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**A fascinating and mysterious discovery—the musical code of the *ta’ame miqra* (cantillation diacritics)*—*reveals the nature of the Torah and the other Jewish Scriptures as complementary musical poems that transcend all imagination**

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The Discovery

After two millennia of silence in exile, a rare and mysterious discovery has revealed the nature of the timeless Book of All Books—the Torah—as a work of poetic perfection and wondrous musicality. A new decoding of the Masoretic *ta’ame miqra* (cantillation diacritics) shows that they convey melodic instructions and musical rhythms that reveal the composition of Scripture with astounding precision and consistency. They illuminate the Biblical text as a perfectly rhymed opera that was composed in the full range of known musical and poetic styles worldwide. Each and every word in the Torah, the cornerstone of the Jewish, Islamic, and Christian scriptures, plays a vital role in this Divine song. Therefore, one may state that this book embodies the most sublime and extraordinary artistic perfection known to humankind. In addition, it has been discovered that the other books of the Old Testament, including Psalms, of course, are also written in the form of perfect rhymed musical works in all their parts, without exception.

In other words, the holy Torah—the best-known book in the world, the work that Jews read unrelentingly, day and night, day in and day out—is in fact a unitary, rhymed song of mammoth scope and immense complexity. Furthermore, the cantillation marks, their use forgotten for two millennia, are signs that show us how to read, or to be more precise to sing, this Divine song. By using the newly discovered method to analyze the musical styles in the Torah, we find that the Torah accommodates melodies and rhythms in contemporary genres such as opera, Latin and South American styles, and even jazz and rap, in rhythms that correspond perfectly to all the rules of modern poetic and musical technique. The extent, complexity, and professional level of the songs transcend the imagination from every possible standpoint.

This musical phenomenon has great religious and even historical implications. It reveals the magnificence of the Jewish culture in the Land of Israel, the nation’s developed musical and intellectual life, and the advanced level of art that flourished in its capital, Jerusalem, in the epochs preceding the destruction of the Second Temple. Through this discovery we may hear and understand the sounds of joy, exultation, and song of the ancient Jewish culture. It exposes us to the bold and impressive musical colors of ancient prayer, the customs of the festivals, and the elation that gripped the congregation of worshippers as they sang before the holy and timeless Creator of all cultures. This discovery also sheds new light on what happened during the era when the Land of Israel was occupied by its enemies and reveals the circumstances of the misappropriation of the unique Biblical musical styles and techniques, and their diffusion among the nations. Therefore, one may state that the discovery opens for rediscussion the entire historical origin of world poetic and musical art and reveals difficult facts relating to deceit and genocide against the background of racism, evil, pursuit of pride, and a culture of falsehood.

Discovering the Secret of the *Ta’ame Miqra*: The Divine Rhythm

As we know, the *ta’ame miqra* (cantillation diacritics) accompany almost all of Scripture. In addition to the vowel diacritics, they appear on all sides of the written letter—before, above, and below—and are manifested graphically in short or long lines, arcs, and arrows. The *ta’ame miqra* were meant to indicate the way the written words should be sung aloud and show how words within sentences are connected. Some of them instruct the reader to pause between two words; others tell us to link words and read them as one. I find all of this fascinating but you, dear readers, must be arching your brow and asking: “Mr. Glikshtern, what’s your story anyway?” To which I’ll reply: “It is a story as unlikely as it is true.”

First, however, due diligence is called for. I am neither an academic, not was I brought up in the ways of the Torah. Indeed, I am a *ba’al teshuva,* a relatively recent convert to religious observance*.* What this means is that, although I am graced with certain analytical and musical credentials, there are many things in the tradition that I do not know and have had to find out on my own. This, however, may have been for the best because a person born into a religious family and raised on Psalms and traditional texts certainly has extensive religious knowledge but may take many of the traditions for granted. Even though my experience with Jewish tradition had exposed me to the singing of songs in synagogues, I never understood the purpose of reading the Torah aloud on the basis of the cantillation marks; nor did I grasp the range of styles in which the chanting took place. During the COVID-19 pandemic, however, as we were all enduring lockdown at home, I suddenly found myself reflecting on these symbols day and night, with no possible way of asking anyone in my congregation what they meant. Thus, late at night, as I concentrated on studying the sacred Psalms, I recalled that cantillation diacritics accompany not only the Psalms but also the written texts of all Biblical books.

This whet my appetite. Thus, I marshaled all of my strength and skills, my common sense, my experience in algorithmics, and the rules of music that I had memorized, to crack the code of the cantillation marks with all their musical meanings as set forth by the eternal Composer and Conductor, the Holy Lord. Indeed, eventually I was able to learn the meaning of the *ta’ame miqra* according to the traditional definitions. However, I resolved not to accomplish this before finishing my experiment; namely, I decided to try to decode the system by myself. I did so for two reasons. First, I posited that if I knew the outcome of the experience in advance, I would assign a meaning to a certain diacritic without investing any effort in exploration. Second, I hoped that even if I had not defined the goal of my research, it would lead me logically to results identical to the accepted Masoretic method.

Late at night, as I tried to decode the rhythms of the Psalms, I came across the diacritic known as the *ma’amid* (as it appears in one of the traditions)—a small vertical bar (“|”) positioned under the letter that it accompanies. This mark consistently coincided with salient beats in the rhythms that I managed to identify. And now, as I studied the Psalms and labored over the *ma’amid*, **rhyming** words suddenly and surprisingly began to spring up at me from the text. As I continued to read the Psalms, I slowly realized that this combination of rhymes is not random but part of a systematic phenomenon. I tracked the rhythms and rhymes in search of a melody that would bring the entire text together. What I found, however, was not one melody but a method by which one can determine a specific rhythm that fits each and every Psalm. The cantillation marks served as guides steering me toward the discovery of the path to the correct reading—or the singing, in fact—of all of Scripture and even the literature of the sages and the various Biblical commentaries, as I found farther down the road.

The more accurately I followed this method and the more compliant with the instructions of the diacritics, the more variations on similar rhythms appeared. Despite their general similarity, these rhythmic variations create songs that are differentiated in their rhythmic spirit. This spirit reflects the theme and essence of each and every Psalm. As stated, the musical complexity of the melodies—in terms of both their high level of composition and the musical prowess required to perform them—is surprising. This complexity shows us that the ancient Jewish people had a keenly developed musical sense and the ability to enjoy refined and complex rhythms. Here is the place to mention the abundance of descriptions in the Talmudic literature of the grassroots joy associated with these melodies.

As my research progressed, I discovered that the *ta’ame miqra* are melodic definitions of the written text. Thus, as I took part in the morning service in which the Song of the Sea (Exod. 15) is read out, I began to sing the first verse:

*Az yashir Moshe u-vne Yisrael et ha-shira ha-zot la-Shem va-yomeru lemor ashira la-shem ki ga’o ga’a sus ve-rokhbo rama ba-yam.*

Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song unto the L-rd: I will sing unto the Lord for He is highly exalted. Both horse and driver has He hurled into the sea.

Here, by chance, I enunciated the *a* in *az* at twice its normal length. That is, I read out the first word of the Song of the Sea, *az,* as *a-az.* Then I noticed that under the letter *alef* was a diacritic in the form of “”—a sign resembling the *ma’amid*, as represented previously, but with a small “tail” attached to the vertical bar. Immediately I sensed that this tail is meant to instruct the reader to prolong the note and enunciate the word as *a-az*. This led me to a lengthy and exhausting but, at the same time, astonishing and fascinating process of decoding the rhythmic meaning of each and every diacritic with the help of my toolbox of associative abilities combined with the musical, Biblical, and general knowedge at my disposal.

Hidden Rhymes

The musical complexity of the songs in the Bible is matched by their poetic complexity. Namely, by using the scanning method that I had discovered, I found that the musical phrases are often so lengthy that some of the rhymes remain concealed. By “hidden rhymes” I am referring to rhyming words placed so far apart from each other that their existence may go unnoticed. One reason that these rhymes stay hidden is that they belong to long phrases that are impeded by their melody from returning to the tonic at the end of the passage. This technique creates a sense of impatience in the listener, indicating that the information expressed in the rhymes has an instinctive sensory manifestation in the listener. Another reason—the main reason—for the concealment of the rhythms from the reader’s ears is that, as stated, the words recited are not read out in the right tempo, which in its correct tonal context brings groups of written passages together so that the rhymed words set themselves in positions equivalent to musical bars. They then create the familiar sense of poetic harmony in one of the most amazing and diverse rhymed songs of our times.

As for the length of the tones, the rhythms that I was able to identify allowed me to cognitively work out the distribution of the lengths of the phrases. With the help of this distribution, I calculated the proportionate lengths of the diacritics in these groups of phrases. The collection of diacritics within the phrase, the word order, and the way certain words are pronounced helped me to detect the length of each and every diacritic by trial and error.

Sound of Sorrow or Sound of Joy?

After I discovered the rhythms that the *ta’ame miqra* dictate and the rhymes buried in the written text, what remained was to test the connection of the diacritics with the tenor of the song. Here I was guided by several questions: What system is at work? How is the reader instructed to “navigate” the scale of notes that served the holy poetry in its time? And, more generally, what scale is it? Back in the day, I had been given various answers to these questions. In my musical studies, I learned about the determinants, processes, and methods in the development of music around the world. Now, however, as I examined the diacritics in a new light, the veil was torn from my eyes and I discovered that the historical determinants and processes at work here had merely disrupted the advanced harmony that the original Biblical texts had once possessed, as well as its descrpitions. Thus, basing myself on a commentary by Rashi that describes the Torah cantor and the way he passes his finger over the text, I tried to decode the tones of the diacritics. I assumed that the *ta’ame miqra* must tell the Torah reader what pitch, high or low, to use in chanting the words. The markings that indicate the pitch level resemble arcs positioned diagonally in opposite directions around the letters—“)” or “(”. Taking a deeper look at these graphic indicators, I felt associatively that they were in fact notes, flowing tones that the reader may enunciate in a high or low voice and at a quicker or slower pace. This, in fact, is the method that underlies all the *ta’ame miqra*.

The *Ta’ame Miqra* and the Secrets of the Holy Torah

Here I have tried in the briefest way possible to expose you, my readers, to the unfamiliar traits of the *ta’ame miqra*, which the definitions of the traditional methods totally overlook. I found that a method lurks behind these markings and that this method reveals the uniformity of the Biblical text. By using it to enunciate the text, one may discover the particular rhythm that suits each and every passage and paragraph in the Holy Scriptures.

It was a bumpy road, a lengthy process of thrust and parry, that led me to this discovery. I feel clearly that this process was accompanied by a special providence, thanks to which I was exposed to many relevant details precisely at times of uncertainty and vacillation. It is strange, or perhaps, on the contrary, perfectly natural, that I of all people, a novice in religious observance who has musical education but lacks academic expertise and prior religious knowledge in this field, should be the person to whom this stunning discovery was revealed. However, out of modesty and moderacy, I avoid, for the time being, the comparisons and the general conclusions that these new insights invite. Instead, I wish to share the knowledge about this important and surprising discovery with the public.

Given that our world was created through the medium of the words of the Creator, blessed be His name, this discovery of the method behind Biblical song will have an enormous influence on the power of prayer, allowing prayer to be uttered with a precision that will become possible only now, for the first time, after having been forgotten for millennia. The discovery creates tools with which we may uncover the truthfulness and correctness of the ancient writings, resolve halakhic contradictions, and reveal hidden historical truths. Furthermore, the correct reading of the *ta’ame miqra* using the method that I discovered reveals the lyrical unity of song in the Holy Torah and the Divine message that it carries. I have no doubt that it will advance the salvation of the Jewish nation, may it yet occur in our days through Hashem’s kindness.

Amen, may it be His will!

And now, our new friends and companions, the international team for the research, production, and dissemination of the Divine glory worldwide, for the sake of its resurrection in its full magnificence, invite and welcome you to come with us, together, and explore, investigate, uncover—and, above all—sing together at [www.HaShira.com](http://www.HaShira.com) with joy and elation, sanctity and purity, the song of our enduring sanctity—none other than *HaShira!*