



The Greeks and Us: in the Bible

1. Once, many years ago...

In parshat Noah, the Torah names some of Noah's sons and grandsons:

Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Yefet; and to them were sons born after the flood. The sons of Yefet; Gomer, and Magog, and Maday, and Yavan, and Tuval, and Meshekh, and Tiras ... By these were the isles of the nations divided in their lands; everyone after his tongue, after their families, in their nations (Genesis 10, 1-5).

Who is Yavan's (=Greece's) father?

1. Shem (continue to number 21).
2. Ham (continue to number 8).
3. Yefet (continue to number 14).

2. Wrong.

3. Noah blessed Shem and Yefet because of their good deed.

He blessed Yefet saying: "God shall enlarge ("yaft" in Hebrew) Yefet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Kena'an shall be his servant" (Genesis 9:27).

The blessing he gave to Yefet has several interpretations. Let's learn Rashi's interpretation:

"Although... Koresh, who was from the descendants of Yefet, built the Second Temple, the Divine Presence did not dwell there. And where did it dwell? In the First Temple that Shelomo, who was from the descendants of Shem, built." (Rashi on Genesis 9:27)

According to Rashi, in which Temple did the Divine Presence dwell: the First Temple or the Second Temple and why?

1. In the First, because Koresh, who is a descendant of Shem, built it (continue to number 15).
2. In the First, because Shelomo, who is a descendant of Shem, built it (continue to number 7).
3. In the Second, because Shelomo, who is a descendant of Shem, built it (continue to number 11).

4. Židon

They are mentioned as part of the Canaanites in the Book of Genesis and as part of the enemies that needed to be fought during the period of Joshua and Judges. During this time, they are also mentioned in connection with idolatry and marriages to foreign women (and sometimes both...).

However, in the same region was another kingdom called Žor (Tyre). Read these verses and then continue:

And Hiram king of Žor sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David a house (Samuel II 5: 11)

And Hiram king of Žor sent his servants to Shelomo; for he had heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father: for Hiram always loved David (Kings I 5: 15)

And the Lord gave Shelomo wisdom, as he promised him: and there was peace between Hiram and Shelomo; and they two made a league together (Kings I 5: 26)

To the chief Musician, to Shoshannim, A Maskil for the sons of Qoraĥ. A Song of loves ... And O daughter of Žor, the rich among the people, shall entreat thy favour with a gift... She shall be brought to the king in embroidered garments (Psalms 45: 1, 15-16)

Fill in the missing words (you can use the word bank below):

_____ king of Žor sent messengers to build a house for _____, and when his son, _____, reigned after him, he sent messengers to him because he _____ his father. There is peace between them

and they make a covenant. Also, in the Psalm, _____ who marries the king is mentioned positively.

word bank: Idolatry, David, Hiram, loved, hated, Ahab, Shelomo, daughter of Zor, Izevel.

After filling in what's missing, which of the following words did you NOT use:

1. Shelomo, Aĥ'av, hated (continue to number 11).
2. Aĥ'av, hated, Izevel, idolatry (continue to number 17).
3. David, Shelomo, Izevel, loved (continue to number 15).

5. Hiram of Zor was an expert in making brass vessels

As we continue reading, we discover that Shelomo also makes vessels:

And Shelomo made all the vessels that belonged to the house of the Lord: the altar of gold, and the table of gold, upon which the showbread was ... and the candlesticks (menorahs) of pure gold, five on the right side, and five on the left, before the inner sanctuary (Kings I 7:48-49)

Circle the type of material from which Shelomo made the vessels in the Temple. Then, continue to the number of menorahs that Shelomo made in the Temple. The number is: _____

6. Wrong answer.

7. We Have a Special Relationship with the Sons of Yefet.

On one hand, Noah blesses Yefet. On the other hand, according to Rashi, the Divine Presence did not dwell in the Second Temple because the sons of Yefet built it.

Which country's flag is this?

1. Lebanon (continue to number 16).
2. Egypt (continue to number 2).
3. United States of America (continue to number 11).



8. Try Again.

9. Where Did the Oil Wood Come From?

Shelomo asks Hiram for cedars, and Hiram generously provides him with cypress wood as well. Shelomo uses the materials Hiram sent for the external parts of the house, but not for the internal parts. He makes the doors of the sanctuary and the Holy of Holies (called 'dvir'), and the keruvim that are in the Holy of Holies from 'oil wood'.

In other words, Shelomo intentionally does not use the wood that Hiram sent for the innermost parts of the Temple, but rather uses wood that apparently comes from the Land of Israel.

Why? We'll try to answer that later... Meanwhile, multiply the number you're at now by two, and continue to that number.

10. You were very precise with the number of menorahs!

In the Temple and its courtyard, there were many vessels. The vessels in the Temple courtyard were made of brass, like the laver and the altar where sacrifices were offered. In contrast, the vessels inside the Temple and the sanctuary, were made of gold, for example, the menorahs and the ark.

Read **Abarbanel's** commentary and answer the question that follows:

It appears that Shelomo did not want Hiram to make vessels from the gold designated for the sanctuary and temple, because due to its holiness, it was not appropriate for it to be made by a foreigner (=non-Jew).

(Abarbanel, Kings I 7)

Why did Shelomo prepare the gold vessels himself and not let Hiram make them?

Continue to number 13.

11. Incorrect.

12. The Trees in the Temple.

As we learned, Lebanon is unique in that it has cedar trees, which are the best trees for building sturdy structures. Therefore, Shelomo requests cedar trees from Hiram.

Read the following verses and then give them titles from the glossary below:

And Shelomo sent to Hiram, saying.. And, behold, I purpose to build a house to the name of the Lord my God ... Now therefore command thou that they hew for me cedar trees out of the Levanon) Kings I 5, 16, 19-20) And Hiram sent to Shelomo, saying, I have considered the things which thou hast sent to me: and I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of cypress (Kings I 5, 22)	And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house even to the walls of the ceiling he covered them on the inside with wood, and covered the floor of the house with planks of cypress (Kings I 6, 15)	And within the sanctuary he made two keruvim of oil wood ... And for the entering of the inner sanctuary he made doors of oil wood ... The two doors also were of oil wood ... So also made he for the door of the temple posts of oil wood (Kings I 6, 23, 31-33)
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Titles: Making the external parts of the house; Making the internal parts of the house; The negotiation between Hiram and Shelomo.

Fill in the blanks: Shelomo asked Hiram king of Zor for _____ trees, and Hiram agreed and even added _____ trees. When

Shelomo builds the house of God, he builds the walls from _____ trees and the floor from _____ trees. In the inner part of God's house, he builds keruvim made from _____ trees, and he also makes the doors of the sanctuary and temple from _____ trees.

How many times do the three types of trees appear in the **verses** below? Continue to this number: ____

13. Cedars and oil trees, brass and gold.

For the building of the Temple, King Shelomo sought help from the kingdom of Žor. First, he requested lumber from them: cedars and cypress, for building the external parts of God's house. Second, he imported an expert brass craftsman to build the brass vessels in the Temple courtyard.

On the other hand, Shelomo was careful not to use Hiram's help for anything related to the internal parts of the Temple; he used olive wood, not cedars and cypress, to build the doors to the sanctuary and the Holy of Holies and the keruvim, and he prepared the most holy and internal vessels, the golden vessels, by himself.

On Hanukkah, we tell the story of our struggle against the Greeks, who entered the sanctuary, took the golden candlestick and all the Temple vessels, and defiled all the oils. From everything we've seen, we learn that we have a complex relationship with the sons of Yefet, including Greece.¹ While we have what to learn from them, mainly in material and aesthetic matters, we need to be careful that our Holy of Holies remains ours alone.

And now, for the final step: answer the questions in the crossword puzzle below, then proceed to the answer you get in the middle column (hints are in the parentheses).

1. Izevel's father (19).
2. From me, the keruvim in the Holy of Holies were made, (two words, 12).

¹ It's interesting that the Bible tells us that the Greeks were also experts in brass vessels: "Yavan, Tuval, and Meshekh, they were thy merchants: they traded the persons of men and vessels of brass for thy merchandise. (Ezekiel 27:13).

3. I am made of brass and located in the Temple courtyard (10).
4. The tribe from which Hiram's father came (18).
5. The last child of Yefet (1).
6. The fourth son of Yefet (1).



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14. Correct! Yavan (Greece) is the son of Yefet.

An important point that will help us later is that all of Yefet's descendants live on islands.

Let's reviews a short story from Parashat Noah.

After Noah left the ark, he planted a vineyard, made wine from the grapes, drank from it, got drunk, and fell asleep, unclothed, in his tent. Ham, his youngest son, observing his father in this humiliating state, didn't cover him with a blanket, but instead went to tell his brothers.

Shem and Yefet walked backwards into the tent, without looking, and covered their father with a blanket out of respect. When Noah woke up, he was angry with Ham and blessed Shem and Yefet.

Why did Noah bless Shem and Yefet?

Continue to number 3.

15. Incorrect.

16. The cedar tree is the symbol of Lebanon.

The lebanese cedar is a very tall tree that was historically used to build large and important buildings, and is endemic to Lebanon. That is why it appears on their flag.

But what does this have to do with us? We're at war with them!

Continue to number 19.

17. We see that we have allies in Lebanon too...

Unlike the Židonians, who are mentioned in connection with the Canaanites and the conquest of the land, whom we fight against, and whose daughters are idol worshippers – the kingdom of Žor is mentioned only in positive contexts: building David's house, peace and alliances in Shelomo's time, and even when a "daughter of Žor" is mentioned regarding marriage, the whole context is positive, with no mention of idolatry at all.

These differences might be related to Žor's location. Žor is a city situated on an island,² while Židon is on the mainland, so the Židonians are connected to the Canaanites and the land we need to conquer, while Žor, being on an island, is not.

But the difference between Žor and Židon is deeper. Židon is connected to Ham (because Canaan is Ham's descendant), who behaved in a morally corrupt way and was therefore cursed by Noah, while Žor is an island, and thus connected to Yefet, who received Noah's blessing in God's name and all his descendants are connected to islands.

Why do we have different attitudes toward Žor and Židon? Write at least 2 reasons.

And now let's learn about building the Temple at number 12.

² This was the case during Biblical times until the days of Alexander the Great, who poured stones and dirt into the sea and connected Žor to the mainland, until our present day.

18. The Artisan from Žor

In addition to the cedars, Shelomo brings a skilled artisan from Žor to craft tools and utensils for the Temple.

He was a widow's son of the tribe of Naftali, and his father was a man of Žor, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Shelomo, and wrought all his work (Kings I 7, 14)

What material were the vessels made by Hiram, the craftsman from Žor, made of?

1. Silver (Continue to number 2).
2. Gold (Continue to number 11).
3. Brass (Continue to number 5).

19. Indeed, we are at war with Lebanon, but...

Our relationship with Lebanon is a bit more complex. To understand this relationship, read the following verses and draw lines between each verse and its matching description/image and circle the enemies in Lebanon that appear in these verses. Note! Some verses have more than one match!

But king Shelomo loved many foreign women.. Židonian, and Hittite women .. For Shelomo went after 'Ashtoret the goddess of the Židonians (Kings I 11, 1-5)

A connection to the Canaanites

And the children of Yisra'el continued to do evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Ba'alim, and the 'Ashtarot, and the gods of Aram, and the gods of Židon (Judges 10, 6)

from the south, all the land of the Kena'ani, and Me'ara that is beside the Židonim .. All the inhabitants of the hill country from Levanon as far as Misrefot-mayim, and all the Židonim, them will I drive out from before the children of Yisra'el (Joshua 13, 5-6)

idolatry



And Kena'an begot Židon his firstborn, and Het (Genesis 10, 15)

And Aĥ'av the son of 'Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord .. that he took to wife Izevel, the daughter of Etba'al king of the Židonians, and went and served the Ba'al, and prostrated himself to him (Kings I 16, 30-31)

Marriage to a non-Jew

And the Lord said to the children of Yisra'el ... The Židonim also, and 'Amaleq and Ma'on, did oppress you; and you cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand (Judges 10, 11-12)

Two of these verses are related to both idol worship and marriage to foreigners (=gentiles). From which book are these verses taken?

1. Joshua (Continue to number 15).
2. Kings (Continue to number 4).
3. Judges (Continue to number 11).

20. You invested, you learned, and you've reached the finish line!

One last point to think about... Notice: What's special about the following date? Or more precisely, one day after it? (Remember that the first month in the Bible is the month of Nisan).

"In the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying: ... Consider now from this day and upward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider it." (Haggai 2: 10-18)

About this and more, we will learn in the next booklet...

21. Incorrect