

*Treasures of the Torah*

*“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls,  
46 and upon finding a single pearl of great value,  
he went and sold all that he had and bought it.  
Matthew 13:45*

*‘ We haven’t got a chance, bro’*



**17th June 2023 - 28 Sivan 5783  
Numbers/Bamidbar 13:1 - 15:41**

**Shelach (On your Behalf )**

Shabbat Shalom Talmadim, and welcome to this week’s Parsha Pearl.

**Key Events**

**Moses sends out men to scout the promised land**

**The scouts bring back the report**

**YHVH threatens to destroy the people because of their lack of faith**

**Moses intercedes on their behalf**

**A man is caught collecting wood on the Sabbath**

**YHVH commands fringes to be made of blue cord to remind the people of His laws and to remain holy.**

The Parsha begins:

**3** *Adonai* said to Moshe, **2** “Send men on your behalf to reconnoiter the land of Kena’an, which I am giving to the people of Isra’el. From each ancestral tribe send someone who is a leader in his tribe.” **3** Moshe dispatched them from the Pa’ran Desert as *Adonai* had ordered; all of them were leading men among the people of Isra’el.

**4** Here are their names: from the tribe of Re’uven, Shamua the son of Zakur;

**5** from the tribe of Shim’on, Shafat the son of Hori;

**6** from the tribe of Y’hudah, Kalev the son of Y’funeh;

**7** from the tribe of Yissakhar, Yig’al the son of Yosef;

**8** from the tribe of Efrayim, Hoshea the son of Nun;

9 from the tribe of Binyamin, Palti the son of Rafu;  
10 from the tribe of Z'vulun, Gadi'el the son of Sodi;  
11 from the tribe of Yosef, that is, from the tribe of M'nasheh, Gadi the son of Susi;  
12 from the tribe of Dan, 'Ammi'el the son of G'malli;  
13 from the tribe of Asher, S'tur the son of Mikha'el;  
14 from the tribe of Naftali, Nachbi the son of Vofsi; and  
15 from the tribe of Gad, Ge'u'el the son of Makhi.

**16** These are the names of the men Moshe sent out to reconnoiter the land. Moshe gave to Hoshea the son of Nun the name Y'hoshua.

In this opening passage, we read that YHVH instructs Moses to send out the men, but these men will ultimately be chosen by Moses himself and not named by YHVH.

This immediately puts a great deal of pressure upon Moses. His option is to choose men of good standing, however, there is one stipulation; they must be tribal leaders.

One of my first thoughts at this moment is, why did YHVH not just allow Moses to pick a team from among the men but specifically instructs him that the squad be made up of leaders?

I suggest that the results from the voice of the leaders holds far more gravitas among the people; in addition this will have more impact upon the faith of the people.

We learn that Moses only asks them to bring back a report that will answer a number of questions but leaders, being who they are, can't help but add their own opinions and advice to their findings; this is not what Moses asks of them.

**v18** And see the land, what it is, and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; **19** And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong holds; **20** And what the land is, whether it be fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time was the time of the first ripe grapes.

Just read the beginning of last line of the text: ' And be ye of good courage'. KJV.

Before the scouts set off, Moses does one final and very important thing; He changes Hoshea's name to Y'hoshua. The English translation is 'Joshua'. The importance in this task, does one thing — the Hebrew letter 'yud' prefixes the original name and thus adds the name of the Lord to it. Hoshea which means 'salvation', becomes Y'hoshea, YHVH is salvation'.

This is not just an insignificant end line to this passage. Though we have only one sentence which states this amazing occurrence, it stamps the final end to the hidden message found within the list of the tribal names of the leaders. Let's have a look.

**Tribal name & meaning.      Scouts name & meaning**

Reuben/See.....Shamua/ Hear, (Name)  
Simeon/Hear.....Shafat/Decide, Judge.  
Judah/Praise.....Kalev/Heart.  
Issachar/Reward.....Yig'al/Redeem.  
Efrayim/Fruitful.....Hoshea - Y'hoshua/Salvation - Yehovah is Salvation.

Benjamin/Son of My people.....Palti/My deliverer, delivered.  
Zebulun/Prince.....Gadiel/YHVH of My troops, YHVH is my fortune.  
Yosef/Adding.....Gadi /My Good Fortune  
Dan/Judge.....Ammi'el/YHVH of My people/ My Kinsman is YHVH  
Asher/Happy.....Setur/Hidden  
Naftali/My Struggle.....Nachbi/Refuge or secret hidden place.  
Gad/Fortune.....Ge'u'el/YHVH is Exalted, the Mighty One will rise up

In a brief summary we can see that though Moses may have made an arbitrary decision to gather the group of men, the Lord's hand was in the midst of his decision.

The scouts had some serious mileage to cover.

13:21 So the men explored the land from the Desert of Zin to the border of Hamath. 22 They went through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai lived. They are descendants of Anak. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) 23 When they came to the Eshcol Valley, they cut off a branch with only one bunch of grapes on it. They carried it on a pole between two of them. They also brought some pomegranates and figs. 24 So they called that valley Eshcol [Bunch of Grapes] because of the bunch of grapes the Israelites cut off there. 25 Forty days later, they came back from exploring the land.

During this time, you can imagine the conversations going on amongst the men. We must realise that these men made it across some rough terrain, and would have had to have some significant resolve and stamina to complete the journey; however, despite their physical prowess and mental strategising, their faith just didn't stand up to the task.

On their return, they brought back produce and were accurate in all that they surveyed. They had fulfilled the task and ticked all the boxes, but they just could not help themselves; they had to throw in their opinion; according to them, the task of taking the land and fighting the giants was just too much to ask.

"We can't attack those people, because they are stronger than we are"; 32 and they spread a negative report about the land they had reconnoitred for the people of Isra'el by saying, "The land we passed through in order to spy it out is a land that devours its inhabitants. All the people we saw there were giant! 33 We saw the N'filim, the descendants of 'Anak, who was from the N'filim; to ourselves we looked like grasshoppers by comparison, and we looked that way to them too!"

Returning to the journey for a moment, we see that the men travelled to the place of the Anakim, the land of the giants. This was the land of Hebron, where Abraham and Sarah dwelt, at the terebinths of Mamre, and where Abraham purchased the cave of Macpelah as a tomb (known as the Cave of the Patriarchs) for His wife.

Chapter 14 begins with yet another complaint from the people. They are utterly dismayed and believe that they have come all this far to be killed by YHVH. They know that Moses will not relent on the task given him and so they remark, 'let us find a leader to help us get back to Egypt'.

Having done all to hold the people together, Moses, joined by Aaron, seem to fall on their own faces in shock and dismay. The complaint and the lack of faith halted the move forward into the land.

Following Joshua's plea and encouragement, the people decided to do a little bit of stoning and had Joshua and Caleb in their sights. At this point YHWH's glory appeared in the tent of meeting in front of the whole of the Israelite community. This is an unusual event. Despite the anger of the Lord being aroused, the Lord remains in the covering of the tent but allows only a part of Himself to be seen. YHWH could not appear outside the tent completely because those who saw Him would simply perish. This is YHWH's grace at work. We see this again as He listens to Moses' argument.

YHWH's anger grew and He decided to destroy the nation of Israel and suggested that Moses should be the one out of whom He will make a great nation.

What we see in Moses' intercession is a man who is very familiar with YHWH and not afraid to speak to Him from his heart. Moses argues with YHWH to relent and not turn away from His promise to make Israel a great nation. In addition, Moses rejects the personal offer from the Lord which would propel him into the patriarchal elite.

YHWH hears Moses' plea for mercy and thus His hand of judgment is held, but the compromise is that those who brought the bad report shall die and that Israel will wander the desert for 40 years — one year for every day the leaders were out scouting the land.

14:20 And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to your word.

21 But truly as I live and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord,

22 Because all those men who have seen My glory and My [miraculous] signs which I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have tested *and* proved Me these ten times and have not heeded My voice, 23 Surely they shall not see the land which I swore to give to their fathers; nor shall any who provoked (spurned, despised) Me see it.

Later in the same chapter, we see how remorse came upon many of the people. Their decision was to somehow make amends and go back to fight. Moses argues with them saying that YHWH will not be with them and they will die. Their decision to fight was made in presumption, but it also ignored YHWH's judgement that people should continue their route by the way of the Red Sea.

Before we leave, our attention must be drawn to Joshua and Caleb. Joshua from the tribe of Ephraim and Caleb from Judah, will represent the two sticks of Joseph and Judah. In time Ephraim will take on the identity of the ten tribes in the northern kingdom and the greater diaspora. Caleb will come to own Hebron (Joshua 14) according to the Lord's promise and thus Caleb and his kinsmen stayed in the land. Hebron also became the place where David was anointed king and ruled His kingdom.

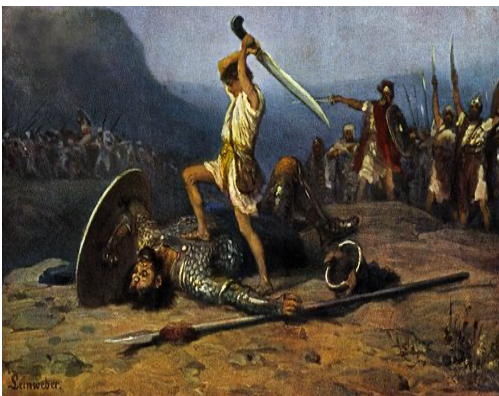
**2** After this David inquired of the Lord, "Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah?" And the Lord said to him, "Go up." David said, "To which shall I go up?" And he said, "To Hebron." **2** So David went up there, and his two wives also, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. **3** And David brought up his men who were with him, everyone with his household, and they lived in the towns of Hebron. **4** And the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. 2 Samuel 2:1-4.

As we consider the story of the exodus as a pattern in the continuing saga of the redemption of Israel, I want to say that I feel that the Lord will redeem this episode in the greater exodus to come as this time will be a time when the regathering will be endowed with faith and with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit amongst His people. This chapter in the history of the Hebrews is one that we must learn from and not replicate.

I have chosen in this parsha to focus upon the story of the spies. I hope that we have gleaned some of the unseen aspects of the narrative.

It would really help us if we were to consider our own responses if we found ourselves in similar circumstances. We too, with hindsight and knowledge, must hold back our own thoughts of judgement upon our ancient forebears, as our responses to future events may also be uncertain.

As believers, we have all gone through a process of change. Often, we will fight with the prescribed way of YHVH. We will want the easy over the hard ways, the valleys instead of the mountains, and even prefer to contend with people much like ourselves instead of the giants. It may well be certain that we will also join the grumblers and the complaining tribe.



As we leave, let us pray that we may have the resolve of Joshua and Caleb, whose ardour and zeal for the Lord remained well into their old age. Let us also refrain from listening to bad conversation and even more be part of the culpable community.

Friends, it will be for sure that hiding along the path of our own faith-life journey, the giants will find purchase. For some of us, they have become embedded in the trials of our lives and have become burdensome travellers with us. However, it is time now to address their positions and the power they wield in our lives. They may seem invisible, but they are ever present. They stand like suits of armour in the corridors of a grand house. Some are active and some empty. Their weapons of warfare hack away at the things that pertain to our advancement and inheritance. The Lord says that when we go through the valley of shadow — these dark corridors, He is with us. He is our strength, our shield and hiding place. He is our future and He will be exalted. The arrows of the enemy cannot pierce the armour and the shield and his giant taunts and shouts do not penetrate the helmet of salvation. He believes in his formidable stature, but he has forgotten that he will always be taken down by the 'Rock'.

### **The five stones.**

Scripture tells us that David took five stones:

Then he took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine. 1 Samuel 17:40.

Some writers have identified these stones as being aspects of David's heart:

Faith, Trust, Courage, Obedience, and Praise. Others say that they symbolise grace (represented by the number 5) in the Torah, and Chronicles 20:5-8 goes on to tell us of the giants David and his servants slew later on in his life.

However, I'd like to propose something else. But first, as we have yet to identify some giants that prevail in our human experience let us have a look at a few: Constant ill health, never being able

to progress, hurt through disappointment, the death of a loved one, situations at work, unworthiness, abuse — especially in the marriage relationship, relational breakdown.

We can all possibly think of a few more prevailing circumstances that stand in our way of moving positively forward. We can choose to remain under subjugation to these powers, but we have all be given the authority to remove them and to conquer and change the situation. We know that in Christ, we will never have to defeat them on our own.

Now let us look at my proposal for the five stones. I believe that each stone represents a giant. Goliath embodied the aspect of each stone. These giants are:

1. Fear.
2. Lack of trust in YHVH.
3. Unbelief in ourselves and who we are in Christ.
4. Verbal abuse.
5. Control or slavery.

For forty days Goliath strutted before the army of Israel, taunting them.

Goliath stood and shouted a taunt across to the Israelites. “Why are you all coming out to fight?” he called. “I am the Philistine champion, but you are only the servants of Saul. Choose one man to come down here and fight me! If he kills me, then we will be your slaves. But if I kill him, you will be our slaves! I defy the armies of Israel today! Send me a man who will fight me!” 1 Samuel 17:8-25

Fear overtook the Israelite army and thus they did not put their trust in the Lord, and neither did they have confidence in themselves. Goliath abused them verbally in his forty-day rant, threatening to defeat the Israelites and place them in slavery, under the control of the Philistines.

Friends, without even a single swipe from the sword of this giant, Goliath deployed an awesome barrage of armaments toward Israel simply by his presence. The aspects of the stones represent therefore this barrage that is projected to hit the heart of our confidence. We can choose to maintain our focus on the giant or decide to deploy the weapons of warfare which we have been given authority to use.

In summary, the people lose heart because they realise that the task ahead of them is just too immense. In other words their capacity in number and in experience was severely lacking.

Walking into YHVH’s promises is not always an easy affair and is more often difficult to make sense of. The people, listening to the scouts’ report looked upon their own strength, and just as Peter succumbed to a sinking feeling, they submerged themselves, without even firing an arrow, into their defeat.

Our journey of faith, just as this is for this ancient caravan of people, is one of exploration, as much about ourselves and beliefs as well as our level of faith. Friends, faith is not a dormant concept. It is a tool that must be put into action, just like a hammer. Faith is therefore a weapon, an arrow that is released from the bow in our hands. Once released, it enters into the air corridor that leads to its destination. As it speeds onwards, it must cut through our weaknesses and attitudes and separate all our perceptions and perspectives. As the arrow head cuts through this veil of human constructs, we realise the subterfuge. The veil is thin and acts as the illusion of a wall. The enemy, my friends, is a master magician — he does not want us to use our YHVH given faith. Remember, faith in YHVH comes from YHVH - it is a gift. We are not left to work out YHVH through our own means. Faith is the key that gives us entry upon the narrow road. On this narrow road, our physical and spiritual journeys cross. Ultimately, however, we still are allowed choice. We can walk with each other or we can walk with Jesus on this Emmaus road.

There is a faith that is common to man, it is a natural type; it looks at our own abilities and measures our own level of zeal. Of course, there are things we can do ourselves, but those things that advance the kingdom of YHVH, are done with His help through the Holy Spirit. Let me say again, ‘we are not alone’.

The faith that Joshua and Caleb had was not transferrable. It was a personal faith that comes from knowing that all things are possible when YHVH is on your side. Remember, Joshua spent time with Moses at the tent of meeting and Caleb was said by YHVH to have a different spirit.

Faith speaks to us through the 'Shema'. The word means to hear what YHVH says and act appropriately. However, 'appropriately', may have a different meaning to some. To some who understand the 'Shema', a response of obeying YHVH's word and acting upon it verbatim, is an appropriate response. For others, there may be some working out to do.

YHVH's 'Shema', to the people was to move on, turn around and go through the wilderness. Unknowingly, they were obeying His will.

Through the wilderness, we will walk with the veil and the presence of YHVH as the Water and the Rock, and our ever present help and provision, is unseen. Sometimes, YHVH is close, sometimes afar off. Either way He will always remain with us, watching and waiting. We walk with angels, beloved; they keep our feet from stumbling upon the rough ground.

Friends, the people did not have faith in Joshua and Caleb's faith. Turning around because of the ten leaders' report, forced them at that time into the will of YHVH. He knew that this is what would happen, exactly. Nonetheless, faithlessness is the original sin of the first humans and is a offence which leads to expulsion from the presence of YHVH. The people were sent into the wilderness to gain some.

Zeal is not enough to do what YHVH requires of us. Thus again, we see that the people could not share this type of zeal with Joshua and Caleb. They were simply not prepared for the fight because significant change had not taken place. However, Joshua and Caleb failed to see the weakness in themselves and among the forces of the people. Can you imagine the level of frustration the two men felt, having to turn around and walk forty years into the wilderness with this bunch?

What was the point therefore of YHVH taking the people to the brow of the hill, to show them the promised land? I believe it was simply to show them His promise. But as always, we look to blame our inadequacies and failures upon someone more powerful than ourselves.

In the end, it would be Joshua and Caleb who would outlive the generation that entered into the long walk. Only in their early eighties, will Joshua and Caleb be in a position to lead the people and take them on into subsequent battles, once they entered the land.

The story of the exodus of the peoples, is a story of salvation and the redemption of the land. It is an allusion to the final place where YHVH and His people will dwell in shabbat of the Lord. The Torah, given to the people at Sinai, will be a blueprint of change for the restoration of a YHVH's kingdom family to the kingdom estate.

Learning to live by the covenant law, the people will become a cohesive community, enjoined to YHVH. In this, we see the attachment of real estate (the land -OT) with the people, redeemed by YHVH through our Messiah Yeshua (Renewed Covenant).

When we consider the things we are called to do by YHVH, who is it that is ultimately doing the work? When we hammer a nail into a piece of wood, is it not the person who swings the hammer who is doing the work? Of course it is, and so, we see that it is YHVH Himself, that does everything, we just have to submit to being the right tool in His hand. We can't be the hammer and the hand, that's the problem that arises when we look only to ourselves to complete the task.

Before we leave our study, one can't help thinking that if Moses picked the leaders in the first place, he must be responsible for something. Well, that's exactly what some rabbinical thought argues. Perhaps Moses wasn't as perfect as we think. We never really thought that anyway, did we?

What we learn from Moses' decision, is that he also put faith in those he considered as leaders, and that my friends, points the finger around at us. How often have you placed faith in leaders, both in government and in the church, and have been let down.

In these circumstances, we must learn a valuable lesson - all men are fallible, we can only put our faith in the One who never changes. We will all fail at our faithfulness, but if we are aware of our frailties and misdemeanours, we can quickly turn around and acknowledge that we have done wrong and repent.

On a final note, it is important that whether we are preachers or teachers, and leaders whether in a formal capacity or not, we are all called to emulate the Great Shepherd. We must shepherd His flock, not by might or power but by His Spirit. In doing so, not one sheep will be lost.

We are on the cusp of losing generations in this great battle of faith. There are lost souls in this world. Some don't know that they are lost; others are searching and others have backslide in their faith. Without losing faith, and with all perseverance we must remember that we are called to be part of a greater gathering of people, and so we must with Christ like zeal, bring in the lost.

Hebrews 3: 7- 16.7 So, as the Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you hear his voice,

8 do not harden your hearts

as you did in the rebellion,

during the time of testing in the wilderness,

9 where your ancestors tested and tried me,

though for forty years they saw what I did.

10 That is why I was angry with that generation;

I said, ‘Their hearts are always going astray,

and they have not known my ways.’

11 So I declared on oath in my anger,

‘They shall never enter my rest.’ ”

12 See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. 13 But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. 14 We have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end. 15 As has just been said:

“Today, if you hear his voice,

do not harden your hearts

as you did in the rebellion.”

16 Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt?

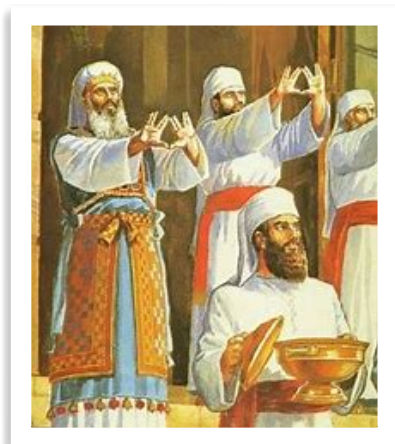
17 And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies

perished in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if

not to those who disobeyed? 19 So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their

unbelief.

Be encouraged friends. We have not been given a spirit of fear, we have been given a different spirit. Run with it and do not be dismayed. Be grateful also, for the mistakes of our ancient brothers and sisters. They have taught us something.



Numbers 6:



24 'Y'varekh'kha Adonai v'yishmerekha.  
[May Adonai bless you and keep you.]  
25 Ya'er Adonai panav eleikha vichunekka.  
[May Adonai make his face shine  
on you and show you his favour.]  
26 Yissa Adonai panav eleikha v'yasem l'kha shalom  
[May Adonai lift up his face  
toward you and give you peace.]

Shabbat Shalom

Grant Marshall: Co-founder Arrows of Ephrayim Ministries.

Additional Readings.

*Haftarah B'chukkotai: Joshua 2:1-24— B'rit Hadashah: Mt 10:1-14, Heb 3*

*Glossary*

Midrash: In Judaism, the **Midrash** is the genre of rabbinic literature which contains early interpretations and commentaries on the Written Torah and Oral Torah (spoken law and sermons), as well as non-legalistic rabbinic literature (Aggadah) and occasionally the Jewish religious laws (Halakha), which usually form a running commentary on specific passages in the Hebrew Scripture (Tanakh)

Targum: **Targum Onkelos** (or **Onqelos**), is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum (Aramaic translation) to the Torah. However, its early origins may have been western, in Israel. Its authorship is attributed to Onkelos, a famous convert to Judaism in Tannaic times (c. 35–120 CE)

Targum Jonathan: **Targum Jonathan**), otherwise referred to as **Targum Yonasan/Yonatan**, is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum to the Nevi'im/Prophets. Its early origins, however, are western (i.e. from the Land of Israel), and the Talmudic tradition attributes its authorship to Jonathan ben Uzziel of Jerusalem in the time of King Herod

Tannaim: Tannaim were the Rabbinic sages whose views are recorded in the Mishnah, from approximately 10-220 CE. The period of the Tannaim, also referred to as the Mishnaic period, lasted about 210 years.

Talmud: The **Talmud** means "instruction, learning", "teach, study") is a central text of Rabbinic Judaism. The term "Talmud" normally refers to the collection of writings named specifically the **Babylonian Talmud** (*Talmud Bavli*), although there is also an earlier collection known as the Jerusalem Talmud (*Talmud Yerushalmi*) or Palestinian

The Talmud has two components:

1. The Mishnah (c. 200 CE), the first written compendium of Judaism's Oral Law;
2. The Gemara (c. 500 CE), an elucidation of the Mishnah and related Tannaitic writings that often ventures onto other subjects and expounds broadly on the Hebrew Bible

Jubilees: The Book of Jubilees claims to present "the history of the division of the days of the Law, of the events of the years, the year-weeks, and the jubilees of the world" as revealed to Moses (in addition to the Torah or "Instruction") by angels while he was on Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights. The chronology given in Jubilees is based on multiples of seven; the jubilees are periods of 49 years, seven "year-weeks", into which all of time has been divided

Vulgate: This is the Latin Bible. Translated from the Hebrew and Aramaic by Jerome between 382 and 405 CE, this text became known as the 'versio vulgata', which means 'common translation'.

Rashi , whose real name is Shlomo Yitzchaki was born in France in the 11th century. Rashi wrote a comprehensive commentary on the Talmud and commentary on the Hebrew Bible.

Moses ben Maimon, also known as Maimonides became better known by the acronym Rambam. He was born in 1138 in Cordoba, Spain. He was a Sephardic Jew and influential philosopher. He is considered to be among the greatest of Torah Scholars.

Nachmanides - 13th century French Jewish Philosopher, commonly known by the acronym; Rambam.