

Part 10 Numbers 33.1-36.13 "MASI"

"PILGRIM PATHWAYS"

THE EARLIEST HEBREW SCRIPT

From what we know of the Samaritan TORAH which is still revered-that text was written by Abishua son of Phineas (Abishua's name can be found in Acrostic in the text of the Samaritan Torah) -to whom Moses refers several times. Phineas is probably to be credited with the writing of Joshua as the scribe of Joshua. It is not surprising that his son should write a copy of Moses' Torah. Moses himself had the widest ability in writing- he would have had knowledge of hieroglyphics and cuneiform-skill with a stylus and the capacity to produce papyrus copy. From boyhood he would have used ink and papyrus. It is wholly possible that Moses adapted the Syrian cuneiform alphabet to the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet which actually came in at this time. A bowl found at Lachish (1300BC) according to Dr.Landon, onetime professor of Assyriology at Oxford provides the earliest otherwise known use of the script on a bowl found there. The writing reads, "His righteousness is my support"-itself a glowing maxim of the potter.

READING NO.1 33.1-10

THE PATH TO THE BLESSINGS OF ELIM

These are the departure points of the Children of Israel who departed from the land of Egypt by their hosts under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses **wrote down** their goings forth and the points of departure under the attentive gaze of the LORD and these are the departure points aligned with their points of departure.

(i) They left Rameses [*Coptic for "pastor" Simonis "field of the sun"*] on the first month in the 15th day of the first month-which followed Passover. **The Children of Israel went out with a high hand before the very eyes of the Egyptians. And the Egyptians were burying all those firstborn among them that the LORD had struck and the LORD brought judgments against their gods.** *Moses distinctly says that the plagues each represented a judgment against one or other of the Egyptian gods.* So the children of Israel departed from Rameses and camped in Succoth.

(ii) And they departed from Succoth [*booths*] and camped at Etham which is in the border of Midian

(iii) They left Etham [*Terminus of the Sea*] and returned over Pihahiroth [*"Mouth of Caverns" or Egyptian for "place of green sedge"*] which is upon the face of (East of) Baal Zephron and camped at Migdol

(iv) And they departed from Pi Hahiroth and crossed **through the middle of the sea** and travelled three days in the desert of Etham and pitched in Marah *As the LORD attentively watched his scribe of 120 years writing these facts down He must have watched most especially as Moses wrote so simply of this crossing saying only-"they crossed straight through the centre of the sea" and were going on for three days on their journey. This assumes no stop-but the guidance of fire by night and cloud cover by day.*

(v) And they left Marah [*"bitterness". Moses does not even mention "grumbling" or problems there*] Exodus 15 22-26-the setting of initial grumbling is passed over factually and came to Elim **and at Elim there were 12 springs of water and seventy palm trees and they camped there.** *Elim is summed up in one verse both in Exodus and here. Moses does remember the blessings of the Palms and springs which are naturally connected to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit-prophetic TORAH of the Spirit's gifts.*

(vi) They departed from Elim and camped at the Sea of reeds. *Along the east coast of the Red Sea- the gulf of Aquaba on the other side of the Sinai Peninsula was actually anciently called the "Sea of Reeds"*

READING No.2 33.11-49

PIGRIMAGE &REPHIDIM (PRAYER SUPPORT)

(vii) And they left the Sea of reeds and camped in the wilderness of Sin. *The word "Reeds" also means "end" so it was here they got their last look at the reeds of the Red Sea across whose northerly waters they had earlier crossed.*

- (viii) And they left the wilderness of Sin *margining the Heroopolitan gulf* and camped in Dophkah.
- (ix) And they left Dophkah (*Dophkah means "knocking hard at the door" or "driving hard" perhaps they were making all speed. The modern name may be Tabbacha* and camped in Alush.
- (x) And they left Alush (*meaning "a crowd of men"-It appears that the question of water for the great numbers becomes the most acute issue as they begin to turn inland.*) and camped at Rephidim **and there were no waters there for the people to drink.**
- (xi) And they left Rephidim (*"props"-here Moses remembered his "props"-Aaron & Hur". Israel battled the Amalekites*) and camped in the wilderness of Sinai (*After 3 months travel-Exodus 19.1*)

PILGRIMAGE AND THE MIRY PLACE OF SIN UNDER THE LAW

(xii) And they left the desert of Sinai (*"miry" the second of three peaks-Mount St Catherine lay to the south west-Sinai itself on the south and further North East lay Horeb (Mount of the "Bush") The location was miry by reason of the mountain streams and "messy" for tent dwellers-but water was found in abundance and Moses was over a month in the mountain there*).and camped at Kibroth Hattaavah.

PILGRIMAGE -21 MONTHS AND A HOST OF DELIGHTS ALONG THE WAY *It was John Newton in his letters who referred to "the sweets and delicacies that the LORD provides along life's pathway for His children-this He did for the "children" of Israel too*

- (xiii) And they left Kibroth Hattaavah (*"graves of lust" where they desired flesh to eat*) and camped at Hazereth.
- (xiv) And they left Hazereth (*"fenced enclosures" or "green pastures"-a pleasant place for pilgrims - one which would have been used by nomadic desert tribes*) and camped at Rithmah (*"bound broom"*)
- (xv) And they left Rithmah (*where God provided "brooms"*) and camped at Rimmon Perez
- (xvi) And they left Rimmon Perez (*"abundant pomegranates"*) and camped at Libnah
- (xvii) And they left Libnah (*"whiteness"-probably very white sand or 'poplars'*) and camped in Rissah
- (xviii) And they left Rissah (*"fall of dew"-a very refreshing distillation affording water*) and camped at Kehalathah
- (xix) And they left Kehalathah (*place of "assembly" where they may have heard Moses discourse*) and camped at Mount Shapher
- (xx) And they left Mount Shapher (*"beautiful" mountain-a place of loveliness where views enchanted*) and camped at Haradah
- (xxi) And they left Haradah (*place of "fear, trembling and haste"*) and encamped in Makeloth
- (xxii) And they left Makeloth (*"staves" where the need for "handles" for tools and staves for the elderly were to be had*) and camped at Tahath
- (xxiii) And they left Tahath (*"lower" -perhaps beneath a plateau or hills*) and camped at Tarah
- (xxiv) And they left Tarah(*"Delay"-perhaps they could not move easily at this time-maybe dust storms or other reasons within the camp or God's design that they should not go further yet prevented movement*)and camped at Mithcah
- (xxv) And they left Mithcah (*"sweet fountain" where there was tasteful water*) and camped at Hashmonah
- (xxvi) And they left Hashmonah (*"productive soil"-a place where food and fruit would grow*) and camped at Moseroth
- (xxvii) And they left Moseroth (*"binding"*) and camped at Bene Jaakan
- (xxviii) And they left Bene Jaakan (*ellipsis for "wells of the sons of Jaakan-a desert settlement*) and camped at Hor Haggidgad
- (xxix) And they left Hor Haggidgad (*"cavern of thunder"*) and camped at Jotbathah
- (xxx) And they left Jotbathah (*literally "goodness" "a land of rivers of water" Dt. 10.7-possibly the best station of all*) and they camped at Abronah
- (xxxi) And they left Abronah (*"Passage"of the sea. The people were now over a coastal range on the Aelanitic gulf-on the northern tip of Ezion Geber on what we call the gulf of Aquaba*) and camped at Ezion Geber

PILGRIMAGE AND THE COMFORTS OF KADESH

We read in Deuteronomy 2.3 "You have compassed this mountain long enough". God desired to move his children on after 40 years when an entire generation with a few notable exceptions had passed on.

(xxxii) And they left Ezion Geber (*"backbone of a warrior"*) and camped at the desert of Zin which is Kadesh

(xxxiii) And they left Kadesh (*"consecrated" The station at which Israel spent the best part of 38 YEARS -so there is a generation of life in the wilderness- modern Ein el Qudiret -the place of very considerable wells of spring water. Kadesh was located at the junction of the road from Edom to Egypt and that form the Red Sea to Canaan that centred*)

PILGRIMAGE AND PARTING

We camped at Mt.Hor at the fringe of the land of Edom. *Here Moses defers from the travel log to write an obituary for Aaron. Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor at the mouth or command of God in the 40th year or anniversary of Israel's leaving Egypt and the fifth month and the first day of the month. Aaron was a man of 123 years of age at his death on Mount Hor.*

And the Canaanite king of Arad who dwelt in the desert of Canaan heard that the Children of Israel were coming. *The big move out of Kadesh northwards was early reported in southern Canaan.*

PILGRIMAGE AND ANNUS MIRABILIS-ENTRY AND VICTORY

(xxxiv) And they left Mt. Hor (*"mountain"*) and camped in Zalmonah (*place of "shades" or the "shadows" -they were now in a long valley that leads steadily upward along the King's Highway.*)

(xxxv) And they left Zalmonah and camped at Punen

(xxxvi) And they left Punen (*"Corner"*) and camped at Oboth

(xxxvii) And they left Oboth (*"skin bottles"-a place for filling water flasks*) and camped at Iye Abarimin the border country of Moab.

(xxxviii) And they left Iye (*heaps of Abarim*) and camped at Dibon Gad

(xxxix) And they left Dibon (*"decline" or "wasting"*) Gad and camped at Almon Diblathaim

(xl) They left Almon Diblathaim (*"concealment" and "house of two fig cakes"*) and camped in the mountains of Abarim opposite Nebo

(xli) They left Abarim (*regions on the other side*) and camped in the Arabah of Moab over against Jericho across the Jordan. They camped along the Jordan basin from Beth Jeshimoth to Abel Shittim in the Arabah of Moab *Discounting Rameses which is Egypt Israel had moved to 40 stations between Egypt and en route to Canaan. "House of desolations" and "mourning or meadow of acacia (gnarled thorny) trees" were the two limits of their final camp. On the one hand they could feel the "destruction of bygone years which befell Sodom and they perhaps prepared a coffin for Moses- last among the pilgrims to die before Israel entered Canaan- Moses-whom they searched for and were not able to entomb for God buried him.*

READING No.3 33.50-34.15

PILGRIMAGE AND THE DANGEROUS NET OF IDOLATRY

(SPEECH No.161) And the LORD spoke to Moses in the Arabah across Jordan over against Jordan saying, "Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them, "When you cross the Jordan to the land of Canaan dispossess the inhabitants and you shall destroy all the beautiful forms [*Hebrew SHECIAH-"beautiful visuals or "exquisitely made forms"*] and keep destroying all the poured out or molten "images"[*Hebrew ZALAM "shadows" of creatures on earth*] and all their high places you shall be cut off. Cause yourselves to possess the land and settle in it for I have given you the land to hold possession of it [*Hebrew YARASH allied to "net so to take for oneself-and to "inherit" so as to possess permanently.*] Divide the land for inheritance by lot among your tribes-to the numerous tribe his large inheritance, to the small his small heritage-what falls by lot shall be theirs; you shall divide your

inheritance according to the clans of your fathers. And if you do not dispossess the inhabitants of the land before your face those you cause to remain of them will be **thorns** in your eyes and **fish hooks** in your thighs and they will be hostile adversaries to you in the land where you will be living. And it shall be that like as I would have done to them I will do to you or as I would have silenced and cut them off so I will do to you.

(162) CHAPTER 34

And the LORD spoke to Moses and said, "Command the Sons of Israel and say to them, 'Because you are coming into the land of Canaan, this land which is falling to you by inheritance is the land of Canaan by its (recognised) borders' Facing south from the desert of Zin up to where Edom's hand holds sway.

(a) And your **southern border** on the east from the extremity of the salt sea eastward. And your boundary shall turn from the south or Negev to the ascent or rising hills of the scorpion, crossing to Zin and going on to the south of Kadesh Barnea. It will then continue to Hazar Addar and cross to Azmona. It will turn from Azmona to the River of Egypt and on to the sea.

(b) And the sea shall be your boundary-the great sea your **western** boundary.

(c) And this shall be your **northern (or) destined** boundary starting from the Great Sea it has been marked out for you to the Mount Hor. From Mount Hor it has been marked to Lebo Hamath (as you go to Hamath-100 miles north of Damascus.) -the boundary will go to Zedad (the mountain side-of the Lebanon range. Your border will go to Ziphron ("sweet smell"-pitch? cf Lebanon timber) and it will cause itself to go on to Hazar Ayin ("village of the fountains")-this is your **northern** or destined border. *This line appears to run through towns now unfamiliar but more readily delineated from Ezekiel 48.1 which links them on an East West line running close to Hamath over 100 miles north of Dan. The "destined" or "hidden"(Hebrew ZAPHON) territory allotment is spoken of. In the time of King David much of this country was held by Israel. In the millennium it will be enjoyed and it seems exceeded.*

(d) And the **eastern** boundary is marked out for you from Hazar Ayin to Shepham (on the east of Judah-cf 1Samuel 30.28) and the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah (50 miles south of Hamath and 30 from the Sea) on the east of Ayin and continue down the lower slopes of the sea of harp sounds [*Hebrew YAM HAMELAH-this is **prophetic TORAH** of the music and beauty of the gospel which would arise under Messiah in this place*] This shall be your land and its surrounding borders, And Moses commanded saying, "This land which is your inheritance by lot the LORD has commanded that it be given to the nine and one half tribes. The tribe of the sons of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance. Both tribes and the half tribe have taken their inheritance on the other side of Jordan opposite Jericho eastward.

Of these four the Northern boundary gives most cause for reflection since it includes much more than is mapped to Israel currently. These historic boundaries we can expect to be restored under Messiah.

READING No.4 24.16-29

PILGRIMAGE IS A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The sons of the leaders who lived close to Moses named their children well. These young men were to enter Canaan and they carry the history of God's sovereign goodness in their names and hopefully had character to match those names. The journey of life has many valuable lessons which we like the Children of Israel and John Bunyan can learn in the wilderness of the world.

(163) And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, "These are the names of the warriors who are to allot the land for you-Eleazar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun. One by one the leaders of each single tribe shall be taken to receive the land. These are the names of the warriors or men:-

For the tribe of Judah-Caleb(dog-faithful) the son of Jephunneh; for the tribe of Simeon Shamuel(Listening to God) son of Ammihud; for the tribe of Benjamin Elidad(one whom God loved) son of Kishon; for the tribe of the sons of Dan Bukki(devastation from the LORD) its leader son of Jagli; for the sons of Joseph and the tribe of the sons of Manasseh its leader Hanniel (The grace of God)son of Ephod; for the tribe of Ephraim its leader Kemuel (assembly of God)son of Shiphtan; For the tribe of the sons of Zebulun the leader Elizaphan(God has protected) son of Parnach; for the tribe of the sons of Issachar its leader Paltiel (deliverance of God)son of Azzan; for the tribe of the sons of Asher its leader

Ahiahud (brother of unity) son of Shelomi; for the sons of the tribe of Naphtali its leader Pedahel (he whom God redeemed) son of Ammihud. To these the LORD commanded to allot the inheritance of the Sons of Israel in the land of Canaan. *Twelve leaders that are in their very names a testimony to what God had done and what He would yet do for Israel. These names each carry a lesson of God's love and covenant blessing.*

READING No. 5 25.1-8

CHAPTER 35

PILGRIMAGE AND PROVISION FOR GOD'S SERVANTS

(164) And the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Moab across Jordan from Jericho saying, "Command the children of Israel that they give the Levites cities to hold from the surrounding cities to live in and for pasturage. These shall be cities for rest and for pasturage of their animals their horses and all their beasts. The pasturelands of the cities given to the Levites shall extend 1500 cubits from the walls. Measure [*Hebrew MADAD*] outside the city facing east 2000 cubits; on the south side 2000 and on the west side 2000. The city shall be in the centre. This shall be pastureland for them in their cities. And six of the cities shall be cities of refuge to where the fugitive who has slain (someone) shall flee and on top of that you shall give them 42 cities. All the cities of the Levites that you give them shall be 48 with their pasturage. Each man shall allot his allotment of the number of cities you give the Levites to hold by the greater or lesser size of his tribe. *The LORD settles the burden of giving in proportion to the means of the giver. This principle applies even in such Christian liberality as Paul sought from the Corinthians toward the need of Jews in the first century.*

READING No. 6: 25.9-34

PILGRIMAGE AND (CAPITAL) CRIME

THE LAW OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN ISRAEL.9-21

THREE SCENARIOS CITED

(SPEECH No.165) And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, "Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, 'When you cross the Jordan to the land of Canaan cause them to choose cities as cities of refuge so that fugitives who have slain in ignorance [*Hebrew SHAGAG*] can flee there. They shall be cities for flight from the kinsman avenger and the slayer shall not be put to death until he stands trial before the congregation for judgment. These cities you give will be cities of refuge from the avenger. There will be three cities across the Jordan and three cities in the land of Canaan. These six cities will be for the Children of Israel and for the stranger who dwells among you for refuge for him who slays anyone in ignorance or error.

(a) And if the slayer strikes and kills anyone with an instrument of iron he shall die the death. And if the slayer has a stone in his hand with which he kills the slayer shall die. He is a murderer.

(b) If he has an instrument of wood and kills with it he shall die. He is a killer. The kinsman avenger of blood shall kill the slayer when he lights upon him.

(c) And if from hatred he pushes him down or throws something at him deliberately and he dies or if out of enmity he strikes with his hand so that he dies the slayer who struck him shall die the death and the kinsman avenger of blood shall slay kill the slayer when he lights upon him.

THE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE OF "INTENT" 22-25

But if suddenly and without enmity he pushes him or sends any article in his direction without intent or kills him with any stone without seeing him-but it falls on him so that he dies though he is not his enemy and he did not seek to do him harm then the assembly shall judge between he who struck and the kinsman avenger of blood by these judgments. And the assembly shall deliver the one who wounded from the hand of the Avenger of blood and return him to the city to which he fled and he shall return to stay there **till the death of the great or high priest who anointed him with the oil of holiness.**

A MAN ACCUSED SLAYER LIVED ALL HIS LIFE UNDER RESTRICTED FREEDOM 26-29

But if the slayer goes to the boundary of the city where he fled for refuge and the avenger of blood finds him he may kill the (accused) slayer but the blood of the slayer is not his responsibility for the slayer shall abide in the city where he flees for refuge till the death of the high priest and after the death of the high priest he shall return to the land he holds. These shall be statutes of judgment where you dwell through all generations *This principle of justice still applies in modern Israel and in fact the charge of manslaughter in our own legal system may lead to the exoneration of one convicted of murder-equally the law of "intent to murder" requires to be confirmed to establish guilt.*

BLOODSHED POLLUTES AND DEFILES 30-34

Any who takes a life shall be slain by the testimony of **witnesses** but the testimony of one witness shall not answer as testimony for a soul to be put to death. Do not take money **to atone** and save the life of a slayer who is guilty of murder. He shall die the death. Do not **take atonement** for the one who flees to the city of refuge only to return and live on his land before the death of the high priest. And do not pollute the land where you live for it is blood that pollutes the land. And there is **nothing that can atone** for the blood shed in it except the blood of the one who shed blood. And do not defile the land where you dwell -where I dwell in its midst for I the LORD dwell in the midst of the Sons of Israel.

READING No.7: 26.1-9 PILGRIMAGE AND WEALTH

The sons of Joseph had come from an elite Egyptian background and the final judgements of Moses were occasioned by the contention of the daughters of Zelophehad and their brothers.

The heads of the fathers of the clans of the Sons of Gilead son of Makir son of Manasseh son of Joseph came near to the "face" of Moses *The face of Moses was often so radiant the people dared not approach the Leader* and the princes or heads who were heads of their fathers' houses among the sons of Israel, and they said, "The Lord Yahweh commanded that the land be given by lot to the Sons of Israel and the Lord in the very **presence of Yahweh** [Hebrew BEYHWH] commanded that the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother be given to his daughters. They may marry as wives within any one of the tribes of the sons of Israel and they shall lessen the tribal heritage of our fathers and add in this way to the inheritance of the tribe where they live and belong and by that diminishing our heritage shall be less. And Moses commanded the sons of Israel at the very **mouth of Yahweh**, "The words in respect of expansion of tents of the Sons of Joseph are honest or right. [Hebrew KEN]This word which the LORD commanded to say to the daughters of Zelophehad -that they should definitely only marry within the families of the tribe of their father was good in their eyes. But the inheritance of the Sons of Israel shall not go round[*Hebrew SABAB "circulate"*] from tribe to tribe for each man of the sons of Israel shall stick to [*Hebrew DABAQ "to hold firmly as glue"*] the inheritance of his fathers. And each daughter who possesses heritage from the tribes of the Sons of Israel shall marry within one of the families of the tribe of her fathers in order that each married man of the sons of Israel shall possess the heritage of his fathers. So the heritage shall not later pass from tribe to tribe because each man of the Sons of Israel shall "stick to" his inheritance.

SUMMARY 36.10-13

Thus the daughters of Zelophehad did in accordance with what the LORD'S command to Moses. Mahlah Tirzah Hoglah Milcah and Noah married the sons of the beloved brothers of their father. They became wives within the families of Manasseh son of Joseph and their inheritance became that of the tribe of the family of their fathers. These are the commands and judgments that the LORD commanded Moses in the wilderness of Moab from above Jordan Jericho.

The End of Part 10 "Pilgrim Pathways"