

**Date:** 27 Iyar 5786 (May 14, 2026)

**Torah Portion:** Bamidbar

**Topic:** The Hidden Muster, Part 2

The rabbis often associated exile with the diminishing of the moon. Yisrael passes through periods where divine light appears obscured, yet the covenant remains alive beneath the surface. The farewell between David and Yonatan in the field reflects this painful tension. Covenant loyalty survives even while visible structures collapse. Their weeping anticipates the anguish of exile itself: separation, uncertainty, and waiting for future restoration.

The teachings of Maimonides reinforce this perspective. In his discussion of the Messianic era, Rambam warns against obsessive speculation concerning end-times calculations. One should not become consumed with determining exact dates or apocalyptic sequences. Instead, the proper response is steadfast obedience to Torah and refinement of character. This principle aligns closely with Matthew 24:36: “Of that day and hour no one knows.” The concealed time is intended to cultivate watchfulness rather than curiosity.

Similarly, the Tanya explains that exile is not merely political displacement but spiritual concealment. Divine vitality becomes hidden within the material world, and the task of humanity is *birur* (בִּירוּר) —clarification and refinement. The darkness preceding redemption therefore serves a transformative purpose. When worldly certainty collapses, the soul is confronted with the question of ultimate allegiance. Will one cling to temporary powers, or to the eternal kingship of YHWH?

Matthew 24 describes angels gathering the elect “from the four winds.” This imagery recalls the tribal arrangement around the Mishkan in Numbers. Yisrael once camped in ordered formation around the visible dwelling of the Divine Presence. The prophetic vision foresees a future regathering in which scattered exiles are once again assembled around divine kingship. The wilderness generation foreshadows the final restoration.

Yet the gathering also involves judgment and separation. In Numbers 3 and 4, not everyone could approach the sanctuary in the same manner. Distinctions existed between priest, Levite, and tribe. Holiness required discernment. Likewise, Matthew 24 calls for spiritual vigilance. Not all who witness signs truly perceive their meaning. Some interpret cosmic disturbance merely as catastrophe, while others recognize birth pangs of redemption.

The sages often compared redemption to dawn. Darkness intensifies just before morning because the world stands at the threshold of transition. The Talmud describes the “footsteps of Moshiach” as an era marked by confusion, instability, and moral inversion. The external shaking described in Matthew 24 corresponds to an internal shaking of humanity itself. False securities are dismantled so that the fear of Heaven may emerge anew.

The farewell covenant between David and Yonatan offers one final insight. Yonatan tells David, “YHWH shall be between me and you, and between my seed and your seed forever.” Even amid political collapse and separation, covenant continuity remains. This enduring covenant becomes the hidden thread uniting the passages. In Numbers, the covenant organizes the camp. In Samuel, it preserves loyalty amid danger. In Matthew, it sustains the faithful during cosmic upheaval.

Thus, Matthew 24:29–36 should not be read merely as a prediction of catastrophic events. It is a call to covenantal readiness. The darkening heavens reveal the inadequacy of earthly powers. The hidden day and hour humble human pride. The gathering of the elect fulfills the wilderness pattern established in Torah. The concealed king, like David in exile, will ultimately be revealed openly. Until then, the task of Yisrael is not panic, but faithful watchfulness.

The ultimate message of these passages is that redemption emerges through concealment before revelation, order before glory, and covenant before kingdom. The wilderness census, the hidden new moon sign, and the cosmic signs of Matthew all testify to the same truth: YHWH guides history according to His appointed order, even when His purposes remain partially veiled. The faithful are therefore called not to master the mystery, but to remain steadfast within it.

Shalom.

