

16 – Ki Tisa & Joshua 12 – Outline

Ki Tisa Summary – Extra Points

1. “Ki Tisa,” “when you lift,” comes from the census commandment: “When you lift the head of the children of Israel to number them...”
2. In making the golden calf, the people seemed to have acted out of ignorance, applying the ways of Egypt to worshipping the One True God
3. God tells Moses to “leave Him alone” so that He can destroy Israel (without Moses seeing), which is an insight into God’s character
4. What we can learn from Moses’ intercession:
 - a. appeal to God’s reputation
 - b. appeal to God’s relationships with the patriarchs and our own ancestors
 - c. the haftarah emphasizes this appeal to God’s reputation
5. Though Moses had seen God do a lot of destruction up to this point, he still wanted to know God better; God’s inner nature was seeping through
 - a. there’s a way to discipline in love that actually draws a child to you, and there’s a way to discipline in mere anger

Maturity and Community

Community: As the calendar draws to a close, we are functioning within a community as never before; with maturity and healing comes more connection

1. census and community – “Ki Tisa,” “lifting the head”
 - a. being reckoned in the community
 - b. lifting the head implies healing
 - i. downcast face – sin, shame, can’t meet others’ eyes
 1. God to Cain: “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?”
 2. with shame comes disconnection
 - ii. uplifted face
 1. smile, raising the eyes to meet others’
 2. connected to healing, overcoming sin
 - c. This portion contains the golden calf incident, yet it is named for this positive lifting of the head
 - i. we should focus on the positivity here, not Israel’s sin
 1. the 13 Attributes of Mercy is a high point in Scripture
 - d. half-shekel and community: many say the oddity of a “half” here emphasizes that we aren’t complete without others in the community
2. mo’edim and community
 - a. mention of the mo’edim is oddly placed here in this important moment of God’s revelation of Himself to Moses
 - b. we underestimate the power of the mo’edim to keep us centered, remembering
 - i. Robin Luton: “As soon as we forget, we start to make idols in our life.”
(https://vimeo.com/805709274?embedded=true&source=vimeo_logo&owner=168153907 16m)
 - c. we also underestimate the power of the mo’edim to unite

- i. they unite the farmers in their planting and reaping, for one
- d. Application to Yeshua**
 - i. after He returns, in practical terms, the world will be united especially by the mo'edim, a shared calendar
 - ii. the Blood: Yeshua's blood is the root of all unity, and it's easy to find at the center of the mo'edim
 - 1. Passover – the blood of the lamb
 - 2. Shavuot – the blood sprinkled on the people
 - 3. Fall – the blood presented on Yom Kippur
- 3. Ex 34:24: "For I will cast out nations before you and enlarge your borders; NO ONE SHALL COVET YOUR LAND, when you go up to appear before the LORD your God three times in the year."
 - a. Two interpretations:
 - i. as they leave their cities to make pilgrimage, God will protect them
 - ii. if they continue to observe these festivals, no one will attack them ever
 - 1. because no one wants to attack a UNIFIED nation

Maturity and Intimacy

- 1. As we mature in a healthy marriage, we should be becoming more intimate
 - a. though Israel at large has disconnected through sin, through Moses, we're seeing a picture of the kind of intimacy God wants to have with His bride
 - i. Exo. 34:5 - "The LORD descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the LORD."
- 2. This intimacy is prompted, however, by the darkness of the golden calf
 - a. as with Purim, light must be brought out of darkness – you need the darkness
 - b. there would be no 13 Attributes of Mercy if there was no golden calf preceding it
 - c. God draws light out of darkness, and He wants to teach us to do the same
 - i. it's the first act presented to us in Genesis 1
 - ii. we can see this pattern everywhere: 1) God shines a light; 2) God creates a dark context for man; 3) mankind reflects God's light
 - iii. in our Torah portion:
 - 1. Moses' face glows
 - 2. Bezalel's name means "in the shadow of God"
 - a. "in the image of God" – reflection
 - b. literally in God's shadow – the dark context for reflecting God's light
 - i. Bezalel is a creator, like God
 - iv. in the 5 books of Torah
 - 1. first three books are God being strong and shining His light
 - a. light from darkness in Genesis 1
 - b. Abram out of paganism
 - c. Israel out of Egypt with His strong arm
 - d. pouring out of Torah
 - 2. Numbers is the dark context

- a. “Bamidbar,” “in the wilderness,” is about the death of a generation in the place of dying, the wilderness
- 3. Deuteronomy is the beginning of mankind reflecting the light of God’s Torah, literally the first restatement of Torah, the reflection
- v. in the Bible in general
 - 1. Tanakh- the sun; Apostolic Scriptures- the moon
 - a. “dark” intertestamental period between
 - 2. Apostolic Scriptures
 - a. written in Greek – the dimmer but more physically grounded reflected light
 - b. filled with Yeshua’s guidance for bringing Torah into the nitty gritty of life
 - c. filled with much physical detail, esp. in the letters
 - i. like the detail of Esther and the Torah portions about the Tabernacle
 - d. from Grant: Matthew’s gospel begins with a genealogy of Yeshua that is given in terms of the moon
 - i. 14 generations, 14 generations, 14 generations
 - 1. 14 is half a lunar cycle

Joshua 12

- 1. summary: It’s a listing of the 2 kings defeated under Moses and the 31 under Joshua
- 2. Joshua is like the second half of the salvation pattern, the winter half
 - a. the winter half, itself, has two halves: Hanukkah and Purim
 - b. Joshua has two halves: chapters 1-12, chapters 13-24
 - i. 1-12 are cleansing, like Hanukkah
 - ii. 13-24 are inhabiting the physical and using it, like Purim (the dark context from which the light emerges)
 - 1. Israel is to inhabit that land and be a light to the nations there
- 3. the conquering of the Land is a huge miracle
 - a. mentioned in Ki Tisa: “Behold, I am making a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels, such as have not been created in all the earth or in any nation. And all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the LORD, for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you. Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I will drive out before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites” (Exodus 34:10-11)
 - b. in the same way, when we consider the squatters in our own flesh, GIANTS, we should remember what God did for Israel with this great miracle of deliverance

Ki Tisa & Joshua 12 Script (not exact)

Welcome to Beth Tikkun and this series on the Spiritual Seasons of the year. This week we are in portion Ki Tisa, the middle of Exodus 30 through chapter 34.

Ki Tisa Summary

Ki Tisa is really a massively important portion with a great many events. We'll take some time today to walk through them. The portion starts out, however, with the rather boring-seeming procedure to take the census. Now, we know nothing in the Torah is boring. If we're bored, it's because we aren't seeing what's there. We'll go a bit deeper with the census later in the teaching. For now, let's just point out that the census commandment is where the name "Ki Tisa" comes from. The sentence here uses an idiom of lifting the head to be counted in the census. "Ki Tisa" means "When you lift," and the literal translation of the first idea here would be something like, "When you lift the head of the children of Israel to number them, every man shall give a ransom for his soul to the LORD." The ransom, or atonement, is set at half a shekel for each man. It would seem that each man throws in a half-shekel, and it is the half-shekels that are counted rather than the people, themselves.

The text then goes on to describe the bronze basin, or laver. This is followed by recipes for the anointing oil and incense, which finish out the instructions for the Tabernacle. God then tells Moses that He has called Bezalel of the tribe of Judah and filled him with the Spirit of God to be able to do the work required for constructing the Tabernacle and all its furnishings, and He has called Aholiav of the tribe of Dan with Bezalel. So these two are a pair, one from Judah and one from Dan. God then repeats the Sabbath commandment, as if to say, "In all this work you're going to be doing with the Tabernacle, don't break the Sabbath." We're going to see the Sabbath commandment repeated yet again a bit later in the portion.

Before that, though, comes the tragedy of the golden calf. Although God had already clearly instructed the people to not make idols, the people seem to be acting out of ignorance here as they try to understand how to worship God in the absence of Moses, who can help them understand the ways of the Lord. Most of what they know about worship at this point comes from Egypt, where they would fashion a physical object to act as a channel of worship of a god. They have the desire to worship the true God Who took them out of Egypt, but they can't imagine that there's another way to do that than what they learned to do in Egypt. So they make an idol through which they try to worship the true God. And they have apparently also learned in Egypt that such idolatrous worship should also be connected to sexual immorality, so they seem to have done that too. It's really a mess, but one thing the incident shows us is how radically different God's ways are than man's ways.

God tells Moses what the people have done down below. It would seem God purposed to wipe Israel out at this point, but He doesn't want to do that with Moses looking on, which is an interesting lesson in God's character. God says, "...let Me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you." Moses

intercedes on behalf of the people. We can learn from what he does in this moment. First, he appeals to God's reputation among the nations. He says that the nations will think He brought them out of Egypt to kill them in the mountains. And he also appeals to God's relationship with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. When we see doom approaching, we can also appeal to God's reputation and His relationships with the patriarchs and our own ancestors.

The haftarah for this portion in Ezekiel makes this point that God is concerned for His name and will sometimes save the undeserving simply for the sake of protecting His name. The first verse of the haftarah reads, "Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord GOD: IT IS NOT FOR YOUR SAKE, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, BUT FOR THE SAKE OF MY HOLY NAME, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came" (Ezekiel 36:22).

With Moses' intercession on behalf of the people, God relents, and Moses goes down with the tablets. He picks up Joshua along the way, and when Moses sees with his own eyes what is happening among the people, he's so enraged that he shatters the tablets God had just inscribed. Moses disciplines the people and asks for those on the Lord's side to rally to him. It is only Moses' own tribe, the Levites, that do so. They end up slaying 3,000 in Israel that day, and this action is connected to their elevation to service in Israel.

Moses goes back up the mountain and continues to intercede for the people, asking that God either spare them or blot out his own name from God's book. God answers that He will blot out of His book whoever sinned against Him. He then sends a plague on the people.

We have yet more of Moses' intercession for the people a bit later, a conversation that leads to Moses saying to God, "Please show me Your glory." It's a fascinating request that almost seems to not fit the situation. Moses sees the incident of the golden calf and, before that, he hears God say that they are a stiff-necked people. At this point, Moses knows that he's in for a real challenge in leading his people. Moses' response to being presented with that challenge isn't, "God, please make me more powerful" or "make me wise to lead the people." He doesn't try to get out of it either. Instead, Moses' response is that he needs to know God better. It's like Moses had gotten to know God enough by this point to know that HE REALLY WANTED TO KNOW HIM. And that process should be happening in each of us – the more we see, the more we want to see.

But think about what Moses has seen of God so far. It's been a lot of destruction in Egypt and even destruction in Moses' own people, the children of Israel. Yet in all those interactions with God up to this point, God's essence was leaking through to Moses, and Moses wanted to see more. There's a way to discipline in love and a way to discipline in mere anger. If we discipline in love, we actually draw the one we are disciplining toward us.

God agrees to make all His goodness pass before Moses and says that He will proclaim to him His name, "The LORD," the Tetragrammaton. But first, Moses has to go down to chisel new tablets like the first he broke. God is giving Moses the chance to at least partly make right what he did in anger when he broke the first tablets. Moses ascends with the new set, and only then,

when Moses has had a chance to partly make right his action, does God descend in a cloud and stand with Moses. At some point, God puts Moses in the cleft of the rock and passes before him so that he can see His back. And God speaks out His name in the form of what Judaism calls “The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy.” It’s a high point in the whole of the Bible.

God then renews the covenant, connecting to this renewal several items, which we must conclude are very important due to this connection to the covenant renewal. The first is the promise to drive out the inhabitants of Canaan, the promise of future blessing, dwelling in peace in the Land. The second is the commandment to not make molten images, which seems quite appropriate here after the golden calf. The third item connected to covenant renewal is, fascinatingly, a reiteration of the mo’edim, particularly the three pilgrimage festivals and, once more, the Sabbath. And we’ll talk about why it might be that the mo’edim – of all things – are among the few commandments connected to this covenant renewal and this absolutely transcendent moment when God reveals Himself to a human being. Finally, as the portion ends, we read about the shining face of Moses, how his face would shine after he would talk with God such that he felt the need to wear a veil after talking with God.

Maturity and Community

Let’s do some work now connecting this portion to the calendar. The first connection I’d like to make has to do with community. As the calendar draws to a close, we are functioning within a community as never before. Healing and maturity, living as we are designed to live, is all about connecting to each other and serving each other in the very specific ways we are given to serve. There are several places in this portion that speak to being bound together in community.

The first is the census. As we mentioned before, “Ki Tisa” means “when you lift the head,” when you lift the head to take a census. Or, we can say, “when you lift the head to reckon people as part of this community, this nation.” Being counted in the census is an affirmation of your status as an Israelite. But it’s more than that. The lifting of the head implies healing. Hear this: BEING IN COMMUNITY AND HEALING ARE CONNECTED. And the opposite is also true: being in sin and separation from community are connected. Sin puts you outside the camp. Sin makes your head drop and makes you withdraw from people. The shame of falling cuts us off from others. We first see this literal connection of falling to sin in the text when Cain’s offering is rejected and he is crestfallen, and God asks Cain, “Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen?” When one’s face falls, they are averting their eyes from meeting yours. If you find yourself or someone else pulling away from community, it’s possible that deep sin is behind the disconnection.

In the same way that sin is connected to falling, raising up the face in a smile and raising up the eyes to meet the eyes of others is related to healing and overcoming sin. Once again, lifting a head and being part of community and healing are like a package deal; they go together. So this lifting of the head is what this portion is about, being the name of the portion.

This is a curious thing because we find the incident of the golden calf here. But then we also find God’s revelation of himself to Moses here. The fact that the title of the portion is related to

the healing rather than the falling shows us where we should put OUR emphasis while reading – we put it less on Israel’s sin of the golden calf and more on the positives, like God’s deep revelation of Himself to a man.

Another place we see this idea of community and unity here in this portion in regards to the census is in the idea of the half shekel. Many commentators make the case that a half shekel is incomplete and seems to be a bit of an odd way to count a person. They go on to say that it is only in community that one’s shekel is made whole.

And let’s bring in the mo’edim now under this point about maturity being linked to connection in community. As I mentioned, the odd-seeming restatement in this portion of the Sabbath (yet again) along with the pilgrimage festivals is connected here to God revealing Himself to Moses and the renewal of the covenant with the nation. The text says: “You shall not make for yourself any gods of cast metal. You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you...” and on it goes (Exodus 34:17-18). In other words, don’t make another golden calf, and keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. What? Why are the mo’edim included here?

I think we underestimate the power of the mo’edim, their ability to keep us centered and remembering, and their power to strongly unite a community. This is one place in the Torah where we can see just how important these appointed times are in God’s mind and in His design for us. We have plenty of holidays nowadays, from President’s Day to Valentine’s Day. What we’re talking about here is different. The mo’edim will be the heartbeat of the world one day.

Let me repeat something important that Robin Luton mentioned in her Torah portion conversation this week with Grant on the Torah Today Ministries website. She and Grant were discussing the golden calf and the idea that Israel somehow forgot. We can say they forgot who they were and Who God is and how we walk with Him. And Robin said, “As soon as we forget, we start to make idols in our life.” The weekly Sabbath tugs us back into the reality of the spiritual realm. For six days, our eyes and ears are mostly filled with the mundane things of life, but on the Sabbath, we’re more focused on the spiritual realm than the mundane. We even cook ahead of time. The annual mo’edim pull us back to the Source of our blessing and the Source of our salvation. They are partly designed for meeting with God so that He can do a work of growth in us, but they are also partly designed to make us remember, and the word “remember” is explicitly linked to the various mo’edim. God is repeating the appointed times at this point of re-embracing Israel after their idolatry because there is great power in the mo’edim to re-center us in truth so that we won’t stray with idolatry again.

Beyond the mo’edim anchoring us in truth, though, I think we underestimate the power of God’s appointed times to set a rhythm and unite people together. Think about how these 3 Pilgrimage Festivals unite the nation. Much planning throughout the year must go into these trips, where they are connected in the heart of the nation at Jerusalem, the city of shalom, completeness, wholeness. If you are a farmer, and you know you’re going to have to be gone

for a couple of weeks at certain points in the year, you know that you will need to get the seeds into the ground by a certain time so that you can harvest by a certain time so that you can start out for Jerusalem with your firstfruits in hand. You're doing all of your work with one eye always on these coming trips to meet with the God of the Universe in the Holy City of God. And too, in the process of meeting with Him and bringing your offerings to Him, you are united with the rest of the nation, the other tribes who live so far away from you that you would never see them if it weren't for these pilgrimage festivals. Everyone is going to be planning around and planning for the mo'edim. It's the pulse of the nation.

And let's broaden this out a bit by bringing an application to Yeshua into the picture. Think now to a time after Yeshua returns and the world is at peace. In practical terms, how is it that we are going to be united across our vast distances and cultures, from Japan to California? Of course first of all we are united only by the Blood of Yeshua; that's the foundation. But what are the vessels we are given to express that unity? The vessels are the commandments, and among those commandments, the mo'edim have a special place of honor because of their power to unite across time and space. What if the people in Japan and China and Afghanistan and Syria and South Africa and France and the Americas were all sharing a sacred calendar that brings time into alignment for all of them, that brings business into alignment and travel into alignment, where all the employers in the world knows that people will be resting and celebrating and cooking and traveling on certain days? It's one thing for a country to be in step like this, but the whole world? That's something else we can't quite imagine right now. The nations are going to have to cooperate as never before to make sure everything is ready, all is prepared, for whichever great mo'ed is next on the horizon. The whole world will have one eye on their work and one eye on the next mo'ed, in a good way. And we are told that the biggest of all of these is going to be Sukkot.

And speaking of the blood of Yeshua as the basis of unity, we don't have to look very hard at the mo'edim to see the Blood of Yeshua at the very root of them. At the two great poles of the calendar, Passover and the fall mo'edim, what is at the center of the story? It is the blood of the lamb on the doorways at Passover, and it is the blood that is presented in the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur. We also find this blood sprinkled on the people at Shavuot. The foundation of the great unity the nations will experience one day is the life, death, resurrection, and return of Yeshua.

Lastly on this point, a verse jumped out at me this time that I hadn't really noticed before. It's Exodus 34:24: "For I will cast out nations before you and enlarge your borders; NO ONE SHALL COVET YOUR LAND, when you go up to appear before the LORD your God three times in the year." No one will want to attack Israel to take their land if they honor the pilgrimage festivals. There are a couple of ways to understand this idea, both of which I think are true. One is that when they are all heading to Jerusalem, leaving their cities less protected, God will make sure a neighbor doesn't attack. The other way to read it is that if you keep doing this, if you keep honoring these pilgrimage festivals, God will NEVER allow surrounding nations to covet their land, whether they're in the middle of a trip or not. What is the image of a powerful nation that others don't want to attack? It is a UNIFIED nation. A nation standing together is strong. And as

the people come together according to God's sacred appointed times, they are fused into oneness, united.

Maturity and Intimacy

Another connection between this time of year and the Torah portion is the higher state of intimacy we see here in God's interaction with Moses, revealing Himself when he places Moses in the cleft of the rock and declares His name through the statement known as the 13 Attributes of Mercy. As a marriage matures, if it's a healthy marriage, the level of intimacy should be steadily increasing as the two are knitted more and more together. These chapters are still early in God's relationship with Israel, and Israel in general has actually just sinned and separated herself from God, but we're seeing a picture here THROUGH MOSES of the kind of intimacy God desires with His bride, and it's meaningful that we're seeing this picture at this time of year, when we read this Torah portion near the maturity of Purim. I love verse 5 in chapter 34. The NASB reads, "The LORD descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the LORD." God came down and stood there with Moses! You almost picture them standing next to each other watching the sunset from the top of Mt. Sinai. I'm sure it wasn't like that, since Moses is only allowed to see the back of God, but I like the way the image this verse gives me, anyway.

One thing I want to point out here, though, is what prompts this moment between God and Moses. What prompts Moses to even ask for a deeper revelation of God? It's the DARKNESS of the golden calf. Moses is interceding for the people, and he's seeing how difficult it is going to be to lead the people, and he's saying, "Look, I can't do this. Draw me closer to You; help me to know You better, and then I can do it." In other words, here we have a glowing example of the general idea of Purim, which is the light emerging from the darkness, revelation emerging from hiddenness.

In the last teaching, we said that the darkness is the necessary context for bringing out the light. We simply don't reach for God with the passion He desires when our lives are full of cakes and cappuccinos. It's when we're facing that diagnosis, when we're confronting the loss of a dream we've worked hard for, when we're coming to terms with brokenness in our relationships with others – it's when we're in the darkness that we reach out to Him with passion and say, "Show Yourself to me! I trust You, and I'm walking with You, but help me to walk even more closely with You!" IF THERE WAS NO GOLDEN CALF, THERE WOULD BE NO REVELATION OF THE 13 ATTRIBUTES OF MERCY. And so this is another example of this central aspect of Purim and this spiritual season in general, the bringing forth of the light from the darkness. It's at this time of year that we're reading about one of the greatest falls into darkness followed immediately by one of the greatest lights the world has ever seen.

On the one hand, drawing the light out of the darkness is something God does. But on the other hand, He wants us to learn how to do it too, with His help. He wants US to have a role in bringing forth the light out of the darkness, this fundamental act of creation. He wants us to grow up to learn how to create as He creates, and this light from the darkness is presented to us as His first act of creation in Genesis 1. If we look carefully at the Word and the world, we

will see that first God brings light out of darkness, and then He helps mankind to do the same thing. God shines a light, then brings a darkness for mankind, and in the context of that darkness, He helps mankind to reflect that first light He gave. It's the story of a single day. The sun shines. Then comes the darkness, and in that darkness, the moon reflects the light of the sun. Let me repeat that: first the sun shines, then God brings the darkness, and in that darkness, the moon reflects the light of the sun. We need the darkness so that the reflected light can be seen and appreciated. The full moon on a dark night speaks much to the human soul. It is a kind of evangelism.

This concept is not only a main key for understanding Purim and this time of year, but it's also alluded to in our Torah portion. Do we really need to know that Moses' face glowed after he would talk with God? I mean, it's an interesting detail, but I don't really see the Torah giving us details just because they're interesting. There's deep meaning in the fact that Moses was reflecting the light of God. That's a picture of what all of us are supposed to be doing as the bride, the bride who is connected to the moon with the chance of fertility each month. We can also find this idea in the Torah portion in the name "Bezalel," the one given special skill to craft the Tabernacle. His name means "in the shadow of God." On the one hand, this can mean, "in the likeness of God," the idea of being a reflection of God. And on the other hand, it can literally mean Bezalel is standing in God's shadow. If he's standing in God's shadow, then he has the right context of the darkness that comes forth from God within which he can shine forth the image of God. Bezalel is a creator. He creates the earthly tent that is a reflection of the heavenly tent.

If we look carefully, we can see this first light followed by the darkness and the reflected light in many places and many scales. No matter how you cut the Bible, you will see this same pattern. If we take just the first five books, we see that the first three especially deal with God shining the light, God being very active and strong to first bring light out of the darkness, then call Abram out of the darkness of paganism, then with a strong arm bring the children of Israel out of Egypt, then His pouring out of the light of His Torah.

In Numbers, the fourth book, we see a shift relative to the first three books. Keep in mind that these nuances are all relative based on our zoom level. Within the context of the Torah, Numbers is God bringing a kind of darkness, the dark context that mankind will need to reflect His light. The Hebrew name for Numbers is "Bamidbar," and you can hear the word "midbar" there, which is "wilderness." "Bamidbar" means "in the wilderness," and the wilderness is known Hebraically as the dying place. It's a place of great danger from blasting sun and lack of water and all kinds of venomous crawling things and large predators, too. There is a cleansing happening here, the dying of a generation raised in Egypt. And so the darkness is connected first to cleansing.

But then the darkness is connected to the coming forth of the light, the reflection. The book of Deuteronomy is where we see the light begin to reflect from mankind. Deuteronomy is considered the beginning of the oral law. It is Moses' restatement of the Torah. Let me say that another way: Deuteronomy is mankind's first REFLECTION of the light of the Torah.

It's a beautiful thing to see. And if we zoom out to include the book of Joshua, the sixth book of the Bible, we see in that zoomed out context that Joshua even more strongly pictures first the cleansing darkness followed by the reflected light of mankind. We'll get into that a little in a moment.

Before we go there, though, I want to point out this pattern of light and reflected light in one other place in the Bible. If we zoom out to the level of the whole Bible, we can say that we have two main sections, the Tanakh and the Apostolic Scriptures. The Tanakh is the sun, and the Apostolic Scriptures are the moon; in between the two there's a dark period that we call the "intertestamental period." There is a reason that the Tanakh is in Hebrew and the Brit Chadashah is in Greek. This is meant to be. What we're seeing in the Greek is a reflected light that is a bit dimmer but has a grounding in physicality that is part of God's plan. The Apostolic Scriptures are filled with Yeshua's guidance for applying Torah properly to all areas of life, the nitty gritty of life. Eventually, the story becomes filled with specific details in the form of letters to certain churches, with people being addressed by name and a lot of travel plans. We should hear in all these details the echo of all the physical details in Esther and the physical details concerning the Tabernacle we read at this time of year. At the end of the Bible, we see an expression of deep physicality in the service of deep spirituality, and this is how mankind reflects God's light. We reflect His light by fully inhabiting the physical vessels He gave us to inhabit and put to good use.

There's much to say here about this topic, but the last point I want to make here connecting the Apostolic Scriptures to the reflected light is that the first chapter of the first book of the Apostolic Scriptures points us to the waxing and waning of the moon. This is something Grant has taught us. Matthew begins with the genealogy of Yeshua. And that genealogy finishes like this: "So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah fourteen generations" (Matthew 1:17). And Grant has observed that 14 is half a lunar cycle. Matthew is putting the history of humanity leading up to Yeshua's birth in terms of the moon, the waxing and waning of the moon. From the early darkness of Abraham to the bright light of King David, half a lunar cycle. From the brightness of King David to the darkness of Babylonian exile, half a lunar cycle. If this is how the Apostolic Scriptures begin, then this idea is critical for understanding the deeper nature of what follows in the whole of the Brit Chadashah. This section of Scripture is specially connected to the moon.

Joshua 12

Let's turn now to Joshua 12, which is basically a listing of all the kings defeated under Moses and Joshua. Under Moses, 2 very powerful kings east of the Jordan are crushed, and under Joshua, 31 kings west of the Jordan are destroyed, for a total of 33.

I'd like to use the bit of time remaining here for Joshua to do something of a summary of the overall connection we've been making between the calendar and the book of Joshua so that we can see how Joshua continues this movement toward mankind reflecting God's light.

In the pattern of salvation, there are two halves, and we see these two halves in the calendar. We can call them summer and winter. The summer side is about rebirth and childhood and adolescence. The winter half is about adulthood and marriage. If we zoom in on the second half, just the winter side, we see two main steps there. They are called Hanukkah and Purim.

Hanukkah has a lot to do with battle and cleansing, the cleansing of the Land of Israel from the Greek occupiers and the cleansing of the Temple from the impurities the Greeks introduced there. It is during this cleansing of the Temple that we see the miracle of the menorah happening. Purim has a lot to do with putting that cleansed vessel to use. I'm ignoring a lot of other connections here, but in general, step one, cleanse the place, and step two, fully inhabit the clean vessel and start using it as it was intended to be used. In the winter, we cleanse and inhabit, we cleanse and put to use.

Now, how does Joshua fit into that picture? I'll do this quickly, so if you lose the thread, don't worry; it'll be over soon. If we widen out our perspective to put Joshua alongside the five books of the Torah, Joshua clearly carries the characteristics of winter, even more than Numbers and Deuteronomy. It's a relative thing. Within this framework, the Torah tells the first half of Israel's salvation story, and Joshua tells the second half. The Torah ends with Israel standing on the east side of the Jordan, ready to cross over into the Land. Joshua picks up from there. And, interestingly, in the same way that the winter has the two main holidays of Hanukkah and Purim, Joshua can easily be divided in two. Joshua divides cleanly into the first 12 chapters and the second 12 chapters. We can say the first 12 are like Hanukkah, and the second 12 are like Purim. In the same way that Hanukkah is about battle and cleansing, the first half of Joshua is about the battle for and cleansing of the Land, the purification of the vessel. And just like Purim has a very deeply physical context from which the spiritual light emerges, a deep darkness, the second half of Joshua is about settling into the darkness of the physical Land, dividing it up into portions for the tribes, inhabiting the homes. The point of this descent into physicality is so that the spiritual light can shine out from that place. What a light to the nations Israel is meant to be in that physical place – a God-fearing, Torah-loving kingdom in the middle of the planet, where they treat each other as brothers and sisters, where they look out for each other and establish each other and steady each other. That's the light that emerges from the darkness.

This list of 33 defeated kings in Joshua 12 puts a kind of capstone on the first half of Joshua. It's maybe the Bible's way of having a party. It's Joshua's and Israel's chance to look back at how far they have come, with God's help. God had promised this. And in this week's Torah portion, God describes how enormous of a miracle this conquering of Canaan is. This is what God says about this inheriting of the Land in Exodus 34 right after He reveals Himself to Moses: "Behold, I am making a covenant. Before all your people I will do marvels, such as have not been created in all the earth or in any nation. And all the people among whom you are shall see the work of the LORD, for it is an awesome thing that I will do with you. Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I will drive out before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites" (Exodus 34:10-11). These are peoples who had been rooting themselves in the Land for centuries upon centuries. There were giants among them. There

were allegiances among them. They grew up on that land and knew every cave and every spring. Yet God empowered Israel to demolish them.

And He does the same with us. We might look at a giant in our physical flesh, in our vessel, and say, “God, that thing has been there for longer than I can remember. It is rooted there, even if it is a squatter. It knows the territory better than I do at this point, and it has outsmarted me for decades. It’s 10 feet tall and has 12 fingers and 12 toes. I can’t stand up to that thing. Impossible.” And God says, “I did it for Israel when they came up out of Egypt and, in faith, crossed into Canaan. And I will do it for you, too. Just go down to the brook and get you five little stones. And march right out to meet that giant, and watch him fall. When I’m on your side, we’re not playing by the natural rules.” You might be little compared to that giant, but there’s a very big God standing behind you.

Well, that’s all for today. Thanks for listening. May God make us a people who use the darkness and struggles of life to seek God’s face, to ask to know Him better. May we be people who value community connections and seek to strengthen each other in community. May we search for His clever hiding places and delight in Him when we find Him there. May we refuse to cower in front of the giants in the flesh but instead focus on the God Who stands with us on the battlefield. And may He make us into the people He wants us to be. Shalom.