**Some Questions to Ponder:**

1. From all the readings for this Shabbat, which reading touched your heart and fired your imagination?

I was struck by the Hakham’s commentary concerning the test that HaShem will give to us in the end, where a so-called prophet will do a miracle to deceive us. I was also struck, again, that this chapter contains deep secrets, according to Meam Loez, and that no one is sharing the goody goodies, including Meam Loez.

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 33:1?

**These are the journeys** - Why were these journeys recorded?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 33:18?

**Rithmah** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: רִתְמָה?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 33:40?

**The Canaanite...heard** – What does this pasuk teach us?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 33:49?

**from Beth-jeshimoth to Abel-shittim** - What does this pasuk teach us?

**Abel-shittim** – Why is shittim prefaced with Abel?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 33:52?

**You shall drive out** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: וְהוֹרַשְׁתֶּם?

**their temples** - What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: מַשְׂכִּיּֽתָם

**their molten [idols]** - What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: מַסֵּכֽתָם?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 33:54?

**wherever [the lot] falls** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew phrase: אֶל אֲשֶׁר־יָצָא לוֹ שָׁמָּה?

**according to the tribes of your fathers** – What is this number?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 33:55?

**those whom you leave over** – What effect will be felt from these?

**as spikes in your eye**s – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: לְשִׂכִּים?

**and thorns** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: וְלִצְנִינִם

**and they will harass you** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: וְצָרְרוּ?

1. What implicit teaching is given in the text of B’Midbar 33:14 according to the Targum?

Torah study is equated to water and that they go hand-in-hand.

Lloyd Nelson: This verse states that Israel was neglectful of Torah laws as indicated by the name of the station they were to camp at Rephidim, which has as its root word raphin. Therefore the lack of water is apropos to the fact that if one does not drink from the spiritual water of life (Torah), to quench ones spiritual thirst, neither should one blessed with the quenching of the physical.

1. What is it taught by the first letters of the four words that start our Torah Seder – i.e. “Eleh Mas’ei B’ne Yisrael”?

There will be four exiles: ב = Bavel, מ = Media-Persia, י = Yavan (Greece), א = Edom (Rome).

1. In your opinion when were, or will be fulfilled the prophecies of the Master in Mark 13:21-23? Please provide reasons for your answer.

V.21 teaches us that this will happen in the time of the end, which is the time just before the seventh millenium when Mashiach is expected. It will be after the whole world has heard the mesorah, as we learned last week.

Walter Oakley: The events will take place in the future. The sum of historical events demonstrates that these events has only superficially been accomplished. Therefore, the events of the future must include the materials included in the present pericope of Hakham Tsefet’s pericope.

To say exactly “when” these events would take place is a matter of conjecture.

However, it would seem self-evident that the Mesorah of Messiah (from our previous pericope) must be taught to all nations before these events can take place.

1. Why was the name of Rephidim changed to “Masa UMerivah”?

This place was called Massah and Meribah because the people quarreled and tested HaShem - ***Shemot (Exodus) 17:7*** *And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?*

1. Why is Mark 13:21-23 anchored in B’Midbar 33:14?

At Rephidim we **tested** HaShem (v.14). in Mark 13:21 HaShem will **test** us.

Walter Oakley: The key to Jewish life is the Torah and Torah study.

Lloyd Nelson: In B’Midbar we have the example of Israel being neglectful of the Torah, and as a result complained of thirst having no water.

In the same manor those who neglect Torah (Written and Oral), prior to the establishment of G-ds government (return of Messiah ben David), will find the great deception easy to swallow because of their thirst, not knowing that that which they are drinking from, is poisoned.

1. In your opinion what is the intent of Hakham Tsefet’s pericope by the hand of his scribe Mordechai (Mark) for this Shabbat?

To be carefull that we focus on Torah study while crefully avoiding the hoopla swirling around at the time of the end.

Lloyd Nelson: In B’Midbar we have the example of Israel being neglectful of the Torah, and as a result complained of thirst having no water.

In the same manor those who neglect Torah (Written and Oral), prior to the establishment of G-ds government (return of Messiah ben David), will find the great deception easy to swallow because of their thirst, not knowing that that which they are drinking from, is poisoned.

Let us learn from the journeys of Israel. Do not be in the same state Israel was in, that of moving from place to place, which was the result of not trusting or doing the will of G-d and His Torah. This ended up in the only way which would benefit Israel, which was that of wondering in the wilderness and the process soul correction taking place.

Without faithful obedience to the Written and Oral Torah, and diligently studying as taught by our Hakamim, it is easy to be deceived by pseudo prophets and pseudo messiahs.

Walter Oakley: In short, Hakham Tsefet is trying to say that if we will remain grounded in the Torah and teachings of the sages we will not be likely candidates for deception.

Hakham: Do not depart for the Torah or from the oral Torah.

1. In what way does the Torah, Psalm, Prophetic reading of Isaiah, and Mark 13:21-23 point to the fact that this is the second of seven Sabbaths of Consolation?

The **Torah** recounts all the places where HaShem took care of us and showed us His mercy. The **Psalm** shows us that we deserve much worse than we received. **Isaiah** shows us consolation by recounting that HaShem has saved us, forgiven our sins, and taught us. **Mark** consoles us by letting us know what the end times will be like in order that we can avoid the worst of it.

Walter Oakley: In short, Hakham Tsefet is trying to say that if we will remain grounded in the Torah and teachings of the sages we will not be likely candidates for deception.

The Torah Seder, while not give a specific date alludes to the fact that we are in the month of Ab, possibly during the days of consolation. v 38

Psalmist draws on the antithesis of Nahamu possibly to demonstrate that we will experience Nahamu in the future through the redemption of HaShem.

The Prophet speaks of the Banner, the Messiah as the coming redeemer and consolation of G-d’s people 11:10, 12 and the gentiles who will accompany Yisrael in the redemption.

Mordechai looks at the whole genre and deduces that we need consolation by forewarning

1. What part of the Torah Seder fired the heart and imagination of the Psalmist for this week?

The Psalmist was inspired by the recapitulation of the Torah to do his own recapitulation of the Bne Israel, and HaShem’s, actions during this period in the wilderness.

1. What part of the Torah Seder fired the heart and the imagination of the prophet this week?

The Prophet emulates the recapitulation of the journeys in the wilderness by reminiscing about our reaction to HaShem’s many kindnesses during this period. The Prophet also subtly suggests that the future will be patterned on the Torah’s journeys.

1. What part of the Torah Seder fired the heart and the imagination of the prophet in the Special Ashlamata?

The special Ashlamata looks at the journeys as prophetic of the future and he proceeds to give us some of the details based on the journeys.

1. What part/s of the Torah Seder, Psalm, and the prophets fired the heart and the imagination of Hakham Tsefet for this week?

Walter Oakley:

**TORAH SEDER**

Mordechai connects with the Torah Seder through the false prophet Korach (B’Midbar 32:14)

Through antithetical analysis, Hakham Tsefet shows Moshe and Aaron as role models for legitimate prophets and Messiah’s (Anointed to Office and Mission)

**TEHILLIM**

The Psalmist remembers the golden calf as a replacement (sign) for a legitimate prophet. The theme covers the signs though the use of the golden calf and the replacement of a legitimate prophet with a false symbol. (Tehillim 106:19)

**ASHLAMATAH**

The banner of the Prophet is Messiah. He will gather the scattered ones of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

The remnant of verse 16 are the Elect of G-d’s people connecting with Hakham Tsefet’s verse 22

**SPECIAL ASHLAMATAH**

The Prophet also mentions the “Banner” (Messiah) as a tool for restoration and return. Furthermore, Messiah is the True Messiah as opposed to the pseudo-messiah and a True prophet in contrast to the pseudo prophets. 49:22; 50:4

Thematically Hakham Tsefet sets the time of birth pangs against the weeks of consolation and strengthening to encourage and strengthen his audience in preparation for times of difficulty.

1. After taking into consideration all the above texts and our Torah Seder, what would you say is the general prophetic message from the Scriptures for this coming week?

Look carefully at the journeys so that you will not be unaware of what the future holds. Learn from the past!

Lloyd Nelson: Do not suffer from thirst (lack of Torah), but be diligent and ready to answer all men of the hope that lies within us.

In doing this we will not be over taken in the deception of the enemy and enticed by his devices.

Walter Oakley: Find a GOOD Hakham, (ONE) and follow his directions rather than going from place to place (here and there), find your mission and stay busy with that and the rest will take care of itself.