

Parashah #36

(Updated for 6.11.11)

B'ha'alotkha ~ **בהעלתך** ~ When You Set Up

Torah: B'midbar/Numbers 8:1~12:16

Haftarah: Z'kharyah/Zechariah 2:14~4:7

B'rit Hadashah: Yochanan/John 19:31-37; Ivrim/Hebrews 3:1-6

CHAPTER 8

This week's Parashah, (B'hah-ah-lote-khah) B'ha'alotkha, begins with a short *mitzvah / commandment/instruction* concerning some of the maintenance of the *Menorah/Lamp Stand* (verses 1-4). Verses 2 & 3, "cast their light forward in front of the menorah", used to be confusing to me. My finite mind had always envisioned the cups of the Menorah to be somewhat like a votive candle only deeper. How could one direct the light? When given a replica of a 1st century "lamp", it helped me get a better handle on it. I'll try to explain . . . the lamp, fashioned of clay or pottery, has a round opening in the top, where one pours the oil. On one end of the top, there is somewhat of a spout with a small hole where the wick sticks out. Consequently, if the lamp were placed on the Menorah with the "spout" toward the front the light would be cast forward.

One commentary in the Stone Edition of the Artscroll Chumash indicates *Aharon/Aaron* became upset because each of the tribes brought offerings for the dedication of the *Mishkan / Tabernacle* but the *L'vi'im/Levites* did not. Yehovah comforted him, saying his service was greater than theirs because he would prepare and kindle the Menorah. Additionally, the Sages believe Yehovah was alluding to the time when the Temple service would be discontinued by the Syrian-Greeks. Only the faith and heroism of the Hasmoneans, generally known as the Maccabees, a family of Aharon's priestly descendants, would succeed in driving out the enemy, purifying the Temple, and once more kindling the Menorah.

Again, Aharon was comforted by Yehovah when he was told his family would one day save the nation. The offerings of the tribal leaders were great and impressive but they were temporary. Aharon's contribution would be eternal. Reading the part about Aharon's "family would one day save the nation", I was reminded of Yeshua, our *Kohen HaGadol/Great High Priest*. The time is soon coming when He will save the entire nation of Israel. Halleluyah!!!!

Verses 5-26 give detailed information about the consecration and duties of the *L'vi'im/Levites*, who required a sacrificial ritual, just as the *Kohanim/Priests* in *Vayikra/Leviticus 8*. In verses 16-18, Yehovah reiterates, "I have taken the *L'vi'im/Levites* in place of all the firstborn from among the people of Israel."

Verse 19 has some interesting wording, in the Chumash and in the original Hebrew. The words *B'nei Isra'el/children* or *sons of Israel* is used five times. I immediately thought of the number 5 representing grace and then reflected on the fact there are five books in Torah. Then I

read commentary from Rashi, one of the great Hebrew sages, which says, “Yehovah mentions Children of Israel five times, corresponding to the five books of the Torah and to show His great love for Israel.”

In **verses 23 and 24** we learn about an “apprenticeship” period of those who reach the age of twenty-five. The Complete Jewish Bible doesn’t call it apprenticeship but that’s where my mind went. I used to work for a mechanical contractor and I remembered the “apprentices” were learning the trade and were under the leadership of someone already skilled in their work. Sure enough, when I checked the Chumash this section was “labeled” **Apprenticeship and responsibility**. It went on to say someone who had not shown indications of success after five years of study had only a slim chance of attaining his goal. On the other hand, after volunteering to assist his fellow Levites, and doing so successfully, when he became thirty, the candidate or “apprentice” was assigned a specific task.

Verses 25 and 26 address those who attained the age of fifty. While it is believed, by some, they were completely released from their duties, others believe they are forbidden to bear the Tabernacle artifacts on their shoulders but they continue to perform the rest of the Levitical services such as singing and closing the Temple gates. I’m inclined to believe the latter. Additionally, in today’s vernacular, they most probably became supervisors since they had already “been there and done that”.

CHAPTER 9

In **verses 2 & 3** “in its appointed time” is stressed by its repetition. With regard to the *Pesach/Passover* offering, the stress on the *moed/appointed time* teaches the offering **must** be brought in its designated time, even if the day falls on the Sabbath. Usually, personal offerings are not to be made on Shabbat but the Pesach offering is indeed to be brought even on the Sabbath.

Because of His love for His people, Yehovah allowed for (pay-sahk sheh-nee) *Pesach sheni / the second pesach-offering* which was allowed when a person was contaminated through no fault of their own. The second Pesach was different from the first as there was no festival associated with it. The people were to eat matzah and *maror/bitter herbs* with the offering and none of it was to be left over (**verses 6-12**).

If we think back, the men who were made unclean were the ones carrying the corpse of *Yosef/Joseph*. Remember? Yosef requested his bones be taken out of (Mitz-rah-yeem) *Mitzrayim/Egypt* when they left. Once again, Yosef prefigures Yeshua. Fast forward to Yeshua’s death. Two men became ritually unclean when they attended to Yeshua’s body. They were (Nahk-dee-moan) *Nakdimon/Nicodemus* and *Yosef/Joseph* of Arimathea, secret disciples of Messiah and members of the Sanhedrin. Both were men of distinction and could have had their servants care for the Master but chose to show their love and devotion by taking care of His body personally. One month later, somewhere in the Holy City, *Yerushalayim /*

Jerusalem, on the fourteenth day of the second month (Iyar) at dusk, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus sat down to their Seders. Maybe they even reclined at a table together, lifting their cups, remembering Yeshua.

It is said some Hassidic communities remember the second Passover by making a small Seder meal on this night and eat unleavened bread. Not that we need to become Hassidic but maybe this is something we could consider doing in memory of Nakdimon and Yosef of Arimathea for what they did for our Messiah. Just a thought

In **verses 15-23** we find more repetition and detailed information about the cloud covering the Tabernacle, whether it was for only a day or for a long time, the people stayed when the cloud stayed and the people moved when the cloud moved. Another well known Hebrew Sage, Ramban, explained the need for so many examples of long and short encampments and journeys. He states . . .

- “Even if the cloud remained for a long time at a site that the people found inhospitable, they submitted to Yehovah’s will (**verse 19**). Sometimes the people may have wanted a long rest from a difficult journey, but the cloud stayed in place for only a number of days, and then moved on (**verse 20**), and sometimes they would have only an overnight respite from travel, and be forced to leave in the morning (**verse 21**). On other occasions, they would march through the night and then rest for a full day and night. Then, seeing that the cloud remained in place and thinking that they would make camp for a period of time, they would begin to unpack . . . and then the cloud would lift unexpectedly, making it more difficult to travel than if they had had only an overnight rest. Sometimes they would rest for two days, and get the signal to march at night, an even more difficult situation (**verse 22**). Whatever the situation, the people marched and rested without complaint, according to the word of Yehovah as indicated by the cloud.”

Again, I want to emphasize the above quote is rabbinical. I feel the passage is credible except the last sentence. The people did NOT march and rest **without complaint**. Time and again we read about their “murmurings” against Moshe.

At this point, I want to encourage you to see the movie DEFIANCE, if you haven’t already. I need/want to see it again. It is excellent and gives us food for thought concerning the coming Greater Exodus (***Yirme’yahu/Jeremiah* 16:14-16**).

CHAPTER 10

Verses 1-8 speak about the two trumpets which were to be made of silver and used for summoning the community and for sounding the call to break camp. An interesting side note indicates silver is symbolic of Yehovah’s redemption. One commentary indicated one long blast with **both** trumpets would summons the entire assembly to come to the Tent of Meeting. One long blast with one trumpet would summons the leaders only; two blasts with one trumpet

summoned the entire community. If the “alarm blast” was sounded, the camps were to begin traveling with the East camp first, then the South. The sons of Aharon, the *cohanim/priests* were the ones to sound the trumpet.

Verse 9 is very clear about sounding an alarm on the silver trumpets “when you go to war in your land against an adversary who is oppressing you . . . then you will be remembered . . . and you will be saved.” I have no idea why my mind “tripped” to this scene but I thought about our early soldiers, particularly during the Civil War and how the Cavalry would sound the trumpet just prior to “charging” the enemy. Do you think some of them might have been of Hebrew descent? Or at least learned this from past tradition? Hmmm!!!!

Verse 10 says the trumpet should be sounded at our (mo-ed-eem) *moedim/designated times*. This translates to Feasts and Festivals, for me. Then it specifically mentions *Rosh Chodesh*. This is the *New Moon Festival*, literally, *Head of the month* and is really very important. Please bear with me as I share some very pertinent information with you.

THE GIFT OF THE NEW MOON

The first commandment the Hebrews were given, as a people, is the mitzvah of (Roe-sh Kho-dehsh) *Rosh Chodesh*, the *New Month* (**Sh'mot/Exodus 12:1 & 2**). Isn't this a strange first commandment? You'd think the development of the calendar would only come after the establishment of the basic fundamentals like the Ten Declarations. Why does the Torah consider the process of establishing the new month as a major breakthrough in creating a nation? And what was wrong with the solar calendar everyone else had been using? What is the significance of basing the Hebrew calendar on the moon? Remember Yehovah shows us His calendar; His method of keeping track of things. Nowhere does it indicate He ever decided to go along with the Roman solar calendar. His prophecies are therefore based on His calendar even today! Actually, this is a whole other teaching . . . so I'll tell ya what I'm gonna do . . . at the end of this portion, I will include “The Gift Of The New Moon” teaching.

CHAPTER 10 (con't.)

NOW , back to our Parashah for this week!!! Do you remember a few weeks ago when we were studying the tribes with their different banners and insignias? We learned the tribes went out in formation; first the tribes from the East then the ones from the South; next the tribes on the West and lastly the tribes from the North. There was discussion as to exactly where the tribes carrying the materials of the *Mishkan/Tabernacle* and its appointments would be. Some thought behind *Y'hudah/Judah*; others thought after *Re'uven/Reuben* and still others weren't sure. Our Abba Father leaves nothing, absolutely nothing, to chance and gave very specific instructions in **verses 11-28** (specifically verses 14-21). Let's read **verses 14-21**. This is the line up . . .

- First there was *Y'hudah/Judah*, *Yissakhar/Issachar*, and *Z'vulun/Zebulun*.

- By then the Tabernacle was down and Gershon and M'rari used the wagons pulled by the oxen, which had been given to them by Aharon for this express purpose, to move the heavier items for the Tabernacle.
- Afterwards came *Re'uvén/Reuben*, *Shim'on/Simeon* and Gad.
- Then K'hat and his people carried the most holy items and were followed by . . .
- *Efrayim/Ephraim*, *M'nasheh/Manasseh* and *Binyamin/Benjamin*.
- Lastly were Dan, Asher and *Naftali/Naphtali*.

See, it all makes sense. Of course, Gershon and M'rari would go after Y'hudah, Yissakhar and Zebulun. This way they would have the *Mishkan/Tabernacle* set up and ready for K'hat when they arrived with the most holy articles to be placed inside the Tabernacle.

Since *Shavu'ot/Feast of Weeks* commemorates the giving of the Torah and coincides with Pentecost, the following is quite interesting as we follow *B'nei Israel/Children of Israel* in their journey toward the Promised Land. Pay close attention to the names of the tribes, their leaders and their fathers!

Numbers 10:11 “On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle of the testimony. **12** And the children of Israel moved out in stages from the Sinai Desert. The cloud stopped the Pa'ran Desert. **13** So they set out on their first journey, in keeping with Yehovah's order through Moshe. **14** And in the lead was the banner of the camp of the descendants of Y'hudah (*Praise*) whose companies moved forward; over his company was Nachshon (*the enchanter*) the son of Amminadav (*incited my people*). **15** Over the company of the tribe of the descendants of Yissakhar (*there is recompense*) was N'tan'el (*given by El*) the son of Tzu'ar (*making small*). **16** Over the company of the descendants of Z'vulun (*the dwelling*) was Eli'av (*Elohim my father*), the son of Helon (*my strength*). **17** Then the tabernacle was taken down; and the descendants of Gershon (*exile*) and the descendants of M'rari (*bitterness*) set out, carrying the tabernacle. **18** Next the banner of the camp of Re'uvén (*behold the son*) moved forward by companies; over his company was Elitzur (*Elohim my Rock*) the son of Sh'de'ur (*casting light*). **19** Over the company of the tribe of the descendants of Shim'on (*hearing*) was Shlumi'el (*friend of Elohim*) the son of Tzurishaddai (*my Rock is sufficient*). **20** Over the company of the descendants of Gad (*fortune*) was Elyasaf (*whom El has increased*) the son of De'u'el (*invoked by Elohim*). **21** Then the descendants of K'hat (*assembly*) set out, carrying the sanctuary so that [at the next camp] the tabernacle could be set up before they arrived. **22** The banner of the camp of the descendants of Efrayim (*doubly fruitful*) moved forward by companies; over his company was Elishama (*Elohim has heard*) the son of 'Ammihud (*my esteemed people*). **23** Over the company of the tribe of the descendants of M'nasheh (*one who forgets*) was Gamli'el (*reward of El*) the son of P'dahtzur (*the Rock has ransomed*). **24** Over the company of the descendants of Binyamin (*son of the right hand*) was Avidan (*my Father is judge*) the son of Gid'oni (*who cuts down or makes low*). **25** The banner of the camp of the descendants of Dan (*the Judge*), forming the rearguard for all the camps, moved forward by companies; over his company was Achi'ezer (*my brother helps*) the son of 'Ammishaddai (*sufficient people*). **26** Over the

company of the tribe of the descendants of Asher (*glad*) was Pag'i'el (*blessed by El*), the son of Okhran (*troubled*). **27** Over the company of the descendants of Naftali (*my strife*) was Achira (*my evil brother*) the son of 'Enan (*watching*). **28** This is how the people of Israel traveled by companies; thus they moved forward.

This account of the beginning of the journey through the wilderness is a picture of the entire history of B'nei Yisra'el. Before they arrive at the trials and tribulations, we see the ideal form in which they are to advance through history, organized into tribes and families traveling in information. On the other hand, by the meaning of the names, we get a glimpse of the struggles and triumphs of a chosen nation from its calling to its future.

“Wait a minute!” was my first thought as I started reading **verse 29**. “Moshe said to **Hovav** the son of **Re'u'el** the Midyani, Moshe's father-in-law . . .” I thought Moshe's father-in-law's name was *Yitro/Jethro* (*abundant* or *without measure*)! So, where did these unusual names come from? A little digging helped me to find Ramban's commentary. The name *Re'u'el* meant *friend of El*. *Hovav*, meaning *cherished* or *beloved*, came from the Hebrew word *Ahavah* which means *love*. These names were given to them to signify their love of Torah. When they converted, they each adopted a new Hebrew name. Okay, I can live with this!!! Anyway, the rest of the story . . . although Hovav was planning on returning to his homeland and people, he was finally convinced to stay with *B'nei Israel/children of Israel* especially after Moshe assured him of being treated as well as anyone else. Indeed, Hovav's descendants were given a very fertile 250,000 cubit plot of land near Jericho.

Having seen the relevance of **verses 14-21** concerning the placement of the Levites in marching order, **verse 33** kinda blew my mind!!! Searching for commentary on this, I found the following in the Artscroll Chumash:

“The commentators raise the difficulty that the Ark traveled after the formations of Judah and Reuben, not at the forefront of the camp. Rashi cites Sifre that this was not the Ark that contained the Tablets, but a second Ark, which contained the broken pieces of the First Tablets, which Moses had shattered. According to Ibn Ezra, this journey was an exception to the rule, in that only this time did the Ark precede them. Sforno explains that the Ark went first to protect them from snakes and scorpions that proliferated in that part of the Wilderness.”

However, there has been discussion during some of our other Torah Studies concerning the Ark going before the tribes, which would certainly cause their enemies to flee from them. So whether the Ark went before them **this** time (**verse 33**) and **this** time only, I'm sure we will learn as time goes by. (Scripturally, I haven't seen a second ark mentioned.)

Another interesting commentary concerning this verse is: “The three-day journey of the ark can be seen as alluding to Messiah. By willingly dying and entering the grave, Messiah traveled three days ahead of the rest of us in order to achieve eternal life for us. By means of His death,

a three-day journey, He has gone “to prepare a place” for us in His Father’s house (Yochanan/John 14:2).

As I understand it, the people did not break camp immediately after the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle. First, it moved from the Tabernacle and hovered over the camp of *Y’hudah / Judah*. Then the trumpets would be sounded and *Moshe/Moses* would announce (verse 35) “*Arise, Yehovah! May your enemies be scattered! Let those who hate you flee before you!*” and they would begin the journey. When it was time to encamp, the cloud would arrange itself over the camp of Judah. Then Moshe would announce (verse 36) “*Return, Yehovah, of the myriad thousands of Isra’el!*” Could these two verses be prophetic in nature as well? Could verse 35 reference the resurrection of Yeshua and verse 36 refer to His return, second coming?

CHAPTER 11

The beginning of Chapter Eleven finds *B’nei Isra’el/the children of Israel*, approximately one year out of Egypt and the murmuring begins. Yehovah’s fire breaks out against them on the outskirts of the camp and scares the bee-jeebers out of them. They cried out to Moshe who interceded on their behalf. That place was called (tahv-eh-rah) *Tav’erah/burning* (verses 1-3).

Although they were being well cared for, they decided they wanted meat to eat. The absurdity of this is the fact there was no shortage of meat. The tribes of Reuben and Gad had enormous flocks (B’midbar/Numbers 32:1). Let me be quick to interject here . . . I don’t believe ALL of the people complained. According to verse 4, it began with most of the “mixed multitude” and spread to some of the spiritually weaker Israelites. Verse 5 indicates while they were in Egypt, their fish cost them nothing and they had all their fruits and veggies but now all they had was just manna.

I’m sure they received food from their slave masters; fish from fishermen; fruits and vegetables from farmers and I would daresay the fish in the Nile were plentiful enough so they were virtually free. However, I find it hard to believe the Egyptians, who would not even give them straw to make their bricks, would give them free anything, let alone, food! One commentary I read suggested it was “free” in the sense it came without having to perform mitzvot. I have heard it taught the manna “took on” the taste of whatever one desired; another said it tasted like a dough rich in oil . . . and I’m thinkin’ chocolate chip cookie dough! Yummm!!!

Do you remember, way back there in *Sh’mot/Exodus*, when Moshe was hesitant to be the leader Yehovah knew he could be? Remember one of his reasons? I believe he said he was a terrible speaker (Sh’mot/Exodus 4:10). In verses 11-15, Moshe becomes SO frustrated, he goes to Yehovah and really unloads. In fact, Moshe said to Yehovah he couldn’t endure this any longer and would just as soon Yehovah kill him outright!

So, in **verses 16 & 17**, Yehovah instructs Moshe to bring Him 70 leaders and He would put some of the same Spirit which rested on Moshe on the 70 leaders. They would help carry the burden of the people along with Moshe. This was the beginning of the Sanhedrin.

Obviously, in **verses 21 & 22**, Moshe is still very stressed out and is still complaining to Yehovah about being able to feed the 600,000 men, not counting women and children. Yehovah is SO gracious, as always, and He asks Moshe a question, “has Yehovah’s arm grown short? Now you will see whether what I said will happen or not!” (**verse 23**)

One of my friends who receives these Torah portions shared the following with me:

About B'midbar 11:23---When Abba asked Moshe, "Has My arm grown short?" It made me think about an art class I interpreted this Spring semester. I know this verse isn't using art terminology, but the L-rd used something I learned in that class to give me a really neat mental picture I'd like to share with you. It's too cool!

The class was learning about using correct perspective while drawing. They had to use a technique called "foreshortening." The teacher explained that when a person is standing with his arms hanging at his sides, the fingertips should be drawn reaching almost half-way down his thigh. However, if a person is reaching out to the artist, the arm must be drawn shorter to maintain the right perspective.

Moses had the wrong perspective. Abba pointed out to him, "Does my arm look short to you? That means I'm holding out to you the very thing you need. Reach out and accept it!" I love that picture the L-rd gave me! Thanks, Ms. Vicki!!!

Here, we see what I believe, is the first public outpouring of the (Rue-ahk Hah-Koe-dehsh) **Ruach HaKodesh/Holy Spirit** (**verses 25-29**) As Yehovah took the same Spirit which was on Moshe and placed it on the 70 leaders, they began to (nah-bah) **naba/prophesy**. According to Strong’s, Brown-Driver-Briggs and the Gesenius Lexicon, means to “pour forth words of praising, edification, prophecy and songs by Divine power, sometimes in a language unknown to the speaker”. Soon the prophesying stopped except for the two who remained in the camp. **Eldad/whom G~d loves** and (May-dahd) **Medad/who loves** continued to prophesy in the hearing of all the camp. When **Y’hoshua/Joshua** told Moshe to make them stop, Moshe replied, “Are you so zealous to protect me? I wish all of Yehovah’s people were prophets! I wish Yehovah would put His Spirit on all of them!”

At the instruction of Yehovah, Moshe tells the people to get cleaned up and consecrate themselves because Yehovah is going to give them meat. In fact, they will have meat for an entire month. They will eat meat “until it comes out your nose and you hate it!” **Verse 31** says “a wind brought quails from across the sea”. The quail covered the ground to a depth of three feet! We read over this and don’t really pay attention . . . get out your yardstick and measure the depth of three feet. Three feet comes up to my waist, almost!!! Can you imagine? While the people were still eating, Yehovah struck the complainers with a terrible plague.

Consequent-ly, the place was named (Keev-roat Hah Tah-ah-vah) ***Kivrot-HaTa'avah*** which means ***graves of greed*** because they buried the people who were so greedy (verse 34). Could this be a picture of what it will be like when He pours out His spirit on ALL flesh? (Yoel /Joel 2) Doesn't this also indicate His purpose in the outpouring?

CHAPTER 12

We are all familiar with the story about ***Miryam/Miriam*** and ***Aharon/Aaron*** murmuring against ***Moshe/Moses*** which begins in **B'midbar/Numbers 12**. Most of the stories told indicate their jealousy of Moshe's intimate relationship with Yehovah which came from Moshe's total commitment to Yehovah. However, scripture is very clear, Miryam and Aharon began to criticize Moshe because he had married an Ethiopian woman. Then they began to attack Moshe's relationship with Yehovah.

A new twist came from information in the Chumash. Since Moshe had to be ready to hear from Yehovah at any moment, he had to be ritually pure at all times, which meant he had to refrain from marital relations with his wife, ***Zipporah***. By the way, her Hebrew name means ***bird***. This information remained their private affair until Miriam learned of it from a chance remark by Zipporah. Not realizing Yehovah had instructed Moshe to remain ritually pure at all times and feeling it was an unjustifiable affront to Zipporah, Miriam shared the news with Aharon, who agreed with her. Yehovah himself appeared to them, to chastise them and testify Moshe's prophecy was of a higher order than anyone's and therefore he had to remain ritually pure at all times.

This story concerning Moshe caused me to wonder about Yeshua. Could this have been the reason He chose to not marry . . . so He could remain in ritual purity to communicate with His Father?

We all know Miriam was punished by Yehovah for starting this criticism of her "little" brother. Miriam's mistake became an eternal teaching to us concerning the gravity of the sin of slander, in Hebrew (lah-shone hah-rah) ***lashon hara/evil tongue***. But, there is more! As we know, Miriam contracted (tzah-rah-aht) ***tzara'at*** which is NOT leprosy but a ***Divinely imposed skin condition caused from the sin of slander and gossip***. Only Miriam was afflicted because she was the one who instigated the criticism of Moshe. Miriam's tzara'at was healed immediately in response to Moshe's prayer but since she suffered Yehovah's rebuke, she had to remain in quarantine, outside the camp for seven days, as if her father had humiliated her publicly.

B'ha'alotkha ~ **בהעלתך** ~ When You Set Up
Haftarah: Z'kharyah/Zechariah 2:14~4:7

Our Torah portion begins with a discussion of the daily Menorah lighting in the Tabernacle and the Temple. Here in the Haftarah, there is reference to the vision of a Menorah and an angel's prophetic interpretation of that vision.

The (Koe-hen Gah-dole) **Kohen Gadol/High Priest** was Joshua (although this is not Joshua the son of Nun); the leader of the nation was Zerubbabel and the prophet who shared this vision was Zechariah. He begins by looking ahead to the time when all the world will acknowledge Israel is Yehovah's chosen people under the leadership of the tribe of Judah, the tribe of David.

Zechariah turned to Joshua, who was a victim of the same sin which plagued much of the nation during this time of the Babylonian Exile. His sons had married gentile women and Joshua had failed to chastise them. In his vision, Zechariah sees HaSatan condemning Joshua for this lapse, which was symbolized by the soiled garments he was wearing. But Yehovah defends Joshua; he was immersed in the flames of the exile's physical and spiritual destruction and as such cannot be condemned for the past. The angel clothes Joshua in the pure vestments and the turban of the high priesthood – but warns him he must obey the commandments from now on. Only then can he be assured his heirs will succeed him as Kohen Gadol.

Finally, Zechariah is shown a Menorah, complete with a bowl containing oil, tubes bringing oil to its seven lamps and even two olive trees to provide a continuous supply of fuel. This symbolizes all man's needs are provided by Yehovah – man, however, must have the eyes to see it.

B'ha'alotkha ~ **בהעלתך** ~ When You Set Up

B'rit Hadashah: Yochanan/John 19:31-37; Ivrim/Hebrews 3:1-6

Yochanan/John 19:31-37 Our parallel here is *Pesach/Passover*. **Sh'mot/Exodus 12:46** says no bone of the Passover lamb is to be broken and **B'midbar/Numbers 9:12** says the same thing. Furthermore, **Tehillim/Psalm 34:21(20)** says: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but Yehovah delivers him out of them all. He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken." Here in **verse 33**, regarding the crucifixion of Yeshua, we learn "they didn't break his legs" as they did the others. However, one of the soldiers did stab his side with a spear which reminded me of the passage in **Zechariah 12:10** which says "They will look at him whom they have pierced".

Ivrim/Hebrews 3:1-6 Like Moshe, Yeshua was Yehovah's emissary sharing His truth and wishes to the people of Israel. In this respect, Yeshua fulfills the role of being a prophet like Moshe as predicted in **D'varim/Deuteronomy 18:15-19**. Also, like Moshe, Yeshua intercedes for the people (**Ivrim/Hebrews 7:25**) and as such He is fulfilling the role of the Cohen just as Moshe did when the people worshipped the golden calf as well as at other times. Here's an interesting commentary concerning Moshe and Yeshua. Moshe was the paragon of virtue within Judaism because **B'midbar/Numbers 12:7** says "Moshe was faithful in all Yehovah's house." Here, **verse 3** says "but Yeshua deserves more honor than Moshe . . ." This

idea of the Messiah being better than (Mo-shay Rahb-bay-noo) *Moshe Rabbenu/Moses our teacher* can be derived from traditional Jewish sources.

- “And the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters.’ This phrase from **Genesis 1:2** alludes to the spirit of the Messiah, because **Isaiah 11:2** says, ‘And the spirit of Yehovah will rest upon him’ [that is, upon the ‘shoot of Jesse’, which is a name for the Messiah]. Also we learn from the same text in **Genesis 1:2** that this spirit of the Messiah comes through the merit of repentance; for in **Lamentations 2:19** repentance is likened to water: ‘Pour out your heart like water.’” (Genesis Rabbah 2:4)

AND

- “At the beginning of the creation of the world King Messiah had already come into being, because he existed in God’s mind even before the world was created.” (Pesikta Rabbati 33:6)

The corresponding Psalm for this Torah portion is: Tehillim/Psalms 68

Next week’s lesson: Parashah #37

Shlach L’kha ~ שלח לזאתה ~ Send On Your Behalf

Torah: B’midbar/Numbers 13:1~15:41

Haftarah: Y’hoshua/Joshua 2:1-24

B’rit Hadashah: Messianic Jews/Ivrim/Hebrews 3:7-19

Who fills his mind with Torah clears it of fear and folly.

Rabbi Chanina Sgan HaKohanim

The giving of Torah happened at one specific time, but the receiving of Torah happens all the time, in every generation.

Meir Alter, the Gerer Rebbe

Organize yourselves into classes for the study of Torah, since it can best be acquired in association with others.

Talmud: Berkot 63b

Shavuah tov (have a good week)!!!

As I promised . . . “The Gift of the New Moon” teaching follows as a separate document . . .

THE GIFT OF THE NEW MOON

Updated: June 2011

The first commandment the Hebrews were given as a people is the mitzvah of (Roe-sh Khoe-desh) Rosh Chodesh, the New Month: "*And Yehovah said to Moses . . . in the land of Egypt . . . This month is for you, the head of the months. First it is for you among the months of the year.*" (Exodus 12:1-2)

The Hebrew nation was told, while still in Egypt, the month of Nissan, the month in which they would be leaving Egypt, should be their first month. From then on, they, as a nation, have a responsibility to count the months and create a uniquely Hebrew calendar based on the lunar year.

THE HUMAN ELEMENT

The mitzvah of sanctifying the new month was a rather involved process. As soon as someone saw the tiniest sliver of a new moon, they would run to the Jerusalem High Court. Two witnesses were needed to testify the moon was actually seen. They would then convene the court, declare the new month and send messengers across the land to tell everyone the new month had begun on this certain day. They, in turn, would pass on the news. They placed torches on mountains and high spots to spread the news faster. Sometimes it took two weeks for people to receive confirmation of the day the court had declared as the beginning of the month. (This, by the way, is the root reason why the Hebrews of the Diaspora keep two days of the holidays, just in case they were wrong about which day was *Rosh Chodesh* if the information didn't arrive on time.)

The Hebrew or Biblical calendar determines on which day each Hebrew/Biblical holiday will occur. Each particular holiday brings with it a spiritual reality available for us to tap into on a specific day. *Pesach/Passover*, for instance, contains the opportunity to attain spiritual freedom while *Rosh Hashanah/New Year* is the time for judgment.

The determination of this calendar is placed squarely in human hands. If the moon was to appear, in fact, on a Monday, but no one actually saw it until Tuesday, "seeing is believing" and the court would decide the first of the month was on a Tuesday. As a result, Yehovah, as it were, follows the decision of the court and acts accordingly. So, in the case of Rosh Hashanah, He would put off His judgment of the entire world by one day! Yehovah is giving the Hebrew people an empowering message with this first commandment. Up until now, the Hebrews have been slaves to the Egyptians. Their time was not their own. Now, Yehovah says, you are becoming masters of your time. And not only of your own time, but of My time as well! By being given our own system of measuring time and creating our own calendar, we are taking charge and shaping reality. We are given a certain area of control over nature. Time is steadily moving ahead, never-stopping, marching on in a cyclical, repetitive spiral, we are given the power to stop or start time at will, allowing us to "share" with Yehovah the special creativity of determining reality.

THE MOON

As part of this empowering message, it is essential for the moon to be the determining factor in setting up our calendar, not the sun. The unique feature of the moon is that it appears to wax and wane, to disappear and reappear, to grow, diminish and grow again. It is also the smaller of the two luminaries.

The sun is the symbol of unchanging nature, rising in the East, setting in the West, day in and day out, every day of the year. The moon, however, changes and seems to be telling us something: You can be small and you can diminish until you almost disappear, but then, when things look their darkest, hope springs eternal. You can start looking up again. You can change a situation and yourself for the better, no matter how bad it seems. Nothing is static or set in stone. Human beings have a free will which is the power of renewal – an ever-present struggle against the steady, cyclical, repetitive and predictable march of time and nature.

The solar system determines the *year*, in Hebrew *shana*, which comes from the same root as *to repeat, to go over*, whereas the moon sets the *months*, *Chodesh* from the Hebrew root *chadash*, – *new, change, different*.

The Hebrew people are compared to the moon. Though they are small, and suffering has been an integral part of their history among the nations, they know to never give up. As an individual and as a nation, they will rise again and light up the night.

Hebrews live with the belief of the power of miracles and Yehovah supervises over the world. He is not dependent on predictable laws of nature. The Hebrew nation has a special relationship with Yehovah; even when on the lowest spiritual rung and about to assimilate and disappear, Yehovah maintains His constant love, as a father loves his son.

Yehovah relates to Moses a message to give to Pharaoh and to the Hebrew people before the 10 Plagues begin “*My firstborn son is Israel*” (Exodus 4:22). The Israelites had reached their lowest point at this time and were undeserving of any miracles in their own right. Yet that is exactly when Yehovah sweeps us up, taking us out of the darkness of Egypt and initiates the upward-moving process until 50 days later when we are deserving of receiving the Torah and of becoming a nation.

What a perfect time and place to give the Hebrew people the encouraging message in the commandment to sanctify the new moon every month and to determine our calendar this way: “*And Yehovah said to Moses ... in the land of Egypt, say to the Hebrew people: This month is for you the beginning of the months ...*” (Exodus 12:1-2)

Yehovah has given us the power of renewal and change, the gift of expanding, brightening and growing big again after we have been diminished.