



Parasha Beha'alotecha

June 6, 2020

Torah: Numbers 8:1-12:15

Haftarah: Zechariah 2:14-4:7

Sh'lichim: Hebrews 3:1-6

Shabbat Shalom Mishpocha! In today's *parasha*, *Beha'alotecha*, sometimes pronounced as *Beha'alotcha*, Israel is in the Sinai Desert and they have been there for almost a year. They have built the Tabernacle and its furniture and consecrated the *Kohanim*. *B'halotkha* means "when you set up" and is referring to the *menorah* being placed in the Holy Place in the Tabernacle. In this *parasha*, the Levites, the *Levi'im* are also consecrated. Instructions were also given to allow those who missed *Pesach* on Nisan 14 an opportunity to participate in *Pesach Sheni*, the second Passover ceremony a month later. Other things in this *parasha* are the clouds which ADONAI placed over the Tabernacle while they were camped and lifted when the group was to move on. Two silver trumpets were made and instruction for their use was given; they would be used to summon the leaders of the tribes or sometimes the whole community. They would also signal travel plans, war or festivals.

In the second month of the second year, six days after the Second Passover, the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle. The order in which the tribes were to break camp and to travel was given. Israel left the wilderness of Sinai, marched for three days and camped in the wilderness of Paran where the cloud stopped. Some of the people complained about the hardship and the fire of ADONAI broke out. The complainers also grumbled about the lack of meat and Moses complained to ADONAI about how hard it was to deal with all the people. ADONAI told him to bring seventy elders to the Tabernacle and He would place some of the Spirit on him on them. ADONAI became angry with the complainers and brought a severe plague. *Miryam* and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman he married and also seemed to be jealous of his position. ADONAI brought leprosy on *Miryam* and after Moses cried for Him to heal her, ADONAI's judgment was that she was remain outside the camp for seven days and could then be brought back in.

The Tabernacle represented ADONAI's holiness and was the worship center for Israel, the way that they could not only worship Him, but also have their sins forgiven. Some of the offerings, such as the Peace Offering were for worship and other offerings for sin. The importance of the Tabernacle to the daily life of Israel is shown in the way that ADONAI had the nation to travel. *Beha'alotecha* tells us that they travelled in groups of three tribes with one as leader. As soon as the Tribe of Judah led out of camp with the other two tribes, the sons of Gershon and Merari, the Levites, were to begin dismantling and packing the Tabernacle for travel. The sons of Kohath, the Levites responsible for the transport of the Sanctuary and all of the furnishings would also have to pack at this same time. But, the Sanctuary and furnishings did not travel until the second group of three tribes led by Reuben travelled. Then the Kohathites set out with the sanctuary and furnishings. *Torah* says: *21 Then the Kohathites set out, carrying the holy items. The Tabernacle was to be erected before their arrival* (Numbers 10:21 TLV). Then Ephraim set out leading two tribes and then the final three tribes led by Dan. It was important that the Tabernacle be set up and ready to function right away.

Everything that was in the Tabernacle is a representation of the ministry of Yeshua in some way. The most obvious, spiritual meaning of the *menorah*, the holy object described in today's *parasha*, is that Yeshua is light, and as He described Himself, is "the light of the world." But, in my estimation, the most significant portrayal of Yeshua within the Tabernacle is the person of the High Priest. The most vivid picture of an event which happened in the Tabernacle in the wilderness is Aaron within the Holy of Holies sprinkling goat's blood on the Ark of the Covenant to atone for the sins of the people. But, to protect himself from the holiness of ADONAI, he had to first make a cloud

of incense smoke to cover the ark before he could sprinkle the blood of a bull to make atonement for himself and before he could make atonement for the people: 15 *“Then he is to slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, bring its blood behind the curtain, and do with it as he did with the blood of the bull—sprinkle it upon the atonement cover, and before the atonement cover”* (Leviticus 16:29 TLV). While the atonement made by Aaron was limited, one year at the time, we have the same picture of Yeshua making eternal atonement for the sins of all who place their trust in Him. Yeshua’s atonement took place in the perfect tent, the one in heaven: 12 *He entered into the Holies once for all—not by the blood of goats and calves but by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption* (Hebrews 9:12 TLV).

Yeshua was not from the Tribe of Levi and could not have been a High Priest after the order of Aaron. Or was He from the Tribe of Levi? In Luke 1:36, the angel Gabriel tells *Miryam*, who is about to become pregnant with Yeshua, that that her kinswoman, Elizabeth, has conceived a son in her old age. The Greek word used for kinswoman is *suggenes* (soong-ghen-ace) and means “blood relative.” Since Elizabeth, the soon to be mother of *Yochanan*, John, along with her husband Zechariah, were of the Tribe of Levi, *Miryam* must have also had a family connection to Levi. *Miryam*’s father was from the Tribe of Judah. His genealogy was given in Luke 3 but her mother is not mentioned. Since Elizabeth was her blood relative, *Miryam*’s mother had to have been from the Tribe of Levi.

What are we to make of this? Whatever it is, it has to do with Yeshua as *Kohen HaGadol*, the High Priest of Israel. Concerning Aaron’s genealogy, we find that his parents were also from different tribes. He was from Levi but his wife *Elisheva*, Elizabeth, was from the Tribe of Judah, the daughter of *Amminadav*, the great - great grandson of Judah. Regarding Yeshua, He also had lineage from both of these tribes, but only through His mother. I am not trying to make the case that He could have been High Priest through His mother’s ancestry in the Tribe of Levi. That was not possible because the priesthood was passed only from father to son. But, Yeshua also received His priesthood from His Father, a Father who is not of any earthly tribe. In pursuing this line of thinking, I am not trying to say anything other than that Yeshua’s priesthood is perfect. It fulfilled all of ADONAI’s requirements including whatever ancestry was required. What we don’t know about His ancestry from His mother will become known when He returns as King. There is a purpose in Yeshua’s mother *Miryam* visiting her Levite relative Elizabeth and the undisclosed information surrounding their kinship. It is just not know to us yet.

What we know for certain is that Yeshua’s priesthood replaced Aaron’s priesthood. According to Hebrews 8:6, it was replaced based upon better promises. And, it was replaced by an eternal priesthood, one like the priesthood of *Malchizedek*, the priest of *Shalem*. Hebrews 7:17 echoes Psalm 110:4 when, regarding Yeshua, it states: 17 *For it is testified, “You are a kohen forever, according to the order of Melechizedek”* (Hebrews 7:17 TLV). *Malkitzedek* is a mysterious figure. We are not told who his parents were, but in Genesis 14:18 that he was a priest of *El Elyon*, the Most High G-d. As a human being, he did not live forever. But, he, a human priest, is a type established by ADONAI, to be fulfilled by His Son, who is eternal. The point is that ADONAI established *Malkitzedek*’s priesthood and He established Yeshua’s priesthood. In the fullness of time, Aaron’s priesthood ended and Yeshua’s eternal priesthood began. When by His death, Yeshua paid the sin price for all humanity for all time, He ascended into heaven and placed His own blood on the Ark in the Tabernacle there. Yeshua is now carrying out the duties of His priesthood as He remains in Heaven. *Sha’ul* tells us: 34 *“It is Messiah, who died, and moreover was raised, and is now at the right hand of God and who also intercedes for us”* (Romans 8:34b TLV).

That is the focus of our message today, Yeshua’s perfect High Priesthood and His continuing intercession for us. The whole of John chapter 17 is sometimes called “Yeshua’s High Priestly Prayer.” He was praying for His disciples when He said: 20 *“I pray not on behalf of these only, but also for those who believe in Me through their message, 21 that they all may be one. Just as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You,...”* (John 17:20-21a TLV). We’ve talked quite a bit about unity in the body of Messiah recently. But, unity is coming and each of us has a part to play in it. Do you think that it is possible that the unity of Yeshua’s body is a prerequisite, a pre-necessity, for the “salvation of all Israel” as

prophesied by *Sha'ul* in Romans 11? It is my prayerful assumption that it is. The rabbis have a teaching called *Tikkun Olam*, “repairing the world,” which teaches that Jews have an obligation to engage in any activity which improves the world and brings it closer to the harmonious condition for which ADONAI created it. As followers of Yeshua, we are also obligated to take up the causes which He has given us. Even though He is interceding for us, praying for us to be “one,” we also have a part in becoming one. We must do everything within our power to strive for that unity.

Why so much emphasis on the salvation of all Israel? We are looking forward to the “salvation of all Israel” for several reasons. One is that God’s Biblical plan will be carried out. In Romans 11:26, *Sha'ul* says that in this way all Israel shall be saved and then quotes Isaiah 59: 20 “*But a Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those in Jacob who turn from transgression.*” It is a declaration of Adonai. 21 “*As for Me, this is My covenant with them,*” says Adonai: “*My Ruach who is on you, and My words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, or from the mouth of your offspring, or from the mouth of your children’s offspring,*” says Adonai, “*from now on and forever*” (Isaiah 59:20-21 TLV). They must turn from their transgression, repent of their sins. But, they will have help in doing that from ADONAI. In His mercy for Jacob’s children, ADONAI said: 10 “*Then I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication, when they will look toward Me whom they pierced. They will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son and grieve bitterly for him, as one grieves for a firstborn*” (Zechariah 12:10 TLV). To hasten that happening, we must love each other, every follower of Yeshua, with Yeshua’s love.

Another reason that we’re looking forward to the salvation of all Israel is that “no Jew should be lost,” that every one of them would know their Messiah. There are plenty of Scriptures which tell us that G-d wants none to be lost in reference to all of humanity. He loves all of us and wants us all to be saved. *Sha'ul* verifies this: 4 *He desires all men to be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth* (1Timothy 2:4 TLV). But, *Shimon Kefa*, the apostle to the Jews, seems to be the only one who stated this for them. Writing to Jews in the diaspora, those dispersed throughout the Roman Empire, he said: 1 *Loved ones* (Jews in the diaspora), *this is now the second letter that I am writing to you* (2Peter 3:1a TLV) and then goes on to say: 9 *The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some consider slowness. Rather, He is being patient toward you—not wanting anyone to perish, but for all (of you Jews) to come to repentance* (2Peter 3:9 TLV). That is the context. And, shouldn’t it be that way, that ADONAI would desire those whom He chose to be priests to the nations to know His Son?

A third reason is that that great salvation (of all Israel) will precipitate a great global revival, a time when many more, perhaps billions, of the people from the nations will trust in Yeshua. 2 “*Thus says Adonai-Tzva’ot, “I am exceedingly zealous for Zion, I am burning with jealousy for her.”* 3 *Thus says Adonai, “I will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth and the mountain of Adonai-Tzva’ot will be called the Holy Mountain*” (Zechariah 8:2-3 TLV). And then, ADONAI continues: 20 *Thus says Adonai-Tzva’ot, “Peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will again come. 21 The inhabitants of one city will go to another saying ‘Let us go to entreat the favor of Adonai and to seek Adonai-Tzva’ot. I also am going.’ 22 Indeed, many peoples and powerful nations will come to seek Adonai-Tzva’ot in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of Adonai. 23 Thus says Adonai-Tzva’ot, “In those days it will come to pass that ten men from every language of the nations will grasp the corner of the garment of a Jew saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you’” (Zechariah 8:20-23 TLV). We are seeing the foundations of these things being laid now. ADONAI has placed the lens of the microscope on Israel and Jerusalem in particular. Powerful nations are seeking her favor; the United States, India, Saudi Arabia and even China. Also, much of the territory which ADONAI promised to Israel is about to be reclaimed by annexation which is even being applauded by many Palestinians, who state that they prefer to live under the State of Israel rather than Palestine under Abbas. Yeshua is their Messiah too! Many of those who now call themselves Palestinians, plus many other Arabs along with Gentiles from every nation, will grab the *tzitzit* of a Jew when that day comes.*

A fourth reason is because we know that the return of Messiah Yeshua won’t be far behind the salvation of all Israel. Yeshua said: 14 “*This Good News of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in the*

whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14 TLV). The end which will come is not the end of the world, but the end of the ages: *24 For Messiah did not enter into Holies made with hands—counterparts of the true things—but into heaven itself, now to appear in God’s presence on our behalf. 25 And He did not offer Himself again and again—as the kohen gadol enters into the Holy of Holies year after year with blood that is not his own. 26 For then He would have needed to suffer again and again from the foundation of the world. But as it is, He has been revealed once and for all at the close of the ages—to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. 27 And just as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this judgment, 28 so also Messiah, was offered once to bear the sins of many. He will appear a second time, apart from sin, to those eagerly awaiting Him for salvation (Hebrews 9:24-28 TLV). After the Gospel has been proclaimed to all the world with the result being the salvation of all Israel and many from the nations, Yeshua will return, but not to forgive sin. It will be too late when He returns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords! And, we are eagerly anticipating His return as the great conclusion to God’s sovereign plan. I very strongly believe that our becoming a body which meets Yeshua’s requirements for unity will bring about the fulfillment of Sha’ul’s prophecy in Romans 11:25-26 about the salvation of all Israel.*

The words “that they may be one” are now ancient words. They have been known to Yeshua’s followers since He prayed His High Priestly prayer for His disciples shortly before He went to the stake for us. After finishing His last Passover meal and when He and His disciples were still together in the room, He prayed *20 I pray not on behalf of these only, but also for those who believe in Me through their message, 21 that they all may be one. Just as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You, so also may they be one in Us, so the world may believe that You sent Me.* (John 17:20-21 TLV). Yeshua was speaking about us, the ones who believe through His disciple’s message. This prayer is more important for us today than it was even 25 years ago. Why? It is because of the times in which we live. Each passing day brings us that much nearer to Yeshua’s return. And it’s doubly important because as His body of followers, His living disciples, we are not nearly ready for this event to happen. We often talk about being “without spot or wrinkle”: *27 Messiah did this so that He might present to Himself His glorious community—not having stain or wrinkle or any such thing, but in order that she might be holy and blameless* (Ephesians 5:27 TLV). What is “without stain or wrinkle?” In my opinion it is “oneness characterized by love.” Preceding these words in verse 25, Sha’ul said: *25 Husbands, love your wives just as Messiah also loved His community and gave Himself up for her* (Ephesians 5:25 TLV). We are to love each other in Yeshua’s body just as a husband is called to love his wife and just as Yeshua loves the body. As fallible human beings, we will never be without sin, but as Yeshua’s followers, we are called to strive to be more like Him. Sha’ul said this to the Corinthians and to us: *1 Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Messiah* (1Corinthians 11:1 TLV).

One major problem which we have, in Yeshua’s American body in particular, is the diversity of our theological approaches. We are not nearly all on the same page with regard to what we believe the Scriptures teach. Each group or person believes that their approach is most correct. Which of any of our approaches is correct, or are any of them correct? The correctness of our theology is not what Yeshua asked of us and is praying for us; that we would be one. Is it possible that we as Yeshua’s followers have any influence on this final stage of the latter days? I believe the answer is a resounding yes. It is directly related to our unity of love and purpose in the Body of Messiah. Are we, the card carrying members of Yeshua’s body, relating to the other members of the body as we should? If we’re honest the answer is in most cases, no, we’re not. When will we all come to the unity of the faith; to mature adulthood and without spot or wrinkle? It’s not now as apparently, Yeshua’s body has not reached that important place. I believe that there is a pre-determined level of unity among believers, a level set by ADONAI, which once reached by Yeshua’s Body, will be the signal for God to pour out a spirit of grace and supplication on the children of Jacob. Supplication means that they will humbly ask that their sins be forgiven. They will trust in their kinsman redeemer Yeshua, and then “all Israel shall be saved.” When we, Yeshua’s current disciples, have determined that we will forgive and love the other members of the body, regardless of their theological positions and/or actions toward us, and this movement spreads across the body of Messiah, G-d will then save “all Israel.” This doesn’t mean that when that happens we will all believe exactly alike, but that we will

love and accept each other in spite of our theological differences. The maturation of Yeshua's Body, getting off milk and on solid food, is the key to this happening. That level of maturity will come when we, the members of Yeshua's Body, stop focusing on our own needs and wants and stop nursing old wounds and stop savoring the things which we have against others. We must sincerely love others, whether or not they follow a theological position with which we agree, or are members of a Church body with which we agree.

A statement made by Yeshua in His Mount of Olives conversation relates to a coming falling away from the faith. He said: *10 "And then many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one other. 11 Many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. 12 Because lawlessness will multiply, the love of many will grow cold"* (Matthew 24:10-12 TLV). That has been going on at ever increasing levels since Yeshua spoke these words 2000 years ago. Since the very early centuries there has been factionalism and division in the Body of Messiah. False prophets have led followers into various forms of Christian or Messianic faiths which many times included anti-Semitism, violence and murder. Our factions today are not necessarily so violent, but still very divided and many times separated by harsh words. Many individuals who claim to follow Yeshua today are examples of the lawlessness which Yeshua proclaimed would come. Their lawlessness includes adultery, fornication and drunkenness among other serious crimes as well as a general turning away from the Word of G-d. These kinds of things are what you think of as being done by unbelievers, and not by those who "claim" to follow Yeshua. All of us have made mistakes. We all sin. But, if we continue to sin without remorse or repentance, our relationship with Yeshua is under suspicion. I am not setting myself up as a good example of a disciple of Yeshua. I need to take this advice as much as anyone. *Sha'ul* tells us that all have sinned and fallen short of G-d's glory. With the right heart attitude, we can repent and return. But, lawlessness is here now and is continuing to increase. And many who are committing this lawless behavior claim to be followers of Yeshua.

But, there is great hope for revival? There definitely is and that's where we come in as we continue to hope and pray for Yeshua's words in John 17 to become true in this era, our era. He said: *21 that they all may be one. Just as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You, so also may they be one in Us, ...* Yeshua is praying that His body, all of us, will be united in love together and at the same time united in Him and the Father. This is not something which will happen just by chance or even by supernatural intervention. It's up to us! We must work to be one! And, our work includes actively seeking to forgive those who have offended us. And, we ourselves, must continue to grow closer to the One who, Himself, is completely and entirely love.

We spoke earlier about *Tikkun Olam*. The rabbis have proposed that every righteous action brings us that much closer to the betterment of the world situation and the coming of the Messiah. I propose that those of us in Yeshua's body consider a similar process, a personal philosophy for each of us within either our Christian or Messianic faith. It can be called *Tikkun HaGuf*, "repairing the Body" of Messiah. *Tikkun* means repair or restoration and *HaGuf* means "the body." *Tikkun HaGuf*, repairing Yeshua's body through love and forgiveness, will spread throughout the body, spreading the "oneness" for which Yeshua prayed. This oneness, this unity within the body of Yeshua's followers will, I believe, bring about that for which we have been praying for so many years; the salvation of all Israel and then the return of our Messiah. This may seem simplistic and naïve but it can happen if we, as Yeshua's followers, get serious about being His disciples and operating our lives in His love. In the principle of *Tikkun HaGuf* we must let our love and unity go beyond theology; beyond factionalism and beyond sectarianism. We must let our love go beyond the way we interpret and observe various Scriptures. If there is error in our approach, it is ADONAI who will correct us. Rather than judge error, our job to become as much like Yeshua as we can.

When ADONAI's preset level of "oneness" is reached, when the body of Yeshua has reached a critical mass of "oneness," suddenly we will have millions of new and excited Jewish followers of Yeshua followed soon after by millions and millions of new Gentile followers. After these things happen that long awaited event will occur. *Sha'ul* said: *16 For the Lord Himself shall come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the blast of God's shofar, and the*

dead in Messiah shall rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left behind, will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air—and so we shall always be with the Lord (1Thessalonians 4:16-17 TLV). We will go up with Yeshua and remain with Him and shall always be with Him. After the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, we will return to earth to the Land of Israel with Yeshua as He defeats His enemies at the great battle. I may not have the timing of events exactly in order; none of us knows for certain.

Led by the influence of *HaSatan*, many nations will attack Israel. Even though some of them seem to be our enemies now, Scripture tells us that in the end certain nations will return to God. Regarding Egypt and Assyria, with Assyria being composed of northern Iraq and Syria, Isaiah prophesied: *23 In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians will come to Egypt, and the Egyptians to Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. . 24 In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria a blessing in the midst of the earth. 25 For Adonai-Tzvaot has blessed, saying: Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria My handiwork, and Israel My inheritance* (Isaiah 19:23-25 TLV). What we need to understand today is that many who now profess to be Muslims and enemies of the Jews will renounce that false belief and turn to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and His Son Yeshua.

Rather than succumb to *sinat chinam*, baseless hatred, against those who are now our enemies, we must love our enemies. Yeshua said: *44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45so that you may be children of your Father in heaven* (Matthew 5:44-45). Does all this seem impossible? In the natural mind it may seem that way, but I strongly believe that this is the process which will bring us to the physical return of Yeshua as our Messiah. This process begins with each individual follower of Yeshua. Each of us has been filled with the *Ruach HaKodesh* and the power of the Spirit is potentially ours. Just before He rose to the Father Yeshua answered a question: *6 So when they gathered together, they asked Him, Lord, are You restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time? 7 He said to them, It is not your place to know the times or seasons which the Father has placed under His own control. 8 But you will receive power when the Ruach HaKodesh has come upon you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and through all Judah, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth* (Acts 1:6-8 TLV). We have received His *Ruach HaKodesh*, His Holy Spirit, and we can have that power to be His witnesses here in “the end of the earth.” Our focus should be on being Yeshua’s disciples, His followers who are filled with His Holy Spirit and empowered with supernatural love. Be in the world, but not of the world. As *Sha’ul* tells us in Philippians 3:20, “Our citizenship is in Heaven.” Many of those whom we now see as our enemies will one day be our friends. With God, nothing is impossible.

Yeshua, High Priest after the order of *Malktzedek*, our perfect *Kohen Gadol*, is even right now at the right hand of our Father in heaven interceding for us. His prayer is that we would be one even as He and the Father are one. Be encouraged! Even though the world seems to be in turmoil, ADONAI is still in control. And, in good times and bad, the best place for any person to be is, “in Yeshua!” *Shabbat shalom!*