



*“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls,
46 and upon finding a single pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and
bought it.*

Matthew 13:45

5th March 2022

2 Adar II 5782

Pekudei - ‘Account’

Exodus 38:21-40:38

Shabbat Shalom Talmadim,

Blessings for a great Shabbat, and for the week ahead. From Shabbat to Shabbat may the name of the Lord be praised.

We have now journeyed through the whole book of the Exodus. Parsha Pekudei is generally combined with Parsha Vayek’hel which means ‘He assembled’. In context to previous Chapters, we find that we are still going through the process of gathering and preparing, making and setting apart. In essence that process runs through the whole of the book of Exodus, and that will be my focus of insight in this study.

When we finish, we will find that the journey of the Exodus is the story of us all. There is not one believer who will not be able to lay their lives upon the blueprint of this trek and not say that it does not belong to them.

The Exodus journey tells us the account of how YHVH dealt — working with grace, patience and compassion, with persons and peoples to get them through a journey that will be the beginning of the fashioning of a nation. This journey, outlining a process that will lead them to salvation and to a promised land, will end when the full number of His people will have been gathered.

Romans 11

25 For, brothers, I want you to understand this truth which God formerly concealed but has now revealed, so that you won’t imagine you know more than you actually do. It is that stoniness, to a degree, has come upon Isra’el, until the Gentile world **enters in its fullness**; **26** and that it is in this way that all Isra’el will be saved. As the *Tanakh* says,

“Out of Tziyon will come the Redeemer;
he will turn away ungodliness from Ya’akov

and this will be my covenant with them, . . .
when I take away their sins.” CJB

We can see so much in this one chapter in the book of Romans that gives us an outline of YHVH's plan for His people. We see the constant ebb and flow in His relationship with them — how He is extracting a remnant from the world, changing them, helping them to understand Him, laying down a foundation of laws and precepts that help contain, construct and consecrate the community in Abraham's caravan, the whole house of Jacob.

We have read how the people, if they are to survive, must learn to adjust and change their life experiences to become a new people, set apart to YHVH.

The Torah in its entirety revolves around the sets of fundamental precepts that are established in this book. The story of Exodus almost ends where it began. We will see in a moment where this is.

Where the book of Exodus establishes a community basis of law, we have only an introduction to what responsibilities will be placed upon the priests, who themselves will be a separate tribe among the whole of the tribes of Israel. In addition, Leviticus, the priestly book, outlines their religious and ritual laws more clearly.

The book of Exodus, as we saw right at the very beginning of our studies, is called 'Shemot' which means 'names'. The title really has nothing to do with the journey itself but has everything to do with the people who are mentioned in the narrative. We are told that the whole family of Jacob had journeyed to Egypt and thus the names of the sons of Jacob are mentioned from the outset.

We are told that the Israelites had prospered but things would change drastically as Joseph and what he established disappeared into the ether as a new and unsympathetic Pharaoh arose, and literally turned all that had been done upside down.

On a side note, we see here how, when the Lord's people remain close to Him and prosper, the nation they live in prospers too. Though they did not know it, Israel was to be a light and a flow of life to the nation. Their bondage can come only through a time of neglecting their relationship with God and thus rulers will rise to steal all that they have done. In addition the enemies of Israel will conspire to make them a defeated people and will find ways of eliminating and dehumanising them. In essence what will happen is that the identity of the people will begin to erode and make them weaker.

The Nazis during the WWII developed a whole machine by which to eradicate the Jews. Though many other races and cultures suffered, the final solution was focused upon Israel. They designed a way to remove the identity of the people, shaving their heads and giving them uniforms and yellow stars. It was hard to tell who was male and who was female. Let us not forget, that prior to the war, the Jewish communities prospered and brought welfare to the communities in which they lived.

Education, finance and industry grew, employing many and enriching society. But soon someone would arise to see this prospering group as being too influential and arrogant. They needed to be brought down. Power and wealth had to be allowed to all of society not just to a few, especially the Jews.

A new regime was designed and the Jews had no place in it. Placing them into servitude under appalling inhumane conditions would be a way of getting a workforce to help build the new empire.

It is an all too familiar story when laid beside the pattern we find in Exodus.

However, we must realise that the pattern repeated itself during the future exilic periods of the Jews.

The promise of YHVH to Abraham will ultimately lay the foundation of the times and situations to come. YHVH is an unchanging God. He does not deal with the arrogance and the disobedience of His people in a new way. His ways are established. However, He will not contend with man forever.

The second chapter gives us the first significant name — ‘Moses.’

We know Moses and Aaron are key players within the scenes, but can you figure out the other members of the cast that have more than a bit part in this story?

Parsha Pekudei, begins with an accounting or really a tally/inventory of what is brought in by the people to build the Mishkan.

The quantity of gold and silver is recorded and Bezalel and Oholiab are mentioned again, but it is not clearly defined as to how much of the precious metals were used on each specific item to be made. The metals are weighed according to the sanctuary shekel. The amount brought in gold, silver and copper are absolutely staggering and even more so if we equate it to today’s worth.

It is approximated that the sanctuary or temple shekel weighed about 10g. However, no one knows for sure what the exact weight was during the time of Moses. A talent weighed 3000g. The gold alone weighed in at twenty-nine talents and seven hundred and thirty shekels.

A rough estimate would place the amount of gold at just under a ton and at today’s value that would equate to £41,517,000.

The book of Chronicles 22:14 tells us that an even more staggering amount of gold, some 100,000 talents, was procured by David.

For over ten chapters we have been reading about how the Mishkan should be built. We began in chapter 25, parsha ‘Terumah’ - ‘contributions’, when the offerings to build the tabernacle, from the people had to be taken. The detail of all the furnishings build up throughout the remaining chapters.

We can see that the narrative is protracted and that there does not seem to be any chronology. However, what we can see is that the people are moving toward celebrating their first Passover in the wilderness. The last one, a foreshadow, was observed in Egypt. From the 10th day to the 21st day of the first month, from the intaking of the lamb for slaughter to the end of the seven days of leavened bread, the people prepared. Remember that the removing of leaven from the house was a shadow picture of the consecration of the priests.

The taking of the offerings occurs around the time of the giving of the law - the third month.

EX19: 1 In the *third month* after the people of Isra’el had left the land of Egypt, the same day they came to the Sinai Desert. 2 After setting out from Refidim and arriving at the Sinai Desert, they set up camp in the desert; there in front of the mountain, Isra’el set up camp. 3 Moshe went up to God, and *Adonai* called to him from the mountain:

So we can see that from the third month, in which Shavuot or Pentecost is observed, the building of the Mishkan proceeds. Roughly, some nine or ten months later, around about the end of the book of Exodus and heading for Pesach, the people are hard at work, building in readiness, the tabernacle of the Lord.

When we read Parsha Pekudei, we can therefore see more than just a tally of materials for the building of the Mishkan. We see the gathering of the people — a joining and a journey of the bride of Messiah as He gathers her to His tent. A year previously, the people were in bondage. Their travel thus far, is only the beginning of a tempestuous trial. We see that what they offer to YHVH to build His house, had to come under the hands of craftsmen, the heat of the fire the tempering of the water and the weight of the hammer. It is a process we all have to go through. The Story of the

Exodus, the book of names, begins with a calling out; it begins with identifying us, personally and also adding us to the list.

It is the story of change and the trials we must all endure. My friends, we do however have to be aware also, that all those who left on the journey had choice. Only a few of the Israelites left their Egyptian prison. We have been given choice too. We are called to be a people of faith and to trust YHVH for His outcome and plan for us. However, whatever we decide, whether it is for a good outcome or not, we cannot be removed from that plan.

Finally, how long have you been in your faith journey? Do you need to make a tally too?

Remember this; the Lord will never give us more than we can bear. He is the beginning and the end. Isaiah 41:10 is the word the Lord has placed on my heart this week. Let me share it with you.

**‘Do not fear [anything], for I am with you;
Do not be afraid, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you, be assured I will help you;
I will certainly take hold of you with My righteous right hand [a hand of justice, of power, of victory, of salvation].’AMP.**

Finally let me also bless you with the words of this hymn:

*When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word,
What a glory He sheds on our way!
While we do His good will, He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.*

*Trust and obey, for there's no other way
To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.*

*Not a shadow can rise, not a cloud in the skies,
But His smile quickly drives it away;
Not a doubt or a fear, not a sigh or a tear,
Can abide while we trust and obey.*

Be blessed and walk in the Light of His love and may this Shabbat bring harmony and peace to your week.

Until next time.

Shabbat Shalom
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Numbers 6:

24 ‘Y’varekh’kha Adonai v’yishmerekha.

[May Adonai bless you and keep you.]

25 Ya’er Adonai panav eleikha vichunekka.

[May Adonai make his face shine on you and show you his favour.]

26 Yissa Adonai panav eleikha v’yasem l’kha shalom

[May Adonai lift up his face toward you and give you peace.]

Glossary

Midrash: In Judaism, the **Midrash** is the genre of rabbinic literature which contains early interpretations and commentaries on the Written Torah and Oral Torah (spoken law and sermons), as well as non-legalistic rabbinic literature (*Aggadah*) and occasionally the Jewish religious laws (*halakha*), which usually form a running commentary on specific passages in the Hebrew Scripture (*Tanakh*)

Targum: **Targum Onkelos** (or **Onqelos**), is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum (Aramaic translation) to the Torah. However, its early origins may have been western, in Israel. Its authorship is attributed to Onkelos, a famous convert to Judaism in Tannaic times (c. 35–120 CE)

Targum Jonathan: **Targum Jonathan**), otherwise referred to as **Targum Yonasan/ Yonatan**, is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum to the Nevi'im/Prophets. Its early origins, however, are western (i.e. from the Land of Israel), and the Talmudic tradition attributes its authorship to Jonathan ben Uzziel of Jerusalem in the time of King Herod

Tannaim: Tannaim were the Rabbinic sages whose views are recorded in the Mishnah, from approximately 10-220 CE. The period of the Tannaim, also referred to as the Mishnaic period, lasted about 210 years.

Talmud: The **Talmud** means "instruction, learning", "teach, study") is a central text of Rabbinic Judaism. The term "Talmud" normally refers to the collection of writings named specifically the **Babylonian Talmud** (*Talmud Bavli*), although there is also an earlier collection known as the Jerusalem Talmud (*Talmud Yerushalmi*) or Palestinian

The Talmud has two components:

1. The Mishnah (c. 200 CE), the first written compendium of Judaism's Oral Law;
2. The Gemara (c. 500 CE), an elucidation of the Mishnah and related Tannaitic writings that often ventures onto other subjects and expounds broadly on the Hebrew Bible

Jubilees: The Book of Jubilees claims to present "the history of the division of the days of the Law, of the events of the years, the year-weeks, and the jubilees of the world" as revealed to Moses (in addition to the Torah or "Instruction") by angels while he was on Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights. The chronology given in Jubilees is based on multiples of seven; the jubilees are periods of 49 years, seven "year-weeks", into which all of time has been divided

Vulgate: This is the Latin Bible. Translated from the Hebrew and Aramaic by Jerome between 382 and 405 CE, this text became known as the 'versio vulgata', which means 'common translation'.

Rashi, whose real name is Shlomo Yitzchaki was born in France in the 11th century. Rashi wrote a comprehensive commentary on the Talmud and commentary on the Hebrew Bible.

Moses ben Maimon, also known as Maimonides became better known by the acronym Rambam. He was born in 1138 in Cordoba, Spain. He was a Sephardic Jew and influential philosopher. He is considered to be among the greatest of Torah Scholars.

Nachmanides- 13th century French Jewish Philosopher, commonly known by the acronym; Rambam.