



The consequences of radical zeal

Parashat Pinehas (41) – Pinehas

Torah: *Bemidbar* 25:10 to 29:40

Haftarah: *Melakim Aleph* 18:46 to 19:20

Apostolic Scriptures: *Romiyim* 11:2-32

At the end of last week's *sidrah* we were introduced to *Pinehas*, son of *El'azar* and grandson of *Aharon*. With unprecedented zeal, he stabbed two people to death, simultaneously, with a spear. A plague broke out among the people as a result of physical and spiritual fornication with the daughters of the *Mo'abites*, an indirect consequence of the episode with *Bi'am* when he would speak only *YAH*'s words. Despite the blessings he pronounced upon them, we experience the human factor which is inherently corrupt. One commentator¹ puts it very well:

“The chapter is placed between the Balaam oracles and the second census account for theological and literary reasons. In relation to the Balaam oracles it shows that, even while God was blessing *Yisra'el* through Balaam on the heights of Peor, below on the plains of Moab *Yisra'el* was showing its weak and sinful character. The parallel between this incident and that of the *Torah* at *Sinai* and the golden calf (*Exod.* 20-32) is obvious.”

We have already learned that people's names also reflect their characters. Some names are very descriptive, but when we look at the meaning of *Pinehas*' name, it is almost laughable. The name is derived from two root words, פֶּה (*peh*), which translates as 'mouth' and נָחָשׁ (*na-Chash*), which translates as 'serpent'. The name *Pinehas* therefore means “serpent mouth” or “mouth like that of a serpent”! The only other person with this name possibly deserved it. He was one of the wicked sons of *Ēli*, the priest (*cf. Shemu'el Aleph* 1:3), brother of *Hophni*.

Jealousy is one of the biggest problems in our society. People get jealous of each other for the slightest reasons and most of it is actually useless. The enemy uses this trait as a tool not only to bring division between people, but also between man and *YAH*. However, there is one form of jealousy that is extremely positive and that is the jealousy that we should have on behalf of *YAH*. We read the words of *YAH* as He speaks to *Mosheh*:

Bemidbar 25 ¹¹“*Pinehas*, son of *El'azar*, son of *Aharon* the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of *Yisra'el*, because he was ardent with My ardour in their midst, so that I did not consume the children of *Yisra'el* in My ardour.

The word קָנָא (*qa-Na*) not only translates as 'jealousy', but also as 'zeal'. In this verse we read the inflection קִנְיָתִי (*qi-na-Ti*), “My jealousy/zeal”, spoken by none other than *YAH* Himself. He has a zeal to make every

¹ Ashley, Timothy R. *The Book of Numbers*. New International Commentary on the Old Testament series.

human a part of His kingdom. Man, in contrast, tries to live as far away from YAH as possible to hide his sinful lifestyle and do what he desires as a human. Fortunately, there is a line of people we learn about in Scripture who have a zeal for YAH, similar to what He has for each of us.

Balaq's plan to curse *Yisra'el* failed, so he now makes another plan – seduce the people through idolatry, which ultimately leads to their being seduced both morally and spiritually:

Bemidbar 25 ³Thus *Yisra'el* was joined to *Ba'al Pe'or*, and the displeasure of יהוה burned against *Yisra'el*.

The word בַּעַל (*Ba'al*) translates as 'master' and פְּעוֹר (*p'Or*) translates as 'gap', which more accurately refers to the female genitalia. It is therefore no wonder that mixed sex and orgies were the order of the day. For this reason we already read last week:

Bemidbar 25 ⁵And *Mosheh* said to the judges of *Yisra'el*, "Each one of you kill his men who were joined to *Ba'al Pe'or*."

During this process, זִמְרִי (*zim-Ri*), a *nasi* (prince, leader) from the tribe of *Shim'on*, literally took a woman of *Midyan*, כּוֹזְבִי (*koz-Bi*), into a tent in broad daylight and in public. *Zimri's* name translates as "my music" and *Kozbi's* name translates as 'false' or "to seduce". For *Pinehas*, it was just too much and he stood up, took his spear, entered the tent and pierced both of them at once – something that suggests that they were having intercourse at that point. Two words that stand out here in the original text are firstly קֶבֶה (*qu-Bah*) which is translated as 'tent' in most translations. However, it also means belly and this is the only place where it occurs in the *TaNaKh*. In later Rabbinic writings the word is used for 'brothel'. The second word we read is 'belly', therefore, instead of גּוּף (*guf*), body, or בָּשָׂר (*be-Sar*), flesh, the original text uses קֶבֶתָה (*qo-ba-Tah*), which translates as 'gap' or 'cavity', again alluding to the female genitalia. However, ironically, the word can also be used to mean "speak evil of" or 'curse'.

Both *Zimri* and *Kozbi* were from high social standing, as we learn from Scripture. *Zimri's* father was *Salu*, ruler of a house from the tribe of *Shim'on*, while *Kozbi's* father, *Tzur* (rock), held a similar position in one of the tribes of *Midyan*. *Pinehas* may have had a price on his head after this double murder, but because he acted in the name of YAH, he was protected and exalted.

This was such an important event that *Dawid* even recorded it in his poems:

Mizmor 106 ²⁸And they joined themselves to *Ba'al Pe'or*, And ate slaughtering made to the dead.

The action of *Pinehas* was extremely radical, but it saved the people from total destruction. A little leaven spoils the whole batch (cf. *Qorintiyim Aleph* 5:6-7). Here we see people continuing in rebellion, despite what they were warned against. We know that YAH is gracious in forgiving sinners who may err due to temporary weakness and then ask for forgiveness. However, there is a difference between weakness of spirit and deliberate rebellion. *Sha'ul* teaches us:

Qolasim 3 ⁵Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: whoring, uncleanness, passion, evil desire and greed of gain, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these the wrath of *Elohim* is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

Some scholars try to insinuate that *Pinehas* would never die, but this is metaphorical, in that the "eternal priesthood" would be carried on by his descendants. This covenant of peace would also protect *Pinehas* from the supporters and family of *Zimri* who might later seek retribution.

Immediately after this action of *Pinehas*, *YAH* commands *Mosheh* that the nation of *Midyan* should be considered an enemy and needs to be attacked. This is quite strange, because it was actually the *Mo'abites* who seduced the people. However, we see two transgressions that *Midyan* committed:

- 🥂 they devised a plan to seduce *Yisra'el* and cause them to fall into idolatry;
- 🥂 Their hatred towards *Yisra'el* was so great that they would even send one of their princesses and sacrifice her to achieve their goal.

In the *TaNaKh* we see two strange phenomena. The first is something that would normally be unacceptable. When scribes would write new *Torah* scrolls, the rule was that every letter had to be perfect. Letters were also not allowed to touch each other or appear inferior in any way. However, we see the word **שְׁלוֹם** (*sha-Lom*), peace, which is recorded in the original text of *Bemidbar* 25:12 as a broken letter **ו** (*vav*) – see accompanying illustration. We discuss this and other matters extensively in our series, *Language of Redemption*, currently aired on Silver Trumpet Radio every morning at 06:00.



On the *p'shat* level it means nothing, but on the *sud* level we see the brokenness of our *Mashiach* as He brings us the decisive salvation. The letter *vav* is the sixth letter of the *alephbet* and represents man, someone who is spiritually broken and has also broken the original covenant. The normal *vav* actually looks like a pin or nail, that which was used to nail *Yeshua*, our Salvation, to a torture stake. The broken *vav* can also mean that the word **שְׁלִים** (*sha-Lim*) is highlighted, something that translates as accomplished and indicates that the covenant, as *Yeshua* fulfilled it and came to renew, has been completed once and for all, not replaced as the christian church believes – now it is only for us to follow.

The second strange phenomenon is the incorrect break of the original text; three words (**וַיְהִי אַחֲרָיו הַמִּגֵּדָה**), “it came to be, after the plague”, which are added at the end of the previous chapter. However, we read them in most translations at the beginning of chapter 26. The reason given for this is that the death of the rebellious group, those who sided with the ten spies, has now finally been accomplished. From here on, all who are counted will enter the promised land.

Mosheh is therefore ordered to take another census. This time *El'azar* is included and this happens 39 years after the exodus from *Mitsrayim*. The tribe of *Lěwi* is again not included and we now see a decrease in numbers of about 1 820 in the total:

Bemidbar 26 ²“Take a census of all the congregation of the children of *Yisra'el* from twenty years old and above, by their fathers' houses, everyone going out to the army in *Yisra'el*.”

The last part of the verse makes it clear what it is all about. There is going to be war to get the enemy nations out of the promised land. This could even be done by one person, but *YAH* wants these people to realise that they should all stand in unity with Him. We also see a sharp decline in the numbers of *Shim'on*; one reason for this is the death of 24 000 during the plague due to their debauchery – keep in mind that *Zimri* was from the tribe of *Shim'on*. In contrast, the tribes of *Menashsheh*, *Binyamin*, *Ashěr* and *Yissaskar* had increased considerably and the general feeling is that they were blessed because they had no part in the debauchery. Declines in the numbers of the tribes if *Ephrayim*, *Naphtali* and *Gad* cannot be explained.

The other reason for the census is to determine the size of the territory for each tribe. Obviously, larger tribes will receive a larger territory. Therefore, we learn of three actions that arise as a result of the census:

- 🥂 distribution takes place proportionally;
- 🥂 the lot is cast;
- 🥂 the inheritance is awarded.

Looking at translations, irrespective of how well they are done, we lose certain information and meanings. In the narration of this *sidrah*, we see the word מִשְׁפָּחָה (*mish-pa-Chah*), family or tribe, more than 80 times! YAH's nation is made up of families, the foundation of the nation's survival. All peoples and cultures that allowed miscegenation and corruption to be part of their tradition eventually died out. The survival of a family lies in keeping faithful within the marriage covenant. In the Hebrew text we also see two letters added to each tribe's most important name: the letter ה (*hei*) at the beginning and the letter י (*yud*) at the end.

The letter *hei* always indicates the definite article, the. The letters *yud* and *hei* are the first two letters of the tetragrammaton, YAH's entire Character and Authority (Name) and is many times used together as an abbreviation, as in יה, YAH, as we prefer to use it as well. By embracing each family's name with His Character, it teaches us that each family belongs to YAH. He is literally before and behind them for protection. The *yud* represents the male aspect and the *hei* represents the female aspect. This teaches us that each family is formed by the union of the father and the mother. One of the songs sung for the going up to the festivals also clearly shows this in the Hebrew text. Our preferred translation states it clearly:

Mizmor 122 ⁴Where the tribes have come up, The tribes of Yah, A witness to Yisra'el, To give thanks to the Name of יהוה. [emphasis added]

A middle-aged man visited a rabbi in the land of Yisra'el and said he was considering emigrating to Yisra'el. The rabbi wanted to know why he would want to do such a thing and his answer was that it would take his spiritual development to a deeper level. The rabbi laughed at him and said to him in Yiddish: "*Mach doh erets Israel!*" This translates as: "Make an Israel out of where you are now." Where YAH has placed you is where He wants you; all you have to do now is to put your ear to His mouth, to unite your heart with His heart, to synchronise, so that you can know what His will is for your life. Nothing will please Him more and you will be the happiest person in the world.

According to tradition, the names of the twelve tribes were placed in one container and drawings of the outlines of the twelve portions of the land in another container. The high priest, El'azar, in full priestly regalia with the *urim* and *tummim*, would take a name from one container and announce the name of the tribe. The leader of that tribe was then to take a card from the other container and by heavenly intercession it would be the portion of the land allotted to that tribe:

Bemidbar 26 ⁵⁵But the land is divided by lot, they inherit according to the names of the tribes of their fathers.

In the original text we read the words עַל פִּי הַגּוֹרָל (*`al pi ha-go-Ral*) which literally translates as "through the mouth of fate".

When the tribe of Lěwi is counted, we notice that several names are missing if we compare it to the previous count. Most scholars are of the opinion that a large part of the Lěwites were massacred in the war against the king of Arad (cf. *Bemidbar* 21:1). They apparently pursued the enemy forces and tried to drive them back, but after a fierce battle they were wiped out along with seven other families (cf. *Bemidbar* 26:57). Despite this, there are one thousand more Lěwites than in the previous count! The only people who came out of Mitsrayim and would enter the promised land are Kalēb and Yehoshua – the rest have already died in the wilderness as determined by YAH.

The daughters of צִלְפָּחָד (*tze-laf-e-Chad*), from the tribe of Menashsheh, are faced with a problem. They realise they will have no part in the new land, therefore they approach Mosheh, El'azar and the elders to lament their fate. Their defence is, among other things, that their father was not part of the rebellion of Qorah. They request that their father's name not be removed from the tribe on the account of him not having any sons. As with the person collecting wood on *Shabbat*, this is similar to the permission that YAH

grants people who are unclean during *Pěsaḥ*. *Mosheh*'s uncertainty requires him to inquire from *YAH* to get clarification on this matter. This teaches us that no one, not even *Mosheh*, who spent three months on the mountain with *YAH*, has all the answers. It is also a sign of humility and something that each of us should apply at all times.

Tselophḥad's name translates as 'firstborn'; we also see the word *echad* at the end of his name. The case of the daughters, *Maḥlah* (sickness), *No'ah* (movement, to shake), *Hoḡlah* (partridge), *Milkah* (queen), and *Tirtsah* (pleasant, well-disposed), is attended to and *YAH* decrees that they will each receive a share in the new land. Several other rules are added to address any similar cases in the future.

Some scholars believe that *Mosheh*'s hope was sparked by this case, that he might be granted entry to the new land, since an exception and new rules were made regarding the laws of inheritance. However, his hope is quickly dampened when *YAH* commands him to climb Mount *Aḡarim* and look at the land that the nation of *Yisra'ēl* will enter. He is reminded of his rebellion with *Aharon* at *Meribah* and *Qadēsh*, after which he requests that *YAH* appoint someone in his place so that the people may not be like sheep that have no shepherd.

YAH commands *Mosheh* to appoint *Yehoshua ben Nun* as his successor. *Yehoshua*, son of *Nun*, can also be abbreviated as *Yeshua*. If we follow only *Mosheh*, we too will come out of *Mitsrayim*, delivered from slavery, but only to the grave. However, if we follow *Yeshua*, the man who came like *Mosheh* to complete the work (cf. *Deḡarim* 18:15), we will move from the grave past the cross and also be delivered from our sins. This will then bring us into a new land where we will live with *YAH* forever (cf. *Ḥazon* 21 and 22 in their entirety).

The name of *Nun*, *Yehoshua*'s father, means to sprout, to reproduce. It is also one of the Hebrew letters, which translates as 'fish' and has a value of 50, the number of deliverance. There were 50 days between *Yisra'ēl*'s exodus from *Mitsrayim* and the receiving of the *Torah* at *Sinai* when the first part of their deliverance was completed. The number 50 also refers to the Jubilee, the great festive occasion of our final deliverance. The *gematria* of *הגאולה* (*ha-ge-u-lah*), the salvation, is exactly 50!

The letter *nun* is strongly associated with our Messiah. One of his names is *Yinon*, derived from the letter *nun* and translated as "he will rule." From the smartest man on earth we learn:

Mizmor 72 ¹⁷Let His Name be forever, His Name continue before the sun; And let them bless themselves in Him; Let all nations call Him blessed.

While there is nothing remarkable in any translation, we see the original text reading: *לפני שמש ינון שמו* – *lifnei shemesh yinon shemoh* – His name [*Yinon*] will be forever (has existed), or; as long as (time and place) the sun is there. The letter *nun* is the fourteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. King *Dawid*'s name in Hebrew, *דוד*, has a *gematria* of 14 (*dalet* = 4, *vav* = 6; 4+6+4 =14, cf. *Mattithyahu* 1:17). Through this we also see the relationship between *Yehoshua*, the son of *Nun*, and *Dawid*. *Yeshua*, as the descendant of *Dawid*, is the abbreviation of *Yehoshua*, son of *Nun*.

The last mystery we want to look at here is with the two letters *nun* in the name of *Yehoshua*'s father, *ינון*. The first salvation is through the first *nun* and is connected to the last *nun* by the letter *vav*, whose numerical value is 6, the number of man who was created on the sixth day. The last *nun* is slightly longer², which shows us that the final salvation of man would have to reach below the earth to bring about the resurrection of the dead with the return of *Yeshua*.

² Five letters of the Hebrew alphabet change shape when they are the last letter of a word.

When we studied the rules regarding the seven set-apart festivals a few weeks ago in *Wayyiqra* 23, we also learned about the associated sacrifices. For the very first time, we now learn of another sacrifice that needs to be offered during the celebration of the beginning of a month with the new moon. This is the same as the sacrifice during *Pěsaḥ*, but it seems as if the goat, which is mentioned last, was actually offered first as a sin offering (cf. *Shemoth* 29; *Wayyiqra* 5; 8; 9; 14; 16). The most important thing we learn here is that the new moon, or month, is just as important to *YAH* as *Shabbat* and the festivals. Note that there is no command here to spend the day like a *Shabbat*, but only to acknowledge it in gratitude and bring offerings. One very important point that *Maimonides* makes is seen in the words:

Bemidbar 28 ¹⁵ and one male goat as a sin offering to יהוה is prepared, besides the continual ascending offering and its drink offering.

It is a clear command that the new month, at the time of the new moon, be announced and acknowledged. *Dawid's* spiritual companion, *Asaph*, recorded this for us:

Mizmor 81 ³ Blow a *shopar* in the New moon, in the covering for the day of our festival. ⁴ For this is a law for *Yisra'el*, And a right-ruling of the *Elohim* of *Ya'aqob*. ⁵ He appointed it in *Yehosēph* for a witness, When He went throughout the land of *Mitsrayim*; I heard a language that I did not know.

We notice an interesting spelling of *Yosef's* name in Hebrew, where a ה (*hei*) is added – we read יהוסף instead of יוסף. The first three letters of the tetragrammaton appear here as well as the first three letters of *Yehoshua's* name. *Yosef* is one of the key figures as a reference to our Messiah for every person on earth. His ministry in *Mitsrayim* brought about not only the ultimate salvation of his own people, but also everyone who becomes part of *Yisra'el* through recognition of sin and being born from above.

We mentioned moon worship last year and emphasise once again that this is not our intention to allude to worship the moon. Please review last year's version for more information. However, we would like to emphasise here that some people believe that the moon specifically indicates the month and subsequent *Shabbats* – something that is not recorded in Scripture. Other groups of people disregard the moon altogether and adhere only to a calendar indicated by the sun. Both of these groups practice serious deception and we strongly advise believers to stay away from such.

We covered all the festivals almost three months ago, but the most important thing to learn here is the fulfillment of the first four festivals – what *Yeshua* has already done for us. The Passover lamb on *Pěsaḥ*, unleavened bread that refers to the seven thousand years during which all can receive forgiveness of sins. The first day of unleavened bread is a reference to *Yeshua's* first coming and the last day to his second coming. The festival of weeks, *Shabu'ot*, teaches us that the redemption of the first coming is completed, when *Yeshua* begins to serve in the heavenly tabernacle as the high priest according to the order of *Malkitsedeq*. The first day of the seventh month is a reference to *Yeshua's* second coming, the tenth day to our reward that we will receive and from the fifteenth day we, as bride, will celebrate with him for the seven thousand years. On the eighth day, after the celebrations, the new *Yerushalayim* descends to earth with everlasting joy.

In addition to this description, the festival of *Sukkoth* is also described in *Wayyiqra* 23:34-43 and *Deḇarim* 16:13-15. When we compare the different descriptions of the festival, there are three major differences between *Wayyiqra* and *Bemidbar*:

- ☞ *Bemidbar* 29:12-38 mentions many more animals being sacrificed on each of the eight days, while these are only enumerated in *Wayyiqra*.
- ☞ *Wayyiqra* 23:33-43 emphasises the celebration of the festival and its purpose of recalling the period in the wilderness with their stay in temporary huts, something that is not mentioned in any way in *Bemidbar* 29:12-38.

🥂 *Bemidbar* makes no mention of the types of trees used in the celebration we read about in *Wayyiqra* 23:40-43.

However, we should take note of three particular ways in *Bemidbar* 29:12-34 in which sacrifices were brought during *Sukkoth*:

- The first day begins with 13 bulls and the last day ends with 7, giving us a total of 70 bulls. The offerings include asking for protection for the 70 nations of the world;
- the offerings differ from day to day;
- there is a special drink offering (which we will discuss shortly).

The bulls decreasing by one each day indicates that each nation, also each individual, who opposes YAH's teachings, will gradually become weaker with time. A total of 98 lambs are sacrificed, holding back the 98 curses that we will learn about much later in *Debarim* 28. When it comes to the drink offering for each sacrifice, we also see quite insightful aspects. In vv. 16, 22, 25, 28 and 34 the singular, נִסְכָּה (*nis-Kah*), drink offering, is used. However, drink offerings, plural, are spoken of three times, with two different spellings. The first instance is in v. 18 where we find the word נִסְכֵּי־הֶם (*nis-ke-Hem*). A redundant letter מ (*mem*) is added here. At v. 31 we read נִסְכֵּי־הָאֵלֹהִים (*ne-sa-Chei-ha*) where a י (*yud*) was added. Finally, in v. 33 we see again the word נִסְכֵּי־הֶם (*nis-ke-Hem*), also with the redundant מ. These three exceptional letters spell the word מַיִם (*Ma-yim*), which translates as water.

At each festival and also during the daily sacrifices, only the prescribed amount of wine was offered as a drink offering, about 1.5 liters (a quarter of a *hin*). During *Sukkoth*, the priests not only offered their usual drink offerings, but also a quantity of water. This water would be obtained from a nearby spring each morning and carried by various methods from the blowing of the *shofar* to the *mishkan*, later the temple, where it would be joyfully poured out with the drink offering during the evening sacrifice. This event is known as שְׂמִיחַת בֵּית הַשּׁוֹאֵבָה (*Sim-chat beit ha-sho-e-Va*), "rejoicing of the house of (water) pouring". This celebration would continue until the midnight hours. The reason for this was twofold:

1. To show gratitude for the year's harvests that were completed with provision for adequate water;
2. a plea for enough water that would provide for a fruitful harvest in the coming year.

A few weeks ago, during our study of *parashat naso*, we mentioned *Yeshua* possibly participating in this festival during the feast of *Sukkoth*:

Yohanan 7 ³⁷And on the last day, the great day of the festival, יהושע stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me, and let him who believes in Me drink. ³⁸"As the Scripture said, out of His innermost shall flow rivers of living water."

Yeshua usually linked His teachings to events or occasions, even to natural phenomena such as plants, flowers even rocks and trees. This case was no different. While the priests rejoiced in the festival with the pouring out of water, *Yeshua* prophesied of living water that would flow from every person as he or she was filled with the Spirit who was set apart. The festival of *Sukkoth* is a reference to the joyful time after *Yeshua*'s return and is announced by several prophets:

Zekaryah 14 ⁸And in that day it shall be that living waters flow from *Yerushalayim*, half of them toward the eastern sea and half of them toward the western sea, in summer as well as in winter. ⁹And יהוה shall be Sovereign over all the earth. In that day there shall be one יהוה, and His Name one.

We also read:

Yeshayahu 12 ³And you shall draw water with joy from the fountains of deliverance.

That deliverance that *Yeshayahu* speaks of is *Yeshua*, who died a horrible death on a torture stake once and for all of us. However, without knowledge of *Torah* and the background of sacrifices, we would have no idea how to thank and honour *YAH* for the gift He gave us and how to appreciate *Yeshua*. It is therefore important to take these words to heart and not only meditate on them seriously, but also put them into practice daily:

Bemidbar 29 ³⁹These you prepare to יהוה at your appointed times, besides your vowed offerings and your voluntary offerings, as your ascending offerings and your grain offerings, as your drink offerings and your peace offerings.

Preachers are often expected to act or deliver messages as requested or wished for by their followers or congregation members. As difficult as it may be to please everyone, there are nevertheless some who give in to temptation because they believe that their survival depends on those people. Under the guise of “we give our all for all people”, there are some preachers who do give in to temptation, even if it is just to see what they can get out of it. While it may sometimes be necessary to make concessions in our lives, it is important to know that success in life – including a life of word ministry – can only be ensured by our own desires and not those of others. May it be our desire to, like *Pinehas*, be able to strengthen our lives with the same zeal that he had and of which *Sha’ul* also teaches us after his encounter with *Yeshua*:

Ma’asei 26 ¹⁹“Therefore, Sovereign Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

We conclude with the words of a modern sage³:

“As we, the modern readers of Numbers, think scripturally, this overwhelming emphasis on sacrificial worship has one intent: to cause each reader to think of the enormity of the offense of our sin against the holiness of God, thus driving the repentant sinner to the foot of the Cross. All sacrifices—whether of the morning or evening, of Sabbath or New Moon—have their ultimate meaning in the death the Savior died. Apart from his death, these sacrifices were just the killing of animals and the burning of their flesh with attendant ceremonies. After his death, sacrifices such as these are redundant—indeed, offensive—for they would suggest that something was needed in addition to the Savior’s death. But before his death, these sacrifices were the very means God gave his people in love to help them face the enormity of their sin, the reality of their need for his grace, and—in some mysterious way—to point them to the coming cross of Savior Jesus.”

We have gone through this book of *Torah* so fast and in the will of our Father, we will complete it next week with a double blessing: the last two *parashot* of *Bemidbar*. May everyone’s preparation for it be blessed!

Shabbat shalom!

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Sources:

We prefer to not use the word ‘God’, because of personal conviction. In most cases, unless quoted from another source, it will be replaced by ‘*Elohim*’ or inflections of the same word.

All citing of Scripture is taken from The Scriptures 2009, unless indicated differently.

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³ Allen, Ronald B. “Numbers In Genesis.”—Numbers. Vol. 2 of The Expositor’s Bible Commentary p. 949

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