

Parasha (Torah portion) B'ha'alot'cha (When you set up):

Torah: B'midbar (Numbers) 8:1-12:16
Haphtarah: Z'kharyah (Zechariah) 2:14(10)-4:7
B'rit Chadasha: Revelation 11:1-19 (Jeff Feinberg);
Jochanan (John) 19:31-37; Hebrews 3:1-6 (David Stern); 1 Corinthians 10:6-13 (Jack Farber); Mark 6:13; Revelation 2:17; Romans 12:1; 1 Kefa (Peter) 1:2; 2:9; Acts 2:3; 10:3,4; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Hebrews 12:28

Meditation on parasha B'ha'alot'cha, entitled:

"The Seven Wonders of this world and of G-d's Kingdom" by Aaron (Aharon) Shaw

This week's Parasha seems to hang on the first 4 verses of Numbers chapter 8. Verses 1 & 2 read...

ADONAI said to Moshe (Moses), "Tell Aharon, 'When you set up the lamps, the seven lamps are to cast their light forward, in front of the menorah.'"

The seven lamps are akin to the 7 festivals of Yisrael. All 7 festivals are represented in B'ha'alot'cha in one form or another. Below, I will briefly outline the connection of the parasha to the festivals and touch on the significance of each.

1) Pesach (Passover)

B'midbar 9:12 commanded Yisrael not to break any of the bones of the Pesach lamb. David Stern connected this verse to Jochanan 19:31-37. The Roman soldiers broke the legs of the 2 criminals hanging with Yeshua (Jesus) but did not break Yeshua's legs. Yeshua is our Pesach lamb!

2) Chag HaMatzot (Unleavened Bread)

The *man* (manna) in B'midbar 11:8 is a parallel to *matzah* (unleavened bread) of Chag HaMatzot...

And it tasted like something made with olive oil

Oil was used for anointing priests and kings and for healing the sick (Mark 6:13). Olive oil was fairly expensive because of everything involved in producing it and the fact that few people could own their own olive press. Moreover, Yisrael was 2-3 million people wandering in a desert and unable to plant their own olive trees. So the fact that Yisrael derived the benefit of this oil taste every time they ate the *man* was remarkable. The *man's* oil taste was also a promise of what they would one day have in the land and a promise of the anointed and healing man they would one day have access to...

*To him who overcomes, I will give to eat from the hidden man
(Revelation 2:17)*

3) Yom HaBikkurim (First Fruits)

Eschatology is the study of last things; by contrast, Yom HaBikkurim is a festival devoted to first things. This is also the day Yeshua was resurrected.

B'midbar 8 describes how the *Levi'im* (Levites) were to be cleansed and presented. The cleansing is mentioned 3 times (verses 5,6,15) and the presentation is mentioned 3 times (verses 11,13,15). This is no accident. The *Levi'im* were FIRST to be cleansed, THEN presented, in that order. We are first cleansed by Yeshua's sacrifice; THEN our bodies can be presented as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1).

I have taken the Levi'im in place of all the [FIRST] born sons of Yisrael. Of all the Yisraelites, I have given the Levi'im as gifts to Aharon and his sons to do the work in the tent of meeting on behalf of the Yisraelites, and to make atonement for them so that no plague will strike the Yisraelites when they go near the sanctuary
(B'midbar 8:18.19)

We see in the Haphtarah portion that the Levi'im were symbolic of things to come!

"Listen, O cohen gadol [high priest] Y'hoshua [Joshua] and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come..."
(Z'kharyah 3:8)

Rabbi Jack Farber has linked the Torah and Haphtarah portions to 1 Kefa. Kefa told the people receiving his letters that they were "set apart by the Spirit for obeying Yeshua the Messiah" (1 Kefa 1:2). As such, they were "a chosen people, the King's cohanim [priests], a holy nation, a people for G-d to possess. Why? In order to declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light!" (1 Kefa 2:9).

5) Shavu'ot (Pentecost)

[Moshe] gathered 70 of the leaders of Yisrael and placed them all around the tent of meeting. ADONAI came down in the cloud, spoke to [Moshe], took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the 70 leaders. When the Spirit came to rest on them, they prophesied, then but NOT afterwards.

(B'midbar 11:24,25)

Why not afterwards? The Spirit had left. This event also was a sign of something that was yet to come...

The Spirit came to rest on them (Acts 2:3)

In B'midbar 11, the Spirit came to rest on 70 individuals. In the Talmud we are told there are 70 nations of the world. The rabbis have also stated that the Torah was given on Shavu'ot and that "G-d's voice at Sinai was heard in all languages" (Shabbat 88b). The outpouring of G-d's Spirit was always intended for all mankind...

...I will pour out My Spirit on all humanity

(Yo'el [Joel] 3:1[2:28])

When the Spirit now comes through Yeshua, it comes to stay! (1 Corinthians 3:16).

5) Rosh Hashanah (Trumpets)

The blowing of shofarim (ram's horns) was an intimate part of Rosh Hashanah (Vayikra [Leviticus] 23:23). In B'midbar 10, Yisrael was commanded to fashion and use 2 silver trumpets. In verse 9, we read:

And when you go into battle in your land against the adversary who is distressing you, then you shall blow the trumpets, and you will be remembered before ADONAI your G-d

Sounds like rape whistles to me!

At your times of rejoicing - your appointed feasts and at Rosh Chodesh [the new moon, yet another festival connected to this week's Torah portion!] - you are to sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, and they will be a memorial for you before your G-d (B'midbar 10:10)

The connection to Acts 10:3,4 could hardly be stronger. To the gentile believer Cornelius, an angel of ADONAI said:

Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before G-d

As an aside, this demonstrates yet another connection between Torah portion B'ha'alot'cha and the appointed times (although not one of the main 7). Every 3 years, Yisrael was to remember the poor by giving them gifts (D'varim [Deuteronomy] 26:12-15).

6) Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)

The cohen gadol is the key player in Yom Kippur. The 3rd chapter of the Haphtarah portion is focused on Y'hoshua, the cohen gadol. David Stern recommends that Hebrews 3:1-6 (which focuses on the cohen gadol Yeshua) be included in the B'rit Chadasha readings for this week.

"Listen, O cohen gadol Y'hoshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring My Servant Tzemach [the Sprout, or the Branch]. Behold the stone I have set in front of Y'hoshua! There are 7 eyes on that stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it," says ADONAI, 'and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day.'"

What are the 7 eyes on the stone? Z'kharyah 4:10 gives the answer...

The [] seven are the eyes of ADONAI that range throughout the earth

But what is the stone in front of Y'hoshua?

Dani'el 2 talks about a cut rock but not one cut by human hands. This rock becomes a huge mountain that fills the whole earth. Verse 44 is noteworthy...

In the time of those kings [future kings that were to come], the G-d of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it itself will endure forever

This means that the kingdom G-d was going to set up could not have existed at the time Daniel wrote those words. Also, it also could not have existed at the time the Torah was given.

[W]e have received an unshakable Kingdom
(Hebrews 12:28)

So what is the inscription on the stone that was in front of Y'hoshua? Let's look again at Revelation 2:17:

To him winning the victory, I will give him a white stone, on which is written a new name that nobody knows except the one receiving it

In last week's Haphtarah reading, Shimshon [Samson]'s father asked G-d what His name was. The answer?: "Why do you ask My name? It is wonderful/miraculous/beyond full understanding" (Shof'tim [Judges] 13:18). Some of the ancients believed that you could evoke deity merely by uttering the deity's name. But G-d is someone we are to have a vital, living, intimate relationship with, not a special pet that we can get to do tricks for us by saying or doing just the right things!

7) Sukkot (Tabernacles)

Sukkot was a celebration initiated after the final harvest of all the crops of the land. Z'kharyah 3:10 is the perfect Sukkot image...

"In that day [i.e., the day when the land is atoned for in a single day], each of you will sit under his vine and fig tree" declares ADONAI

On Sukkot, Yisrael was to rejoice before ADONAI with branches. Let us rejoice before ADONAI with Tzemach - The Branch! (Z'kharyah 3:8). May The Sprout sprout deep roots into our hearts and lives, filling the entirety of our lives in the same way that the mountain in Dani'el chapter 2 fills the whole earth!

These 7 festivals are but 7 of the wonderful wonders of G-d's Word. They are living and vital, but they are incomplete without 1 ingredient...

8) Shabbat (The Sabbath)

Shabbat's importance supercedes even the importance of Yom Kippur. This is evidenced by the fact that the penalty for violating Yom Kippur was excommunication; the penalty for violating Shabbat - death.

Rabbi Jeff Feinberg linked this week's Torah portion with Revelation 11, which talks about 2 witnesses. These 2 are 2 specially anointed leaders. Of the 70 anointed leaders of B'midbar 11, 2 of them had a special anointing - Eldad and Medad.

Eldad
"G-d has loved"

Medad
"loving, affectionate"

Mightily, The Spirit came and rested on Eldad and Medad. Acts chapter 2 likens The Spirit that came down on that Shavu'ot to fire. Eldad and Medad were definitely 2 guys on fire!

Revelation 11 also describes 2 menorot (plural of menorah). What are the 2 menorot? Jewish and gentile believers together lighting a darkness of the world!

G-d's Shabbat is the fire that lights the 7 lamps of the menorah.

How's the menorah doing in your life?

Shabbat Shalom!