

Could Tzelophehad's inheritance be given to daughters?

Parashat Pinchas ([B'midbar/Numbers 25:10 – 29](#)) 5781 B"H
(Updated 7/19/22 5782)

The Law had been given, but clarification was needed

By [Numbers 25](#), Israel had *Torah* (God's instructions), but different situations arose in Israel's history which needed clarification.

One such instance occurred in [Numbers \(B'midbar\) 27](#) when a man named Tzelophehad (commonly spelled, [Zelophehad](#), in English translations) died in the wilderness.

He was survived by **5 daughters**.

Tzelophehad's family

It appears Tzelophehad had been a decent man.

Nothing is said about his wife, so she may have died many years earlier.

Yet somehow Tzelophehad managed to raise up 5 thoughtful daughters:

Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

Machlach's name refers to "sickness." If she was the firstborn, as suggested by the name-order listing in the Bible, perhaps her mother struggled during childbirth. Noah's name is derived from a word meaning, "movement," referring to

"trembling" or "quivering." Perhaps she was seen as "nervous" or "anxious." Choglah's name is a bit more obscure, probably meaning, "partridge" according to Strong's Hebrew Concordance. Maybe she was a crier as an infant, because, according to the [International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#), partridges were known for their loud cries that attracted plenty of attention. Milcah is a form of Malchah, meaning "queen," and Tirtzah describes a "favored" one or one in whom there is "delight."

These women knew right from wrong and just from unjust. They were respectful of Moses and they concerned themselves with a legal matter, demonstrating that they also respected YHVH.



The legal precedence was such that sons received a father's inheritance.

But Tzelophehad had no sons!

He did, however, have some independent thinkers!

His daughters concerned themselves with an issue of fairness, seeking justice, not only for themselves, but for the legacy of their father.

TZELOPHEHAD'S FIVE DAUGHTERS

The legal precedence in Israel was such that sons received a father's inheritance. But Tzelophehad had no sons! He did, however, have some independent thinkers. His daughters concerned themselves with an issue of fairness. They sought justice, not only for themselves, but for the legacy of their father.



Moses & Eleazar hear the daughters' petition

Tzelophehad was never part of [Korah](#)'s clan. Tzelophehad's daughters made a special point to ensure their father's legacy would in no way be connected to Korah.

Tzelophehad had nothing to do with the rebellious uprising.

[Read about Korah, the \(wicked\) Social Influencer of their day HERE](#)

Machlah, Noah, Choglah, Milcah, and Tirzah appeared before Moses, Eleazar, and the princes of the entire Israelite assembly at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

No sickness or nervousness would keep them from walking in favor.

They did not seek attention for attention's sake.

The 5 sisters had in them the confidence that they were daughters of Israel, queens in the royal kingdom of a holy nation blessed by the Almighty One. They were bound as sisters, and they made their petition *together*.

["Why should our father's name diminish from his family just because he had no son? Give to us property among our father's brothers." \(Numbers 27:4\)](#)

A verdict from on high

Moses didn't make a decision until he had consulted the Supreme Law-Giver, *ADONAI*. Moshe prayed and the LORD responded to him that Tzelophehad's daughters were right:

They ***should*** be given the inheritance of their father, and the commandment would stand for all of Israel.

There was only one caveat (described in [Numbers 36](#)) which was that the daughters had to marry within their tribe.

Individual and community rights

These five brave women took a stand for their human rights. Some would say they remained limited due to the provision that they must marry within their clan, but culturally speaking,

they were still granted significant freedom to marry whoever they wished within their tribal grouping.

Rabbi Johnathan Sacks, of blessed memory, delves deeper into the human rights discussion that arises from [Numbers 27](#) in his article titled, [Complexity of Human Rights](#). Of particular interest, the dichotomy of the individual rights justly pursued by the five daughters of Tzelophehad and the group or tribal rights that are also an important part of wholesome justice.

Today, most people are only focused on their *individual* rights, to the exclusion or disregard of the needs and rights of the wider society. This can lead to major distortions in appropriate social justice. The “me” culture of today forces wider society to adapt to *outlandish policies* demanded by at times defiant individuals, in a less-than-holy and unjust way.

The lesson from [Numbers 27](#) is that when an individual pursues justice in a righteous and holy way, then their needs can and should be addressed, and the wider society will benefit from that individual situation.

Machlah, Noah, Choglah, Milcah, and Tirzah would marry within the tribe, for their own benefit, but also for the benefit of the nation of Israel.

Families come first, and this Scripture passage illustrates that.

The 5 daughters of Tzelophehad were blessed and heard because of their faithfulness and obedience, and the nation of Israel prospered, even to this day.



[Korah: the Rebellious Social Influencer](#)

Balaam & Balak: Conspiring to curse Israel

King Balak was terrified of what would come to his kingdom once the Israelites arrived. Israel had just decimated the Amorites, so this king had reason to be concerned. Balak's fear rubbed off on his people. Numbers 22:3 says "Moab was filled with dread because of B'nei Y'Israel [the children of Israel]" (Numbers 22:3). The Moabites knew Israel was strong, both in number and in power.

Divine Empowerment in an "Inclusive" Age: The Baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2

The Empowerment of followers of Messiah Yeshua (Jesus)

[Acts 2](#) is one of my favorite passages of Scripture:

[When the day of Shavu'ot \[Pentecost\] had come, they were all together in one place. Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And tongues like fire spreading out appeared to them and settled on each one of them. They were all filled with the Ruach ha-Kodesh \[Holy Spirit\] and began to speak in other tongues as the Ruach \[Spirit\] enabled them to speak out. Acts 2:1-4, TLV](#)

I think it is my favorite because it was completely **ignored** by the church I attended growing up.

And I attended faithfully.

Obsessively faithfully.

If the doors of that church were open, I was there. Choir practice, youth leadership teams, bell choir, instrumental ensembles. It was a very large church with a large staff, so there were many opportunities for me, and I'm thankful for that. I probably wore out the pastors with all my theological questions, but they put up with me!

But despite all of those years in the church, I had never heard [Acts chapter 2](#) when the LORD empowered the believers with the power of the Holy Spirit (*Ruach haKodesh*).

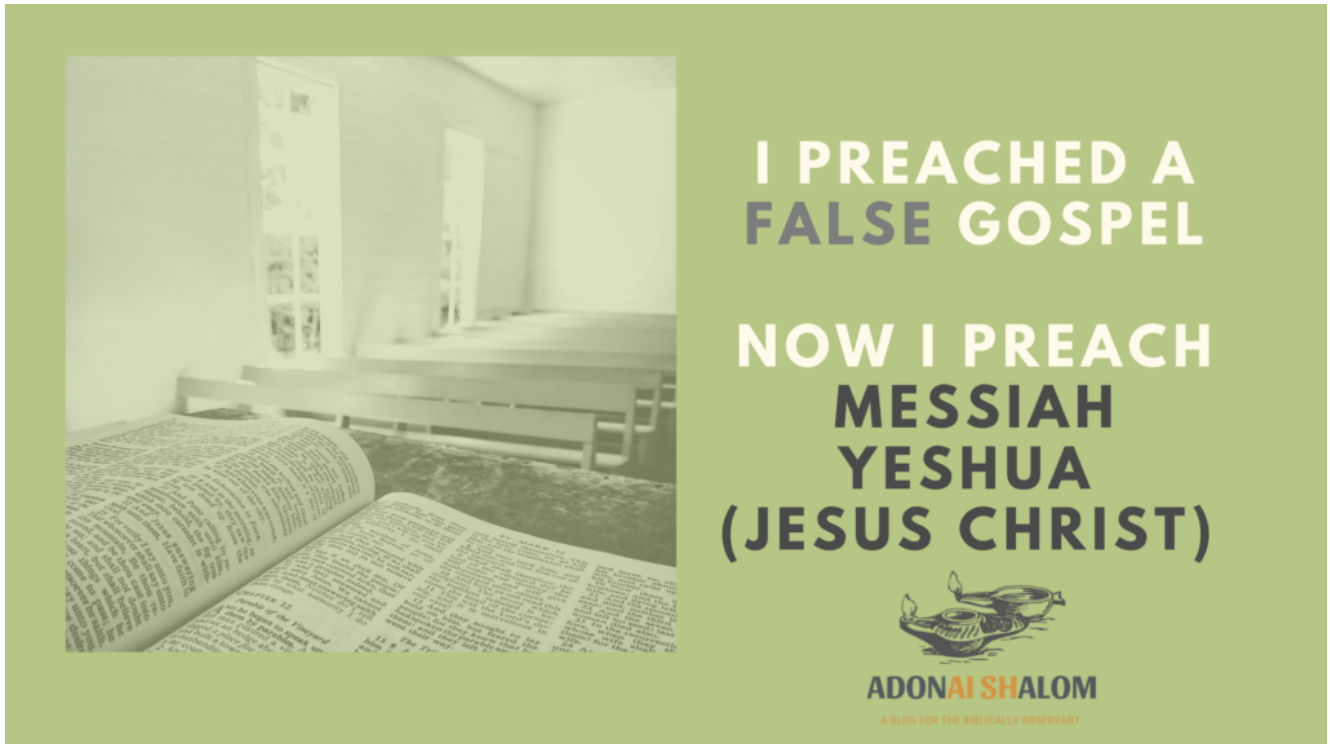
I even learned to preach and lead entire worship services before I went to college.

The problem is, I had learned to preach a false gospel...

I didn't know that, of course.

But when I did figure that out, I felt deceived!

I was angry, hurt, but on-fire for Jesus (*Yeshua*).



My experience in a universalist church

See, I grew up in a universalist type of 'church' in which everything and anything could be considered 'divine' and the deity of Messiah was even questioned.

It was normal to practice 'mysticism' and the congregation built a pagan labyrinth so that they could become 'closer' to God. 'Sin' was explained away through relativism and none of the leaders I knew believed in a literal eternal hell.

Liberal social justice agendas were presented as 'gospel;' and homosexual clergy were not only accepted, but encouraged.

I am a very spiritual person and have been since I was very little, so I was intrigued by the "historical Jesus" debate and the off-center teachings presented to me by my pastors as a teenager. I had the opportunity to travel to France, and walked on the Chartres labyrinth, excited to bring back books

and souvenirs reflecting what I know now to be an occult practice.

I had no idea that we were so outside of a Biblical framework, but I did know that the pastoral staff thought ill of evangelicals, calling anyone who took the Bible at its word a “fundie,” their pejorative term for a fundamentalist.

There was always talk of “inclusion,” but this really meant including only those who agreed with their far left agenda.

I was taught an imitation, but the LORD led me to TRUTH

When I went to college and later to Divinity School, I realized how far the church had strayed from Biblical Truth.

By studying Hebrew, I was awakened to the reality that Scripture is inspired and without error in its original form.

The one nice thing about being raised as a ‘Unitarian Considering Christ’ was we were always open to Judaism. I never struggled with the concept that Messiah Jesus stood on this earth as a practicing Jew, a Holy Rabbi with the greatest teaching of all time. Eventually, I accepted my Savior Yeshua and the glorious gift of salvation.

Hallelujah!

The Postmodern/Emergent Church is looking for an “experience”

The postmodern and emergent church movements were popular when I was a student. One thing that stands out to me with those who want to start drawing and painting in church is that people are genuinely looking for an “experience.”

The church, as a whole, has strayed so far from Scripture that people don't realize that the experience they are looking for is found within the pages of the Holy Bible and that **everything else is a cheap imitation.**

Well-meaning people add things into worship services, not intending to become idolatrous, yet these extraBiblical practices lead people far far away from what they *actually* need.

Truth vs. Imitation

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Worldly empowerment vs. Divine empowerment

Inclusiveness, feminism, empowerment – all key words in the liberal agenda, **mask the true need in the world today.** The Gospel is inclusive of all who would be willing to make a change, but **the Gospel isn't going to change to suit humanity's deviant desires.**

It is good to feel empowered! But you have to be

empowered with the right thing!

That's why the power from on high is so important. [Acts 2](#) is all about *supernatural* empowerment!

The Holy Spirit will empower you in your calling to do the will of the Father.

The world offers a false empowerment. Feminists and liberal activists don't actually support or love women. They hate Biblical womanhood because they want women to be men.

That devilish agenda says: Go ahead, have children, but make sure you're back on the job in 6 weeks after you have your baby. We wouldn't want you to reconsider and stay home with your children.

When my second son was born, I had been serving as a hospital chaplain on a staff of primarily men. When I informed them I would not be coming back because I was choosing to stay home with our little ones, they told me I was overly traditional and that I would regret my decision.

No regrets here.

To me it was humorous that I had grown up more liberal than any of them, and now they were calling me ultra-conservative.

□

Shavu'ot = Pentecost

The believers gathered in the Upper Room were there on a feast day. It was called *Shavu'ot*, and Jewish believers had celebrated it for years. Our English translations call it "Pentecost," and many Christians today mistakenly believe it was a newly established feast day after the Resurrection, but that's not right.

The word for "Pentecost" comes from Greek, for 50, because

Shavu'ot referred to the Feast of Fifty Days, better known as the Feast of Weeks. The timing of Messiah is perfect, so on this exact day, 50 days after the resurrection, the LORD poured out His Spirit upon the gathered believers to coincide with the feast.

Are you experiencing a time of waiting?

In [Acts 1:4](#), Messiah Jesus (*Yeshua*) told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they received the Promise of the Father.

Maybe you are waiting. Maybe you know the LORD has something more in store for you, but you're in a waiting pattern. If you are waiting, but with a sense of expectation, with faith that He will work in your life – I assure you, He will.

Don't be afraid in the waiting, nor discouraged.

Make sure you seek Him.

Who was empowered on Pentecost/Shavu'ot?

[Acts 2:3](#) says, "[There appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.](#)"

The last phrase there, in Greek, "upon each and every one of them" is important for those interested in "inclusivity."

The Greek is *emphatic* meaning that this included men *and* women.

ἐφ' ἕνα ἕκαστον αὐτῶν
eph hena hekaston auton
Upon each and every one of them

The gifts and calling of the Eternal One are irrevocable ([Romans 11:29](#)). He calls men **and** women to share the Good News, and to be empowered by His very Spirit to do it well.

What was going on *before* this moment, *before* the power of Adonai came?

Prayer and supplication. Both men and women were present in an Upper Room prayer meeting.

[These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary \[Miryam\] the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. Acts 1:14](#)



All these with one mind
were continuing
together in prayer —
along with the women and
Miriam, Yeshua's mother,
and His brothers.

ACTS 1:14

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There were at least 120 men there ([Acts 1:15](#)), women and

probably even children.

[RELATED: 6 Stone Jars, 120 Gallons of Wine, and a Wedding in Cana](#)

The LORD uses men and women. In different ways, yes, but (if you are a woman reading this) don't let anyone tell you that there's no place for you in the ministry. That simply isn't true. If He has given you a voice, you have something to say, so long as it lines up with the Word of God. Most of the people in the Upper Room were men. The women were outnumbered. But they were most certainly included.

God chose this group of men and women to be present to receive the inaugurating outpouring of the fire of the Holy Spirit because they were faithful in prayer and they were willing to obey!

Comfort will come after pain or loss

I have used this passage with women's ministry groups because women in all walks of life endure all sorts of challenges and pain: Women who have recently lost their own mother, women who have been told by doctors they cannot have children, women who have ended pregnancies due to poor guidance by nonChristian medical staff or women who genuinely felt there was no other option, women who now live with the regret or guilt of any type of past sins.

The most emotionally painful thing to endure might be the mother who lost a child, whether that child was an unborn baby or an adult child. Many times it is out of that pain that the LORD will use you to minister to someone else. If you've been marginalized from the pulpit because you are a woman, you will also understand a hurt others will not understand.

Whatever you relate to as a horrible pain to endure was exactly the kind of pain the women (and the men) endured the day after the crucifixion.

Even though they knew what they had seen and heard and they knew that Jesus was the Messiah, and He told them He would rise again and He promised to send another Comforter . . . even so, there must've been so many questions going through their minds.

We who are filled with the Holy Spirit today cannot now imagine what life would be like without Him, without His glorious presence. One of the most *distressing(!!!)* Psalms to me is [Psalm 51:11](#). "[Cast me not away from Thy presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.](#)" Just the thought makes me shudder!

Maybe you have experienced something earth shattering. Maybe you have watched as something you have loved, dreamed of, or even built seems like it's gone. When we ministered in Alabama and Tennessee, we frequently worked with people who had suffered devastating losses after tornadoes raged through their neighborhoods. Just know that the Spirit of the LORD can help you get through whatever has distressed you or twisted your life upside down.

What is your own personal Sabbath's Day journey?

The verses contained in [Acts 1:12-Acts 2:1](#) describe what occurred in (what most have calculated to be) 10 days from the Ascension described in [Acts 1:9](#).

If there is a situation right now in your life, give it a few days. It might take ten, it might be four . . . it might be more than 10. But like I said earlier, God's timing is perfect. You can trust Him.

[Acts 1:9](#) “Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched He was taken up...”

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives ([Acts 1:12](#)), a Sabbath’s Day journey – meaning it was a fairly short walk. They would not receive the Promise of the Father without resting in Him, without listening for His voice.

Maybe you’ve been traveling *more* than a Sabbath’s Day journey, keeping your agenda jam-packed. Honor the Sabbath, and the Lord of the Sabbath will meet you right where you are. Not everyone who desires to be baptized in the Holy Spirit receives that blessing right away. Think of it as a journey: He will satisfy your hunger and thirst when you need it most.

The Holy Spirit provides anointing so that you can be a Godly example to others

There is nothing more noble than to be an anointed, Holy Spirit-filled servant of God.

We need the power of God to change the way we speak, the way we interact, the way we present ourselves. You know, something that has been lost over time is the art of etiquette. I noticed this particularly when I lived in the south, having grown up in the north. Up North, we don’t usually say “yes, ma’am” and “no, sir.” It is wise and godly to teach your children, or your spiritual children, the etiquette of God’s Word. How to be a Godly example for others. It is more than attending an assembly. It is living the Word in thought, word, and deed, so that the transformation Christ has worked in you will be evident to all.

We need our **etiquette** to be anointed! If you comport yourself with grace, doors will open for you.

The Holy Spirit will empower you to pray for the salvation of your city!

We are not in Jerusalem, but we *can* tarry in our own cities, asking the LORD to intervene in these last days. I know from experience that those who have been immersed in false doctrines CAN be led to the Truth, but it requires prayer!

I am thankful for believers who prayed for me!

Pray, with fervor, without ceasing so He will send an outpouring of His power upon and into you, either for the first time, or for a new time.

Pray, pray, pray until the yoke-breaking, curse-disrupting and destroying, Almighty Power of the Most High descends upon you and believers around you and ignites your home and your city and your congregation with the Love of Messiah.

The most inclusive wonderful thing you can ever do is pray for someone and welcome them when they decide to become a citizen of heaven, too!

PRAY!

Pray, pray, pray
until the yoke-breaking, curse-disrupting and destroying,
Almighty Power of the Most High
descends upon you and believers around you
and ignites your home and your city and your congregation
with the Love of Messiah.



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I look forward to hearing YOUR testimony! share your comments below. If you have not yet met Yeshua, the Promised Messiah of Israel, please reach out. He loves you very much and lived and died so that you could live eternally with Him. I would be so honored to pray for you or with you. If you'd like, please consider subscribing to our email list! Blessings and Shalom!

Dead Bodies, a Red Cow, Snakes, and the King's Highway: The makings of a movie, or an intense Numbers

Bible Study?

Parashat Chukat ([B'midbar/Numbers 19-21](#)) 5781 B"H (Updated 7/15/22 5782)

We continue our study through Numbers today.

Most people probably don't count the passages of Scripture in [Numbers 19-21](#) (known as *Parashat Chukat*) as among the most understandable or relatable of the Bible.

This portion of Scripture definitely won't be the favorite of anyone uncomfortable with dead bodies!

The Red Heifer and Bible Prophecy

These chapters talk about a red heifer that is to be burned so that, mysteriously, its ashes can purify an unclean individual who has touched a dead body. Specific instructions are given about how to be purified if you've touched a corpse, what to do if an open container without a lid fastened on was in the tent when someone died there . . . lessons on decontamination, in a sense. Relatedly, the origins of medical advice, [quarantines](#), and cleanliness are all rooted in Torah: even the serpent symbol used today by the medical community was loosely inspired by Moses' bronze snake in [Numbers 21:9](#).

The puzzling role of the red heifer that is described in [Numbers 19](#) is a source of much debate surrounding the Third Temple and the fulfillment of end times prophecy. *PBS Frontline* has an interesting article in its Apocalypse series describing some of the issues around the red heifer in modern context titled, ["Forcing the End: Why do a Pentecostal cattle breeder from Mississippi and an Orthodox Rabbi from Jerusalem believe that a red heifer can bring change?"](#) Perhaps you will

find it interesting reading, along with an article humorously titled, ["In Quest of the Holy Cow"](#) from *Israel my Glory*.

While red cows exist, they have not existed in Israel until very recently, 2018 to be specific. That means that for over 2,000 years, there was no red heifer anywhere in Israel. CBN news reported on the [2018 red heifer](#) and since then, there have been other candidates. Ever heard that Crystal Lewis song, ["People get ready, Jesus is coming?"](#) Yeah. It's true. He's coming back! Get ready.

[**LINK: Holy cow! Prophecy fulfilled after red heifer is born at Temple of Israel**](#)

A stutterer told to talk . . . to a rock

While it is impossible for us to fully understand the LORD's reasons for each instruction given in His Word, we can rest assured that He **does** have a reason for everything, even if we don't understand.

Moshe (Moses) of all people, knew to obey God's instructions, yet, on one famous occasion, he let his emotions get the best of him. When the people complained that they had no water to drink, *ADONAI* told Moshe to **speak** to a rock, and it would "give out its water" ([Numbers 20:8, TLV](#)).

In [Numbers 20:10](#), Moses called the people "rebels" (an insult in their day) and pounded on the rock twice rather than speaking to it.

We generally assume this is because Moses was angry.

He might also have been extraordinarily nervous.

Speaking was not Moses' *forte*. ██

Water from the Rock

Moses called the people 'rebels' (an insult in their day) and pounded on the rock twice rather than speaking to it.

We generally assume this is because Moses was angry.

He might also have been **extraordinarily nervous**.

Speaking was not Moses' *forte*.

He stuttered... so the idea of talking to a rock in front of the entire nation of Israel was probably not something he was too eager to do.

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Was Moses indeed a stutterer? Neurologists and theologians don't collaborate as much as perhaps they should, but an article in [First Things](#) looks at the evidence from *neurological science* that **CONFIRMS the widely-held interpretation/assumption that Moses stuttered.**

The LORD had his reasons for commanding Moses to trust Him and *speak*. The rock contained water and could respond to verbal command. What's more, Jesus Christ the Anointed One, *Messiah Yeshua*, warned the Pharisees that rocks would cry out if the believers ceased from praising their Father ([Luke 19:40](#)). But ultimately, the command to speak to the rock in Meribah was not so much to prove that such a feat could be done as it was a test of faith! Moses failed to obey, and it cost him: he and that generation would not live to see the long-awaited Promised Land.

In any case, water *did* gush out of that rock, quite a sight to

see.

Something out of a movie?

The LORD provides for the Israelites' needs, but the people can't seem to shake their grumbling addiction.

They complain there is no bread, no water, and that they are sick of manna.

By [Numbers 21:6](#), ADONAI's patience had grown thin. He sent poisonous snakes which started biting people and many died. God is long-suffering, so even after all of this He makes a way for healing and restoration. Moses is instructed to construct a bronze snake on a pole (*nehushtan*), which would provide healing whenever a bite victim looked at it.

So many supernatural occurrences! These accounts in the book of Numbers really seem like something out of a movie!

Unlike a movie, however; all of what is written in Scripture is completely true. The Author is your Creator, and He will be your Savior if you will turn to Him in faith!

The King's Highway

If all of this wasn't enough trial and tribulation, the Israelites had to traverse land that was controlled by enemies.

In ancient times, there was a highway that connected the north to the south for purposes of travel and trade. This highway was known as the "King's Highway," and it was rightly named, because different *kingdoms* controlled access to the main road.

The King of Edom would not allow Israel to pass through their territory, nor would King Sihon and Og of the Amorites.

Israel had to wage war.

Israel won and began to live in the land which had belonged to the Amorites.

Israel's history is full of struggle and strife, but ultimately, **Israel wins.**

Today, as believers, we are part of Israel. We, too, have rebelled and fallen short of the expectations set out for us by the Word of God. Yet, in His infinite grace, mercy, and love, the LORD God of Israel has made a way for us.

We do not deserve permission granted to walk upon His Holy Road, but we walk the True King's Highway, and He gives us victory along the way.

I am reminded of a hymn we sang growing up:

The King's Highway

I know not where the road will lead
I follow day by day,
or where it ends: I only know
I walk the King's highway.
I know not if the way is long,
and no one else can say;
but rough or smooth, up hill or down,
I walk the King's highway.

And some I love have reached the end,
but some with me may stay,
their faith and hope still guiding me:
I walk the King's highway.
The way is truth, the way is love,
for light and strength I pray,
and through the years of life, to God
I walk the King's highway.

King's highway, Evelyn Atwater Cummins

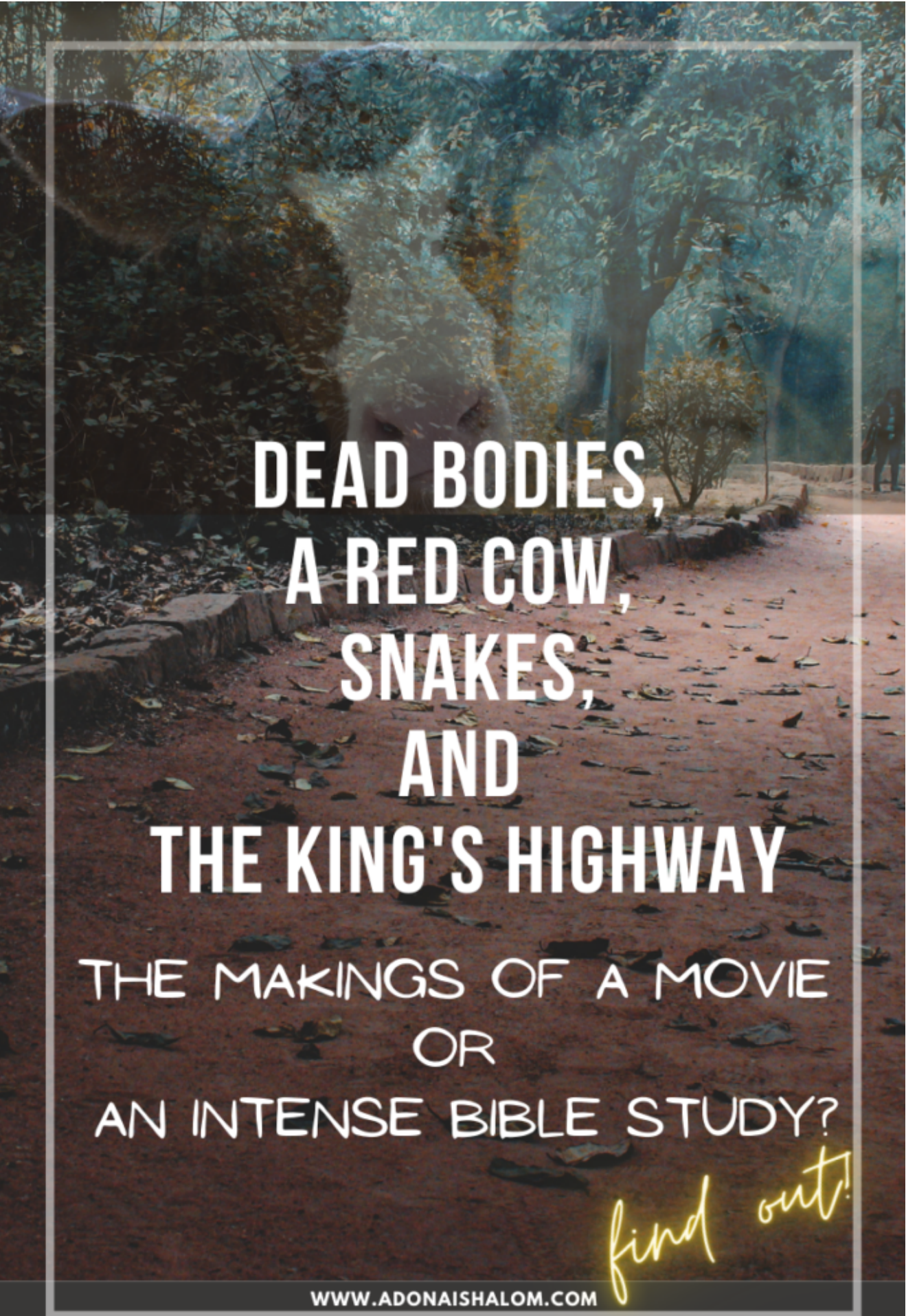


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*I know not where the road will lead
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I walk the King's highway.
The way is truth, the way is love,
for light and strength I pray,
and through the years of life, to God
I walk the King's highway.*

King's highway, Evelyn Atwater Cummins

Let's continue walking along our King's Highway together as we study the book of Numbers together!

A misty forest path with a large white bull in the background. The path is dirt and covered with fallen leaves. The trees are tall and thin, with some yellow leaves. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and ethereal.

DEAD BODIES, A RED COW, SNAKES, AND THE KING'S HIGHWAY

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Shabbat Shaḷom!

May you have a restful and blessed Shabbat with your family!

“So there remains a Shabbat rest for the people of God.

For the one who has entered God’s rest

has also ceased from his own work,

just as God did from His.”

Hebrews 4:9-10

Korah: the Rebellious Social Influencer

Today, we have social media “influencers.” Korah was the social influencer in his day. He didn’t get YouTube awards or Facebook fans, but he had enough followers to cause a major disruption. That generation would never make it to the land of milk and honey.

Sticks and Stones on Sabbath

Underneath that pile of stones laid a man who had no understanding of his need for a relationship with his Maker. Bruised and buried, that man represents all of those who do not yet understand that Messiah has come – that Messiah was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities.