Public Statement By Doron Witztum

A. People often ask why, over the last 12 years, I have spent so much time in the field of hidden codes in the Torah, instead of my original field of interest-modern physics and general relativity. The discovery we have made concerning hidden patterns in the Torah is ultimately much more far-reaching and significant. The repercussions of our discovery touch on the very nature of human existence. It can be looked at as the same feeling Robinson Crusoe had when he first discovered the tracks in the sand, that he wasn't alone on the island.

We have called this press conference as the researchers who did the original research on the topic of hidden codes. We will be focusing on three issues:

1) How, using standard scientific and statistical tools, we found that details of ancient and modern history are encoded in the original Hebrew text of the Torah. 2) To discuss the many books and works that have been published related to this field that have no scientific basis, and are therefore meaningless 3) As the researchers, we will explain why it is impossible to use codes to predict the future.

B. A brief overview of the development of codes research

1. According to mystical sources in Jewish tradition, the Torah can be read and understood on many levels, including the level of a "hidden text." It is composed of words spelled out by skipping equal numbers of letters through the original Hebrew text. We call this phenomenon ELS- Equidistant Letter Sequences. The problem with measuring the significance of what we find is that ELSs will certainly appear in any text, and any word may appear many times at many skip distances.

2. Twelve years ago, I developed a method to see if this hidden text could be scientifically and objectively validated. The idea is as follows: It is a natural property of any text that words that are conceptually related are likely to appear in the same area of the text. Therefore we decided to see if the ELSs of related words also tend to appear in the same area of the text of the Torah. In order for the convergence of two ELSs to be considered successful, we developed two criteria. a) A close proximity of two ELSs b) That the ELSs that appear are ELSs with a relatively short skip distances between the letters, compared to other ELSs of that word.

*For example: hammer and anvil. Figure 1

3. Professor Eliyahu Rips developed the mathematical system for measuring the statistical significance of the results. Yoav Rosenberg took Eliyahu's ideas and developed an appropriate computer program to carry out these experiments.

4. In 1986, an extensive experiment was conducted which checked the overall tendency of convergence of a large list of pairs of words: names of famous personalities and their dates of birth and death. The experiment succeeded. A paper describing the results was sent to a scientific publication, and this became the beginning point of a rigorous six year process of review and analysis until it was finally published. Several referees checked the work and asked for further testing. One of these involved re-running the experiment with a completely fresh set of data, and also checking other control texts. This was done and the research passed all tests with very highly significant results. The article was finally published by Statistical Science in 1994.

5. Harold Gans, formerly a senior cryptologic mathematician at the U.S. Department of Defense, conducted an independent experiment to test the phenomenon that we discovered, using a different set of data. His experiment also succeeded with highly significant results. He sent his paper for publication to a scientific journal. Their response was "This phenomenon has already been scientifically established, so your work is just another example of the phenomenon."

6. We have conducted seven other experiments that are available as pre-prints.

7. At present, I am completing a book that gives a true view of this fantastic phenomenon, and that will describe not only the ten experiments I mentioned, but also many other successfull experiments which reveal a vast spectrum of subjects, ancient and modern.

C. Our comments on the book of Michael Drosnin, and other similar books that have been published 1. On the one hand, we are happy to see publicity for the phenomenon of Torah codes 2. On the other hand, there is a danger that the entire credibility of codes research will be destroyed. Mr. Drosnin's work employs no scientific methodology. No distinction is made between statistically valid codes, and accidental appearances, which can be found in any book. For example, Drosnin's "code" of the comet Shoemaker Levy crashing into Jupiter is statistically meaningless. Such a code can be found by accident in 1 out of any 3 books checked!

2. What is the danger of research done with no scientific parameters? For example, we know that the field of health involves systematic rigorous testing of new medicines. If someone freely distributes a medicine that has undergone no scientific testing, there are two areas of damage: 1) The credibility of useful and helpful medicines will be severely compromised. 2) People may end up using useless medicines in place of helpful ones.

In codes research, we are dealing with a similar situation: 1) The credibility of serious codes research will be compromised by amateurs whose "discoveries" are scientifically meaningless 2) People will exploit the Torah to present all kinds of counterfeit proofs, by finding "hidden messages", that bolster their ideology.

We have a very important and valuable phenomenon that has been discovered. It's a scientific discovery that can really help us get a better understanding of the nature of our existence. Rather than have it watered down with people's personal exploitation or

misunderstanding, we should be investing more in serious research and understanding of the phenomenon.

In summary, one who wishes to show legitimate examples of Torah codes should at least follow two basic rules: A. Use mathematical tools that can provide a level of statistical measurement between the minimal occurrences of ELSs. B. Use an objectively chosen list of words to look for:

I will now show an example of what I mean by an objective list. This example has never been shown before publicly:

Figure 2

The process is to take one central word, find its minimal occurrence in the text, and then construct a tableau based on it. In this case, our topic is the death camp Auschwitz. We take an objectively chosen list of related words. In this case, we are looking for the names of the subcamps that comprised the Auschwitz complex. We make a tableau based on the words "of Auschwitz." With our tableau set, the computer will systematically look throughout the text for a minimal occurrence of each of the sub-camps. Any one of these words can appear anywhere in the text of Genesis. We find something very unexpected-that they consistently appear in the area of the words "of Auschwitz."

D. The Future: Mr. Drosnin's book is based on a false claim. It is impossible to use Torah codes to predict the future.

I myself as the original researcher of the phenomenon of Torah codes, investigated thoroughly the question of predicting the future. I reached the conclusion that it is impossible. I saw this through experimentation and also as a simple point of logic. There are several reasons why it's impossible. I will give the most basic reason. In general, we always have difficulty understanding a text where we don't have any syntax or punctuation. In the plain Hebrew text of the Torah, without punctuation, I could easily read the ten commandments as telling me to steal and murder. There's a verse that describes Moses being commanded to bring incense. I could easily read it as a commandment to use drugs. All we have is a few isolated encoded words of a hidden text. Maybe we're missing some very critical words. It's literally impossible to learn a coherent story out of the juxtaposition of a few words that may be somehow related.

Additionally, just like there is a code that Rabin will be assassinated, I also found a code saying that Churchill will be assassinated!

Figure 3 "Churchill will be assassinated"

Even regarding past events, there are ELSs of words that appear near each other that have no relation to each other. It is therefore unwise, and one could say irresponsible, to make "predictions" based on ELSs of words appearing near each other.

In summary, we see that predicting the future is impossible. We see that by publicizing books and works of examples of codes that have no scientific basis, it ruins the integrity of serious research. And finally, we see that the scientific phenomenon of Torah codes is a real one, and is one that deserves serious attention.

Doron Witztum ....Jerusalem June 4, 1997