BRING FORTH EARTH FOR HIS GARDEN AND WASTE LAND. (Sanhedrin 59b).

We will preface our discourse with some remarks from the chapter Akabia (Aboth 3:2) in addition to our prefatory remarks on the perasha, and with it the difficulties will be solved.

R.HANINA, PREFECT OF THE PRIESTS SAID: PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF THE KINGDOM, SINCE BUT FOR FEAR THEREOF WE HAD SWALLOWED UP EACH HIS NEIGHBOR ALIVE.

RAV HANINA: The many entreaties ( ד'י'י'ן ב'ר ) which man makes is what the PREFECT OF THE PRIESTS says. Though High Priest, he is here called prefect of the priests as it is written in the Yerushalmi (Yoma 40a): "Five things were said concerning the prefect, and one of them was that he was not selected High Priest until he was made prefect."

PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF THE KINGDOM: Direct your prayer so willingly that there should be peace between you and the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus the words FOR THE PEACE OF really mean the peace of the Kingdom of Heaven, for it is written (Is. 27:5): "Or let him take hold of my strength, that he make peace with me..." We know, too, that Aaron the High Priest was a lover of peace and a pursuer of peace, and more than any other man was able to direct his prayers so as to make his peace with heaven and earth, and it is for that reason that the priestly blessing closes with the word "peace." That is why, moreover, the Urim and Thummim (i.e. the oracular stones) were placed over the breast-plate which the High Priest wore, for it is written (Ex.28:30): "And thou shalt put in the breast-plate of judgment the Urim and Thummim, and they shall be on Aaron's heart..." And we know that the heart is the important thing in prayer, as it is written in Sifre in expounding the verse "...and to serve Him with all your heart" (Jos. 22:5) for prayer is worship with the heart. The Ramban (Nachmanides) has written (in his commentary to Exodus 28:30) that the main feature of the Urim and Thummim was that there were holy names (formed by jewels) from which the High Priest could foretell the future and inform

Israel concerning things to come. And (the divination from) these names is divided into parts. On the one hand various letters in the names of the Tribes formed by the imbedded jewels in the breast-plate would light up;- and they are called Urim ( אֲרִיִּים ) because they illuminated ( אֵינֶם אֵלֶּם אֵלֶּם אֵלֶּם ) the eyes of the priest. The second part (of this process of divination) came from the heart of the priest (via the Thummim), for in this way he knew how to combine the letters (that lit up) into proper words, in order that he might be able to show the way to repentance etc. To illustrate: if the letters ו ך ן would light up, he would not know whether the word were ו ך ן (snake) or ן ך ן (breast-plate); hence, the Thummim, which made it possible for him to combine the letters.

But the chief nature of the peace that the High Priest made with this world in his prayers was to pray for wisdom and for wealth, and these two were represented in the Temple by the menorah and the table. (How do we know that menorah and table refer to wisdom and wealth respectively?) Menorah refers to Torah, for we have the verse (pr.6:23): "For the commandment is a lamp and the Torah is light;" and table refers to wealth, as it is written: "He who wishes to become wise shall go south, and he who wishes to become rich shall go north" (Baba Bathra 25b), and as R. Jonah informs us in the first chapter of Berakhot, the lamp (in the Temple) was to the south, and the table to the north. And the peace of the Kingdom of Heaven is above, for there God receives their prayers. The midrash Exodus Rabba, in the perasha "Beshalah" tells us that the angel Sandlaphon waits until Israel has completed its prayers, and out of them he makes a crown for the Holy One, Praised Be He. And the meaning of the phrase THE PEACE OF THE KINGDOM indeed is to make peace in heaven and on earth.

SINCE BUT FOR FEAR THEREOF: i.e., of the Kingdom of Heaven, then he would not pray (to God) for wisdom and riches.

EACH MAN HIS NEIGHBOR: i.e., each man with his neighbor.

WOULD HAVE SWALLOWED UP ALIVE: i.e., both. For EACH MAN really means riches, as it is written: "And a man went....."

and NEIGHBOR means wisdom, for the wise man is called "Brother and Neighbor." Life of the body is riches, and life of the Torah is wisdom, for it is written: "For he is thy life and the length of thy days....."(Deut. 30:20).

WE HAD SWALLOWED UP EACH MAN HIS NEIGHBOR, for the life of the body and the life of the Torah would be destroyed, while wisdom and riches would not be destroyed. But they would not swallow up wisdom and riches.

And after this introduction we shall explain the passages by means of the דבר.

IT HAS BEEN TAUGHT RABBI SIMON B. LAMASSIA SAID: WOE FOR THE LOSS OF A GREAT SERVANT: He meant the High Priest who served in the Temple which is lost, so that he no longer prays for Israel with the breast-plate in which were set the Urim and Thummim. But he isn't really lost, for he is High Priest in heaven, and the term "woe" is used because of the destruction of the Temple as it is written in the Midrash Tanhuma ( מִשְׁכָּן ): "The word "tabernacle" ( מִשְׁכָּן ) is repeated twice (Ex.38:21) because it was placed as a pledge in their hand, and that is why the men of the Great Synagogue repeated the word "woe" twice, for it (i.e., the Tabernacle or Temple) was placed as a pledge in their hands twice."

FOR HAD NOT THE SERPENT GONE ASTRAY: that is, had not the breastplate ( חֹשֶׁן ) become corrupted into a serpent ( שָׂרָפ ) and the Urim and Thummim were still existent (in this world) we would know how to combine the letters (on the breastplate) properly, as has been stated in our prefatory remarks.

EVERY ISRAELITE WOULD HAVE HAD TWO VALUABLE SERVANTS: that is, we would call (or read) the word שָׂרָפ as חֹשֶׁן which is efficacious for two things, namely to pray for wisdom and for wealth. And why does it say EVERY ISRAELITE etc.? For the names of all the Israelites were inscribed upon the breast-plate by the precious stones, as it is written "and thou shalt grave on them the names of the children of Israel" (Ex.28:9). Hence every Israelite would have a part in it and would merit the attainment of wisdom and riches and that is why the

phrase SENDING ONE TO THE NORTH has been interpreted: "he who wishes to become wealthy shall turn to the north," and the phrase SENDING ONE TO THE SOUTH has been interpreted "he who wishes to become wise shall turn to the south."

TO BRING HIM OO STLY GEMS: a hint that his prayers for the two things, namely, Torah and riches would be favorably received and that the angel Sandalphon would weave a crown for God out of the prayers for these two things, hence the use of the plural ( \* נ ו י ס ל ר נ ס ) in the place of the singular. As it is later explained the phrase PRECIOUS STONES really refers to the wisdom of the Torah, i.e., the tablets of stone upon which the Torah was inscribed, and called "good" ( טוֹבִים - טוֹב ) and the word PEARLS refers to wealth. And it is known of course that the ephod was worn underneath the breastplate, for it is written: "And they shall bind the breastplate by the rings thereof unto the rings of the ephod...that it may be above the... girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod." (Ex.28:28) And (in Zebahim ) our rabbis teach that the ephod atones for idolatry for it is written: "...and no ephod ~~ad~~ teraphim" (Hosea 3:4), and the author of the Akedat Yitzchak wrote that the ephod was a customary ornament worn by idol worshippers, witness the case of the idol of Micah (Judges 17:1ff). Therefore while God permitted that the ephod be part of the high priest garb (for the former reason) yet He insisted that it be worn at the rear, suspended from the girdle downwards in the קוּמָה הַחֲסִמָּה and that is likely a gesture of disparagement conforming with what the rabbis said (Sanhedrin 63b) that "all sneering is forbidden except the ridiculing of idols" (by perverting their names) (See note 7).

and the reason that the passage in the text goes on to say MOREOVER ONE WOULD HAVE FASTENED A THING UNDER HIS TAIL, i.e., under the breastplate, which (here is) the ephod, which refers to idolaters, and hence the disparaging language is used WITH WHICH IT WOULD BRING FORTH EARTH FOR HIS GARDEN AND WATELAND. The real meaning of this is that had Israel remained worthy of the breastplate, not only would they have had wisdom and riches, but also idolaters would have been subjected to them to work their gardens and waste lands as it is written (Isaiah 61:5) "and sons

of aliens shall be your plowmen and winvdressers."

By mean of סבל

RABBI SIMON B. MANASSIA SAID: WOE FOR THE LOSS OF A GREAT SERVANT:  
This refers to the Evil Impulse who is termed "a great king" as we have it in  
Nedarim, who was lost from man, who is termed a microcosm. ( עולם קטן )  
(and in the text חבל על שם גדול שאבר מן העולם).

FOR HAD NOT THE SERPENT GONE ASTRAY: The essence of the Evil Impulse  
and the serpent is the body, and had not the body been corrupted to follow the  
bodily impulses, then each one of the "righteous of God," i.e., Israel (David  
here makes the pun ישרי"אל on ישראל ) WOULD HAVE HAD  
TWO VALUABLE SERPENTS, that is the body and the soul would whisper ( מנחשים )  
and urge him to do the good. For the soul had good thoughts and ideas within it,  
and the body had good qualities.

And the fact that it is written SENDING ONE TO THE NORTH, means the heart 5  
as it is written "Thy word have I hid in my heart ( ...צמנה... )", (Psalm  
119:11), and the heart reigns as king in the body as it is written in the Sefer  
Yezira "The heart in the soul is like a king in battle."

AND ONE TO THE SOUTH: refers to reason and the mind which dwells at the  
top of the head. ( רר גרום play on גרום ).  
TO BRING HIM COSTLY GELS: refers to good qualities and good thoughts. Not only  
that, but if the Evil impulse had not left the body, ONE WOULD HAVE FASTENED A  
THONG UNDER ITS TAIL, that is it would not bare its shameful part and it would be  
as if a thong were to hang suspended covering them. WITH WHICH IT WOULD BRING FORTH  
EARTH FOR HIS GARDEN AND WASTE LAID: means that it would bring forth seed, for it is  
written: "Thy seed shall be as the sand ( רב ) etc..." (Gen.28:14), expressly  
for his garden, which is his bride and spouse, as it is written "I have come into  
my garden, my sister, my bride" (Cant.5:1). It would be like a closed garden, a

sealed spring, and would have intercourse with its wife only, only for the sake of procreation, to establish the world that it be not laid waste, as it is written: "He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited" (Isaiah 45:18). And that is what the word WASTE LAND really means -- to establish the ruins of the world.

וְלִי יִרְדָּה הַמַּיִם

RABBI SIMON B. MANASSIA SAID: WOE FOR THE LOSS OF A GREAT SERVANT: refers to the Messiah, for of him it is written "His name shall be continued as long as the sun ( שמש ) " (Ps. 72:17). He has been called great, as it is written, "Who art thou, O great mountain?" (Zech.4:7), and from this verse it has been expounded that this refers to the Messiah who will be greater than Abraham and Moses, as it is written, "Behold my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high." (Is. 52:13). Also the great light that God set aside for the righteous (the affair of the snake's seduction) was known beforehand to Him who spoke and the world came into being, for had not the snake been curded, that is, had not the incident of seduction cursed the snake, the light of the Messiah would have forthwith shone upon the world, and it is known that the world was created only for the sake of Israel, who were called the "first, etc." (Jer.2:3).

EVERY ISRAELITE WOULD HAVE HAD TWO GOOD SNAKES, that is to say two kinds of blessings, as it is written "I have observed signs ( אֲתִירָא ), and the Lord has blessed me" (Gen 30:27). SENDING ONE TO THE NORTH which is the blessing in the world to come which is stored away ( מִצְוָה ) for the righteous. AND SENDING ONE TO THE SOUTH, which refers to a blessing for the world in which he dwells and the essence of dwelling in this world is that it should be so improved that it be the dwelling-place of the Temple, hence it was expressed by the word "south."

And it is then written TO BRING HIM COSTLY GEMS etc., as it is written: "R. Jochanan was sitting and expounding that the Holy One Praised Be He would bring precious stones and pearls which are thirty by thirty and place them in the gates of Jerusalem ... (Baba Bathra 75a) "Not only that, but Israel would live to see

bengeance in the Amalekites and the Githites and to smite them with stick and thong until they be utterly obliterated from the world, hence the phrase ONE WOULD HAVE FASTENED A THONG, means for smiting, and UNDER ITS TAIL, for it is written "How he (Amalek) met thee by the way and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee..." (Deut.25:18). And there too it is written "Thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." (Deut.25:19). And we know that the Holy Name will not be complete, nor the Throne complete, until he (Amalek) is obliterated, and the connection of the Holy Name with Israel is that the name of the Holy One Praised Be He be connected with our name.... (See Ex.17:16a) (Tanhuma, end of perasha אָמָלֵק ). And the word THRONE (Ex.17:16) means the Temple, His Footstool. And that is why it says later WITH WHICH IT WOULD BRING FORTH, meaning the wicked Amalek. EARTH ( אֶרֶץ ) means Israel, who was humbled unto the dust, as it is written "Shake thyself from the dust (Is.52:2). And where will he take them forth? To his GARDEN, which is the Temple, and to his WASTELAND which was destroyed, then the Holy Name will be perfect, i.e. Israel and the Throne, which is the Temple.

And the hidden meaning that we have expounded from Messiah and serpent, is this: that the sin of the serpent ( נָחָשׁ ) will not be wiped out until the coming of the Messiah ( מָשִׁיחַ ), and for that reason their numerical value is the same (i.e.358), and then we will become deserving of the breastplate ( חֹשֶׁן ) in which are the Urim and Thummim. And it will be the highest of highest in our aid. And it will save us from all our enemies. And it will bring us and all Israel to the house of eternity (i.e. redemption). Amen.

NOTES

- 1) S. 16b. See also Ch. 2, note 53 (p. 32)
- 2) Ibid.
- 3) K. 16 ff
- 4) K. 25
- 5) S. 3b
- 6) In this particular section of Sanhedrin (59b et seq.) the discussion evolves around the story of the serpent in Genesis 2.
- 7) This quotation from Sanhedrin 63b is censored in all later editions of the Talmud which we consulted, where the quotation ends at וְיָשָׁם. The freer text which David apparently studied mirrors in interesting fashion the as yet completely unhampered inner life of the Jews in Poland at this period. The Talmud had, apparently, as yet not undergone the censorship both inner and outer as in other countries, and, as here too, later on.

## CHAPTER FIVE

THE POSITION OF THE DARSHAN IN POLAND  
SOME GENERAL REMARKS

From a careful study of the writings of David Darshan, and the examination of some kindred sources, together with some consideration of what Zunz, Dubnow and others had to say in a general way about darhanim and maggidim, we include here some random observations regarding the popular preacher, especially in Poland.

From the Talmud we learn about the existence of tension between the halachic and agadic darshanim. We are told in Sotah 40a, how people used to leave the halachic discourses of Miyya and flock to the agadic expositions of Abbahu.

(1)  
Levi b. Sisi and his son were heads of a school of rabbinic maggidim, and R.Zera opposed their twisting of the biblical verse to suit their momentary aims. So we see that the germs of a later animosity go back to very early roots.

The vast fund of midrashic literature obviously bears witness to the immense force of this popular agadic preaching in Jewish life. We know indeed that so many of these midrashim that have come down to us are the barest skeletons of what must surely have been warm and stirring discourses, full of hope and comfort.

Zunz tells us that in the 16th century there was a spread of popular preaching in the Jewish communities of Europe, perhaps in some measure occasioned by the deep need for comfort as a result of the Spanish catastrophe. At any rate he quotes Joseph Samaga, author of the **מקראי קודש** which appeared in

(2)  
Venice in 1586 to the following effect: **"מנחמם הסנהו בכל ישראל לדרוש רננים בשנה ויום טוב במדרשים ואגדות ולא בדיני איסור והיתור."**

1. (Y.Ma'as III:9)
2. (see Z.Gott. Vor p.428)

When the earliest popular preachers made their appearance in Poland is not known. However, Zunz lists David Darshan's handbook for preachers as the earliest such work to appear, although the date he ascribes to it <sup>(1)</sup> is apparently a repetition of the error which we considered in detail in the first chapter.

According to Zunz there was a difference between the Darshan, who was the "Talmudlehrer," the halachic preacher, and the Maggid or Mochiach who was the itinerant preacher, whose theme was usually morality, <sup>(2)</sup> The Jewish Encyclopedia article on the Maggid characterizes the Darshan as the more scholarly type, usually a rabbi, while the Maggid was the itinerant agadic preacher.

It is fairly evident that this distinction did not apply in the 16th century. David Darshan, was learned indeed, but he was surely not an halachic preacher. To be sure, he selected his themes from the Talmud, as well as the Bible, but the purpose of his exposition was more of uplift to the people than halachic pilpul. He states this most clearly perhaps, in the line preceding paragraph 4 of K., when he says: **ראינו לבאר חכילה דרבי הדמות מעקם**

**לחמון עם חוכחות קטות.**

This does not imply that he was ever unprepared to instruct the people in halacha, as we know of course, from the Hakdama of S. Moreover, David did not appear to occupy any permanent post. He wandered from place to place, as he informs us in paragraph 14 of K, and in the poem at the end of S.

In a regulation of the Wa'ad Arbah Aratsot passed in 1667, <sup>(3)</sup> which we will discuss later, that forbids public preaching without official permit, the phrase **לדרוש ולהוכיח** implies that the term "darshan" and "mochiach" were interchangeably applied to the itinerant preacher, with whom this particular regulation deals.

That the Darshan in this period was not always a rabbi, we learn <sup>(4)</sup> from an extract of the communal record of Zolkiev for in forbidding any preaching

1. i.e., 1548

2. ZGV p.444

3. see app. no.1c

4. see app. no.3

in the Synagogue on Sabbath morning (apparently because it made the services excessively lengthy) it employs the phrase: אף חיה אוהו הדרשן אב"ר<sup>(1)</sup>  
 "אף חיה" which implies of course that some darshanim at this time were not rabbis.

By the 18th century, it would seem however that the popular itinerant preacher was called "maggid" or "mochiach." At least so the maggid Benjamin Ze'eb of Szecebryszcyn terms himself.<sup>(2)</sup>

Did the darshan receive a fixed salary, and if so, from whom? In Italy, for example, during the 16th and 17th century, it appeared to be the custom for the congregation to pay the preacher. So R. Leo Modena<sup>(3)</sup> wishes his congregation to cease paying him for preaching, because thus they seem to be purchasing verbal chastisement. He rather prefers to be free. (This indeed would be considered a strange request today in the not-always amateur rabbinical world!)

In Poland, in a period roughly corresponding this, we do not seem to have such a state of affairs. David Darshan himself states that he was not paid for preaching. His income perforce, came from the sale of amulets. And he<sup>(4)</sup> was evidently an impecunious soul. But from the records of the Wa'ad of 1639 where the will of the deceased R. Pinchas was probated, we find that he bequeathed among other things 50 shockli<sup>(4\*)</sup> to the Synagogue to engage any darshan they might choose, who was to preach to them each Sabbath, and to receive from this fund 1 shockli per Sabbath. Our conclusion can therefore be, that at this time some congregations did engage a darshan, and pay him some sort of regular salary.

When did the darshan preach? In the Hakdama to S., David informs us that he was always prepared to set aside an hour or so to expound the Torah, whenever people were prepared to listen. That he did preach regularly on Sabbaths, we learn from page 16b of S., where he writes: בכל שבת ושבת הדרשן "הדרשן"

1. 1689

2. See App. no. 4

3. ZGV, p. 436

4. See App. 1b

4\* Lithuanian coinage

Just when on the Sabbath the homily was delivered, he does not say. We know of course, that later on the custom developed for the maggid or darshan to speak toward the end of the afternoon service on the Sabbath. However, we have an interesting clue that this was not always the case, in Poland at any rate, and that for a while, the custom of preaching at the Saturday morning service prevailed.

This interesting fact we learn from the extract of the communal records of Zolkiev (1). This regulation, passed in 1689, expressly forbids the granting of permission to any preacher, no matter who he be, to preach at the Sabbath morning service, because of the abuses and strain on the congregation - probably lengthy sermons that made the services uncommonly long. This regulation also makes mention of this reform having been adopted by the leading communities, and they in see fit to follow/such worthy footsteps. Thus they say: **וּבְאִשֶּׁר שָׁנָה הָיָה . . . .**  
**סָנְהוּ וְחָקוּן גִּדּוּל בְּרֹאשֵׁי הַקְהָלוֹת וּבְשָׂאֵרֵי קְהָלוֹת קְרוֹטוֹת וּמִפּוֹאֲרֹת שֶׁלֹּא**  
**לִבְנֵי לִשׁוֹם אִדָּם בְּעוֹלָם לִדְרוֹשׁ בְּהִכְנָ"ס שְׁחִירָה בַּשָּׁבָת רַק דְּרוֹקָא בַּמִּנְחָה . . .**

From which we may perhaps gather that some time before this, perhaps even in David's time, the sermon was delivered at the morning service.

In Appendix A to Chapter Three, we discussed the attitude of the official community to David, and, if we take him to be characteristic of the Polish darshan of his time, the, inferentially, to the darshan in general.

A similar type of opposition emerges from two or three sources in the communal records of the Jews of Poland, at the time when the inner autonomy and kahal control was at its very height. For example, the Wa'ad of 1627 decreed that no man could preach in public without express permission of the rabbi and elders of the community; and that in order to be permitted to preach in surrounding districts the darshan must show written permits from these authorities. (2)

Even sharper is the statement in a decree of the Wa'ad which met in Homsk, in 1667 (3). This decree takes cognizance of the fact itinerant preachers are going about the country addressing multitudes without permission of the local

officials, the רשות מרא דאחרא וז' סובי העיר. Moreover, the consent of individual communities, in the case of itinerant preachers, must be buttressed by the consent of all the communities (of the Wa'ad).

Precisely why the authorities found it necessary to check such itinerant preachers, whether it was to protect the people from charlatans, or whether it mirrors an inner struggle between the forces of mysticism and the forces of rationalistic, Talmudistic communal control, requires deeper and intensive study. The connection between the agadists and popular mysticism even in earlier times has been noticed. <sup>(1)</sup> We have seen too the forces of the kabbala at work in the writings and thoughts of David. Thus these may be clues of a silent struggle that preceded and paralleled the upthrust of Sabbatianism and Hassidism.

<sup>(2)</sup>

We learn too that in 1685 the communal officials placed a curb on the publications of homiletical books. And Dubnow writes:

"...the Council of the Four Lands established a control over the books issued by the printing presses of Cracow and Lublin and imported from abroad. Only such books were allowed to circulate as were supplied with a printed approbation or "haskama"."

The Hakdama of the ספר קה רצון of Benjamin Ze'v of

<sup>(4)</sup>

Szcebryzin gives us a fascinating picture of the attitude of many Talmudic scholars to the maggid. It dates from the 18th century, but is yet worth citing here. We see mirrored, in broad outline, the struggle between the learned Talmudists and the common people. When Benjamin writes here, urging the learned חלמי'י חכמים to stay away from the synagogue on Saturday afternoons, so that the common people may undisturbed listen to the ethical homilies of the mochiach; when he paints a picture of the scene wherein he, the maggid, tries to speak to the people, above the almost deliberate drone of the learned ones studying out loud, and thus distracting the attention of the people from the maggid; when we read how he is told by them to speak, if he has something to say in pilpul, but to be silent if he

1. See esp. the first perasha of Bereshit Rabba. 3. History of Jews in Russia & Poland, Vol. I, p. 195.  
2. App. 2

4. See App. 4

is just going to speak on 'misar'; we see the vivid re-enactment of what has gone on for so long, the struggle between Abbahu and Miyya, the struggle that was already beginning to make itself felt in Poland, perhaps, even in the time of David Darshan.

The sources appended to this chapter, make it possible to cull these few gleanings. There is a wealth of מדרש רב to be gone through and studied carefully, and from such a study will emerge a clearer and fuller picture of the position of the darshan and maggid in Polish Jewish life, in that interesting and deeply fascinating period, the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Which, of course, is in the province of another study, indeed, a wider and more extensive study.

## APPENDIX A

Sources That Throw Light on the Status of the Darshan and Maggid.

(1) פנקס המדינה, ש. דובנוב, ברלין, תרפ"ה.

(א) ועד שפ"ח - 1627

קל. דף 33: ראשי קהלות אין ליתן לאום אדם לדרוש ברבים עד שיסכימו עליו. האב"ד והראשים יצ"ו אחר שיתקבצו לישיב ביחד דוקא, אמנם לא על ידי שליחות השמש; ובסביבות לא יתנו לשוכ אדם לדרוש ברבים עד היות בידו כתובים וחתימות (כתוב) וחתימות מחתת ידו ליתן רשות לדרוש ברבים בלא ידיעת והסכמות הראשים יצ"ו. והעובר על תיקון זה יתן קנס למדינה חמשה זהו' אדום'.

(ב) ועד שצ"ט - 1639

חא. דף 82: (בקשת הא' ה"ר בהחסיד מוהר"ר ישעיה לעשות סדר נכון בדבר צוואות אביו החסיד ז"ל)..... עוד יתן הר"פ הנ"ל לג' ראשי הקהלות לכל קהלה חסישים שאקל' יתן בכל שבוע שאקל' לאיזה דרשן שיבחרו הקהלה לדרוש טדי שבת בשבתו, ועוד יתן עשרה שאקל' על כל שנה שיאמור (שיאמר) קדיש אחר הדרשה לכבוד נשמת אביו (הסנוה) החסיד ז"ל, זה יתן משך שלשה שנים. ועוד יתן הר"פ לכל קהלה מג' קהלות ארבעים שאקל' לספרא שיהיה מחוייב ללמוד הכתיבה עם נערים בני עניים. כנוזכר בתוך צוואת אביו החסיד זצ"ל.....

(ג) ועד האמסק - תכ"ז - 1667

תקצ"ו. דף 144: באשר נחתדש דבר מעתה שכמה אנשים הולכים וסובבים את הגליל ויהודא ודורשים ברבים בלי סמכות רשות והרמנא מרא דאתרא ושבעה טובי העיר, הן בבה"כ הן בשאר מקומות, ואומרים שהם מוכיחים בשער ~~המקומות~~ בת רבים ומדברים תוכחה מגולה בשפת יתר ובטול דמים (וכנסול דמי) ונראים הדברים שקצת לכבוד עצמם הם דורשים. בכך גזרנו אומר שמהיום הוא מכלל איסור כולל שלא ליטול את השם לצאת ולבא לקרות הרבה ולדרוש ולהוכיח ברבים בלי הרמנא ורשות מרא דאתרא וזו' טובי העיר. ובאם יעבור יאמרו לו לך רד זולת שאר עונשים. ואין ביד ראש הקהלה ~~א~~ עם הרב לתת רשות לשום אדם לסבב מעיר לעיר להוכיח ברבים, כי אם שיסכימו כל ראשי הקהלות עם הרבנים.





ונסצא הסוכה כסוני קמן ערך לפני הח"ח שבעיר צא אך כוונת הסוכה  
 כסוני הוא רק להובית את הע"ה אשר הם קסני ערך לפני ולפי ערך ע"ה  
 גדול ערך אני. וזו שאסרו אשרי לדור גדולים נשבעים לקסנים כלו'  
 הח"ח שומעים לסוכה כסוני קסני ערך. גם שהם יודעים יותר דברי  
 מוסר מ"ם אשרי לדור כי ק"ו כי קסנים לגדולים כלומר שעה קסני  
 ערך יתקנו המוסר מפי הסוכה כסוני הגדול ערך בערך ע"ה. ומקסי  
 הגמרא ק"ו חיובא הוא כלומר הלא בלאו הכי מחויבים ע"ה לשמוע גם  
 כי לא יתקנו הח"ח. ומשני אלא מחוץ וכו' כלומר אמת שעל ע"ה הוא  
 חיוב לשמוע אך מסני שהם אינם מבינים ודרכם לחת עיניהם בח"ח כנ"ל  
 וא"כ מחוץ שיתקנו הח"ח ינשאו ע"ה ק"ו בעצמם מה הח"ח שהם יודעים  
 מוסר ושומעים לדברי הסוכה א"כ בודאי דבריו טובים ונכונים מכ"ש  
 אנהנו אשר אין אנו יודעים דרך הישר בודאי חל עלינו חיוב גמור  
 לשום לבינו מסתמך לדבר הסוכה ובוה נחזו' לדברי הרב בהג"ה:  
 ופועלים וב"ב אשר עליהם חוב לשמוע ד"ה יבואו לבה"מד. (עין הגהות  
 הרמ"א לש"ע, א"ח סי' ר"ץ סעיף ב'). וח"ח יסכנו יותר בתענוג  
 אבילה ושחיה קצת רצה לומר יאכלו וישחו קצת וגם קצת ילמדו כביהם  
 כדי שלא יבא ח"ו על ידיהם איזה ביטול מצות תוכחה כנ"ל כי בעז"ה  
 כל הגדול מחבירו יצרו גדול היסנו מסתמך והיה בבואו לבה"מד יבצר  
 בו לציצ הרע למאס בדברי הדורש לרבים כי כן דרכו של יצר הרע  
 להרבות שנאת חנם כמחז"ל יותר ממה שעה שונאים לת"ח ת"ח שונאים  
 זה את זה. ובעון שנאת חנם חרבה ירושלים ועדיין מרקד בן בעו"ה.  
 ע"כ מוטב שלא יבואו הח"ח בעת שיעסוד בעל המגיד השיעור. ואפשר  
 זאת כוונת הרב בהג"ה וגם אפשר כוונת המכתב לזה שאמר אחר סעודה  
 שחרית דהיינו אז הח"ח יתענגו באבילה ושחיה ושינה כי השביעו א"ע  
 כל ימי השבוע צב בד"ה כסעם אבילה ושחיה ונדרו שינה מעיניהם ולא  
 יהיו אז מצויים בבה"מד רק הפועלים וב"ב שאינם עוסקים בחזרה כל  
 ימי השבוע ובודאי יבאו אז. והנה מחמת שלפעמים הסמאנים לשמוע  
 דברי מסתמך מוסר נוחנין מעט ואומרים לסוכה קצר מלולך כי יבטל  
 מצות סעודה שלישיית זע"י זה מסתמך דברי פי המנכ"ח. לזה בא אפשר  
 המ"א להודיע שאין לבטל הדומה עבור סעודה ג' ומביא ראיה שבניו  
 של ר"ם מתו מאותו חמא כי אביהם ר"ם היה דורס חסיד כמחז"ל  
 שהיה דורס חלחא שמעחא חלחא אגדתא וחלחא מחלי א"כ אפשר שבניו  
 היו מושכים לב אביהם לקצר עבור סעוד' ג' ומתו מאותו חמא. ולזה  
 מסיים המ"א זעיקר להבינם יראת שמים בלבבם ולא בסו שנוהגים עכ"ז  
 כלומר כי בעו"ה דרכם של לומדים לומר לסוכה אם יש לך יד בפלסול  
 וחריפות אזי פתח פין ונשמע חכמתך ואם אין חכמתך בש"ס ובפוסקים א"כ  
 אתה כור יוכיח. ובאמת העיקר לצמצם הוא רק להכניס יראת שמים  
מסתמך בלבבם וא"כ מסוכה קמן ערך חיוב לשמוע יראת שמים וראוי  
 ליקח מוסר אפילו מבריה קטנה כמאמר אליהו לאיוב בסימן ל"ה מלפנו  
 מבהמות הארץ ומעוף השמים יחכסנו וכמאמר שהמ"ע לך אל נמלה וראה צמצם  
 דרכים וגו'. וישעיהו הנביא אמר ידע שור קוניה וגו'. מכ"ש הסוכה  
 אשר יוכיח מספרי מוסר מוסר הקדמונים או יאמר איזה מוסר השכיל  
 מלבן בודאי חיוב גדול לקבוע איזה איש שיעסוד חסיד בסבחות זיי"ם  
 לדרוש ברבים כנ"ל במי ילקום ויעלה הקב"ה עליהם כאילו הסליכו  
 אותו ראש מסיים בילקום ואחם עדי נאום ה' ואני אל.....

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