

“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. Mathew 13:45

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Bemidbar - In Wilderness

Numbers 1:1–4:20

Hosea 1:10–2:22

I Corinthians 12:12–20

In this week’s Torah Pearl, we will examine how YHVH instructed Moses to conduct a census of men of fighting age within the tribes, how the tribes are to camp around the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) and how God seeks His people to be a holy people a royal nation.

This week’s Parashah is the first in our study of the book of Numbers which in Hebrew is *Bemidbar*, which means “in the desert.” However, if we put the names of the first four books together we get the following Genesis, *Bereishit*, which means “in the beginning,” Exodus, *Shemot*, means “names,” Leviticus, *Vayikra*, means “and He called.” In these four books titles we read, in the beginning, the names, He called in the desert. It was in the desert where Israel, all twelve tribes was called to gather, and are numbered as they are refined into a nation, set apart unto YHVH.

The imagery of the desert is that of an uncultivated and parched wasteland. This is a symbol of our unrectified world post fall, which is indifferent, antithetical and often antagonistic to Divine consciousness. For the garden which YHVH created and placed humanity in to tend and care for has now become a bareness desert, through man's exile, as the land mourns for mankind to be reconciled with it. We see this concept in Israel, that when she is banished from the land of Israel, the ground becomes a wilderness. However, when she/Israel the people are reconciled to the land, then it flourishes and produces a plentiful harvest, as the land and the Divinely appointed tenants work in harmony together.

What we often miss, is that YHVH chose Israel to be a light to the nations, so that humanity can be restored back to YHVH, and back to creation. For it is as Israel observes the Torah and allows the light of YHVH to shine into the darkness of this world, that springs of living water begin to flow in the desert places. These springs of living water are the waters of the active living word working in our lives, which the living active word is Messiah who is the voice of the word of YHVH. It is this living water which sprang forth from the rock, which the rock is Messiah and the water is living water Messiah gives us. Just as we read that the rock in the desert brought forth water to meet the needs of all of Israel.

What we need to understand is that the water which came forth from the Rock was not a small amount but a vast river which would have formed a lake. Thus, turning the desert into an oasis. For

the desert is a metaphor for the lack of Divine revelation in creation. However, what we see when the children of Israel go into the desert, is that living waters are produced, as the Divine presence of YHVH is manifest and made known to his people. Thus, providing life, as the wilderness is transformed into a garden when the people of YHVH are restored to the land and observe the Torah, which brings forth blessings. As the active word when manifested produces life.

It is only as we allow the living word to work within our lives, as we have an encounter with the Rock of our Salvation, Yeshua that springs of living water can flow and produce life. For all things have been created by Him and through Him and are sustained by Messiah.

We see here that it is in the desert, in the wilderness that YHVH meets with His people face to face, as He converses with at Mt. Sinai and enters into a covenant with them. That He then leads them through the wilderness for 40 years as He provides, guides and protects them, as He transforms them from slaves into a nation set aside for service to the name of YHVH.

Numbers 1:1-4

Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: ² "Take a census of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their fathers' houses, according to the number of names, every male individually, ³ from twenty years old and above—all who are able to go to war in Israel. You and Aaron shall number them by their armies. ⁴ And with you there shall be a man from every tribe, each one the head of his father's house.

The Torah portion commences with YHVH speaking to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the Tabernacle (Mishkan) on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they left Egypt.

They will have just celebrated Passover, and now God has instructed Moses, Aaron and the leaders to take a census of the people.

This is the third time the people have been numbered. The first time was when they left Egypt, the second after the sin of the golden calf, when YHVH commanded them to build the tabernacle and now this census. So, what significance do we see in the counting of the children of Israel? We notice that every male is counted of fighting age, as it identifies those who can defend and engage the enemy within the camp of Israel. However, even though the families were counted, they were numbered under there, respective tribes. Thus, revealing the centrality of family within Israel's consciousness. That every person is unique and significant, yet it is only together that Israel can fulfil the purpose and mandate which YHVH has placed upon; the tribe and the whole of Israel collectively. For no tribe on its own can accomplish the mission of Israel, just as a single person can't. As it is only when Israel is working as one, in community that it can fulfil its calling and purpose. Thus, it is as we sacrifice our own desires, needs and expectations, as we focus upon YHVH can we be a community and live in harmony with others.

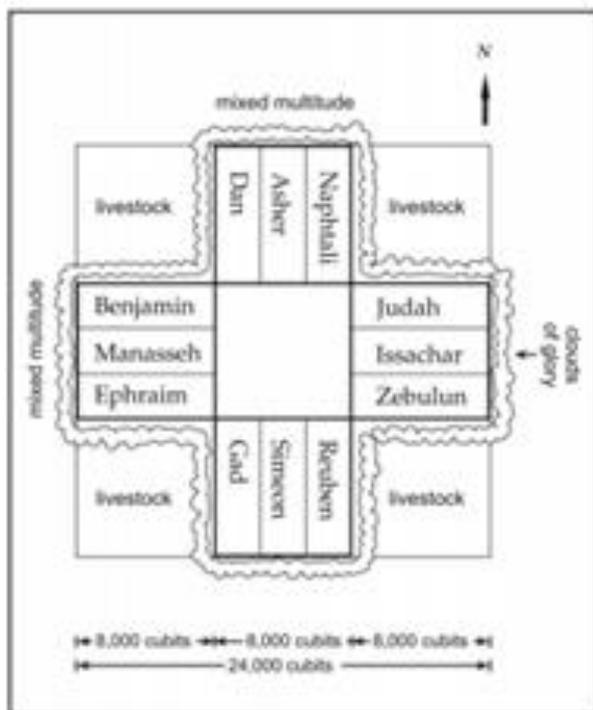
It is as we spend time with YHVH, reading studying His Torah and then apply it, as we humble ourselves to Yah can we love others. Thus, it is only when we reject the selfish, self-gratifying and worldly desires of the flesh, can we truly love our neighbour as oneself, as we show grace, love and mercy to those first within our family, our neighbours and then the broader community. It is in this that the love of YHVH is expressed through us, as we show our love to Yah through observing His Torah to love our neighbour, which as we express our love of God through loving our neighbour, our love of God is enhanced. Love of God further brings about a love of His Torah and the studying of it,

not out of obligation but out of love, which this expressive love is as water in a barren land, it is the light of Messiah which shines in the darkness of the world and produces life. It is as we do this that we can live in a community as we seek to fulfil the co-mission given to us by Messiah.

In identifying those able to fight and defend Israel, we see that Israel now has to engage in warfare, yet if we only perceived this to be a physical battle, we would be mistaken. What we must understand is that yes, there will be physical battles Israel has to fight, but every battle they fight is the manifestation of a spiritual stronghold and root. This is why when Israel went to war the ark of the covenant went before them, as the Levites prepared the way.

In our lives we must understand that every mountain and battle we face has a spiritual undertone, as what we see in the physical is a manifestation of something spiritual. Therefore, if we only deal with the physical display we will never have the victory. It is only as we stand upon the word of YHVH, as we are clothed in the Priestly garments, the armour of YHVH and remain resolute and focused upon Yah that we will be victorious. For we are called to be overcomers, and to have the victory.

After the counting of the people, we read in Numbers 2 how they are to camp around the Tabernacle according to there tribes. **And the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:** ² *“Everyone*



of the children of Israel shall camp by his own standard, beside the emblems of his father's house; they shall camp some distance from the tabernacle of meeting. (Numb. 2:1-2)

The children of Israel were instructed to camp around the Tabernacle in accordance of tribes, with the mix multitudes around (see diagram). In looking at this, we first notice that the Hebrew word for “tribe” is (*shevet*), which also means “branch”: the branches of a tree channel the life forces from the trunk into its fruit. This is necessary for the fruit to grow, as no fruit grows directly on the trunk but rather the nourishing sap of the trunk is drawn from the root system and directed through its branches into the fruit.

In scripture, Messiah states that ***“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*** John 15:5-8 Here Yeshua is drawing on this concept as He speaks to his disciples.

The sages teach that each tribe represent a unique Divine attribute, therefore emphasising an exclusive aspect of the Divine consciousness which all tribes are required to co-exist and work in synergy in a co-mission to bring about Israel's Divine Mission on Earth, within creation. Therefore, it is only when all the tribes of Israel are gathered together as one, through the Messiah that Israel can fulfil the manifest Divine purpose of YHVH and be perfected.

Paul drawing on both concepts writes to the congregation in Rome stating, ***Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. ¹² But if their transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their full inclusion bring!***

¹³ I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry ¹⁴ in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. ¹⁵ For if their rejection brought reconciliation to the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? ¹⁶ If the part of the dough offered as first fruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches.

¹⁷ If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, ¹⁸ do not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. ¹⁹ You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in." ²⁰ Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but tremble. ²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either.

²² Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. ²³ And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴ After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

Here we see Paul conveying to the congregation in Rome that the branches which have been grafted in should not boast or become puffed up, for they are not superior to other branches, as they do not support the root. What we need to understand is that Paul fully realised what the reNewed Covenant was and who it is with. That as Jeremiah stated, it is with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. That the House of Israel was now "Gentile" which have been grafted in. However, because YHVH had been faithful to graft the House of Israel, the "wild Olive branch" back into the tree, it made way for "whoever" believes in the name of the Messiah to be saved and receive the right to become children of the living God.

For it is only when the tribes are united, as the branches that were cut off are grafted back into the trunk of the tree, which is Messiah Yeshua, can the mandate given to Israel be fulfilled and the Divine purposes be perfected.

As believers in Messiah, we must ensure that we do not become proud and puffed up, that we do not become conceited and fight against Judah. We need to understand that there MUST be reconciliation, for this is the Good News of the Gospel of the Kingdom which Messiah and the disciples proclaimed. Paul states regarding this, ***I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷ which***

is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! ⁹ As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!

¹⁰ Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ. Galatians 1:6-10

Here Paul clearly states, that we are not to listen to another gospel, which if anyone preaches a different gospel then they are to be cursed. Why does he say this? It is because if the hearts of the fathers and the children are not reconciled, that of the House of Judah and the House of Israel, then the land will be under a curse. ***"He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse."*** Malachi 4:6

It is because of this why HaSatan seeks the body of Messiah and the House of Judah to be in conflict. However, we must understand that YHVH will ensure that His word IS fulfilled. This is why we have seen the ministry of Elijah being birthed in the Hebrew Roots two House movement. It is because of the lies of the enemy through the doctrines of demons, why many reject this teaching, but we must understand that God will guard the truth of His word and fulfil it at the appointed time. It is for this reason why the two witnesses will come as they prepare the way for the return of the Messiah, through declaring the word of YHVH and turning the hearts of the children and the fathers towards each other. Therefore, as we witness this move within the Hebraic roots movement, it is a further testament to the times we live in and the lateness of the hour.

Numbers 3:40-51

⁴⁰ Then the LORD said to Moses: "Number all the firstborn males of the children of Israel from a month old and above, and take the number of their names. ⁴¹ And you shall take the Levites for Me—I am the Lord—instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the livestock of the children of Israel." ⁴² So Moses numbered all the firstborn among the children of Israel, as the LORD commanded him. ⁴³ And all the firstborn males, according to the number of names from a month old and above, of those who were numbered of them, were twenty-two thousand two hundred and seventy-three.

⁴⁴ Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: ⁴⁵ "Take the Levites instead of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the livestock of the Levites instead of their livestock. The Levites shall be Mine: I am the Lord. ⁴⁶ And for the redemption of the two hundred and seventy-three of the firstborn of the children of Israel, who are more than the number of the Levites, ⁴⁷ you shall take five shekels for each one individually; you shall take them in the currency of the shekel of the sanctuary, the shekel of twenty gerahs. ⁴⁸ And you shall give the money, with which the excess number of them is redeemed, to Aaron and his sons."

⁴⁹ So Moses took the redemption money from those who were over and above those who were redeemed by the Levites. ⁵⁰ From the firstborn of the children of Israel he took the money, one thousand three hundred and sixty-five shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. ⁵¹ And Moses gave their redemption money to Aaron and his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

After YHVH had instructed how the people are to camp, we see how God takes the Levites as His own. Maimonides teaches that anyone “whose spirit has motivated him and whose perception has enlightened him to set himself apart to stand before God, to serve Him has by this fact been hallowed as the holiest of the holy.” In this Maimonides is stating that anyone who seeks to set themselves apart unto YHVH and pursue His will, purpose and instruction can become a spiritual Levite. This is what Peter states when he reaffirms the calling on Israel to be a community of priests and Kings, that of a Holy and royal people, as Yah had intended from the beginning. ***But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*** 1 Peter 2:9

Therefore, through Messiah Yeshua, anyone who seeks the will of YHVH as they commit to walking along the path of righteousness can become a spiritual Levite, just as Maimonides teaches, for this is not a new concept but one which God designed and decreed. What we must understand is that the priesthood is the bride of Messiah and thus all are called to take on this calling. Furthermore, it is the priests who are to make the tribes, the children of Israel ready so that they mature to be the Bride of the Messiah. The question is, are the shepherds of the Body of Messiah getting the Bride ready? I will leave that one with you. However, scripture states that the Bride makes herself ready, spotless without blemish through the washing of the word. What this means is the observing of the Torah, which is walking in righteousness. Thus, it is only as we humble ourselves to YHVH and His will, that we can walk along the path of righteousness which is a life set apart, one that observes the totality of scriptures given to the Body of Messiah.

Yeshua Himself stated that He had to come to do away with the Torah and that those who do them and teach others to observe them will be great in the kingdom, but those who do not observe them and teach others not to will be least. It is not a requirement for salvation to follow the word of God, but it is required to be sanctified and for us to shed this flesh and be transformed into the image of Messiah. As we become His bride, one that is spotless and without blemish. Remember Messiah cannot be unequally yoked with His Bride. Therefore, she Must be humble, gracious, loving and obedient to the word of YHVH, as they follow the example Messiah set for us.

One final point, we see in how the camp is to be arranged the mark, the sign of the covenant, the Hebrew letter Tav, which is a cross. Yet at the centre of this is the Tabernacle that houses the ark of the covenant, the throne of YHVH. That it is here the presence of the living God is manifested, in the heart of the camp. Thus, showing that the Tav, the mark of the covenant which is the Torah is at the heart of Israel’s life, as it is inscribed upon its collective consciousness when they out of love follow it. Let me explain, it is only when a person submits to YHVH and keeps the word of God that the fruit of the Spirit is evident in their lives as a testimony of the Torah being inscribed upon it. Thus, revealing that they have submitted their lives and will to God and are observing His Torah showing Yah that they love Him. It is through this act of submission that we see the sanctification of the body of Messiah, as it is transformed.

Hosea 1:10-11

“Yet the Israelites will be like the sand on the seashore, which cannot be measured or counted. In the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ they will be called ‘children of the living God.’¹¹ The people of Judah and the people of Israel will come together; they will appoint one leader and will come up out of the land, for great will be the day of Jezreel.

We see in the passage above that it was through the act of God divorcing the House of Israel that they would be scattered and become like the sand of the seashore, thus revealing how God would

bring the “whoever’s” into covenant as they are grafted in. I encourage you to study this, as it was not by chance this happened, but rather God knew the end from the beginning and is in control and is sovereign over creation.

Hosea 2:16-20

***“In that day,” declares the LORD,
“you will call me ‘my husband’;
you will no longer call me ‘my master.’
17 I will remove the names of the Baals from her lips;
no longer will their names be invoked.
18 In that day I will make a covenant for them
with the beasts of the field, the birds in the sky
and the creatures that move along the ground.
Bow and sword and battle
I will abolish from the land,
so that all may lie down in safety.
19 I will betroth you to me forever;
I will betroth you in¹ righteousness and justice,
in² love and compassion.
20 I will betroth you in faithfulness,
and you will acknowledge the LORD.***

We see in the passage from Hosea that the restoration of Israel takes place during a time of trouble, one of judgment and mercy. After this period Israel will forget it’s lovers as she sets herself apart unto YHVH and is betroth unto Yah forever, in righteousness. What a time this will be.

You see the reNewed covenant although it has been made, it has not been fully ratified. When Messiah died as the Passover lamb it was to redeem the firstborn of God, the House of Israel, so they could come back into covenant. For they will no longer be aliens from the covenant, far off, but they will be brought close and back into covenant. Thus, they will no longer be Gentiles but have the right to be children of God. In this act God made it possible for all to come into covenant and be part of Israel, to be a priest and holy and royal people. To do this, however, The Voice of the word of YHVH had to die, for the husband cannot remarry the wife he has divorced. However, when the husband dies, she is free to remarry. Therefore, Yeshua, the groom’s died and was resurrected, so that He could reconcile Israel back to God. So, when He was resurrected He was revealing Himself to Israel as the groom as He cried out for His bride to come forth and enter into covenant with Him.

Friends, let me ask, what is at the centre of your life? What is it that direct your steps? Have you surrendered you’re all to God or are you still seeking your own will to be done?

God is seeking people who will surrender everything, as they die to the flesh through humbling to YHVH and adhere to His word. The reality is for most believers what they follow is the precepts and doctrines of men, rather than the word of God. However, as we celebrate Shavuot let us seek the will of God as we lay down our idols and lives to God in total surrender.

As the sages teach, it is only as we do this that collectively can we fulfil the calling on our lives. We cannot do this on our own, but rather as the Body of Messiah. For we all as individuals have a calling,

however, the calling is achieved through working in co-mission in the body, as a whole. It is as we do this that we will see the purposes and manifest Divine presence of YHVH in the assembly.

Yet, just as we see Israel go into the wilderness to be refined, as they met with God face to face. The final generation will also go into the wilderness, the desert and meet with YHVH face to face, as He leads them and brings them into the bond of the covenant and under the rod.

This is the time to Jacob's Trouble, a time many believe is at hand, the question is if it is are you ready. However, if it is the next generation which will see these things, what are we doing to equip them and make them ready?

It is our duty to make provisions for them, as we invest in them and equip them.

Let, us therefore, seek Yah as we seek His will, but let us not just seek but also do. Let us be people who hear and do, who trust and obey.

Shabbat Shalom

CHAG SAMEACH

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