

## Mattot & Masei 2023

This week we have a double Torah portion that closes out the book of Numbers/Bamidbar! Mattot, “Tribes”, covering Numbers 30:2-34:42, and Masei, “Journeys Of”, covering Numbers 33:1-36:13. As Israel’s wilderness journey comes to a close, focus is shifted to conquering the Promised Land. Yet to prepare this generation regarding this coming conquest, they are reminded of where they have been! Together these two portions reveal the message - the journeys of the tribes - 42 stops, each one providing a significant lesson and a season of preparation for what lies ahead. It is a journey required and necessary to transform a nation of slaves into a nation of sons capable of accessing and handling their inheritance.

In fact 42 is the value of yabal יָבַל to flow, to lead, or to carry; it’s the root of the term Yobel – Jubilee! Yet the same letters also form beli בְּלִי wearing out, or destruction. For some it is a season of great devastation, but for others it becomes their jubilee! The distinction is made in the wilderness – midbar – the mouth from which the Dabar/Word is speaking!

Wilderness: Strong’s #4057 midbar מִדְבָּר wilderness, pasture, or mouth; from the root #1696 dabar דָּבַר to speak, to declare, converse, command, promise, sing; gematria of the phrase bamidbar (in the wilderness) = 248, the same as betselem Elohim/”In the image of Elohim” אֱלֹהִים בְּצֶלֶם – seeming to reveal the purpose of being brought here is to be transformed into the image of Elohim!

\*Image: Strong’s #6754 tselem תְּסֵלֶם image, likeness, but it implies not the appearance but the function! Elohim placed within man a representation of His own function (character, mindset, purpose)!

**Genesis 1:26-27** – “And Elohim said, Let us make man in our image/tselem, after our likeness: and let them have dominion...So Elohim created man in his own image/tselem, in the image/tselem of Elohim created he him; male and female created he them.”

His image is revealed through the male (zakar) & female (neqebah), both aspects required for the image to be seen and reproduced or bring forth life! The tselem/the function then is to bring forth and produce life, yet in order to do so Israel must understand both the concept of releasing seed (words) and also the process of wombing or nurturing said seed until it’s fruition!

Could it be that Israel’s season in the wilderness is to teach them regarding the gestational cycles of His Promised Word, where as mature believers they become capable of both releasing/speaking forth the WORD and also capable of nurturing and waiting on that WORD!

This season was an opportunity for Israel to prove that they were mature sons and daughters capable of handling the affairs of the Kingdom, while those who were still bound by a slave mentality were exposed and experienced devastation instead of their jubilee because they weren't capable of waiting and guarding the word they'd been given!

\*These 42 stops seem to directly correspond to the 42 months of the great tribulation, or the 1260 days Daniel prophesies concerning. Could this give a different perspective regarding what will be taking place during this season?

**Numbers 30:1-2** – pay attention that this is addressed not to every individual within Israel, but specifically to the heads of the tribes....why?

Tribes: Strong's #4294 matteh מַטֵּה staff, branch, tribe; metaphorically the image of a staff represents the supply of food, strength, and authority. The origin of this use derives from the image of the leader of the tribe going before the company with his staff in hand.

\*Looking at the individual Hebrew letters reveals an interesting point of focus! מ = womb, has a numerical value of 40 corresponding to the 40 weeks of the gestation cycle; ט = the inverted shape of the letter also representing a woman who is pregnant, has a numerical value of 9 corresponding to the 9 months of the gestational cycle; ה = to reveal, the released breath which creates life, and as a suffix means to be fruitful and able to reproduce!

Once again, it seems a key point of using this term to address the tribes/the matteh, is because the focus is on Israel understanding the gestational cycle of the Promised Word they have been given which is shortly before being born/manifest!

**Galatians 6:9** – “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

The first reference of matteh is found in **Gen. 38** regarding the encounter between Judah & Tamar!

\*An interesting connection, Tamar requests the staff of Judah, which is later used as proof regarding his role as the father. With Judah being the chosen doorway for the promised seed of the Messiah, without Tamar's actions to continue on the seed line there was the potential for a break or compromise regarding the continuation of the promise!

Looking closer at this first reference of matteh and the connection to Tamar, she is wed to Er the son of Judah, who dies leaving her childless, Onan his brother refuses to raise up seed in his brother's stead, so she now must wait for Shelah, the youngest. **Gen. 38:11** – “Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, till Shelah my son be grown:”

Widow: Strong's #490 'almanah אִלְמָנָה widow; from the root #481 'alam אָלַם to bind, also to be silent.

Shelah: Strong's #7956 Shelah שְׁלֵחַ a petition or prayer; from the root #7596 she'elah שְׁאַל request, thing asked for, petition; the root stems all seem to relate a being extracted from bondage and restriction, and toil and turmoil.

In other words, the Hebrew reveals, she is bound ('alam) to the promise in the waiting, and it seems to infer that it is not her words that speak, but she is silent allowing the promised word to speak on her behalf! This promise being to be set free from any form of bondage, restriction, toil, or turmoil.

\*This forms an interesting connection back to **Gal. 6** where we're instructed to faint not – faint: #1590 eklyo ἐκλύω to loose, unloose, to set free or dissolve...in the waiting there is the danger of becoming set free or loosened from the Promised Word you've been given – yet we must stay bound to it if we're to see it come forth!

Israel is told the same thing upon preparing to cross the Red Sea in **Exodus 14:14** – “Yahweh shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.” Hold your peace: Strong's #2790 charash שָׁרַח to cut in, to plough, engrave, devise, or to be silent, or speechless; carries the idea of plowing and tilling the soil, the cycles of harvest.

\*This Hebrew word is a reminder that every Promised word has a cycle of harvest! It will come forth in due season, and we must be diligent and watchful lest our own words release a seed that is contrary – in the waiting cycles is when that promised word is to be engraved on the tablets of our hearts!

Yet what is expected of us in the waiting? Once again the example of Tamar seems to be connected here – she petitions for the staff/matteh – for the authority of that promise to speak on her behalf and it is this promise that becomes her sustenance and strength even when it seems as if she's been forgotten! This is what continues on the promise and brings forth the sons! Do you think this is the same pattern for you and I? To be considered mature sons and daughters, is to be one who understands that has learned the harvest cycles of the promised word we were given, and in the waiting to see the fulfillment of it we understand that word in itself is our sustenance and strength?

\*This foundational concept then becomes intertwined within the concept of the matteh – the staff! It's about the continuation of a promised seed/Word to see it brought to fruition! This is why the tribe leader carries the staff – they are spearheading this journey to see this promise made manifest. And it is that promised seed/word that becomes the source of strength and authority on the journey!

Looking further at Shelah, his name has a numerical value of 335, the same value as Har Sinai הַר סִינַי Mount Sinai! Israel is brought strategically to Sinai to receive the answer to their petition! Until they see the full manifestation of it in the form of the inheritance of the Promised Land, they have access to the staff (the Promised Word

- the Torah), which is capable of sustaining them on the journey. His WORD is the answer to any concern or need that may arise!

Matteh comes from the root #5186 natah נָטָה to stretch out, to extend, spread, bend or bow; carries the idea of inclining one's heart or mind in a certain direction, or of giving your attention. Hmm...could it be that a key component of Israel being considered capable of accessing the Promised Land is whether or not they have inclined their hearts and minds in this direction, whether or not they have finally grasped that the promised word they were given is the final authority and their sustenance - not dictated to by any other force or circumstance?

\*Could it be that the purpose of your wilderness journey is to see if you are bound to the promised word you've been given? And to learn how to exercise the rights you're given in regards to that very word in the waiting - to petition and understand that it is your sustenance and strength.

With this as the foundation, it is interesting to note that the one topic that is addressed here at the end is regarding vows and the significance of keeping one's vows! Do you think perhaps Yahweh is highlighting an area that will determine what category we are placed in - sons or slaves?

Vow: Strong's #5088 neder נָדַר vow, votive offering; from the root meaning to make a vow; 1<sup>st</sup> seen in **Genesis 28:20** where Jacob makes a neder/vow at Bethel/Luz to return safely to his father's house in peace when traveling to Laban.

\*Israel is waiting for the fulfillment of this vow made by Jacob - to be returned to their father's house in peace! It seems Yahweh strategically points them right back here to when Jacob himself makes this vow as it affects their future as well as ours!

### **Genesis 28:20-22**

With Me: Strong's #5978 'immad אִמַּד with; cognate of #5977 'omed אָמַד standing place, indicates an appointed position or function that a person is to fill, carries with it the sense of restoration, endurance, or to be straight; from the root 'amad אָמַד to stand, remain, endure, to be presented or established - Jacob not only requests for the presence of Elohim to be with him, but he's literally petitioning for his standing to be restored! For Yahweh to give him the endurance needed to see the restoration of his house into the appointed position and function they were created to fill!

\*It is interesting to note that the first use of this word 'immad is seen in **Gen. 3:12** - "And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest *to be* with me ('immad), she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."

Do you think perhaps Jacob is petitioning not only for the restoration of his status that has been attacked by Esau, but he's pointing all the way back to the fall of Adam & 'Ishshah, petitioning for the restoration of the status lost by Adam? And here Israel is posed to see a piece of this restoration as they enter the Promised Land, a foreshadowing of the restoration that Jacob's house will see at the end - the last generation - you and I!

Jacob's next petition is to be kept in the way – once again the wording points directly back to the Garden of Eden – shamar Derek, the same terminology is used to describe how the cherubim with the flaming sword keeps the way to the Tree of Life! Once again pointing towards Jacob's petition for a restoration to what was lost to Adam while in a fallen condition! Yet having just had an encounter with the sullam/the Ladder, if he is "kept" in this way, then he is capable of having access!

\*Sullam סֻלָּם = 130, the same value as Sinai סִינַי! Israel's encounter at Sinai is synonymous with Jacob's encounter with the ladder. They too if they will stay in this way, can see their restoration! Hence the significant reminder here of the neder – the vows. To see their jubilee, to see their inheritance, they must remain in the way to see their standing restored!

The next part of Jacob's petition – bread to eat. This connects us right back to the staff/matteh, which represents the supply of food or sustenance. He, like Tamar later, requests the matteh/the staff (representing the WORD) to go before him and preserve him until he sees the fulfillment of the promise!

Stone: Strong's #68 'eben אֶבֶן stone; from this same root stems 'oben אֹבֵן meaning a potter's wheel or a birth stool/birthing stones; same letters rearranged form neba' נִבְאָ to prophesy; breaking apart 'eben א = I will & בן = son; by Jacob's actions he is issuing forth a prophetic declaration, this stone represents a birthing stool/birthing stones that will produce forth the fully restored sons of standing!

\*Here the second Torah portion title is Masei, from the root #4550 massa' מָסַע a pulling up of stakes, breaking camp, or a journey; conjugated here as מַסְעִי which has a numerical value of 180, the same as the Hebrew phrase beni hanavi'im בְּנֵי הַנְּבִיאִים sons of the prophets – these journeys, the entire 42 stops within the wilderness, were the sons/the result/fruit of the words prophesied previously by Jacob – all to bring Israel to their expected destination!

As Jacob closes out this encounter, he ends with a vow on his part to tithe – to give the tenth! Is he attempting to buy the favor of Yahweh? Does Yahweh even need anything Jacob will offer seeing as all of Creation is His? Why does Jacob make this vow? Pastor David already shared last week the power of the law of sowing and reaping and the significance of the tithe, laying a powerful foundation for what is taking place here with Jacob.

Tenth: Strong's #6237 'asar אָסַר to tithe, take the tenth; breaking it apart ע = to see, if I see it this then infers something has been made tangible and brought forth, the value of the word 'ayin עֵיךְ = 130, the same value as sullam/ladder and Sinai. To see the promise of the sullam, the promise given at Sinai, fulfilled and come forth! This is attached to the root שר (sor #8270) navel, navel or umbilical cord, the cord that binds the infant (fruit) to the mother (womb).

Could our diligence to honor the vow of the tithe be a defining factor in how faithful we are to the promised word we've been given? It is what keeps the word bound in the wombs of our mind during the gestational cycle and season required to see this promise come forth! Without the tangible obedience and connection of us giving the tithe, it is easy to allow the word we've been given to be forgotten, neglected, becoming malnourished by our own lackadaisical attitude and lack of commitment.

It's also no accident that tenth/tithe 'asar, is written with the same letters that form sha'ar – gateway! (#8179 שַׁעַר) Your tithe is capable of opening spiritual gateways that allow the promised WORD you've been given to cross from the spirit and be made manifest in the natural! Jacob understood very clearly the vow he was making – he understood to see his house restored, to see the promises revealed within the sullam, he would need to bind himself to it and not be weary in the process!

This generation today, much like the Israel of this portion, is awaiting the end of our exile and the restoration to our inheritance. Yet the wilderness season we have been walking through has been designed to teach us commitment to the promised word, to give us insight regarding the times and the seasons. There is a jubilee imminently upon us and gateways are about to be opened that will bring forth restoration for some and devastation for others. May we like Jacob be seen as one who has honored our vows, and therefore see the restoration of our house and our standing!