

Message 7-22-17
Matot-Tribes
Numbers 30:2-32:42

Masei-Journeys of
Numbers 33:1-36:13
Jeremiah 2:4-28, 3:4
Revelation 22:16-21

Introduction

With the last battle of the wilderness behind them, Israel moves into a new phase: that of settlement. The two tribes of Reuben and Gad ask to settle on the eastern bank of the Jordan River, rather than on the western bank of the Jordan. At first, Moses resists this proposal, but once he is assured that the two tribes will continue to fight along with their fellow Israelites, he consents.

The Book of Numbers closes with this observation: "**Numbers 36:13** *These are the commandments and the judgments which the LORD commanded the children of Israel by the hand of Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho.* (NKJ)

Numbers 32:2-13

2 So the people of Gad and the people of Reuben came and said to Moses and to Eleazar the priest and to the chiefs of the congregation, ³ "Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon, ⁴ the land that the LORD struck down before the congregation of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock." ⁵ And they said, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants for a possession. Do not take us across the Jordan." ⁶ But Moses said to the people of Gad and to the people of Reuben, "Shall your brothers go to the war while you sit here? ⁷ Why will you discourage the heart of the people of Israel from going over into the land that the LORD has given them? ⁸ Your fathers did this, when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land. ⁹ For when they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the people of Israel from going into the land that the LORD had given them. ¹⁰ And the LORD's anger was kindled on that day, and he swore, saying, ¹¹ 'Surely none of the men who came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, because they have not wholly followed me, ¹² none except Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have wholly followed the LORD.' ¹³ And the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD was gone. (ESV)

As we draw closer to the end of the current Torah cycle, we need to really start paying attention to what we are being told in them by the Almighty. Disobedience is the sin that brought God's anger down upon Israel repeatedly. Disobedience is sometimes called the "*original sin*" done by Adam and Chavah, but I recently read something that made me stop and consider what was being said. The writer was saying that the "*original sin*" was not what Adam and Chavah did but what Satan and those who followed him did. They were guilty of disobedience in rebelling against God, thereby causing them to be cast out of heaven. That made me stop and think about it. The sin of disobedience on the part of Adam and Chavah came after the sin of Satan and the one-third of the heavenly host who chose to follow Satan and were cast out. In many ways, we can see ourselves in the story of Israel because they would be cast out numerous times from the Promised Land, and the result of that lack of faith in the Holy One caused disobedience and the creation and worship of an idol not long after Israel was brought out of Egypt to freedom. Sometimes, it is hard to please someone. The story of Israel is not in the Bible, so we can simply ignore it or try to use it as the basis for our rejection of Israel as God's people and taking their mantle upon ourselves. That would make us no better than a common thief thereby breaking God's covenant and mixing with Replacement Theology.

In this week's Torah portion, Gad and Ruben, two of the twelve tribes come to Moses and ask for permission to settle on one side of the Jordan River instead of going into the land. This brings a rebuke by way of the story of what happened to the generation who had listened to the stories of the ten spies instead of listening to the story from Joshua and Caleb, two of the twelve spies who had brought back a positive report. Because of that, they were sentenced to die in the wilderness over a forty-year period with no hope of redemption for what they had done. In the end even Miriam, Aaron, and Moses were to die as well. The moral of the story was if Gad and Ruben were not going to help their brethren fight to take possession of the Promised Land, why would Moses just give them the land on the opposite river bank without them having to do anything to earn it? They got the message and immediately changed their tune. They committed to help their brethren conquer the land, and then they would take possession of their portion. Moses' anger was placated and all was well once again in Israel, but it would not last. The moral of the story is to listen to those who see God's promise even in the face of surmounting odds against them. Joshua and Caleb were the only two out of the twelve spies who stood up for the promise the Lord had made to Israel. Because of that, they were the only two out of that generation that had come out of Egypt to enter the Promised Land. The interesting point here is that Caleb is identified as a Kenizzite. Whether this refers to him or to a family member we do not know, but he is also identified with the tribe of Judah. This tells us that someone who was not born into Israel could become a part of Israel and, in understanding this, we can see that you do not have to be native born. This means that Replacement Theology is a false and unbiblical teaching that goes against what Scripture tells us.

Jeremiah 3:4-15

4 Have you not just now called to me, 'My father, you are the friend of my youth-- ⁵ will he be angry forever, will he be indignant to the end?' Behold, you have spoken, but you have done all the evil that you could." ⁶ The LORD said to me in the days of King Josiah: "Have

you seen what she did, that faithless one, Israel, how she went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and there played the whore? ⁷ And I thought, 'After she has done all this she will return to me,' but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. ⁸ **She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce.** Yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore. ⁹ Because she took her whoredom lightly, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree. ¹⁰ Yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to me with her whole heart, but in pretense, declares the LORD." ¹¹ And the LORD said to me, "Faithless Israel has shown herself more righteous than treacherous Judah. ¹² Go, and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, "Return, faithless Israel, declares the LORD. I will not look on you in anger, for I am merciful, declares the LORD; I will not be angry forever. ¹³ Only acknowledge your guilt, that you rebelled against the LORD your God and scattered your favors among foreigners under every green tree, and that you have not obeyed my voice, declares the LORD. ¹⁴ Return, O faithless children, declares the LORD; for I am your master; I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. ¹⁵ "And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. (ESV)

In verse 8, we see that it says Ephraim was sent away with a decree of divorce, Judah saw what happened, and still chose to follow them. We also see something slightly different in Isaiah 50:1.

Isaiah 50:1 Thus says the LORD: "Where is your mother's certificate of divorce, with which I sent her away? Or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities you were sold, and for your transgressions your mother was sent away. (ESV)

In one instance the Lord says He sent Ephraim away with a **“get”** or divorce decree. Yet, in Isaiah 50:1 we see the Lord asking where is the certificate of divorce? It's as though He is saying that He never handed the written divorce decree to Ephraim. It says He sent her away with a certificate of divorce, which would indicate that the written decree was given to Ephraim, but in Isaiah He is asking where is it? Is He saying He never gave the written decree to Ephraim, or is He saying what have they done with the decree? The result is that He extends mercy to the ten northern tribes and will call them back if they have repented of their sins. It could be He is doing this because Judah followed in Ephraim's footsteps and did the same thing despite seeing what He did to Ephraim. We know He punished Judah as well and sent them into the Babylonian exile but brought them back after seventy years.

So, how does all this tie in to our Torah portion for this week? Israel could not get along once they left Egypt. It seemed to be something ingrained in them that caused them to defy God every chance they got, and that still is evident today, but what we need to keep in mind is that we have also followed in their footsteps in breaking the Lord's covenant, and yet He is still willing to take us back and make us into the nation of Israel He wants us to be.

Revelation 22:16-21

"I, Yeshua, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the Messianic communities. I am the Root and Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star. ¹⁷ The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!' Let anyone who hears say, 'Come!' And let anyone who is thirsty come- let anyone who wishes, take the water of life free of charge." ¹⁸ I warn everyone hearing the words of the prophecy in this book that if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues written in this book. ¹⁹ And if anyone takes anything away from the words in the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the Tree of Life and the holy city, as described in this book. ²⁰ "The one who is testifying to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming soon!'" *Amen!* Come, Lord Yeshua! ²¹ May the grace of the Lord Yeshua be with all! (CJB)

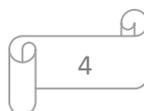
Israel was punished because they could not give themselves over to the Holy One of Israel. They would for a short time and then fall away again. He always gave them the opportunity to repent and turn back to Him and to His Torah. He does the same thing for us. He gives us the chance to put our faith in Him and follow His ways, not those of the Adversary. Satan does not have our best interests at heart, people. All he wants to do is to lead us away from the source of life, the One who gives us Living Water who is the Tree of Life in the Garden, in the beginning. As Satan entered the serpent, and the serpent followed him down the wrong path, Messiah is the Tree of Life waiting for us to embrace Him instead of Satan. One road takes us to death eternal while the other one leads us to the source of eternal life. Which road are you going to follow? Remember, God's people, Israel, chose the wrong road many times throughout their relationship with Him. He took them back, but it was not without consequences. Many died for their disobedience. Many lived because of their faith.

Torah Man says: "Faith either removes mountains or tunnels through."

Blessings in Messiah Yeshua,

Mordecai Silver

TORAH: LEARN IT, LOVE IT, LIVE IT AS YESHUA DID! PSALM 119. If you are not learning Torah, we invite you to attend Judaic Studies Institute, a Distance Learning Institute for Yeshua based Judaic Studies. Drop us a line at student.support@jsi-edu.org for more information. You can earn a certificate or diploma and take courses to help you grow in your understanding.





Rabbi Mordecai Silver, Ph.D.

Tel: (866) 874-7250
Fax: (866) 800-2390
www.etz-chayim.org
tolmm@etz-chayim.org

P.O.Box 467, Organ, New Mexico, 88052

