

July 7, 2019 - Num. 25:10 – 26:51 - Phinehas' Zeal and Another Census
Torah Reading: Numbers 25:10 – 26:51 - Phinehas' Zeal and Another Census
Psalm 105:7-11
Haftarah: Malachi 2:5-7 + 3:16, 10

Phinehas' Covenant of Peace

Numbers 25:10-13 - "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy. Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace: And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel."

Rashi - "a covenant of an everlasting priesthood": Although the kehunah (priesthood) had already been given to Aaron's descendants, it had been given only to Aaron and his sons who were anointed with him, and to their children whom they would beget after their anointment. Phinehas, however, who was born before that and had never been anointed, had not been included in the kehunah until now. And so, we learn in [Tractate] Zevachim [101b], "Phinehas was not made a kohen until he killed Zimri."

A type of Christ

Phinehas, as one who was zealous for the honor of God and of the house of the Lord, was a fitting type of Christ, in whom the prediction of the Psalmist received its accomplishment, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up" (**Psalm 69:9; John 2:17**).

The covenant of grace is described in **Isaiah 54:10** and in **Malachi 2:5** (the Haftarah for this reading) as the covenant of peace.

- **Isaiah 54:10** - "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee."

In Malachi, God threatens to discipline the priests who have not honored His name, and who have forgotten his covenant of peace - said to be with the tribe of Levi.

- **Malachi 2:5** - "My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name."

Peace = Messiah... by way of Esau 'with fair eyes'

Jacob ben Asher, also known as Ba'al ha-Turim, ((1269 – 1343 AD)) in his influential commentary that leaned heavily on gematria numerology, explained that "Shalom," peace, numerically points to "Messiah"; who is the peace, the peace maker, and peace giver, and in whom all the blessings of grace and peace are.

The numerical value of the letters that spell “shalom” (376 — *shin*=300, *lamed*=30, *vav*=six, and *mem*=40) is equivalent to the letters of the name “Esau” (376 — *ayin*=70, *shin/sin*=300, *vav*=six).

King David was said to be of ruddy complexion like Esau. "And he was red, with fair eyes" (1 Samuel 16:12). When [the prophet] Samuel saw that David was red, he said, “Perhaps he is a shedder of blood, like Esau!” Therefore, that verse goes on to say, עיניו יפה עינים with fair eyes. - Baal HaTurim Chumash, Bereishis

The Song of Songs says, “My beloved is white and ruddy.” (Song of Solomon 5:10)

Thus the King Mashiach is concealed in the garments of Esau/Edom/Adam, but his voice is the voice of Jacob. Both Adam and Edom forfeited their inheritance through "eating." (Genesis 3:6, Genesis 25:30)

- **Genesis 27:22** - “Jacob went near to Isaac his father. He felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.”

- **Isaiah 63:1** - “Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this who is glorious in his clothing, marching in the greatness of his strength? It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”

Exodus Rabbah 14:7 - Just as I have made Jacob a firstborn, for it says: Israel is My son, My firstborn (Ex. 4:22) so will I make the King Messiah a firstborn, as it says: I also will appoint him firstborn (Ps. 89:28).”

- **Isaiah 9:6** - His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Jacob disguising himself as Esau is a picture of Christ's incarnation!

(See <https://ladderofjacob.com/2015/11/13/voice/>)

We should also recall that the priests were a vital part of the Peace Offering, in which God, the priest and the offerer shared the same meal and ate of the same offering.

Numbers 25:14-15 - "Now the name of the Israelite that was slain, even that was slain with the Midianitish woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites. And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur; he was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian."

This was a conspiracy at the highest level in Midian to undermine Israel and turn them to idolatry. A Midianite prince even employed his own daughter to prostitute herself for the plan.

War Against Midian

Numbers 25:16-18 - "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Vex the Midianites, and smite them: For they vex you with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake."

(The war with Midian is described later in **Numbers 31:1**)

"wives" = *nêkel* - deceit, machination, cunning

Our mind is similarly vexed by the wives of Satan:

- **John 8:44** - "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

Another Census

Numbers 26:1-2 - "And it came to pass after the plague, that the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, saying, Take the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, throughout their fathers' house, all that are able to go to war in Israel."

The plague was stopped by Phinehas' actions. See **Numbers 25:9** - "And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand."

Numbers 26:3-4 - "And Moses and Eleazar the priest spake with them in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying, Take the sum of the people, from twenty years old and upward; as the LORD commanded Moses and the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt."

They were on the opposite side of the Jordan from Jericho, preparing to enter the Promised Land. The census was in preparation for allotting the land to the various tribes.

A Listing of the Tribes and Families Follows - Numbers 26:3-51

Again, the Levites are excepted. They are numbered later and according to different age groupings. They have no inheritance in the land.

Numbers 26:51 - "These were the numbered of the children of Israel, six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty."