

פרשיות מטות-מסעי / Parshiot Mattot-Masei

Shabbat Tammuz 26, 5769, July 18, 2009
32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d
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Doing according to G-d's Word.

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Numbers 30:2-36:13
הפטרה: Jeremiah 1:1-2:3; 2:4-28 3:4
הברית: Matthew 5:33-37; James 4:1-12
החדשה

10 In Parshiot Mattot-Masei, I would like to look at a note in the marginal
Masorah on the text we have for this week's reading. One of the most important
of the Masoretic notes are those that detail the ketiv-keri that are located in the
Masorah parva in the Leningrad Codex or in the marginal Masorah in Ginsburg's
15 Masoretic text (see also the Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia (BHS)). The Masorite
would not altar the sacred Hebrew text and therefore used the Ketiv-Keri as a way
for correcting and commenting upon the text for any number of reasons (i.e.
grammatical, consonantal, etc). The uncorrected part of the text is called the כתיב
(Kativ) meaning "what is written," whereas the reading that is suggested for
20 correction is called קרי (Keri) meaning "what is read."

20 This week's reading is a double portion, Parshiot Mattot and Masei
(*Bamidbar / Numbers 32:1-33:49*), we find an interesting Ketiv-Keri in the
speech Moshe makes to Yisrael about the request of the tribes of Reuben and Gad
desiring to stay on the one side of the Jordan and not go over to the other side.
The Ketiv-Keri is shown below in *Bamidbar / Numbers 32:7*.

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Bamidbar / Numbers 32:7

וְלָמָּה [תְּנִיאֹן כ] (תְּנִיאֹן ק) אֶת-לֵב בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַבְרָה אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-נָתַן
לָהֶם יְהוָה:

30 The Ketiv (what is written) is תְּנִיאֹן and the Keri (what is read) is תְּנִיאֹן.
This word is derived from the root word נוא a verb meaning "hinder, restrain,
frustrate." For all intents and purposes, it appears the Masorettes intended to cause
the verb to change to the Hithpael verbal stem. The Hithpael has four main uses,
35 (i) describing reflexive verbs, (ii) mutual verbs, (iii) passive verbs, and (iv) verbs
that describe a false situation. In *Bamidbar / Numbers 32:7* there are two
understandings on the use of the word (1) to restrain, forbid such as in the
performance of a vow (see *Bamidbar / Numbers 30:6, 9, and 12*) and (2) to
restrain, make averse the heart. Now the Ketiv תְּנִיאֹן means opposition or to be
40 an occasion for hostility (i.e. to count as an enemy).

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Masorettes

The masorettes were groups of scribes and scholars working between the 7th and 11th centuries. The masorettes developed a system of pronunciation and grammatical guides in the form of diacritical notes on the external form of the Hebrew text as an attempt to fix the pronunciation, paragraphs, verse divisions, and cantillation marks of the Hebrew Bible.

במדבר 32:1-10

1 וּמִקְנֵהוּ רֹב הָיָה לְבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן וּלְבְנֵי-גָד עֲצוּם מְאֹד לִב
 2 וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ יְעוֹזַר וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ גִּלְעָד וְהָיָה הַמָּקוֹם
 3 מְקוֹם מִקְנֵהוּ: וַיָּבֹאוּ בְנֵי-גָד וּבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל-
 4 מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אֱלֵעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן וְאֶל-נְשִׂיאֵי הָעֵדָה לֵאמֹר:
 5 עַמֻּרוֹת וְדִיבֹן וַיְעוֹזַר וְנִמְרֹה וְחֶשְׁבּוֹן וְאֶלְעָלָה וּשְׁבָם
 6 וְנֶבֹ וּבְעֵז: הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר הִכָּה יְהוָה לְפָנֵינוּ עַד-תִּשְׂרָאֵל
 7 אֶרֶץ מִקְנֵה הוּא וְלַעֲבָדֶיךָ מִקְנֵהוּ:
 8 וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִם-מֵצָאנוּ חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ יִתֵּן אֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת
 9 לְעַבְדֶיךָ לְאֶחָזָה אֲלֵינוּ וְלֹא-תַעֲבֹרנוּ אֶת-הַיַּרְדֵּן: וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה
 10 לְבְנֵי-גָד וּלְבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן הֲאֵחִיכֶם יָבֹאוּ לְמַלְחָמָה וְאַתֶּם
 11 תֵּשְׁבוּ פֹה: וְלִמָּחָה תִּנְאוּן אֶת-לֵב בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַבְדְּךָ
 12 אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-נָתַן לָהֶם יְהוָה: כֹּה עָשׂוּ אֲבֹתֵיכֶם
 13 בְּשַׁלְּחֵי אֶתֶם מִקְדָּשׁ בְּרַנֵּעַ לְרֹאֹת אֶת-הָאָרֶץ: וַיַּעֲלוּ
 14 עַד-נַחַל אֲשְׁכּוֹל וַיֵּרְאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת-לֵב בְּנֵי
 15 יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבַלְתִּי-בֹא אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-נָתַן לָהֶם יְהוָה:
 16 וַיַּחֲרֹאֲף יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּשְׁבַּע לֵאמֹר: אֲסִירָאוּ
 17 הָאֲנָשִׁים

v. 50 סביר כִּלְיָ וּכְנ כתיב וקרי בקצת ספרים כִּי. v. 52 סביר וְשָׁבַע, בִּסְמָא וְשָׁבַע
 כתיב וקרי וכן בח"ש ת"י, ת"ע, ת"ס ות"ר. לב. v. 3 כן ירושלמי, בהללוי עֲשֶׂרֶת הִסֵּר.
 v. 3 ס"א ואלעלה סגול. v. 7 למערכאי תנאון כתיב, תניאון קרי, למדנחאי תנאון נקוד
 על ו' קרמאה.

Bamidbar / Numbers 32:1-11

32:1 Now the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad had an exceedingly large number of livestock. So when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that it was indeed a place suitable for livestock, 32:2 the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben came and spoke to Moses and to Eleazar the priest and to the leaders of the congregation, saying, 32:3 'Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo and Beon, 32:4 the land which the Lord conquered before the congregation of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock.' 32:5 They said, 'If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a possession; do not take us across the Jordan.' 32:6 But Moses said to the sons of Gad and to the sons of Reuben, 'Shall your brothers go to war while you yourselves sit here? 32:7 'Now why are you discouraging the sons of Israel from crossing over into the land which the Lord has given them? 32:8 'This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land. 32:9 'For when they went up to the valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the sons of Israel so that they did not go into the land which the Lord had given them. 32:10 'So the Lord's anger burned in that day, and He swore, saying, 32:11 'None of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob; for they did not follow Me fully, (NASB)

- 45 Does the Ketiv-Keri help us to gain a deeper understanding of the response Moshe gives to the tribes of Reuben and Gad? *Bamidbar / Numbers 32:1-5* details the request of the tribes to Reuben and Gad. The children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a great multitude of livestock and seeing the land they had conquered desired to use the land since the land was a place for
- 50 livestock. Within the request (*32:1-5*) we find two main topics (i) if we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a possession and (ii) do not take us over the Jordan. A plain reading of the text provides for us some insight into Moshe's response, the children of Reuben and Gad were requesting land that was not a part of the Promised Land; they were content with the land on this side of the Jordan as fulfilling their tribal inheritance. Also, the
- 55 longing of the children of Yisrael was to return to the Promised Land and Reuben and Gad were contented to remain where they are because the land appeared to be sufficient for them. This is a serious problem because any tribe even considering settling outside of the Land promised to Avraham is a very disturbing indifference to the Word of G-d, the Word in which Yisrael's very existence depended upon.
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As a result, Moshe responds to the request of the tribes of Reuben and Gad in *Bamidbar / Numbers 32:6-7*. Moshe summary statements ask why Reuben and Gad would discourage the heart of the children of Yisrael from going over into the land which HaShem has given them. If we take the Ketiv (what is written) meaning on the translation for discourage, it would seem to indicate that Moshe is saying the children of Reuben and Gad are enemies of the hearts of the children of Yisrael.

Moshe reminds the leaders of the tribe of Reuben and Gad why Yisrael failed to enter the Promised Land 40 years earlier in *Bamidbar / Numbers 32:8-15*. The discouragement of the unfaithful spies had a similar effect on the men of that generation. Moshe says “you will destroy all these people” drawing a parallel to their being an opponent of the heart. The leaders of the tribes of Reuben and Gad offer to send their men of war over to help conquer the land west of the Jordan river in *Bamidbar / Numbers 16-19*. As a result, Moshe accepts the offer providing they fulfill their vow.

Moshe says that if you do this thing, you will be blameless before HaShem and before Yisrael. But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the Lord and be sure your sin will find out you. Basically I they failed to do as they vowed they could be certain their sin will find them out. What sin was this? This is the sin of doing nothing. If they remained at home while their brothers were making war with the inhabitants of the Promised Land, their sin of doing nothing would find them out.

Some scholars believe this Ketiv-Keri is related to a yud-vav (י-ו) homophone. The theory goes that when a scribe is looking at the text he holds the word in his head and accidentally mixes up the vav and the yud. There are 13 instances of this type of note in the Marginal Masorah (compare *Bereshit / Genesis 14:2, 14:8, 24:33, 25:23, 36:5, 36:14, 39:20, Shmot / Exodus 8:17, 16:2, 16:7, Bamidbar / Numbers 1:16, 14:36, 16:11, 21:32, 26:9, 32:7, Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:9, and 29:22*). Regardless the fact that the word is the result of a scribal error or not, the text indicates there is something dealing with the heart that should be considered. In *Bereshit / Genesis 6-8*, HaShem destroyed the earth because the thoughts of the heart of mankind were evil continually. The sages explain this by what is called the “evil inclination.” The scriptures indicate that mankind has a tendency to turn toward evil without the ability to sense and overcome the basic evil inclination (Note *Tehillim / Psalms 51:5, 58:3, and Ecclesiastes 9:3*).

In *Bamidbar / Numbers 32:28-42*, the land is given to the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and in *Bamidbar / Numbers 32:33* also the children of the half tribe of Manasseh. Manasseh was also contented to remain on the east of the Jordan River. In Moshe’s response the use of either *תְּגִיאֶיךָ* or *תְּגִיאֶיךָ* provides us with the significant importance of the heart condition, Moshe thought the people were going to again be guilty of the sin of opposing the will of G-d and restrain the people from crossing over the Jordan. While the blessing of HaShem comes upon those who confess and cling to Him, the purpose of G-d cannot be thwarted by the sinfulness of man. *2 Timothy 2:12-13 If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; 2:13 If we are faithless, He*

110 *remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself. (NASB)* Similarly, our salvation
does not rely upon our strength but upon Yeshua and His shed blood. The Lord
purposes to do a good work in you, to bring you to salvation in Yeshua the
Messiah and to use you in His service for His glory. Are you willing to be in His
service or restrain the work he would do?

115 Heavenly Father,

120 I praise and glorify your Holy Name. You are perfect Lord and I confess
that I have not had a perfect heart in regards to your leading me in my life. Please
forgive me for the sin of unrighteous thoughts. I ask that your will be done in my
life and help me to keep my focus and my thoughts upon you Lord. Please give
me the strength to continue on loving those who have hurt me and to pray for
those who persecute me.

125 In Yeshua's Name I pray. Amen.

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Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!

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הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever