

# בְּהַעֲלֹתָךְ

## BE'HAALOTECHA (IN THE LIFTING UP)

Bemidbar (Numbers) 8:1-12:26

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For the next few weeks, much of what we read about in **Bemidbar (Numbers)** will not be about how the Israelites are **adjusting to wilderness life**, but rather how they are **yearning for the life they had in Egypt** where civilization was **highly advanced** and much more **predictable**. As we consider the possibility of the **prophesied 2<sup>nd</sup> Exodus** occurring in our lifetime, the words of the prophet Isaiah come to mind:

*Isaiah 46:10 Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'*

What are the **promises** that we can cling to? Will the Almighty tell us ahead of time what we need to know? Will we **repeat the mistakes** of the past? **Isaiah** again comes through with **answers**:

*Isaiah 42:9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I declare; Before they spring forth I tell you of them."*

*Isaiah 48:6 "You have heard; See all this. And will you not declare it? I have made you hear new things from this time, Even hidden things, and you did not know them.*

The **Word** of יהוה (Yahwey) is our **assurance**. It is our **job**, however, to **follow His commandments** as He continues to open our eyes to understand them. We must do this **without complaining or questioning His authority**. In this week's Parsha, we will see many of the **last minute instructions** given to the Israelites before they leave Mt. Sinai and head for the **Promised Land**. Sadly, they were **not able to uncompromisingly follow** the One who had **redeemed** them from Egypt and **betrothed** them at Mt. Sinai. Will we study their experiences and **learn from their mistakes**?

*1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. <sup>12</sup> Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*

We begin our Parsha with instructions about the **menorah**:

*Bemidbar 8:1 And יהוה spoke to Moses, saying: <sup>2</sup> "Speak to Aaron, and say to him, 'In the lifting up of (בְּהַעֲלֹתָךְ) the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light in front of the lampstand.' " <sup>3</sup> And Aaron did so; he arranged the lamps to face toward the front of the lampstand, as יהוה commanded Moses. <sup>4</sup> Now this workmanship of the lampstand was hammered gold; from its shaft to its flowers it was hammered work. According to the pattern which יהוה had shown Moses, so he made the lampstand.*

The name of our Torah reading...**Be’HaAlotecha** (בְּהֵעָלִיתָךְ) from verse 2 is difficult to translate. The verse above translates it as “**in the lifting up**”. It is perhaps easier to consider what it really means when you look at its **root** – **alah** (עָלָה) – which has the meaning of “**to go up**” or “**to ascend**”. This is the **same word** that is used when speaking of “**going up to Jerusalem**” and also the root of the phrase “**to make aliyah**” for those who immigrate to Israel. Another related word is **olah**, (עֹלָה) which you can see contains the **same Hebrew consonants** (vowels were added later to the Hebrew text). The olah was the **burnt offering** which the Apostle Paul also connected to us:

*Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of Yah, that you **present your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable to Yah, which is your reasonable service.<sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of Yah.*

Now Moses had already received some of these **instructions for the menorah** back in Shemot (Exodus 25). In Bemidbar וְהִנֵּחַ reiterates two commands:

- That **the menorah’s lamps should all be turned in the direction of the main trunk of the menorah** (the central stem from which the menorah’s arms extend).
- That **the entire menorah should be hammered out of a single block of gold.**

The menorahs that we are familiar with today **may not be accurate** according to these instructions. It is possible that the branches containing **the six lamps extended forward and upward** in what would look like a “**V**” if viewed from up above. The highest **central lamp** is called the “**servant**”, and it is plain to see that this symbolizes **Yeshua**...He is the **vine** and we are the **branches**. As **our lights** are turned in **His direction**, it represents our **keeping our eyes on the Messiah**. It is the entire **duty of the lamps** to point to the **central lamp, i.e. Yeshua**. John the Immerser (Baptist) was a **shining** (pardon the pun) **example**:

*John 5:35 "He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.*

It was the duty of the **High Priest to light the lamp**. **Yeshua** is our **High Priest**. It is **His life** that **lights our lamps**:

*John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with Elohim, and the Word was Elohim.<sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with Elohim.<sup>3</sup> All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.<sup>4</sup> In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.*

And here are our instructions once our **lamp** is lit:

*Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.<sup>15</sup> "Nor do they **light a lamp** and put it under a basket, but **on a lampstand**, and it gives light to all who are in the house.<sup>16</sup> "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

The light should **remain on the lampstand**. It **illuminates** our **good works** (the keeping of the commandments). **Lampstands** are also found in chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation. It is not surprising that **Yeshua the Messiah is in the midst of them**. Most of us have been taught that these **lampstands** are to be found in “**churches**”. But now we can see that these “**lampstands**” are **menorah’s**, and how many “**churches**” actually even have a **menorah** in their **midst**? It seems to make more sense from a Hebraic perspective, that these are **end-times Messianic congregations** in the **midst of the nations**. As we read the **compliments and the warnings** given to these assemblies, we must **take to heart what is said** lest our **High Priest** follows through with His warning **to remove our lampstand**, leaving us in the **dark**.

*Proverbs 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp, And the Torah a light....*

In Bemidbar 9 a **question** arises from those who have **not been able to offer the Passover sacrifice** because of **defilement**:

*Bemidbar 9:6 Now there were certain men who were defiled by a human corpse, so that **they could not keep the Passover on that day**; and they came before Moses and Aaron that day.<sup>7</sup> And those men said to him, "**We became defiled by a human corpse. Why are we kept from presenting the offering of פסח**" at its appointed time among the children of Israel?"*

This is interesting, because it is the **ONLY feast** that is of such importance that one may have a chance of **another date to observe it**:

*Bemidbar 9:9 Then פסח spoke to Moses, saying,<sup>10</sup> "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or is far away on a journey, he may still keep פסח's Passover.'<sup>11</sup> **'On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.'**<sup>12</sup> They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break one of its bones. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it.*

It was **imperative that the Passover be kept**....even if you were unclean or away on a journey. The **Passover was the starting point of all the other feasts**. If a person did not keep the Passover, he would be **cut off from the community**:

*Bemidbar 9:13 'But the man who is clean and is not on a journey, and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person shall be cut off from among his people, because he did not bring the offering of פסח at its appointed time; that man shall bear his sin.*

**Passover** is a picture of **personal salvation** which is **foundational to all subsequent phases of redemption**. The list below details the **cycle of the feasts** and how they relate to **Messiah** and to us:

- **Nisan (1<sup>st</sup> month) 14:** Day of Preparation of the Passover Lamb  
Yeshua was crucified and died for our sins
- **Nisan 15:** First day of the seven day Feast of Unleavened Bread  
A week of focusing on the redemption of the Bride from sin

- **Day following the Sabbath during the Week of Unleavened Bread** - when the Lamb and an omer of barley were waved on the altar  
Start counting fifty days to betrothal - time of maturing of the bride
- **50<sup>th</sup> Day – Shavuot (Pentecost)** – Day of Firstfruits - giving of the Torah  
Receiving of the Holy Spirit - celebrate betrothal of Messiah and Bride
- **Tishrei 1 (7<sup>th</sup> month)** – Feast of Trumpets  
Hear the shout (trumpet) of the archangel (1 Thess. 4:16), Yeshua's return for His bride
- **Tishrei 10** – Day of Atonement  
Purification of the bride
- **Tishrei 15** – Feast of Tabernacles  
Marriage supper of the Lamb
- **Tishrei 22** – Eighth Day  
Celebrating the eternal dwelling of Messiah and Bride

As you can see, you do not want to miss out on the **agenda of the Father!** All who were willing were to take part in the Passover....the unclean, the strangers, the natives of the land.... יהוה had **ONE TORAH** for all:

*Bemidbar 9:14 'And if a stranger dwells among you, and would keep יהוה's Passover, he must do so according to the rite of the Passover and according to its ceremony; you shall have **one ordinance, both for the stranger and the native of the land.**' "*

If there is any doubt in your mind that **you should be celebrating the Passover**, then you should study Ephesians 2:

*Ephesians 2:12 that at that time you were without Messiah, **being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without Elohim in the world.** <sup>13</sup> But now in Messiah Yeshua you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Messiah.*

You **USED to be aliens** from the common wealth of **Israel**, you **USED to be strangers** from the covenants of promise, but **NOW Yeshua brings you INTO this covenant**. You are **no longer apart from Israel!** By obeying **the commandments He has set up for Israel**, we will reflect **who He is** to a lost and hurting world. **It's His plan**. Let's not try to change it for something **we think works better**.

Chapter 11 begins the **incessant complaining** that will characterize this generation of Israelites:

*Bemidbar 11:1 Now when **the people complained**, it displeased יהוה; for יהוה heard it, and His anger was aroused. So the fire of יהוה burned among them, and consumed some in the outskirts of the camp.*

We don't even know what they were complaining about, but the Hebrew word is stronger than just "complaining". It actually describes the people as "evil". יהוה's anger is aroused and it says that **He consumed some of the outskirts of the camp**. Is this a description of people who are **farthest from the holiness which is at the center of the camp**? Is this a picture of those who were **not committed to the authority of יהוה**?

The people are smart enough to turn to Moses who intercedes for them. However, it is not the end of it. This time **an interesting group of people** are mentioned, and this time we are told of the **actual complaint**:

***Bemidbar 11:4** Now the **mixed multitude** who were among them yielded to intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: "Who will give us meat to eat?"<sup>5</sup> "We remember the **fish** which we ate freely in **Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic**;<sup>6</sup> "but now our whole being is dried up; there is **nothing at all except this manna** before our eyes!"*

This **mixed multitude of people**, the riff-raff (רִיפּ־רַאף), appear to be a **motley collection of people who followed Israel from Egypt**. There may have been **quite a number** of these non-Israelites as we suggested two weeks ago in the **Bemidbar** commentary. Well these folks complained about their **diets**. They had plenty of herds and flocks for meat, but these people specifically wanted **FISH**. Since the **Nile River contained an abundance of fish**, it was their main protein source in **Egypt**. There also would have been **abundant sources of fruits and vegetables** in Egypt. It is so, so sad to see that what they were **rejecting** was what they saw as the **dull, boring Manna!** The **Manna**, who we know to be **the Messiah, the living Torah...**their **sufficient sustenance** provided by the Almighty as they journeyed through the wilderness...**the diet of Moses!** Instead **they lusted for everything of Egypt**, and they also corrupted the children of Israel!

The Bible goes on to give a description of the **manna**:

***Bemidbar 11:7** Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its color like the color of bdellium.<sup>8</sup> The people went about and gathered it, ground it on millstones or beat it in the mortar, cooked it in pans, and made cakes of it; and its taste was like the taste of pastry prepared with oil.*

The sages say that the **manna** possessed "**the virtue of every pleasant savor and was agreeable to every taste.**" Why then would anyone reject it? I can actually think of a couple of reasons. First, **it had to be gathered every day and was not good the next day (unless it was Sabbath)**. This required a great deal of **dependence and trust in יהוה**, the provider. Would you be able to trust Him for your **day to day needs**? **Yeshua** had something to say about this:

***Matthew 6:31** "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"<sup>32</sup> "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.<sup>33</sup> "But seek first the kingdom of Adonai and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."<sup>34</sup> "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

A second reason for complaining about the manna may have had to do with **required preparation**. From its description, it doesn't appear that they ate it **raw**. That meant there was a certain amount of **preparation**

**involved.** Likewise should we find ourselves in the wilderness, on the way to the Promised Land...we can't expect it to be without **preparation.** We don't have to worry so much about the "food of Egypt". But the **manna...the living Torah...Yeshua...it requires preparation.** We need to **study, meditate, pray, keep the commandments and fellowship** with like-minded believers.

*Devarim (Deuteronomy) 8:3 "So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of יהוה".*

I certainly don't claim to have a clear picture of the **plan of the Almighty** to take us to the **Promised Land.** But here and there I find verses that really excite me. Let's start with the next verse in Bemidbar, and I want you to take special notice of the **DEW:**

*Bemidbar 11:9 And when the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna fell on it.*

There is an **end-times** scenario (i.e. **in the night**) in **Micah** where the **brothers of Israel (the tribes)** have **joined together.** The **Assyrian** (symbolic of the anti-Messiah) invades and there is a **prophecy** about the **remnant of Jacob (Israel):**

*Micah 5:7 Then the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples, like dew from יהוה , like showers on the grass, That tarry for no man Nor wait for the sons of men. <sup>8</sup> And the remnant of Jacob Shall be among the Gentiles, in the midst of many peoples, Like a lion among the beasts of the forest, Like a young lion among flocks of sheep, Who, if he passes through, Both treads down and tears in pieces, And none can deliver. <sup>9</sup> Your hand shall be lifted against your adversaries, and all your enemies shall be cut off.*

What I wanted you to notice is that **the remnant of Jacob**, who is **in the midst of many peoples**, is "**like DEW FROM יהוה**". The remnant is in the midst of all the nations, but He is **empowered!** Why is he empowered? Because in Bemidbar 11:9, it says that the **manna "fell on the dew"!** **The remnant of Jacob (dew) is covered by the Messiah!** Cool, huh?!!

Now back to the complaint of the **diet.** This really angered both Moses and יהוה:

*Bemidbar 11:10 Then Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, everyone at the door of his tent; and the anger of יהוה was greatly aroused; Moses also was displeased.*

This is a very **BAD** situation. Not only has the **manna been rejected**, but look at **where the people are standing.... "everyone at the door of his tent"**. This appears to speak of **separateness, not unity.** There is a lesson for us here, also. **We must not remain separate and arouse the anger of יהוה.** We can be **different from one another.** We are all **different parts of the body of Messiah**, but we must be **unified** in order to make it to the **Promised Land.**

Moses is angry and overwhelmed, but he is **not admonished by יהוה** in any way. Instead, יהוה provides a **solution:**

*Bemidbar 11:16* So יהוה said to Moses: "**Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may stand there with you.**"<sup>17</sup> "Then I will come down and talk with you there. **I will take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put the same upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone.**

This is a very interesting concept that יהוה will take of the Spirit that is upon Moses and put it upon the 70 (this number usually reflects the totality of the nations) chosen elders of Israel. Moses seems to be a vessel from which יהוה could draw upon to fill others. What a shadow picture of the Messiah who would become the source of the Holy Spirit for all who believe in Him!

Okay, let's skip over and take a look at Miriam and Aaron as they also enter the arena of complaining:

*Bemidbar 12:1* Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married; for he had married a Cushite woman.<sup>2</sup> So they said, "Has יהוה indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" And יהוה heard it.

Now your translation probably refers to Moses' wife being **Ethiopian**, not **Cushite**. That translation may once more be very misleading. The Hebrew word Cushite (כּוּשִׁיָּת) is based on a word meaning "dark-skinned". Is this a different wife, than the **Midianite wife** Moses took in Shemot 2, named **Zipporah**? We know that Zipporah was a **shepherdess** and therefore would have spent a lot of time in the sun to **darken her skin**. **Cush** is also associated with **Midianite territory in Habbakuk 3:7**.

So, making the assumption that this is the same woman, **what was Miriam and Aaron's problem with Moses' wife?** Remember that **Moses married Zipporah about 40 years earlier** when he had escaped to Midian from Egypt. **Moses left her behind** when he went back to Egypt. She only rejoined him on Israel's march out in the wilderness, **so Aaron and Miriam had only recently met her**. Not only that, but all the trouble and complaining that had just occurred was **instigated by people of foreign origin**. That may have easily put a **stigma on Moses' wife in their minds**. The **foreigners in their midst** had already caused big problems for them. What if **Moses was negatively influenced by his Cushite wife?**

The reality was, however, that the **Cushite wife** was only a front for **what was really bothering Miriam and Aaron**. What they were really upset about was **the lack of authority THEY seemed to have**. Weren't **THEY the older siblings?** Perhaps they were even upset by the **70 elders** who had been given **some of the spirit of Moses** and had **prophesied in the camp**. **Jealousy** can manifest itself in **complaining about others**.

Well, יהוה was **NOT happy** with Miriam and Aaron. It is **never a good idea to criticize Moses** (Torah)!

*Bemidbar 12:4* Suddenly יהוה said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out.<sup>5</sup> Then יהוה came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward.<sup>6</sup> Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, יהוה, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream.<sup>7</sup> Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My

house.<sup>8</sup> *I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of יהוה. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?"<sup>9</sup> So the anger of יהוה was aroused against them, and He departed.<sup>10</sup> And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam became leprous, as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper.*

If Cushite means “**dark skinned**” as we mentioned up above, then the “**whiteness**” of Miriam would be a **fit punishment for her offenses!** Why was **Aaron spared** from punishment? I don’t know other than to guess that it had something to do with his **position**. He had already been through the dedication process of the **High Priest**. For him to be suddenly set aside would leave a **vacancy not quickly and easily filled**. Perhaps יהוה made a **merciful “executive decision”** based on an **already fragile situation** among the people of Israel.

It is worth noting that **Aaron begs Moses for Miriam to be healed**. **The Presence of the Almighty** was right there, yet **Aaron turned his appeal to Moses**:

*Bemidbar 12:11 So Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my adonai! Please do not lay this sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned."<sup>12</sup> "Please do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!"*

Aaron understood the concept of approaching יהוה through an **intercessor**. Yeshua is our **intercessor** and we pray to the Father through Him. In the same way that the authority was given to Moses, **Yeshua says that all power and authority has been given to Him**:

*Matthew 28:18 And Yeshua came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.*

We end the Parsha with that **test of unity among the three leaders**...Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. They could actually be seen as pictures of:

- Torah (Moses)
- Priesthood (Aaron)
- Prophets (Miriam – Exodus 15:20)

They were meant to be a “**three-fold cord, not easily broken**” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). But the cord nearly **unraveled** when there was **dissension**. יהוה honors the **Torah** above the other two positions because **anything not based on Torah carries no weight**:

**Isaiah 8:20 To the Torah and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.**

**Yeshua, however, is everything**. He is the **living Torah**...He is our **High Priest**...He is the **Spirit of Prophecy** (Revelation 19:10)! **Baruch HaShem Messiah Yeshua!**

Shabbat Shalom,  
**Ardelle**