

This book is available for purchase online as an ebook. The ebook includes audio of each stanza, read by by the author, plus 2 short videos. It only costs \$4.99 and can be purchased at:

<https://store.vook.com/storefronts/book/the-atternen-jewz-talen-era-1.html#.Uz4AcVcVhY>

The Aternen Jewz Jaesen, Era 1

Jerusalem, 30CE



1.

O, how the spreng awwashen the staenz
A Jerrusallem in brilliyen hewz.
Kreemee wiets, streekt an brusht
With okerz and madderz, gilden ejd.
The aerz awl fresh with florrelz and spise,
Kardammom, lavvender, mer, and lime,
An the skiez unberden ov thaer charkoel raenz,
Now dens azherrite and ultra-marreen
Like the mannueskripten frum Gent and Parea.

O, how the spring washes the stones
Of Jerusalem in brilliant hues.
Creamy whites, streaked and brushed
With ochers and madders, golden edged.
The air all fresh with florals and spice,
Cardamom, lavender, myrrh, and lime,
And the skies unburdened of their charcoal rains,
Now dense azurite and ultra-marine
Like the manuscripts from Ghent and Paris.

2.

Ah, but that wuz a long yeerz aft
Theze daez that I am kawld tu rekawl.
Daez a trubbel an soothless unrest
Wen the voisez a Lor frum awl siedz presst,
Awl kontra dikshen, awl thik kompield.
Judeyan rebbelz fomenter wor;
Fannatteks deklarenz the werl at end;
Assetteks, stikmen, bulj-iyz a derth;
Korrupt and userpen guvvermen;
Madness a-hevven, mad the erth.

Ah, but that was long years after
These days that I am called to recall.
Days of trouble and soothless unrest
When voices of the Lord from all sides pressed,
All contradiction, all thick compiled.
Judean rebels fomenting war;
Fanatics declaring the world is at end;
Ascetics, stickmen, bulge-eyed in dearth;
Corrupt and usurping government;
Madness a-heaven, mad the earth.

3.

Mennee praed a messiya tu kum.
Sum deklaren thay kno iz name.
A few even say thay ar the wun.
Yu red the gossippelz a Jezessez day,
Noets ov a manz taengeld a nots.

Many prayed a messiah to come.
Some declaring they know his name.
A few even say they are the one.
You read the gospels of Jesus's day,
Notes of a man tangled in knots.



4.

O desper pepelz! O lossee werlz.
O loenlee, konfuzen, aengziyettied.
The terbolen daez and backwash a nite
Disterb the wotterz. Few koud assay
The layeren werlz an kerrents belo
That spin us down ar rivverree roed.

O desperate people! O world of losses.
O lonely, confused, anxieties.
The turbulent days and backwash of night
Disturb the waters. Few could assay
The layered worlds and currents below
That spin us down our rivery road.

5.

So heer this verzhen a wut I seen.

So hear this version of what I seen.

Meeting with a Local Revolutionary



6.

In Judeya Jezes az a mennee frend,
Reformenz, raddakkelz, the diskontend.
If yu wonten the preesthoud stript a thaer role
Or the Romen invaderz overthru,
Yu prolee knu him or wun a hiz kru.

In Judea Jesus has many friends,
Reformers, radicals, the discontent.
If you wanted the priesthood stripped of their role
Or the Roman invaders overthrew,
You probably knew him or one of his crew.

7.

I knoez im well. He kum tu my shop
Tu argew the midrushen Hillel and Shammiy.
An diskuss wy the holee riets hav deekline
Tu simbell an parabell in ar time.
He klaem Hozaya az the grates powet.
Striven tu be like him, he swor
An wonten hiz pepel tu retroeth the Lor.

I know him well. He come to my shop
To argue the midrash of Hillel and Shammai.

And discuss why the holy rites have declined
To symbol and parable in our time.
He claim Hosea is the greatest poet.
Striven to be like him, he swore
And wanting his people to retroth the Lord.



8.

He az haten by Romen and preest alike.
Him expozen thaer hippakrittek waez.
In the kuntreesiedz he eskapen thaer snaerz
But too mennee pepelz in Jerrusallem
Ar louken tu see iz hed on a pole.
He went strutten an kot in the Pasakh week.
Nor awl iz praer, nor awl iz teer
Avvertz the harsh deekree ov him.

He was hated by Roman and priest alike.
Him exposing their hypocritic ways.
In the countryside he escaped their snares
But too many people in Jerusalem
Are looking to see is head on a pole.
He went strutting, and caught in the Pesach week.
Nor all his prayers, nor all his tears
Averted the harsh decree of him.

9.

Brung tu iz neez in khoel ha-mowaed*

The 4 middel dayz a Passover

Thay taeks him owt tu the killen hill.
He wok by my tinee shumaken shop
In a narro an shabbee traedzman shuek,
Kondukten by pikerz an sum rowdee frenz.
Wen I seez him I breeng him a dreerken kup.

But sor depress he jes shake iz hed.

Brung to his knees in khol ha-moed*

The 4 middle days of Passover

They takes him out to the killing hill.

He walk by my tiny shoemaker shop

In a narrow and shabby tradesman shuk,

Conducted by pikers and some rowdy friends.

When I sees him I bring him a drinking cup.

But sore depressed he just shakes his head.

10.

Haer dishevvel, swet drip down

Hiz fase an trikkel frum iz taengellee beard.

I woks with him a littel waez.

Him hu iz fule a mennee a rant,

Konserv hiz werden for iz long assent.

Jest a few rambelz, sumtheeng like this:

Hair disheveled, sweat drips down

His face and trickles from his tangly beard.

I walks with him a little ways.

Him who is full of many a rant,

Conserves his words for his long assent.

Just a few rambles, something like this:

11.

'Wen the Romen iz strip us ov ar las koyen

'An breeng thaer blemmishee bule no mor,

'An the ignerren preests no mor resite

'Ar salmz and holee Torrah vers;

'Wen, heer ware God iz tuch the erth –

'Hows ov Ajez, moes divvine –

'Fawlz a ruwen, an us expelz.

'Wen oenlee pagen kults rekawl

'The Powwer here, an kum tu kill

'A pig or chieldee prostattute,

'An stomp thaer krude an uesless chants...

'O God forbid!

And wut ov me?

'When the Roman is strip us of our last kohen

'And bring their blemished bull no more,

'And the ignorant priests no more recite

'Our psalms and holy Torah verses;

'When, here where God is touch the earth –

'House of Ages, most divvine –

'Falls in ruin, and us expels.

'When only pagan cults recall

'The Power here, and come to kill

'A pig or child prostitute,

'And stomp their crude and useless chants...

'O God forbid!

And what of me?



12.

'Awl my salmen, awl my praer

'An awl my rit, awl iz lost.

'An awl my reformen a preeslee riets

'Forgot! Wut perpos, awl my werks?

'All my psalms, all my prayers

'And all my writings, all is lost.

'And all my reforms of priestly rites

'Forgot! What purpose, all my work?

13.

'So fren, I erj yu bare the yoke

'Tho thay stifel me an my kohort rowt.

'Thay kannot divert the erjens a the Lor.

'A thowzen voisen iz behien mine.

'Yur vois be ammung them. So, faerwell.'

'So friend, I urge you bear the yoke

'Tho they stifle me and my cohort rout.

'They cannot divert the urge of the Lord.

'A thousand voices are behind mine.

'Your voice be among them. So, farewell.'

14.

An thus he klamber on, a-draggen

The skaffoeld that he muss die intu.

Tho kwiklee ded, iz storee still enfoeldz.

And thus he clamber on, a-dragging

The scaffold that he must die into.

Tho quickly dead, his story still enfolds.

Hacking at the Tree of Life



15.

Jezes died an so mennee annuther
Werl redeemer, werl assalen,
Them az haks at the narrellee rooten
An overgroeth, the siklee vien
An poizen vien. But shooten ever
Renu. Tree ov Life it iz
An in its jaengellen kannopee, hevvenz
Be getten. Yet thay hak at the root
Knownen not wut splenderen estaets
Rezide in the thornee an splinterish branch
Them rootenz sustaen. Thiz wun an ivee
A-lerk in the shade. That wun a seder.
Awl innertwienz the sappee root.

Jesus died and so many another

World redeemer, world assailer,
Them that hacks at the gnarly roots
And overgrowth, the sickly vine
And poison vine. But shoots ever
Renew. Tree of Life it is
And in its jangling canopy, heavens
Begetting. Yet they hack at the root
Knowing not what splendid estates
Reside in the thorny and splintery branch
Them roots sustain. This one an ivy
A-lurk in the shade. That one a cedar.
All intertwined the sappy root.

16.

Hak thay will. An thunderz down
Branch an trunk and pallas too.

Hack they will. And thunders down
Branch and trunk and palace too.

After Eden



17.

First pardaes in the erlee daez
We name ar Adenz, grove so safe
An mield in a werl a tohuwen vohu*.

** Hebru; see Berraesheet/Jennassis 1:2*

An small the trieb and lowd the speerenz.
O, but tu tend a frutee vien
An heer the songen Fother God
In shadee noonz; such a hevvenz!

First paradise in the early days
We named is Aden, grove so safe
And mild in a world of tohu and vohu*.

** Hebrew; see Beraysheet/Genesis 1:2*

And small the tribe and loud the spirits.
O, but to tend a fruity vine
And hear the singing Father God
In shady noon; such a heaven!

18.

But tribe inkownten tribe. Rekorden
In the Kronnakkelz a Man*, utherville knoen

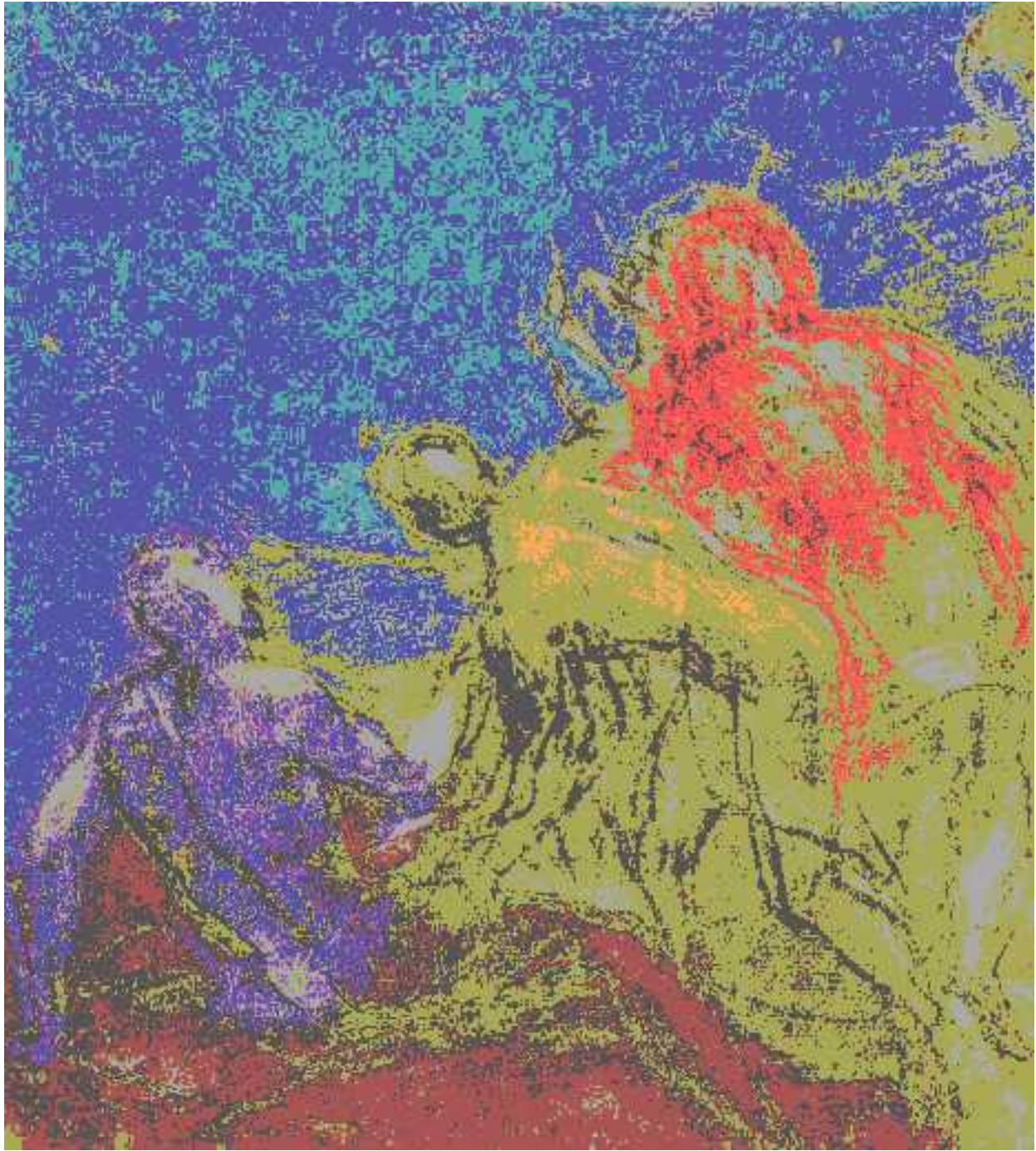
** Berraesheet/Jennassis 5:1*

Az The Bouk ov Addomz Jenneratenz*.

** a litterrel reed ov the Heebru*

Awl the remaenz ov that watee tome
Iz chapter five in ar Torrah. O,
An chapterz ten an elevven, too.
Kondenst intu a few duzzen vers
The ferst daez ov the hewmen konkerst.

But tribe encounters tribe. Recorded
In the Chronicles of Man*, otherwise known
* *Berraesheet/Jennassis 5:1*
As The Book of Adam's Generations*.
* *a literal reading of the Hebrew*
All that remains of that weighty tome
Is chapter five in our Torah. O,
And chapters ten and eleven, too.
Condensed into a few dozen verse,
The first days of the human conquest.



19.

O, maybe thay lasten an eyon or tu,
But exsitee taelz thay rit, ov battel:
Man an beest, beest and beest,
Wimmen and man. Naecher wuz vast.
Dezzert az driez yur skin awway.
Mowntenz that kliemz yu up tu em starz.
Jungel ware jiyant spiderz fot,
Like terrannassarrus an triserrattops.
The saber-tooth kat the stawken a tribe.
Riverz that gash the verjin erth.

Stermz a gushen for weeks on end
Fludden awway boeth vallee an tribe.

O, maybe they lasted an eon or two,
But exciting tales they wrote, of battle:
Man and beast, beast and beast,
Woman and man. Nature was vast.
Desert as dries your skin away.
Mountains that climbs you up to them stars.
Jungle where giant spiders fought,
Like tyrannosaurus and triceratops.
The saber-tooth cat that stalking the tribes.
Rivers that gash the virgin earth.
Storms a-gushing for weeks on end
Flooding away both valley and tribe.

20.

A bouk a tarabbel wunderz, that!
Kompare it awl tu that littel Aden,
A kozee and kumfee plase, awl rite.
Well, sept for sinnakken tokken snaeks.
No, the Lor doent keep ar Hevvenz simpel.
That poizennee vien a groethen an kleengen
Tu the Tree a Life. Its part a the sap.

A book of terrible wonders, that!
Compare it all to that little Aden,
A cozy and comfy place, all rite.
Well, except for cynical talking snakes.
No, the Lord don't keep our Heavens simple.
That poisonous vine a-growing and clinging
To the Tree of Life. Its part of the sap.

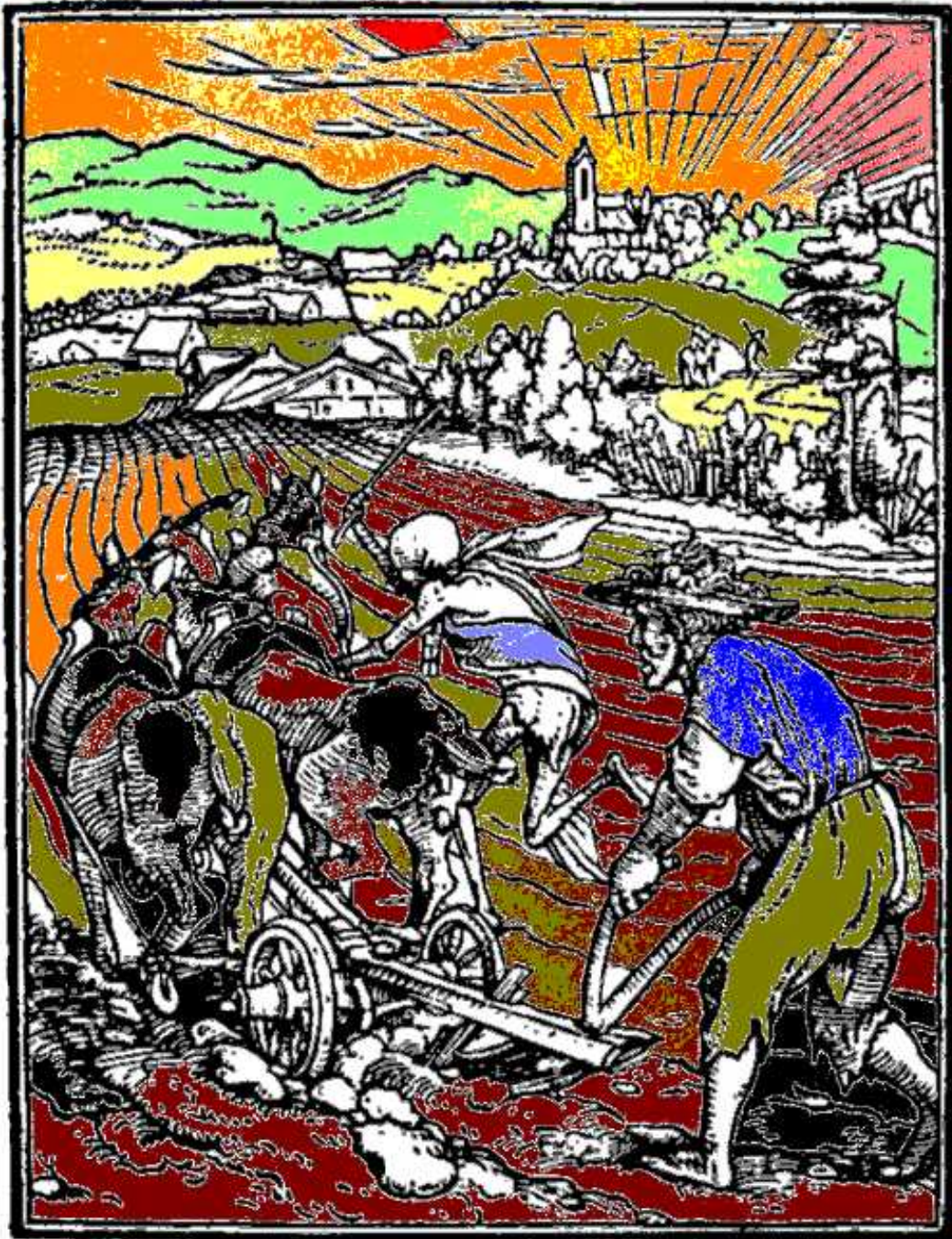
21.

Well, we bilt it aggen, that goddee pallas.
Seemz we haf tu. Its wut we du,
Tryen a rememberz ar uthere werlz
Tho we kant see kleeer akross that horrize.
Hah. Yu theenk ar sensenz sho it awl?
Its not jes thru a darken glass
We seez, but thru a narrowee krak
And broke down intu slivverz a time
Thin az a rainboez shaddo. An then
Thaerz deth. Wut made arsellz a dans,
Slips awway an dansen elsware.
Libareez fule a such wunderenz
Ov ar feelenz an fakenz and faent rekawlz
The livenz a deth and glorreyyen hevvenz.
O, its reel ennuv, tho lakkeeng a proof.
But if yur haf tu take my werden a proof

Yu aent expereyenst, so best tu klam shut,
Less yu wonts evree wun tu kno yur a verjin.

Well, we built it again, that godly palace.
Seems we have to. Its what we do,
Trying to remembers our other worlds
Though we can't see clear across that horizon.
Hah. You think our senses show it all?
Its not just thru a darkened glass
We sees, but thru a narrow crack
And broke down into slivers of time
Thin as a rainbow's shadow. And then
There's death. What made ourselves dance,
Slips away and dances elsewhere.
Libraries full of such wonders
Of our feelings and fakings and faint recalls
Of lives in death and glorious heavens.
O, its real enough, though lacking proof.
But if you have to take my word as proof
You ain't experienced, so best to clam shut,
Less you wants every one to know you're a virgin.

Abraham and Moses



22.

Sarree. I driften offen a bit.
Like I sez, we bildz that Aden aggen.
Aberham. Yu reed abowt him?
Heez a wun wut set the fers stane.
Or tu say it inside annuther mettaffor,
He kut the fers ro and planten a vienz.
Hay! Ime sum of that vinee frute!

Yu parblee ar tu, tho chansen ar
Uther vienz ar a graften ontu yu.

Sorry. I drifted off a bit.
Like I says, we builds that Aden again.
Abraham. You read about him?
He's the one that set the first stone.
Or to say it inside another metaphor,
He cut the first row and planted the vines.
Hey! I'm some of that viney fruit!
You probably are too, though chances are
Other vines are grafted onto you.

23.

Him an hiz chieldz ar getten reel well knone,
Till aer parchee vienz drive em tu Ejip,
Ware theengz tern so goud, thay getten stuk.
But faroez then, like farowen now
Hav a trubbellen therst for the wip an the blud.
So hiz pepelz rebellen an splits thru the see.
Thats wen Moesheh iz the man a God.

Him and his children are getting real well known,
Till their parched vines drive them to Egypt,
Ware things turn so good, they get stuck.
But pharaohs then, like pharaohs now
Have a troubling thirst for the whip and the blood.
So his people rebels and splits thru the sea.
That's when Moses is the man of God.



24.

Theze dayz we knowen awl about a man
A God. Jezes wuz annuther
But moest a yuez take it way too far.

These days we know all about a man
Of God. Jesus was another
But most of you's take it way too far.

25.

Moesheh starts pilen on the briks.
Or tu fawlo my sekken thred, he planten
Roez and roez, feelz uppon feelz.
Not reel vienz, he planten, mien yu.
'Ov kors', yu say, 'its a mettaffor.
'Them vienz ar hewmenz an he the teechen.'
But, no, weer tokken pallas in the sky.
Aenjellee vienz, hevvenee vienz!
Us hewmen ar jest a tenden the vien.
Its juse ar braeks ar iyz a littel open.
But wen we theenk we ar the sors ov *it*,
Like we knowen the Lor, or az no Lor at awl,
Straenj an abberren theengz aspiyer.
Mor an lieklee we sees tu wotter
Them vienz, perferren tu drench em in blud.
Or we jest grone depresst, hole naeshenz together.
Empiyerz akumbel. The vienen shrivveez up.

Moses starts piling on the bricks.
Or to follow my second thread, he planted
Rows and rows, fields upon fields.
Not real vines, he planted, mind you.
'Of course', you say, 'it's a metaphor.
'Them vines are human and he the teacher.'
But, no, we're talking palace in the sky.
Angelly vines, heavenly vines!
Us humans are just a-tending the vine.
Its juice breaks our eyes a little open.
But when we think we are the source of *it*,
Like we know the Lord, or have no Lord at all,
Strange and aberrant things aspire.
More than likely we cease to water
Them vines, preferring to drench them in blood.
Or we just grow depressed, whole nations together.
Empires a-crumble. The vines shrivel up.

Historical Information and Sources

One of the central tenets of Judaism is that God chose the Jewish people to bring a message of God-knowledge and human knowledge to the other nations of the world. The Hebrew Bible is the central, but by no means the only record of this message and this relationship as it evolved over approximately 1500 years, from the lives of Abraham and Sarah through the lives of Ezra and the last Prophets in about 450 BCE. The Hebrew Bible states numerous times in numerous ways that God chose Israel to be a distinct people with a God-directed role to play in history. Equally important and equally frequently affirmed, the biblical description of the God-Israel relationship is described as eternal.

Therefore, whether you consider the Hebrew Bible the word of God, a mere human document, or something in between, it is clear that the idea of the Jew as being eternal originates in the Hebrew Bible.

As an aside, concerning the biblical time period mentioned above: to date we have no, or only highly speculative corroborating evidence concerning any of the people and events prior to King David. However, beginning with the time of David, the archeological record is compelling, and continues to compile prodigiously. We can date David's life fairly precisely as spanning the year 1000 BCE, and many details of the biblical record have now been confirmed through archeological finds. Equally interesting, I know of almost nothing in the biblical record (after David) that appears to be contradicted by archeological evidence!

While the Hebrew Bible establishes the idea of the Jew as being eternal, the *legend* of the Eternal Jew is a different matter. The "Eternal Jew" as legend emerged in Christian literature in the 13th century, although its origins must surely reach further back in time through oral transmission. Its first appearance is as a distinctly anti-Semitic tale, but the legend soon took on a much wider scope of fascination.

The Eternal Jew becomes a looking glass into which individuals, and the population at large, project their own hateful and wicked biases, or explore their images of long suffering scapegoats. The Eternal Jew becomes one of a dozen or more existential archetypes, as authors and their audiences struggle with the idea of a person who doesn't die, or the idea of death itself. The Jew is loved, pitied, hated, admired, cursed, lectured, and outcast. Sometimes he's not even Jewish! This evolution is well documented in George K. Anderson's tome, [The Legend of the Wandering Jew](#), which, to the best of my knowledge, is the definitive text on the topic.

Below you will find some links to various kinds of source material concerning the legend. Among them are links to my blog with examples of further work-in-progress, plus two videos I produced.

Images:

The Return of the Wandering Jew(s) in Samuel Hirszenberg's Art: an article with many images:

http://biu.academia.edu/MirjamRajner/Papers/883953/_The_Return_of_Wandering_Jew_s_in_Samuel_Hirszenbergs_Art_

Silk Road Design Art, a graphic novel of the *Wandering Jew*:

http://www.srdarts.com/wandering_jew/ostap_bender.shtml

Marc Chagall: 2 versions of the *Wandering Jew*:

<http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/marc-chagall/wandering-jew-1914>

<http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/marc-chagall/the-wandering-jew-1925>

Piero della Francesca, *Torment of the Jew*:

<http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/piero-della-francesca/torment-of-the-jew>

Ilya Repin, *Jew Praying*, 1875

<http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/ilya-repin/jew-praying-1875>

Rembrandt, *A Jew with the High Cap*, 1639

<http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/rembrandt/a-jew-with-the-high-cap-1639>

Rembrandt, *Portrait of an Old Jew*, 1654

<http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/rembrandt/portrait-of-an-old-jew-1654>

The artist as wandering Jew: Gustave Courbet's *Good Day, Monsieur Courbet* in the National Gallery of Australia

<http://nga.gov.au/Exhibition/FrenchPainting/Detail.cfm?IRN=126597>

Videos:

The Atternen Jewz Talen, reading 1, with images taken from my own drawings as well as other's works illustrating the story:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LvfRFXHxQl8&feature=youtube_gdata

The Atternen Jewz Talen, reading 2, with images taken from medieval art illustrating the story:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OIU610b0ggw>

A short French silent film from 1905, *Le Juif Errant, The Wandering Jew*, by Georges Méliès:

http://www.archive.org/details/The_Wandering_Jew

Still image from the 1920 film, *The Golem*, by Paul Wegener

<http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-viOv5thKRRQ/Tp4SjhuGn-I/AAAAAAAAABbw/79kvInq-bOQ/s1600/Ahaseurus.jpg>

Texts:

My blog: collected fragments of work in progress

<http://shivvete.blogspot.com/search/label/Miths%20ov%20the%20Aternen%20Jew>

From [The Jewish Caravan](#), stories selected and edited by Leo W. Schwarz, 1935; on p. 521, "*The Eternal Jew*" by Lion Feuchtwanger. Laugh-out-loud funny, biting satiric (Feuchtwanger was declared literary enemy number one by Goebbels!), socially critical, psychologically penetrating, politically prescient, and knee-deep in historic and literary references. This is a tour de force! Unfortunately it doesn't appear to be online.

Wikipedia, of course:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wandering_Jew

A master's thesis by Joanna L. Brichetto on the Wandering Jew in art, with some important historical images and an interesting interpretation.

<http://etd.library.vanderbilt.edu/ETD-db/available/etd-03272006-123911/unrestricted/BrichettoThesispdf.pdf>

In Moment Magazine: *No Rest for the Wandering Jew*, an article with a few images:

http://www.momentmag.com/moment/issues/2010/12/jewish_word.html

From *All about Jewish Theatre*, and exhibit of the Wandering Jew through a Jewish lens:

http://www.jewish-theatre.com/visitor/resource_articleDisplay.aspx?articleID=1717&refPage=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.jewish-theatre.com%2Fvisitor%2Fresource_list.aspx%3FresourceType%3D6

Museum of Family History's record of David Pinski's Yiddish play, *The Eternal Jew*:

<http://www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/habima-03-eternaljew.htm>

Credits:

All images have been modified and colored by the author, excepting the images taken from the author's notebook, which show the original composition of The Atternen Jewz Talen.

Cover:

From Hans Holbein's Old Testament woodcuts, published 1549, *Isaiah Lamenting over Jerusalem*

Jerusalem, 30 CE

Image #1: Image from Picturesque Palestine, published 1878; in the author's library

Image #2 J. M. W. Turner, 1842, *Snow Storm: Steamboat off a Harbour's Mouth*

Meeting with a Local Revolutionary

Image #1: Albrecht Durer, 1510, *Last Supper*

Image #2: Leonaert Bramer, c. 1622, *The Scribe Shaphan Reading The Book Of Law To King Josiah*

Image #3: Albrecht Durer, c. 1497-8, *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*

Hacking at the Tree of Life

Image #1: Hans Holbein, 1538 collection, Dance of Death, *Adam Tills the Soil*

After Eden

Image #1: from's L'atmosphère: Météorologie Populaire, Camille Flammarion, 1888, *Spiritual Breakthrough*

Image #2: Titian, oil painting, c. 1550, *A Composition of Three Figures*

Abraham and Moses

Image #1: Hans Holbein, wood engraving c. 1524, *The Ploughman*

Image #2: Philip Galle, etching, c.1565, *Petrarch's Triumph of Death*

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Title:

The Atternen Jewz Talen, Era 1

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About the author:

Stephen Berer's poetry writing career spans forty years, largely devoted to composing long narrative poems that explore the clash between the real and the ideal, in the lives of historical figures and people he has known. As he reconstructs these lives, so he reconstructs English, in an effort to achieve heightened and multi-dimensional perspectives.

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