

14 – Terumah & Joshua 11 – Outline

Terumah Summary

Terumah: Laying Some Groundwork

1. R’Trugman: the Torah takes a “turn” here – next third is about the Tabernacle and what is to happen there
2. Some strong themes to be looking for at the end of the salvation cycle
 - a. the **ultimate revelation of God’s good plan** – in the Purim story, this takes the form of a sudden reversal where everything looks lost until it suddenly flips
 - b. **man’s greatest chance to express his free will** – with maturity comes free will
 - c. if we are clinging to faith, then we should expect to experience **our point of greatest spiritual development**, and this goes along with **a point of greatest physical development**.
 - i. In our context, physical development mostly means with god’s help, we have developed practical vessels for giving of ourselves to the world around us.
 - d. **great connection to God and others** – connection is life, and as we mature, we are more and more connected to everyone and everything around us.
 - e. **a chance to witness evangelistically** – this could be evangelism with or without words.
 - f. **a great potential for either depression or joy**, depending on where we are holding and how we are approaching the end
 - i. this is a phenomenon of great potential for either depression or joy is something the elderly among us can identify with and teach us about.
 - g. **hints of the new beginning to come soon** – the Sages say that “the end is enwedged in the beginning.”

The Month of Adar

1. Purim is the evening of March 6th this year
2. “Adar” meanings
 - a. “to be great/majestic/wide/expansive/noble”
 - b. “adir” – “strength/power
 - c. A-Dar
 - i. the “Aleph” dwells
 1. in the month of Adar that we witness some kind of culmination of the process of God coming to dwell among us

Terumah: Laying Some Groundwork

1. Midrash Tanchuma: the ultimate purpose of all of creation – including all levels of creation, both high and low – is that God desired a dwelling in the lowest of all the worlds (Midrash Tanchuma, Naso, Parsha 16; late 8th or 9th century AD)

2. God has thus far been rather “high,” but here in Terumah, we are seeing the turn to Him “coming down” to dwell among us
3. **what He really wants is to dwell in *people***; the Tabernacle is just a reflection of dwelling in the people
 - a. we must be a holy vessel first – He helps us cleanse the vessel
 - b. the new Jerusalem is a similar picture – the bride is the people, but what we see is a city; the real thing is the community – the reflection is the city
 - i. “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the HOLY CITY, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared AS A BRIDE adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.’” (Revelation 21:1-4)
 - c. the idea of a physical home for God is a bit strange, but the idea of Him dwelling in people makes sense
 - d. the people are bonded together especially when God gives them the task to make the Tabernacle
 - i. the people and the physical reflection are intertwined
 - e. why the name “Terumah” now – it’s more about the community than it is about the Tabernacle, itself
 - i. “terumah” is “contribution” – this contribution is the key to how the people become a suitable home for God
 1. they lower themselves down in service, He raises them up
 - f. God uses an idiom that speaks to His desire to dwell in people
 - i. insight from D’vorah Berkowitz
 - ii. regarding the inner curtains of linen, literally: “The five curtains shall be joined, A WOMAN TO HER SISTER, and five curtains joined a woman to her sister.” – Ex. 26
4. the idea of “home” is rich
 - a. they reflect us, especially in the littlest details
3. the Body of Believers is being shaken, and part of that shaking is a call to return to the home
 - a. perhaps the recent earthquakes in Turkey are one way God is revealing this shaking of the Believers; one of the most affected cities is the ancient Antioch, where Believers were first called “Christians”

Yeshua

1. Yeshua is God’s ultimate means of dwelling among us, like the Tabernacle but even more so
 - a. He “tabernacled” among us – both an allusion to Sukkot and the Tabernacle

2. Less obvious connection to Yeshua in the Tabernacle
 - a. the goal for each of the 5 main pieces of furniture speak of Yeshua
 - i. Ark – covenant, Yeshua is the “Word Made Flesh” and upon Him rests the New Covenant
 - ii. Shewbread – Yeshua is the “Bread of Life”
 - iii. Menorah – Yeshua is “The Light of the World”
 - iv. Golden and Bronze Altars – Yeshua is “the Lamb of God,” the perfect, sinless sacrifice
 - b. all of these elements require breaking, as Yeshua was (partly from Grant)
 - i. Ark – tablets were broken
 - ii. Shewbread – wheat requires crushing and burning
 - iii. Menorah – olives require crushing and burning
 - iv. Golden Altar – ingredients require drying, crushing, burning
 - v. Bronze Altar – an animal is slain and burnt
3. Why in God’s house?
 - a. If a house is a reflection of inner essence, then part of God’s inner essence is the desire to share Himself with us in the form of His Son; the offerings of Yeshua on each piece of furniture are not just for Him but for us, who He invites to visit

Joshua 11 – the Northern Campaign

1. As Yeshua leads us to clean out the house so God can dwell in it, some parts are irredeemable
 - a. Chatzor, uniquely for mound cities in the north, is burnt completely
2. Who is Yabin king of Chatzor?
 - a. “Yabin” - “Intelligent”
 - b. “Chatzor” – “enclosed”
 - c. Yabin is one of those pictures of the pride of human reasoning, the intellect, humanism. Intellectual pride must be crushed, shown no mercy.

14 – Terumah & Joshua 11 Transcript (not exact)

Welcome to Beth Tikkun and this series called Spiritual Seasons, where we are exploring the Torah portions in the light of God’s yearly spiritual curriculum tied to the calendar. This week we are in parsha Terumah, Exodus chapters 25-27. Let’s begin with a summary of the portion.

After the “sundry laws” of parsha Mishpatim, Terumah starts with, “Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution.’” God then describes the kinds of materials Israel is to collect, which include gold, silver, and bronze, fine fabrics, hides, and precious stones. In 25:8 and 9, God says, “Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell

among them. According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it.” God then describes three pieces of furniture: the Ark of the Covenant, the Table of Shewbread, and the Menorah. Next He describes the curtains with their loops and clasps, then the boards and sockets, then the veil and doorway screen. Finally for Terumah, we have descriptions of the bronze altar and the court.

Rabbi Trugman points out that the Torah takes a pretty radical turn here. Up until now, we have mostly been reading stories, one after the next. Starting with Terumah, about the next third of the Torah centers on building the Tabernacle and what happens in the Tabernacle, with a few stories scattered throughout. In fact, the Tabernacle and the functioning of the Tabernacle is given the most space of any topic in the Torah. It might seem odd to have so much of God’s holy text taken up with all these details of building this elaborate tent. Once we start getting into the sacrificial system in Leviticus, our modern sensibilities are even more befuddled.

One very useful lens we have absorbed from Grant over the years is that God emphasizes what is especially important to Him, and if it’s important to Him, then it’s important to us. We need to pay close attention to what God gives literal space to in the Torah. If something like this major shift in the Torah strikes us as odd, then we need to recognize that we’re missing something important. One difference in the Jewish and Messianic perspective of the Word versus, at least, what I grew up with is the fundamental assumption that there is absolutely nothing in the Word that is anachronistic or out-of-date – ALL of it speaks to ALL of us at ALL points in history.

What might throw us off here is the level of specific detail we are being given for a building that doesn’t exist anymore, at least not in the open. (The rabbis insist, actually, that the remaining parts of the Tabernacle are hidden beneath the Temple mount right now, and that one day these will be brought back out and people will marvel over them.) Great attention to detail is an aspect of increased physicality, and this attention to detail is something we experience as we near the end of the cycle of salvation. We’ll see it in the Purim story, for example, with these elaborate descriptions the king’s party at the beginning of the story. But what I want to say here is that all that great detail is a mask for great spirituality; in other words, the increased spirituality is often reflected outwardly as elaborate physical detail. They go hand-in-hand. And so if we are able to not knee-jerk against the detail and trust that something massive and truly weighty is moving underneath these details, then we can start to open up the package and see the brilliant light inside. There’s simply much more going on here than what’s on the surface. This section of the Torah encompasses the whole middle section of the Torah.

One way we need to approach these chapters is as a roadmap for living with God in our midst, a picture of what it looks like when we reach a kind of end goal in our relationship with the Creator of the Universe. These are literally central chapters that not only teach us how to live with God but also with each other. As we learn about God dwelling with His people, we are also learning about how we dwell with each other. And of course, as with everything else in creation, every detail of these chapters is teaching us about Yeshua. I’m not going to pretend

that I can explain all that, but these are guiding principles that we need to keep with us as we are reading through these chapters.

A Few Themes to Be Looking For

One reason that I believe we are to lift up these chapters particularly high is that we start reading them each year in the final month of the year, Adar. In years with two Adars, we are reading quite a large chunk of this section of the Torah during Adar. Coming to the final month of the year means that we are reaching a concluding level of maturity for this yearly cycle, the 12th step upward out of 12 steps. So there is a relationship between this topic of the Tabernacle and spiritual and physical maturity.

Let me just give now a few of the many themes connected to end stages and end times we need to be keeping an eye out for as we read through and study these portions and as we walk through the holiday of Purim this year. We'll have time to elaborate on many of these as we continue in the weeks to come. For now, let me just list them. Some of these end-of-cycle themes include:

- 1) THE ULTIMATE REVELATION OF GOD'S GOOD PLAN – in the Purim story, this takes the form of a sudden reversal where everything looks lost until it suddenly flips
- 2) MAN'S GREATEST CHANCE TO EXPRESS HIS FREE WILL – with maturity comes free will
- 3) IF WE ARE CLINGING TO FAITH, THEN WE SHOULD EXPECT TO EXPERIENCE OUR POINT OF GREATEST SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT, and this goes along with a point of greatest physical development. In our context, physical development mostly means with God's help, we have developed practical vessels for giving of ourselves to the world around us.
- 4) GREAT CONNECTION TO GOD AND OTHERS – Connection is life, and as we mature, we are more and more connected to everyone and everything around us.
- 5) A CHANCE TO WITNESS EVANGELISTICALLY – This could be evangelism with or without words. We should expect God to be helping us to distribute His light and salvation to those who are crying out for it. Sometimes He does this by putting us in a vice and squeezing us while others are looking on to see how we handle ourselves.
- 6) A GREAT POTENTIAL FOR EITHER DEPRESSION OR JOY, depending on where we are holding and how we are approaching the end; part of the increasing paradox we have with this time of year is that it naturally lends itself to depression, but in the Lord, it becomes a season of great joy. This is a phenomenon of great potential for either depression or joy is something the elderly among us can identify with and teach us about.
- 7) HINTS OF THE NEW BEGINNING TO COME SOON – The sages say that “the end is enwedged in the beginning.” The end spills over into the beginning and the beginning spills over into the end. As the end approaches, a new light is already beginning to rise on a new spiritual

year. The final month of the year contains a great redemption, and this redemption is linked to the redemption of Nissan, the first month of the next year.

Month of Adar

These seven themes are just the first to come to mind as I sat down to think about ending themes. There are many more. But all of these are themes of both Purim and the whole final month of Adar, which we have just begun. Purim is right in the middle of the month, the full moon of the month of Adar, so Purim is expressing ideas central to this month. This year Purim starts on a Monday evening, March 6th. Last month's full moon was Tu B'Shvat, the new year for trees. This month is Purim. And next month's full moon is Passover.

There's much to say about Adar beyond these end-time themes, but for today, I want to focus on the name "Adar," which has a strong link to parsha Terumah. The word "adar" in Hebrew means "to be great/majestic/wide/expansive/noble." It is also connected to the word "adir," which means "strength" and "power." These are all important and related meanings in themselves. But the sages do something else with this word. They separate the aleph at the beginning from the other two letters, yielding, "aleph-dar." This means, "aleph dwells." "Dar" means "to dwell." The aleph refers to God. So this meaning of the word is "God dwells." It is in the month of Adar that we witness some kind of culmination of the process of God coming to dwell among us.

Terumah: Laying Some Groundwork

We can see an immediate connection now to our Torah portion in this way of understanding the word "Adar" as "God dwells," or "the Aleph dwells," since this is the portion that begins to introduce the description of God's DWELLING ON EARTH, the Tabernacle. As we discuss the Tabernacle, let's always keep in mind that in the end, this is a house. It's God's house. So we're seeing the theme of the house coming from multiple angles here.

Let's turn now to the portion. The ancient Midrash Tanchuma famously says that the ultimate purpose of all of creation – including all levels of creation, both high and low – is that God desired a dwelling in the lowest of all the worlds (Midrash Tanchuma, Naso, Parsha 16; late 8th or 9th century AD). God desires a home here among us in the lowest world.

Throughout the Bible, we're reading about how He is accomplishing this. Through much of the beginning of the exodus story, God is re-introducing Himself to humanity after the fall and many centuries of relative darkness. To Moses, His messenger, He presents Himself rather near. But once He has Moses as His mouthpiece in this re-introduction process, He presents Himself at first as mighty and high and removed, separated from mankind. He is literally high, high up there. The plagues consecutively show that God is Master of the lowest places, and then the middle places, and then the highest places, showing that He's higher than the water, higher than the land, even higher than the sky and the heavenly bodies. Eventually He shows Himself as a towering pillar of cloud and fire, and then He appears on the top of a mountain, Mt. Sinai.

Here now in Terumah, we begin to see the plan for coming down from the mountain. God's desire is not to just dwell in the earth. WHAT HE REALLY WANTS IS TO DWELL IN PEOPLE, both individually and especially IN OUR COMMUNITIES. WE are the home he desires. But we have to be a holy vessel for a holy God to dwell within us. So there's some work to be done, and God is patient to work with us to do it. God doesn't force His way into anyone or a community. He wants a bride who chooses Him from her own free will. So He quietly helps us to cleanse our vessel and construct a holy home within and among ourselves; we are given that thrilling privilege of teaming up with Him to make the home.

And God PICTURES all this in the building of the Tabernacle. The building of the Tabernacle is, on a certain level, a kind of culmination of this process of God working with humanity to create a clean and holy COMMUNITY within which He makes His home, dwelling in our midst.

At the very end of the Bible, we see another picture of this idea that God dwells in people, and that kind of indwelling is REFLECTED as a PHYSICAL home for God. In the book of Revelation we read in chapter 21 the following verses:

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the HOLY CITY, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared AS A BRIDE adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.'" (Revelation 21:1-4)

So, the bride is the PEOPLE among whom God dwells, but what we see as a PHYSICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE is a city, the new Jerusalem. The real thing is the community. The reflection is the city.

So as we're reading in these chapters about constructing the Tabernacle and the garments of the priests and how they are to perform sacrifices and how tithes and firstfruits are to be brought and all the rest of the activities there, keep in mind that the Tabernacle, itself, and even all the activity there is not really the main goal. The goal is the relationship with the people. And this is what the prophets keep telling the people when they slide into doing their sacrifices by rote. The prophets keep saying that God wants a relationship with them.

The idea that God could even want a physical home seems rather confusing to us. Can God fit into a home made by man's hands? Can mankind really construct a home for God? The Tabernacle was 2 rooms, about 45 foot by 15 foot, or 675 square feet. That's even smaller than my own little house. Now make no mistake, the Tabernacle is the image of a heavenly Tabernacle which is surely spectacular. But when we're talking about an infinite God, any dwelling, no matter how big and fabulous, is simply a speck. The Tabernacle must be fitted to a Holy God ACCORDING TO THE BEST THAT THE PEOPLE CAN DO at that time, but God's real aim

is relationship. He wants to dwell in the people. And we can see that a person and a community are, indeed, fitting dwellings for God.

One of the things we will see in the following chapters is that in giving the people this challenge of building this amazing little building perfectly suited to their traveling needs and using the best of the materials they have available at the time, in giving them this construction challenge, THE PEOPLE HAVE TO COME TOGETHER and be bonded into a community as never before. So it is partly IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING God a physical dwelling that they BECOME a suitable community to dwell within. The two go hand-in-hand, the fusing of the people and the building of the physical building. As the Tabernacle is built, we see them becoming a giving, cooperative, creative, and fruitful people.

Notice that the name of this important Torah portion is not “Tabernacle.” The name is “Terumah.” This word “terumah,” is focused more on the people than the structure. “Terumah” means “contribution” or “offering” or “donation.” It is from a root (“rum”) that means “to lift up.” And as the people lower themselves down to lift up these donations, as they say, “This is better used for God’s house rather than for me,” THEY WILL BE LIFTED UP, becoming the people among whom the God of the Universe dwells.

The point I want to make here is that we can see in the name of the portion the essence of what makes the people a proper dwelling place. What makes them a dwelling place is their cooperative giving. They are to give of their precious things. They are to give of what looks like their future security, their retirement fund. They are to give of their hard-won compensation for years of Egyptian slavery. They are to give of that which gives them pleasure and beautifies them. It is in this kind of self-sacrifice that we become a dwelling for God. Again, the portion is not named for the Tabernacle. It’s named for what makes the PEOPLE into a home for God, this giving, because this home among the people is God’s real goal.

I want to cap off this idea in one more way today by looking at a peculiar Hebrew phrasing in Terumah, an idiom God uses in Exodus 26. This is an idea I first heard from D’vorah Berkowitz years ago. The section is describing the linen curtains which make up the innermost layer of the walls and ceiling. They are to be interwoven with blue, purple, and scarlet, and they are to have cherubim worked into them. We don’t see it in the English translations, but when God describes how these linen pieces are to be joined together, the Hebrew literally reads, “The five curtains shall be joined, A WOMAN TO HER SISTER, and five curtains joined a woman to her sister.” This wording is also used a bit later when describing how the boards are to fit together. All the other uses of the word “sister” in Exodus are the standard use of sister, most of them applying to Moses’ sister Miriam. The Hebrew here is bringing out the point that on a certain level, the Tabernacle is a reflection of the people, like the new Jerusalem bride from Revelation. The Tabernacle is partly a picture of Israel. When the Tabernacle is in tatters, so are the people. When it is upgraded to a permanent Temple, this indicates a higher level for the people, too. God desires to dwell in people.

The idea of a “home” is a rich one. Our homes reflect us, particularly in the little details. Of all the chachkis and knickknacks we have the opportunity to buy and take home and decorate our homes with, we pass on thousands, and the ones we settle on reflects something about us. We can see a bit of what is going on inside a person by visiting their home. So it can be a little stressful to open ourselves up to have people in our homes. But in many ways, being hospitable in that way creates very strong bonds with people. They get to know you better, and quickly.

In connection to this idea, the final point I want to make on this topic in Terumah today is that God is calling the believing community back to the home. We’re seeing this call going out here and there now, too much to just be coincidence. Leaders of believing communities are hearing this call for their flocks, and there’s a lot of uncomfortable discussion happening now within Elder boards.

This call back to the home is an important development in our times that is one more clue that we are heading into the closing of a cycle of human history. We see this emphasis on the home here as the cycle is closing out, as we’re seeing reflected in the Torah portions at the end of the year. God is shaking the kahal, the church, and part of that shaking is the testing of a certain call, the call to return to the home. He’s shaking the whole world, of course, but that’s just beginning. In this early phase of the birth pains, He’s doing a special shaking in the church, a testing that is meant to refine and prepare the Body for the much greater upheavals to come. In talking with Colleen in South Africa, they are feeling this shaking there, too. And it’s obvious, not subtle.

Now, if God were going to shake the kahal, the believing community, how would He communicate that? Yesterday I was reading in Acts, and I happened to read Acts 11:25-26. It says this, “So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.”

In other words, the city of Antioch has a very special place in the history of the Apostolic era of God’s people. It is there where Believers are first called Christians, “little Christs” or “little Messiahs.” The Bible pauses in the book of Acts to make note of this development because it’s meaningful.

If you’ve been watching the news lately, you might have seen that there was another large earthquake in Turkey last Monday, magnitude 6.3. The epicenter was just a little southwest of the ancient city of Antioch, which is now called “Antakya.” Antioch was one of the closest big cities to that last quake, and it also suffered terrible damage from the two huge earlier quakes that were in that region of Turkey on a fault system that runs through Antioch. Areas of the city were flattened. We could call this a coincidence. But I don’t believe in coincidences. God is shaking the foundation of His church. He’s testing our allegiances. He’s testing our willingness to humbly submit to the spiritual authority He has set over us. He’s testing our willingness to be obedient even if we were more comfortable with some other way of communing together on Shabbat.

In the midst of these early birth pains, I say to BT, “Keep going. You’re doing great.” And we’re seeing the fruit of obedience. Our corporate times together with everyone are important. It’s wonderful to worship all together as a large body. It strengthens us. But at the same time, there are a lot of moving pieces to coordinate on those days, and people sometimes slip through the cracks. What I’m seeing develop now with BT now is that we are finding ways to meet in smaller, more intimate groups. The women are meeting regularly, and the men will be meeting regularly now. There is another group that is forming around the twice-monthly erevs at the building. And of course we have our home fellowships. Each of these is an environment that lends itself better to real conversation and real connection than a large mixed group does, though that large group also has advantages. God is truly helping us to go deeper with each other. It’s wonderful to see.

Yeshua

Let’s turn now to a brief application of today’s discussion directly to Yeshua. Obviously there is a clear connection between Yeshua and the Tabernacle. What is God’s ultimate means of “dwelling among us?” He does so through Yeshua, Who is described as “tabernacling” among us. We can see in John’s use of the word “tabernacled” both a reference to Sukkot, which is the likely time of His incarnation, and also this very Tabernacle that we are just beginning to see described in this Torah portion. Yeshua is called “God with us.”

This main connection between Yeshua and the Tabernacle is somewhat obvious, but I want to take a minute and briefly connect Yeshua to the Tabernacle in a less obvious way. We want to go beneath the surface a bit because there’s great spiritual light there under these physical details, as we said earlier. As I was thinking about this yesterday and this insight began to swim into view, I was quite amazed at what I was seeing.

So here it is. We could say there are five main pieces of furniture in the Tabernacle: the Ark, the Table of Shewbread, the Menorah, the Golden Altar of Incense, and the Bronze Altar. Yeshua has clear connections to all of these. All that they hold or produce is pictured by Yeshua. In other words, Yeshua is the goal and purpose for all of these pieces of furniture.

Let’s see how that is, quickly. The Ark of the Covenant contains the covenant, the tablets, which are the summary of the Torah. Yeshua is called the “Word Made Flesh,” and the New Covenant hinges on Him in every way. The Table of Shewbread has 12 loaves of bread stacked on it. Yeshua is called the “Bread of Life.” The menorah makes light. Yeshua is called the “Light of the World.” And for the two altars, the golden altar and the bronze altar, Yeshua is the perfect offering, the Lamb of God which is the sweet-smelling sacrificial aroma. The writer of Hebrews even says that the veil between the Holy of Holies and the Holy Place represents Yeshua’s flesh.

And further, Grant often would point out to us particularly in relation to the elements of the Holy Place that each element requires a kind of breaking. But this breaking is an element of all of the services attached to each piece of furniture. The sacrifices of the outer court are slaughtered and burned on the bronze altar, a breaking of the animal. The wheat for the bread

in the Holy Place is crushed and burned. The olives for the menorah's oil are crushed and burned. The ingredients for the incense are dried out and crushed and burned. Even the tablets in the Ark of the Covenant are first broken, the breaking of the first set of the tablets. It's quite a picture of what happens to Yeshua as Yeshua, on behalf of mankind, is brought to a place of fruitfulness and light and sustenance and conveyance of wisdom.

What do these connections mean? I suppose this is something we need to ponder for a long time. But I think one thing it means is that if our homes reflect something deep of our essence, and they do, then we can conclude from the Tabernacle that deep within God's essence is the desire to share Himself with us in the form of His Son. He offers Him on the altar. He offers Him on the Table of Shewbread. He offers Him through the burning of the oil to make light. He offers His blood as the proof and foundation of the covenant. All these activities at God's home are not just for Him. They are Him giving of Himself for us who are invited to come to His house and be His guest. It is to be a house of worship for ALL nations. There's something especially deep happening here that we would all do well to continue thinking into as we continue exploring in these coming Torah portions.

Joshua 11 – the Northern Campaign

Let's turn now to the book of Joshua, which so wonderfully illustrates especially what is happening in the calendar in the second half of the year. In Joshua 11, we continue to read about the cleansing process for the body Israel is inheriting, the Land. Joshua 11 is the record of the northern campaign of the taking of Canaan. With the capture of the north, the conquest of the Land is complete, though there remain some Canaanites that each tribe will need to battle individually to remove. It's like they experience victory together as a group, and then God requires each piece to rise up and do what the whole nation had done collectively. Unlike the southern campaign, which was quick, the text tells us that Joshua battled the northern kings for a long time.

What kicks it all off, however, is one king who rallies the northern kings together to come against Israel. His name is "Yabin," king of "Chatzor." He gathers together a vast army to come against Joshua and Israel, described as a great horde like the sand of the seashore. God says to Joshua, "Don't be afraid of them. Tomorrow, I'll give them over to you, dead. Hamstring their horses and burn their chariots with fire." Apparently what Joshua does is come upon this giant camp suddenly when they weren't expecting it. And Israel routes them. At that time, they take the city of Chatzor and slay the king and all the inhabitants. It turns out that Yabin was the head of all these surrounding kings. Joshua burns Chatzor to the ground, unlike the other cities on mounds that will be conquered in the north. For the remaining cities, the people are killed but the cities are not burned.

The point I want to make here is that Yeshua leads us in cleaning out the house before God comes to dwell in it, and some parts are simply irredeemable. They have to be burned to the ground. Like we said earlier, God requires a clean and holy vessel to dwell in. And He leads us through that cleansing process; we experience a new level of this every year according to a pattern. Here we see Joshua leading the people in a second phase of cleansing the Land, the

northern lands this time. And under Joshua's leading, the people are able to salvage a lot of the infrastructure of the Land – most of it in fact. The inhabitants are killed. And we can assume that the people contain within them an unclean spirit that can only be purged completely with death. But most of the cities are kept for Israel to re-inhabit – the city walls and buildings and cisterns and vineyards, along with the livestock. But there are rare times in this cleansing process when God or Joshua says, "We won't save this one. Burn it down all the way to the ground." We saw this at Jericho in the south, and we see it here again with Chatzor in the north.

So, who is this king that must be so thoroughly annihilated that even his city must be burned? "Yabin" means "intelligence." And "Chatzor" means "castle" and comes from a root that means "to enclose." And how many intelligent people are trapped in their castles, both intellectual and physical castles? They are so smart that they've explained away a Creator. They are so smart that they've created a self-sufficiency to where they don't need a community. They are so smart that they turn up their nose at half the world and can't get along with the other half.

Too often intelligence simply leads to pride, and pride is a root evil in humanity. It cannot be tolerated. Pride must be shown no mercy. Even the empty rooms built by pride and human-centered reasoning and humanism are tainted. Burn 'em down. As we go about cleansing our vessel, there are many rooms that can stay and be put to holy uses. Intellectual pride is not one of them.

We'll end it there today. Thank you for watching. I've posted an outline below the video. May God open up these important portions to us as never before, and may we see Him in these portions, and may we see His heart of love in these details of the Tabernacle. May we be a people who God is proud to dwell among. May we be a hospitable people who open our homes generously. And may we be a vigilant and brave people who are not afraid to burn to the ground what does not belong in us. May He make us fully into the people He wants us to be. Shalom.