

Tammuz Video Notes 2019

Month: Four

Tribe: Reuben – *Encampment Head South (w/ Simeon & Gad)*

Tribal Banner: Man, Water, Mandrakes

Sense: Sight

Mazel: Cancer/Sartan

Torah Portions:

- **KORACH** - *Korah*
- **CHUKAT** - *Statute*
- **BALAK** - *Balak*
- **PINCHAS** - *Phinehas*

Blessing

Blessed are You, Adonai, Who gives us the New Moon, the sign of being born from above and continual renewal. Blessed are You, Adonai, Who renews His mercies every morning and gives us countless opportunities to repent and start fresh. May the ancient light of the moon's face never cease from reminding us of Your truth, Your love, and your saving grace.

May the Holy One, blessed be He, renew Tammuz unto us and unto all His people, the house of Israel, for life and for peace, for gladness and for joy, for salvation and consolation, for a good livelihood and sustenance, for good reports and tidings, for rains in their season, for complete healing and swift redemption; and let us say, Amen.

Themes of the Fourth Month

The fourth month is a month of **transformation through heat and pressure**, like the hot, dry summer in Israel. We can expect the nephesh's (flesh's) heat of passion to be tested through sight, tears, and spiritual authority. Ideally, if we are submissive to Adonai, the cool heat of heaven will transform us further into Yeshua's image.

This manifests in the fourth month (like the fourth day) in authority or government, a separation of light from darkness. Adonai gives His spiritual light to earth, but there is a false, comfortable light that vies for our attention, like Tammuz. It appeals to our selfish ambitions and our propensity toward skewed justice. Linked to this testing or training ground is tears and weeping. Tears can come from below or above. They can blur or distort one's vision, or they can cleanse the eye of an obstruction. Tammuz recalls Babylon. What was confused at Babel? Tongues – words and understanding, which is a recall of the sense of the first month. Why did Adonai confuse their tongues? They preferred to exalt themselves instead of Adonai. (Authority issues.)

- **Four** = Authority = Day 4 of Creation¹ - Luminaries govern and give (spiritual) light to the earth through Adonai's clock & calendar. They separate light from darkness. They help one to "see" properly.
- **Reuben** = See a son, or a son that sees
- **Tribal Banner** = Man, Water – both contronyms
- **Sense** = Sight = Focus, Perception, Vision
- **Mazel** = Sartan = Crab/Cancer = Creature with hard shell that walks sideways; confusion; distortion, abnormal growth.
- **Torah Portions** = Authority Issues/Testing

Abominations in the Temple: Tammuz

There is no doubt that many of my listeners and readers are perplexed or even outraged that the rabbis use a false deity's name in conjunction with Adonai's calendar. How dare they mix the holy with the profane, right?

On the surface level, I understand this sentiment. But I hope by the end of this message, you will have a better understanding of why we need to be reminded of Tammuz, especially in the fourth month.

Eze 8:14-15 (NASB) Then He brought me to the entrance of the gate of the LORD'S house which was toward the north; and behold, women were sitting there **weeping for Tammuz**. 15 He said to me, "Do you see this, son of man? Yet you will see still greater abominations than these."

There is a very important question being posed to us as the summer months begin. We've just finished Sivan and the Feast of Shavuot, which commemorates the **giving** of the Torah and the Holy Spirit. As I mentioned last month, giving is not the same thing as receiving. Did you RECEIVE these gifts of the Father? If so, He is your authority, your governor. But...

He will test your heart in the long, hot summer months. The Seed sprouts, grows, matures, and eventually produces fruit. It is in the latter days, the days of the great harvest, the fall feasts,

¹ The number four is expressed by the letter dalet (a door or portal). As the door (delet), four shows one the Way into the Throne room of Adonai. Yeshua is the door for the sheep. (John 10:7-9) It is impossible to get this close and personal with YHWH by entering another door or way. Four depicts Adonai's authority, government, rule, dominion, calendar, time, creation, kingdom, fullness, and the giving of the Torah (Law) and Holy Spirit. Judah was fourth born son and has the scepter of rule. On the negative side, there are four beasts (Dan. 7:3). The fourth one is diverse from the others and has ten horns (see info for 10 below). Then an eleventh horn emerges (see info on eleven here) that seeks to change times (appointed seasons/feast days) and law (God's Torah). (Dan. 7:25) This is in direct opposition to the calendar/clock/seasons/law that Adonai gave on day four of creation. See more at Graceintorah.net under menu "Misparim."

that one can be sure what sort of plant has been produced. Hopefully, it is of “like kind” with the Messiah. The danger is in the name of the fourth month, Tammuz. Rabbi Ginsburg says:

“The truth is that how we see our Tamuz depends on whether we wait patiently for Moses to descend from the mountain with the Two Tablets in his hand, or if we prefer to find a glittery superficial replacement for him in the form of a Golden Calf whose end is more bitter than bitter aloes.”²

So, the question of the fourth month is: who is your real authority? Who rules your heart of hearts? When tested, what comes forth? Tammuz or Adonai? The summer season, when the sun is in its height, has many threshing floors that will reveal the answer.

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon defines Tammuz as “sprout of life.” Tammuz was a Babylonian deity of food or vegetation, and closely linked to fertility worship. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary for Old and New Testaments* from AMG Publishers associates Tammuz with Astarte and Ishtar. These are false gods, challengers of Adonai’s authority.

What we eat (food) and who we have sex with are both acts of intimacy. Can you “see” both the natural and the spiritual side of this coin? Looking at Tammuz forces one to reevaluate these fleshly desires to ensure that it is Adonai and His Spirit that rules these powerful impulses of a man, like Reuben.

Each of the Torah portions this month deal with authority (both righteous and false), rebellion, **impatience**, righteous zeal, and they conclude with Pinchas, where a reiteration of God’s Authority and Government in the offerings at the Altar and the Moedim are given.

In the midst of these portions, we see Israel tested again and again. In one account, the people grow **impatient** and weary of the journey and vocalize their distress by disparaging the manna, the bread from heaven. This causes fiery serpents to bite the people. Moses is instructed to make a bronze serpent and place it on a pole. **The people have to LOOK at it in order to be healed.**

Are you beginning to see the pattern?

If we will not face that which plagues us, like the serpent on the pole, then we are doomed to repeat the mistakes of our past. This is why Tammuz, the Babylonian name for the fourth month, is still used today. Babylon means confusion. We have to look at it or we will continue to suffer its deception and realm of death.

In Tradition

- The sin of the **golden calf** results in Moses' breaking the first tablets of covenant.

² http://www.inner.org/hebrew_calendar/tamuz/tamuz-the-symbol-of-life

- The **walls of Jerusalem are breached** before the destruction of the first and second Temples. (For example, see 2 Ki 25:1-21.)
- The sunrise to sunset **fast of the 4th month** (Zec. 8:19) on the 17th of Tammuz, begins the three weeks of mourning for the **destruction of both Temples**. It ends on Tisha B'Av (the 9th of Av), the actual day the Temples were destroyed.
- Tammuz is the month that **Moses sent the spies** to the Land of Israel (to **see** it, and give a report).

Reuben

רֹאֵן = “See a Son” or “Son that Sees.” The tribe of Reuben often has “a man” as their tribal banner. Are you a “man” made in the image of Elohim? One in the image (tzet) or shadow of God is attached to HaShem as surely as your shadow is attached to you. The alternative is to become bitter, unstable, and rebellious with distorted sight and a sideways walk like the crab or sardine, the mazel of Tammuz. These symbols are attached to the fourth month in order to reveal the authority of your heart.

Gen 29:32 (NASB) Leah conceived and bore a son and named him Reuben, for she said, "Because the LORD has **seen** (ra'ah) my **affliction** (oni); surely now my husband will love me."

H6040 רָאָה on-ee' From H6031 (anah); **depression**, that is, misery: - afflicted (-ion), trouble. Total KJV occurrences: 37

The sense for this month is sight, and Reuben is named for the fact that the LORD “has seen” Leah’s suffering. I cannot help but to back up a few verses and explore how the Torah introduces Leah and Rachel. It connects directly to the question of Tammuz.

Gen 29:16-17 (NASB) Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the older was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 And **Leah's eyes were weak**, but Rachel was beautiful of form and face.

The rabbis teach that Leah’s eyes were weak or tender because of all the tears that she shed in anticipation of having to marry Esau. In tradition, Leah and Rachel were twins, just like Esau and Jacob. Laban’s daughters were to marry the sons of Isaac by birth order. But, Esau rebelled and took other wives. This caused Laban to trick Jacob into marrying Leah, the firstborn, when Jacob only intended to marry Rachel, the second born. Whether this is true or not, Leah’s eyes were tender from tears, and she indeed suffered affliction. While she didn’t express this with conversation, she certainly did so in naming her children.

How many of us have had weak eyes like Leah? How many tears have you cried? How many have felt passed over for another? How many have felt the sting of being unloved, rejected, or scorned? Worse, how many have known the tragedy of abuse, oppression, or cruelty? I dare say that there has not been one life that hasn't suffered at least one of these fruits of death. The tragedies of life produce many tears that make one's eyes swollen and puffy. This lesson is twofold:

On the one hand, it is a grand reminder **to look** into the eyes of our brothers and sisters. The eyes truly are a "window to the soul." **Look at them!** Too often, their tears are ignored; we turn a blind eye to their pain and suffering. We would rather focus on the beautiful form and face of Rachel, because these issues seem less difficult to deal with. But, Adonai "sees" their affliction. He stops to care for their wounds. If we are His shadow, we will too. After all, in the end, Rachel, too, is found **weeping** with a loud voice, calling from Ramah to her children. We don't get to escape tears or suffering or the hard issues of life, even when we think we are taking the easy path.

On the other hand, we must learn that "*weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning.*" (Ps. 30:5) Remaining in a state of mourning, regret, disappointment, shame, or remorse is the epitome of being a victim (not an overcomer). It fails to RECEIVE the grace of God, because the root is bitter.³ This is a dangerous and contagious infection.⁴

Reuben, Tammuz, and the Sartan

In light of this, I find it intriguing that this month's mazel is Cancer, the Sartan or crab. It is the only mazel that has a horrible disease named after it. We often use cancer as an analogy for something negative that spreads quickly, and needs to be cut out or removed. Bitterness, self-pity, jealousy, and selfish ambitions are just as dangerous and deadly as cancer. Usurping godly authority can bring a pestilence or a plague upon the guilty.

³ Heb 12:15-17 (NASB) See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; 16 that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. 17 For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

⁴ We need great wisdom and understanding in order to discern between these two extremes in ourselves and in others. Healing often takes time, intention, and diligence. If you are suffering and have become bitter, remember that Naomi, an admitted "bitter" woman, overcame by the love and devotion of one tenacious young minister, Ruth. It is important to note that nowhere do we find Naomi abusing, accusing, or taking advantage of Ruth. When we are in great pain, we often strike out at those that are trying to help us. But these actions will only isolate and hurt us further. Human ministers are just that, human. Don't expect them to stick around if you continue to fall short of Adonai's grace.

In Torah portion Korach, read this year during Tammuz, two **Reubenites**, Dothan and Abiram, join themselves to the Levite Korah in a rebellion against Moses and Aaron. They also manage to persuade 250 other leaders in Israel to join their attempted coup. The earth swallows Korah, Dothan, and Abiram, and a fire from Adonai burns up (heat) the 250 other leaders. And after all of this, the next day, the people blame Moses and Aaron for killing the Lord's people.

Num. 16:41-42 (NASB) But on the next day all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, "**You are the ones who have caused the death of the LORD'S people.**" 42 It came about, however, when the congregation had assembled against Moses and Aaron, that **they turned toward the tent of meeting**, and behold, the cloud covered it and the glory of the LORD appeared.

The people blame Moses and Aaron for the death of Korah and his company! They still don't realize who they are *really* challenging: Adonai Himself. They turn toward the tent of meeting (God's dwelling place in the desert), and a plague breaks out, killing 14,700 in the camp. (Num. 16) Now, consider where the women were located when they were weeping for Tammuz, another victim championed by the people. They were at the north side of Adonai's Temple, a direct affront to His authority.

Like the congregation in Numbers 16, they were weeping (grumbling) for an abomination. Tammuz was a victim-hero, a leader of the people. His tragic life was idolized and worshipped through tears. **Beloved, there is a very real danger that we will idolize our pain and suffering, blame it on someone else, and accuse the very leadership that God has instituted.** We CANNOT allow our past rejections, hardships, and suffering to confuse God's authority and government. This is blurred vision, a focus on the natural, and we simply don't have all of the facts – ever. The sons of Reuben, Dathan and Abiram said this to Moses:

Num. 16:12-14 (NASB) Then Moses sent a summons to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab; but they said, "**We will not come up. 13 "Is it not enough that you have brought us up out of a land flowing with milk and honey to have us die in the wilderness, but you would also lord it over us? 14 "Indeed, you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor have you given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Would you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up!"**

It's ironic that they accuse Moses of "putting out the eyes of these men," when they are the ones with impaired vision. The sons of Reuben say that Moses brought them out of a land flowing with milk and honey to die in the wilderness. In other words, they called Egypt the real Promised Land! And worse, the people looked around and agreed with their conclusions.

What did Korah and his company say that appealed to Israel? The people were recently informed that they would spend the rest of their natural lives in the wilderness, and that they would indeed die there, because they believed the evil report of the spies. In the natural, every rebellious word of Korah and company rang true. Their message resonated with the red, hot flesh of the congregation in the wilderness.

The wilderness is where the word of TRUTH is tested in us. It is hot, uncomfortable, and hard. Things **look** and feel dry, scarce, and lifeless. But is this the truth? What will we believe? The promises of Adonai – that which we can't see? Or the words of the cunning retractor – the one that appeals to the very real plot of our flesh?

If our spiritual vision is limited (or even tired), we will run to the Korah's and Tammuz's every time. They call it the way they see it, and we agree. So, we rebel at the injustice of it all. Before long, we are crying, "We are a victim! And, it's your fault!" This angry spirit believes its "eyes are wide open," when in reality, it is simply a blind accuser.

Victim's believe that Egypt really does flow with milk and honey. It was better back there, at least there were leeks and garlic to tantalize the tongue. "We will only die in the wilderness anyway." And, they are right! The letter of the Word indeed kills the flesh, but the Spirit raises or quickens one to resurrected, new life. They are one and the same.

Back to Reuben

Sadly, Reuben defiled his father's marriage bed. This disrespectful and reckless action not only dishonored Jacob, but God Himself. In turn, Reuben lost the honor of the firstborn's birthright.

Gen 35:22 (NASB) It came about while Israel was dwelling in that land, that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine, and Israel heard of it...

Gen 49:3-4 (NASB) "Reuben, you are my firstborn; My might and the beginning of my strength, Preeminent in dignity and preeminent in power. 4 "**Uncontrolled as water**, you shall not have preeminence, **Because you went up (alah) to your father's bed (mishkav)**; Then you defiled it—he went up (alah) to my couch (yatzuah).

Jacob says that Reuben is as uncontrolled or unstable as water. The Hebrew word is pachaz.⁵ It means ebullition (ebə'liSHən), which is **to bubble, boil, and froth**. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary for Old and New Testaments* defines the verbal root of pachaz as:

H6348 פָּחַז pāḥaz: A verb meaning **to be reckless, to be arrogant**. It means **to be undisciplined, wild, insolent**. In its plural participial form, it refers to reckless persons (Jdg 9:4). It refers to prophets who are undisciplined and unrestrained in their false prophecies (Zep 3:4).

Reuben was ruled by his boiling and veracious lusts and passions. In other words, he wasn't a "man," but a beast. In case we missed the theme in the Torah portions, or in the number of the

⁵ H6349 פָּחַז pachaz From H6348; ebullition, that is, froth (figuratively lust): - unstable. Total KJV occurrences: 1

month, the tribe of Reuben begs one to look deeper – past skin level. Who is our real authority? Have we defiled the couch and bed of our Father? The prophets scream, “Yes!”

Like Esau, Reuben lost the heavenly birthright in exchange for immediate gratification of the flesh. A moment of satisfaction for an eternity of loss. While Judah received the scepter, Joseph’s sons, Rachel’s firstborn, received the birthright.

1 Ch 5:1-2 (NASB) Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel (for he was the firstborn, but because he defiled his father's bed, **his birthright was given to the sons of Joseph the son of Israel**; so that he is not enrolled in the genealogy according to the birthright. 2 Though Judah prevailed over his brothers, and from him came the leader, yet the birthright belonged to Joseph)...

Now, consider what could have provoked Reuben, the “see a son or son that sees,” to act so arrogantly. Do you suppose that Reuben could see the affliction and tears of his mother, Leah? As her firstborn, do you think that he desired for his father, Jacob, to rectify this? Do you suppose that Reuben might have resented the fact that Jacob preferred Rachel over Leah? Do you think he might have found this whole situation unjust or unfair?

I certainly empathize with Leah’s plot and Reuben’s love for his mother. I relate to the strong need for reparation. Someone must do something, right? The problem is that these stories were not written to elicit a sense of injustice in our flesh. Instead, they have a very specific lesson to teach on authority. We can’t SEE all the factors at work, but Adonai can. We must trust that He is tov, good, even when in the natural, things appear unfair, unjust, or down right horrible.

We are terrified that God is not going to come through for us. We are horrified that God might desire that we live as an unloved wife, like Leah. We can look around our own wildernesses, and quite frankly, at this rate, the future looks bleak. And so, we cry. We weep for our future, like Rachel. But the LORD says:

Jer. 31:16-17 (NASB) Thus says the LORD, "**Restrain your voice from weeping And your eyes from tears; For your work will be rewarded**," declares the LORD, "And they will return from the land of the enemy. 17 "**There is hope for your future**," declares the LORD, "And your children will return to their own territory.

This is a good month to read Jeremiah 31 in its entirety. Trust Him. Believe the Promise. Do not focus on your life’s heartbreaks. At its core, Tammuz is the worship of tragedy, your tragedies. It is celebrating, even if through tears, self-pity and victimhood. **Can you detect how this is an authority issue?** The good news is that there is hope for all sardans and Reuben’s! The blessing Moses has for Reuben is short, but it is power packed.

Deut. 33:6 (LITV) Let Reuben live, and not die, and let his men be numbered.

Warfare

A transformation is a thorough or dramatic change in form or appearance. One's speech, thought, walk, and vision have been radically altered. That's what the spring feasts, culminating on Shavuot at the Mountain are meant to do. They spiritual recreate us every year, transforming us into the image of Messiah. Egypt must be pressed and sometimes even burned out of us. It's a hard process, and flesh hates to die. But, this is a death unto life! May Adonai give you eyes to see that you are "in process," and that there is a great hope for your future.

- FOCUS: Carefully consider, look for, the authority and of your heart.
- Offices of authority are challenged in the Body, in the workplace, and in secular government. Rebellions rise up in many forms, but especially against leadership.
- Be mindful and cautious about grumbling, complaining, and longing for the distorted "normal" of Egypt and Babylon. You are a peculiar people. Your normal is not *their* normal.⁶
- Boiling and frothing lusts, appetites, and desires only lead to losing eternal things for a moment of earthly pleasure. May you live and not die.
- Do not grow impatient with the wilderness, Adonai's testing/training, or in waiting for Yeshua to return. **Impatient hearts always produce golden calves.**
- Do NOT use this time to size up your neighbor. Doing so, actually reveals that you consider yourself to be the judge or authority.
- Look at your neighbor with compassion, mercy, and understanding. See their pain and struggle. Love them.
- Guard Your Eyes! What are you watching, viewing, and perceiving? Make sure Tammuz, golden calves, or other idols are not your focus.
- Do not fall in love with the attention of being a perpetual victim. This is a love for Tammuz. You are called to be an overcomer. How do you do that? Obey – one day at a time.
- Tears blur your sight. Let them flow out and cleanse your vision and release your burdens.
- Don't allow tears of jealousy or selfishness to cloud or blur your vision.
- Know that God really does know and SEE your affliction, and He really does care. Trust that even in these things He has a purpose and can make all things new.
- Remember the breach in the walls of the Temples, their destruction, and why they were destroyed (Idolatry & Baseless Hatred Between Brothers).

Ps. 119:18 (TLV) Open my eyes, so I may behold wonders from Your Torah.

May you have a very blessed fourth month! And, *Tzom kal* - May you have an easy fast!

⁶ Dr. Hollisa Alewine taught on this in her live Torah Portion class for Beha'alotcha, this year (6/2019).