

WOC INTERNATIONAL

Rosh Chodesh Shevat (5780)

2020 New Moon 11 - Jan 3, 2021

Review - For those new to the faith or unfamiliar with the biblical concept of New Moon

What devices have we covered thus far that Satan uses to hinder us from our duties and destiny?

2nd Month (Iyar) - He uses the emotional giants of fear, regret, and guilt

3rd Month (Sivan) - Satan uses the thoughts of the 3 foxes: thief, stalker, and actor

4th Month (Tammuz) - He uses passive idolatry's covetousness, greed, & meditating on sin

5th Month (Av) - Satan uses the seemingly "convincing" events of false narratives

6th Month (Elul) - He uses delusions, deception, & misdirection to create pseudo realities

8th Month (Bul) - Satan uses pseudo realities to spawn pseudo servants

What have we covered thus far the Spirit uses to direct us in our duties on the road to destiny?

9th Month (Kislev) - True servants provide _____ service

10th Month (Tevet) - Selfless service generates _____ works

11th Month (Tevet) - Benevolent works soften hardened hearts

Introduction

Shevat is the 2nd month of Winter, 5th month of the civil year & 11th month of ecclesiastical year

Importance - Moses summarized Torah on the 1st day of Shevat for 37 days before he died

Deut 1:3 "On the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year, Moshe spoke to the people of Isra'el, reviewing everything Adonai had ordered him to tell them." CJB

Naturally, Moses was preparing Israel for entry into the Promised Land

Deut 1:6-8 "Adonai spoke to us in Horev. He said, 'You have lived long enough by this mountain. 7 Turn, get moving and go to the hill-country of the Emori and all the places near there in the 'Aravah, the hill-country, the Sh'felah, the Negev and by the seashore — the land of the Kena'ani, and the L'vanon, as far as the great river, the Euphrates River. 8 I have set the land before you! Go in, and take possession of the land Adonai swore to give to your ancestors Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov, and their descendants after them.'" CJB

Spiritually, Spirit is readying those "with ears to hear" to enter a new Birth Pains session

As Moses had to _____ Torah with them, the Spirit must do the same with us

Without reviewing what He said previously, we can't enter next session properly

Food For Thought - In light of the calendar, why will 2020 events continue into 2021?

Shevat is not a Hebrew name, it is a Babylonian name adopted by the Jews during the Exile

Why did they stop using Hebrew monthly names/numbers and start using Babylonian names?

They believed Jeremiah's prophecy was God's instruction to start a new _____

Notes

Since the original monthly names & numbers recalled the Jews 1st exile in Egypt

The new Babylonian ones would remind them of their redemption from the 2nd exile

Jer 16:14-15 “Therefore,’ says Adonai, ‘the day will come when people will no longer swear, “As Adonai lives, who brought the people of Isra’el out of the land of Egypt,” 15 but, “As Adonai lives, who brought the people of Isra’el out of the land to the north and out of all the countries where he drove them”; for I will bring them back to their own land, which I gave to their ancestors.” CJB

Notes

Important facts to focus on this 11th month of Shevat this year

To most Torah observant Jews, Shevat is associated with Sivan 6 or the Festival of Shavu’ot

Because Yahweh appealed to Israel on both these days to receive a new Torah

Food For Thought - What is the significance of a renewed Torah to the Birth Pains servant?

To selfless servants, Shevat is a time to recall Yahweh’s abundant pouring forth into their lives

Which is memorialized by the Tu B’Shevat celebration on 15 Shevat (sundown Jan 27, 2021)

But this profusion doesn’t just come from knowing what’s occurring in the earthly realm

It comes from us trusting in His heavenly provision to advance His Kingdom on earth

Important fact about the Asher (the son of Jacob)

Asher was the 8th of Jacob’s sons, the 2nd and last borne to him by Leah’s maid Zilpah

Gen 30:12-13 “Zilpah Le’ah’s slave-girl bore Ya’akov a second son; 13 and Le’ah said, “How happy I am! Women will say I am happy!” and called him Asher [happy].” CJB

Important facts about the Asher (the tribe)

In the desert, Asher was based North with Dan & Naphtali (opposite his brother Gad in the South)

They were 1 of 6 tribes chosen to stand on Mount Ebal to warn of the curses of disobedience

They reminded their brethren what would happen if they broke their promise to Yahweh

Deut 27:13-15 “while these are to stand on Mount ‘Eival for the curse: Re’uven, Gad, Asher, Z’vulun, Dan and Naftali. 14 The L’vi’im, speaking loudly, will proclaim to every man of Isra’el: 15 “A curse on anyone who makes a carved or metal image, something Adonai detests, the handiwork of a craftsman, and sets it up in secret!’ All the people are to respond by saying, ‘Amen!’ CJB

In the Promised Land, Asher was based in western and coastal Galilee (near Lebanon of today)

The cooler and wetter climate made it one of the most fertile parts of the region

And the rich pastures/wooded hills were perfect for growing olive oil (their tribal symbol)

But olive oil was more than just a condiment to the ancient Israelites

It was a _____ oil used to anoint priests by which Asher became very prosperous

Notes

While the Asherites weren't significantly more populous or special than the other tribes

They were considered to be the _____, most blessed & prosperous of the 12 Tribes

Deut 33:24-25 "Of Asher he said: "May Asher be most blessed of sons, may he be the favorite among his brothers and bathe his feet in oil. 25 May your bolts be of iron and bronze and your strength last as long as you live." CJB

And they were well known for enjoying all life had to offer, particularly fine dining

Gen 49:20 "Asher's food is rich – he will provide food fit for a king" CJB

They were also famous for having the most beautiful & refined daughters of all the tribes

People of the highest stature including high priests, looked to wed Asherite women

When an Asherite woman wed a Levite, her kids were eligible to serve as high priests

Notes

What 3 things made the Asherite women so appealing to men (esp. Levites)? - They were ...

1 - Very beautiful and possessed an inward _____ & modesty, such as that below

1 Peter 3:3-4 "Your beauty should not consist in externals such as fancy hairstyles, gold jewelry or what you wear; 4 rather, let it be the inner character of your heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit. In God's sight this is of great value." CJB

2 - Spiritually mature _____ who supported Yahweh's work with personal dignity

Prov 31:10-12 "Who can find a capable wife? Her value is far beyond that of pearls. 11 Her husband trusts her from his heart, and she will prove a great asset to him. 12 She works to bring him good, not harm, all the days of her life." CJB

3 - Remarkable _____ who produced healthy and emotionally stable children

Prov 31:28-29 "Her children arise; they make her happy; her husband too, as he praises her: 29 "Many women have done wonderful things, but you surpass them all!" CJB

Food For Thought - How do these 3 Asherite traits relate to Moses' prophecy in Deut 33:24-25?

Notes

Important fact to focus on concerning Asher on the 11th month of Shevat this year

Jewish scholars think Asher's mobility is what kept them disconnected from the other tribes

They never fully incorporated themselves into the nation of Israel

Which is why they did not feel the need to help in the fight against Sisera (Judges 5:17)

But did help Gideon in the fight against the Midianites (Judges 6:35)

Notes

How do benevolent works pertain to our lesson today about softening hardened hearts?

Natural Asher was richly blessed, but they didn't have a soft heart for benevolent works

Their "business minded" heart led to a "Live and let live" policy with the Canaanites that

1 - Made it easy to _____ the Torah's command to "drive them out"

Ex 6:2-5 "God spoke to Moshe; he said to him, "I am Adonai. 3 I appeared to Avraham, Yitz'chak and Ya'akov as El Shaddai, although I did not make myself known to them by my name, Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh [Adonai]. 4 Also with them I established my covenant to give them the land of Kena'an, the land where they wandered about and lived as foreigners. 5 Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Isra'el, whom the Egyptians are keeping in slavery; and I have remembered my covenant." CJB

2 - Let them intermarry to foster unholy _____ relationships with the Canaanites

And ultimately become a minority in their own land & albatross to their brethren

Food For Thought - What does Asher having a better relationship with their Gentile neighbors than their fellow Israelites reveal about Asher's heart and perception of

Now their riches became a _____ to their person, rather than a boon to the Community

1 Tim 6:9-10 "Furthermore, those whose goal is to be rich fall into temptation; they get trapped in many foolish and hurtful ambitions which plunge them into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all the evils; because of this craving, some people have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves to the heart with many pains." CJB

Notes

Fact - Asher & Simeon were only tribes W of the Jordan that furnished no hero or judge for Israel

Yet, it was Anna the prophetess who confessed Yeshua at His birth, on behalf of Israel

Luke 2:36-38 "There was also a prophet named Hannah Bat-P'nu'el, of the tribe of Asher. She was a very old woman — she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage 37 and had remained a widow ever since; now she was eighty-four. She never left the Temple grounds but worshipped there night and day, fasting and praying. 38 She came by at that moment and began thanking God and speaking about the child to everyone who was waiting for Yerushalayim to be liberated." CJB

Food For Thought - If 10 tribes were lost long before Anna was born, how did Luke know Anna was from the tribe of Asher?

Conclusion

Why is the softening of hardened hearts especially important to this next Birth Pains session?

Only a soft heart can produce the _____ courage & strength needed to excel during it

Luke 21:34-36 "But keep watch on yourselves, or your hearts will become dulled by carousing, drunkenness and the worries of everyday living, and that Day will be sprung upon you suddenly like a trap! 35 For it will close in on everyone, no matter where they live, throughout the whole world. 36 Stay alert, always praying that you will have the strength to escape all the things that will happen and to stand in the presence of the Son of Man." CJB

All men are potentially heroes or cowards & the boundary between them gets blurred at times
Asher could have been a hero with his _____, by obeying Yahweh's commands
Instead, the people choose a life of financial ease that led to a moral deterioration

Rev 3:17-19 "For you keep saying, 'I am rich, I have gotten rich, I don't need a thing!' You don't know that you are the one who is wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked! 18 My advice to you is to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich; and white clothing, so that you may be dressed and not have to be ashamed of your nakedness; and eyesalve to rub on your eyes, so that you may see." CJB

Spiritual Asher is also richly blessed & has the same _____ to be a hero
And change lives if they possess that soft heart that produces His benevolent works

1 Tim 6:17-19 "As for those who do have riches in this present world, charge them not to be proud and not to let their hopes rest on the uncertainties of riches but to rest their hopes on God, who richly provides us with all things for our enjoyment. 18 Charge them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, to be generous and ready to share. 19 In this way they will treasure up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they may lay hold of the real life." CJB

Why are benevolent works an important tool in the softening of hardened hearts today?

They're the only works that reflect the graceful way the Father relates to undeserving men

Heb 12:28 "Therefore, since we have received an unshakeable Kingdom, let us have grace, through which we may offer service that will please God, with reverence and fear." CJB

Notes