

When the Cloud Moves!

Numbers 9:17-19. Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tent, the people of Isra'el continued their travels; and they camped wherever the cloud stopped. ¹⁸ At the order of ADONAI, the people of Isra'el traveled; at the order of ADONAI, they camped; and as long as the cloud stayed over the tabernacle, they stayed in camp. ¹⁹ Even when the cloud remained on the tabernacle for a long time, the people of Isra'el did what ADONAI had charged them to do and did not travel.

Seven (Sheva) times Torah directly states that the Lord alone directs and Guides His people! Let's review, Seven, Sheva is a supernatural Hebrew number. The Feast Days cycle follows a pattern of seven and begins with Pesach. Seven in Hebrew is represented by the letter Zain. Seven (Sheva) is the central key to God's creation and design. Sheva is the building blocks of the universe. The world was created in Sheva (seven) days. There are Sheva (seven) feasts of the Lord in the annual feast day cycle. There are Sheva festival days when work is forbidden in Torah. Sheva days of Matzah! Sheva days of Sukkot. Sheva (seven) is the number of creation and is the numbers of perfection. There are Sheva (seven) days in the week. There is the shenat ha-sheva, the seventh year or Sabbatical year in which the ground is to lay fallow. Sheva shabtot shanim-seven sabbatical years are counted (49 years) which bring in the Yovel, the Jubilee on the 50th year! All of creation streams towards the Sheva Millennia, the seventh thousand year which heralds the Messianic age.

Verse 18 states "at the order of Adonai", order in Hebrew is peh {peh} which literally means mouth or speech. Verse 18 actually says "At the mouth of Adonai" Israel travelled. Numbers 9:18 is the first time in Torah that God Himself guides Israel "according to the mouth of the Lord" Israel either camped or moved. Then four more times in these two passage:

Numbers 9:20. Sometimes the cloud was a few days over the tabernacle; according to ADONAI's order, they remained in camp; and according to ADONAI's order, they traveled.

And the last two times are in

Numbers 9:23. At ADONAI's order, they camped; and at ADONAI's order, they traveled -they did what ADONAI had charged them to do through Moshe.

The use of "peh", from the Lord's mouth Seven (sheva) times in such a short span strongly emphasizes and confirms God's answer to Moshe's intercessory request for God Himself to lead Israel:

Exodus 33:12-14. Moshe said to ADONAI, "Look, you say to me, 'Make these people move on!' But you haven't let me know whom you will be sending with me. Nevertheless you have said, 'I know you by name,' and also, 'You have found favor in my sight.' ¹³ Now, please, if it is really the case that I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways; so that I will understand you and continue finding favor in your sight. Moreover, keep on seeing this nation as your people." ¹⁴ He answered, "Set your mind at rest - my presence will go with you, after all."

The people saw the column or pillar of Cloud, Cloud is He'anah in Hebrew means literally a thick, theophonic cloud, a visible appearance of God. The people physically saw this cloud and knew that it was God, not a rain shower or thunderstorm. It is from this visible appearance of God that God Spoke unto Moshe's face to face. Vediber Adonay el-Moshe panim el-panim. Vediber (spoken words) of the Lord to Moshe Panim el Panim, faces is plural here! It incorporates all of God's attributes since He has no material body or form. He is the Ruach Elohim, the Ruach HaKodesh, fire, smoke, thunder, still small voice etc....and speaks to all of Moshe's attributes, the leader, the man God, the prophet, the supernatural staff.....this is a supernatural, powerful, invasion of the natural.

The Mouth (peh) or Voice of God speaks forth from the visible cloud which is an appearance of His presence. Verse 14 Vayomer panay- God answer "MY FACE", My divine presence will go with you. It is the Face of God, in the cloud which is the manifested appearance of God by which Peh, the Mouth of God orders sheva seven times a directive or command from Peh Adonai the Mouth of God, the verbal order directing Israel either to make camp or move. This fulfills Moshe's direct request to God in Exodus 33 that only God Himself lead Israel.

This sounds supernatural and beautifully simple. But in actuality it is one of the hardest practices in the entire Torah. We are usually quite happy to believe that Adonai is directing our lives. When He directs us where we already wanted to go. In that kind of situation, we say, "Everything happens for a reason!" Of course! We say, "It was meant to be," when what it actually means is that Adonai's direction corresponds more or less with what we had wanted and planned.

But what happens when the cloud refuses to move when and move us to where we want to go? What happens when life does not advance according to our plans and timetable?

What happens when the exact opposite occurs? When the cloud suddenly rises from the place where we have built a life, established ourselves, and become comfortable?

There is something deeply profound, a revealed mystery about the fact that Adonai chose to guide us, the entire nation with a cloud. A cloud reveals and conceals simultaneously. Its presence tells you that something is there, but it obscures what lies beyond it. And that is the nature of faith. Faith does not mean seeing everything clearly. It means recognizing God's presence even when the road ahead is obscure.

The cloud never explained why the people had to stop in a certain place. It never tells them the length of the stay. It did not justify its decision, doesn't reason, or invite discussion. It simply rested above the Mishkan. And the people had to keep watching for when it moved.

There could be no complacency or even apathy! They could not become so comfortable that they stopped watching the cloud. They could not become impatient and move before it did. They had to develop two different kinds of courage: the courage to remain, and the courage to leave.

It's a powerful lesson. Sometimes faith means staying where you are, continuing your work, and refusing to be unsettled by temporary difficulties, however difficult those problems may seem. And sometimes faith means recognizing that the cloud has risen and is moving on! This chapter has ended, the mission has moved, and it is time to move forward and begin again somewhere else.

It is this same exact manner in which Yeshua ministered here on earth.

John 8:26-28. There are many things I could say about you, and many judgments I could make. However, the One who sent me is true; so I say **(Laleo: say, speak, exhort, utter, preach, or advises)** in the world only what I have heard from him." ²⁷ They did not understand that he was talking to them about the Father. ²⁸ So Yeshua said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM [who I say I am], and that of myself I do nothing, but say only what the Father has taught me.

Yeshua only says preaches, utters, or advises in the world only what He has Heard from Father. This is exactly What God is doing with Moshe and Israel in Numbers 9. Yeshua states this again in

Luke 17:10. It's the same with you -- when you have done everything you were told to do, you should be saying, `We're just ordinary slaves, we have only done our duty.'"

The servant is obedient, diligently doing the orders from the Master. The servant doesn't tell the Master what to do! The servant doesn't choose which task he or she will perform, nor does the servant suggest days or time periods to work. The servants job is to follow instructions, do what they are told and be obedient to the Master. Moshe didn't decide when to pitch camp or when to Move, Yeshua specifically mentioned numerous times that He only did what He was told to do. Nothing more and nothing less.

The master, God, gives directives, orders, and instructions to follow according to the masters timeline. Adonai has never asked us to develop a vision or mission statement that will guide Him! God has the vision, God has the master plan, God knows all the details, and He has the vision. We, the servants are tasked to carry out God's will and instructions. I talked about this last month with Calling! Rebbetzin and I are bond servants, we are the masters slave. He approached us 27 years ago and placed His plan and will within us! He planted His seed and told us to move forward in obedience. Few congregations operate this way.

Let me say this loud and clear: WE ARE THE SERVANTS, GOD IS THE MASTER. Humans tend to reverse the roles. Humans tend to want to tell God what to do, when to do it, and what they will or will not do and the limits of their loyalty, service, and obedience.

I've heard too many times over the years people make statements such as: I would never move there! I know that the Feasts days are God but I'm not going to honor them! I won't do that! I won't give that up! God told me that years ago, I'm praying about it! Etc, etc. Yeshua specifically states that we simply do our duty! We do what we are told from the mouth of God, the Master. We don't do anything before the Mouth of God speaks and we do not delay in carrying out what He does tell us to do. Peh Adonai, the mouth of God has spoken, God desires that you deny your flesh and follow Him.

Romans 2:7-8. To those who seek glory, honor and immortality by perseverance in doing good, he will pay back eternal life. ⁸ But to those who are self-seeking, who disobey the truth and obey evil, he will pay back wrath and anger.

God wants servants, He wants this place, He wants your place, your reality, your house, your family, your finances, your thoughts, and your possessions to be submitted to Him for service in His Kingdom. He doesn't want you to claim their

His while you reign over them, He wants you to submit all to Him, turning them over to His Kingdom thus becoming a loyal, humble servant to His rule and reign!

God wants you to Serve, to move in the kingdom of heaven and become a leader but, one must first serve:

Matthew 20:25-26. But Yeshua called them and said, "You know that among the Goyim, those who are supposed to rule them become tyrants, and their superiors become dictators. ²⁶ Among you, it must not be like that. On the contrary, whoever among you wants to be a leader must become your servant,

Serving others allows individuals to grow and receive all that the Kingdom has for them, it builds a humble and contrite heart. It teaches how to sacrifice self and your flesh everyday to move and operate in servanthood. IF we go back to Numbers, what God is teaching Israel is servanthood, not slavery, they've already been there. What God is teaching and instilling in them is servanthood, the ability to obey when God speaks. Israel didn't do so good at Mt. Sinai, Adonai knew He had a problem.

Moshe's dialogue and interaction with God in Exodus 33 reveals Moshe's servant heart. He didn't tell God: "I Got this"! Moshe said God, if you don't lead us I'm not going! That is a heart that is completely sold out to God, submitted, obedient, and humble yet confident! Confident to say to Adonai: I can't do this without You! Israel had 40 years of instruction and teaching, when the cloud moved, they broke camp, when it stopped they pitched camp. It became muscle memory, without a second thought. The previous generation had to pass in the wilderness, they had been too immersed into Egyptian culture and ways.....New wine requires new wine skin as Yeshua stated. How did God know they were ready to enter into the promise land? How did He know they were at the point of complete compliance and obedience? Their fruit! Their actions, their obedient compliance and service to God revealed to Him that they were ready. Yeshua told us the same in:

Matthew 7:20. So you will recognize them by their fruit.

Moshe, Yeshua, and God know that when considering anyone for a place of increased responsibility and leadership it is necessary to look at the fruit of the person or people. I've come to learn myself that even if someone is willing and eager to serve, the fruit of the person's life and attitude is exactly what you'll get when you give that person the opportunity to serve. You cannot overlook the fruit of a person's life. It is the key! Your fruit includes your deeds, your actions,

your motives, your moral character, and behavior. This becomes exceedingly clear in times of disagreement and strife. Pressure, strife, adversity, and duress removes the outer façade, revealing your fruit which is a profound revelation of what's inside of you, your character, integrity, and morals.

It's the things you do when you think no one is watching! Your fruit is how you interact with others, especially with those whom you think don't like you or have an issue with. Its revealed in gossip, grumbling, rebellion, and its revealed in your work ethic.....are you like a blister, showing up when the work is done or are you the first to stand up and say "Hineni", Here am I Lord...I am obedient willing, and compliant to your instructions and orders!

When the cloud moves do you pack up reluctantly, with a bad attitude and bitterness cause you like the things the way they are or do you break camp with excitement and vigor because God is moving and doing something new, new places, new horizons so you put in 110% because God said to move out?

A critical point in this as well is timing. So many have healthy trees and there is fruit on the branches, vine but it's not ready. Many times those people see the fruit themselves, they know it's there, everyone can see it but it's not time yet. Picking fruit early, before its time results in a bitter, sour fruit and it also reduces the end harvest, reducing the ripened, good fruit. When you pick a pear before it's ripe you ruin the pear. ONE cannot overlook the warning signs of bad fruit. However, one of Rebbetzin's sayings that holds true is: "Time will tell all things" There are some trees that grow tall and strong with a bounty of fruit but that fruit will kill you if you eat it:

Proverbs 14:12. There can be a way which seems right to a person, but at its end are the ways of death.

Often, the tree just needs maturity, time to allow the fruit to ripen. We see such an example in Acts 13, Sha'ul and Barnabas took Yochanan (John Mark) with them on their first journey of sharing the Good News. Yet in

Acts 13:13. Having set sail from Paphos, Sha'ul and his companions arrived at Perga in Pamphylia. There Yochanan left them and returned to Yerushalayim,

What happened? Immaturity, fighting, gossip, bitterness? We don't know, the word doesn't say other than he goes back to Jerusalem, he isn't ready. We have an early fruit show up and fail while a previous one becomes ripened in:

II Timothy 4:10-11. For Demas, because he has fallen in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone off to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia; Titus has gone to Dalmatia - ¹¹ only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with you, because he is a very useful helper in my work.

Demas didn't prove loyal and humble while at the same time we see a turnaround in Mark. It seems that it wasn't that Mark wasn't able, it was a timing issue, the fruit wasn't ripe on the first trip. Now, years have passed and Mark is not only ready, he is very useful, very profitable to the ministry. Mark may have been talented and gifted but he wasn't ready! Just as Israel was in Numbers 9, although they had a calling and divine destiny, they weren't ready to enter the promise land!

God's ultimate goal is that He be your King, with His voice guiding you, you live a Godly, victorious lifestyle, infused with power from on high doing exactly what He tells you to do just as it was in Numbers 9. We too have a cloud and fire guiding us which we just celebrated last month, the Ruach HaKodesh

Acts 9:31. Then the Messianic community throughout Y'hudah, the Galil and Shomron enjoyed peace and was built up. They lived in the fear of the Lord, with the counsel of the Ruach HaKodesh; and their numbers kept multiplying.

The Peh Adonai (Mouth of God) still speaks to us today through the Ruach HaKodesh today, like My Sinai it is in a multitude of voices accompanied by miraculous healings, words of knowledge, discernment, prayer, signs and wonders just as God delivered from slavery in Egypt. The voice can be heard by everyone if they seek and want to pause and listen! You have to pause and listen!

Adonai is telling us to pack up, time to move, the cloud is moving! This season is coming to an end! He is moving us to a new place, something new! Moving requires packing! Pack up the old disappointments, the old mindsets, the old fears, the previous limitations! We can't take those things from the old season into the new one! Some things must be left behind! We are being called into a new territory, with new opportunities, new relationships, and new, deeper, levels of growth. The door is opening, follow the cloud! Kadima, forward into the blessings, breakthroughs, and the purpose he has prepared for us!