

Lowlands Camping: Tahath

And they removed from Makkeloth, and and encamped at Tahath, Numbers 33:26.

Israel's twenty-second encampment was *Tahath* (also spelled *tachath*), meaning "lowlands."⁷⁸ A lowland, according to the dictionary, is "a land which is low... with respect to the adjacent country..." It may even be a "marsh."⁷⁹ Some suggest that this next camping spot was in the lowlands of Moab, because of the terrain found in that region. However, since there is a notable pattern of Israel's encampments being named more by the experiences than the terrain of these sites, it is more likely that Israel experienced an emotional "lowlands" through continued disappointment, discouragement, and despair.

To further support the belief that *Tahath* was named for Israel's emotional state at this encampment, consider that the word "*tahath*" is from a Hebrew root word meaning "the bottom, as depressed,"⁸⁰ Truly the experiential "lowlands" seemed unrelenting to the people. They had long since lost sight of Canaan, many had lost loved ones, and most were tempted to lose hope.

Tahath means "lowlands" to "hit bottom" and "great humiliation." It also means "contrition" and signifies the breaking of our "stubborn will."

As we consider what such a bleak camp experience may hold for final spiritual Israel, consider that most have gone through some "lowlands" spiritually and emotionally already. And before the end of all things, those who haven't, will. This entire third of the journey is about learning to walk by faith when there seems to be no pathway.

But, in *Yahweh's* mercy, there is a “silver lining” to this dark “low-lands cloud.” While this encampment name indicates a grim experience coming for the End-Time people of *Yahweh*, the meaning of this camp’s ordinal number offers a lifting ray of help and hope.

To illustrate how the numerical “silver lining” relates to the encampment “cloud,” consider an account, which took place about a hundred years ago. As He will for End-time Israel, in this story we see that *Yahweh* brings direction and hope out of helplessness and despair.



George Boldt (pictured on the right) was the Bellvue Hotel manager. As such, he and his wife lived in the hotel in a modest suite. One stormy night, in the wee hours of the morning, an undistinguished looking man and his wife came into the Bellvue Hotel in Philadelphia seeking shelter.

In Yahweh's Mercy, there is always a "silver lining" in the "clouds" of our Tahath experiences.

“Could you possibly give us a room here?” the husband asked.

Boldt, a Christian man with a winning smile, looked at the couple and explained that there were three conventions in town. “All of our rooms are taken,” he said. “But I can't send a nice couple like you out in the rain at one o'clock in the morning. Would you perhaps be willing to sleep in my quarters?”

The couple protested. It was too much to ask. But, Boldt pressed on, “Don't worry about me; I'll make out just fine.” Finally, considering that there wasn't much else available at that hour in a convention-packed city, the couple gratefully agreed. Mr. Boldt then quickly moved his own

family out of their Bellvue suite, in order to accommodate the exhausted couple.

As the grateful guest paid the hotel bill the next morning, he said to Boldt, “You are the kind of manager who should be the boss of the best hotel in the United States. Maybe someday I'll build one for you to manage.”

Boldt looked at the couple and smiled. The three of them had a good laugh. It was the beginning of a what grew to be a good friendship between them.

As they drove away, the couple agreed that the selfless manager was indeed exceptional. Finding people who are both friendly and helpful was rare.

Two years passed, during which the two men kept in contact, continuing to enjoy each other's company whenever time permitted. Then, one day Boldt received a letter from his friend. It recalled that stormy night and enclosed a round-trip ticket to New York, asking George Boldt to come for a visit.

The man met Boldt in New York, and led him to the corner of Fifth Avenue and 34th Street. He then pointed to a great new building there, a palace-like structure of reddish stone, with turrets and watchtowers thrusting up to the sky.

Pointing at the impressive new building, the man said, “This is the hotel I have just built. And I want you to manage it.”



Looking at what was truly the finest hotel in New York and possibly the Eastern Seaboard, Boldt blinked, “You must be joking.”

“I can assure you that I am not,” a quiet smile played around his friend’s mouth.

The enormously wealthy hotel owner’s name was William Waldorf Astor, and the magnificent structure was the original Waldorf Hotel, later to become the famous Waldorf Astoria. George C. Boldt could never have foreseen the turn of events that would lead him to become the manager of one of the world’s most glamorous hotels. Certainly, he did not give up his own place in the Bellvue expecting personal gain. But, so impressive was the Christian generosity demonstrated that stormy night, when he, as a complete stranger, lifted Astor out of a “lowland,” that he befriended Boldt, delivered him from a mediocre existence and granted him a position which ultimately earned George Boldt a millionaire’s retirement.⁸¹

A secular story, no doubt; but, a remarkable account of a man who learned to put others ahead of himself. That is something rarely seen in our times. George Boldt discovered that showing care for others in their lowlands brings blessing to all.⁸² It is most often when one is in a lowlands, that Providence moves.

Are you in a “lowland”? Hold on; *Yahweh* will not fail to meet your need! When you have endured the test of your faith, the Heavenly Father will bring deliverance and blessing, where once was discouragement and despair.

More than fifteen million Americans suffer from depression symptoms, and many more go undiagnosed.⁸³ These are the silent sufferers of “the blues.” It is the hopeless feeling of the “lowlands” on the edge of Moab, a name that means “who is your father?” Often, full-blown depression is the despair of not fully knowing and trusting the Heavenly Father.

The Bible reveals numerous examples of people who passed through a “lowlands.” Adam and Eve were the first humans to experience it, when they were expelled from their garden home. Abraham experienced it (Gen. 15); Jonah (Jonah 4) went through it; Job felt it,

and Elijah withdrew because of it (1 Kings 19). King Saul (1 Sam. 16:14-23), David (Ps. 6, 13, 25, etc), and Jeremiah all passed through the “lowlands” at some time in their lives.⁸⁴

Such discouraging times can be so intense, that they seem unbearable.

The spirit of a man will sustain him in sickness, But who can bear a broken spirit? Proverbs 18:14.

As was the case of Israel in the wilderness, sometimes depression is brought on by guilt. This was true for Cain after he had killed his brother (Gen.4:6-7). Similarly, David lamented his adultery (Ps. 32:3-4). *Yahweh* reaches us at such times with conviction.

*Job's experience in the "lowlands" was not brought on by sin. It was a test, similar to the test *Yahweh's* End-time people will face.*

On the other hand, an experiential “lowland” is not necessarily caused by sin. Job had done nothing to warrant the loss of his substance, children, and health. His time in the “lowlands” was a spiritual test, similar to the ones *Yahweh's* End-time people will face, for the purifying of their character. Yet after enduring the lowlands, *Yahweh* brought him out to great heights of joy and blessing.

Whether brought on by our own sin, or part of the Refiner's fiery proving process, there is hope and help for all who face the “lowlands.” Remember that *Yahshua*, our Messiah, went through the depths of Gethsemane and Calvary. Because He walked the darkest of experiences for us, we may rejoice and trust Him through every difficulty we will face. Our trials will be small by comparison. Thus, as we contemplate the coming “lowlands,” which all of *Yahweh's* End-Time children will face, we can trust our Heavenly Father, and patiently endure as we prayerfully await His promised “lift.”

Then, just as happened for George Boldt, *Yahweh* not only lifts us from our mundane bog, He elevates us to unforeseeable heights of

blessing. “Weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning,” Psalm 30:5.

COMFORT AMID THE CLOUDS

What “lift” from despair relieved the Children of Israel in their experience at *Tahath*? The Bible doesn’t say, specifically, but important insights are revealed through the meaning of this camp’s ordinal position. In Hebrew Gematria, the number twenty-two indicates a drawing together in a stronger community bond. In fact, twenty-two indicates “light,” or the “enlightenment offered by two witnesses.”⁸⁵

*Tahath was Israel's
22nd Campsite. 22,
in Hebrew, means
"light," or the
"enlightenment
offered by two
witnesses."*

What two witnesses were in Israel to bring a ray of “light” to the “cloud-covered” hearts about them? Could those “two witnesses” have been Caleb and Joshua, still making effort to guide and encourage the downcast to trust the YAH of Jacob?

In its full Gematria, twenty-two is like an olive branch extended to the guilty. It signifies goodness in the face of despair. It bears the comfort of a “warm fire on a cold night.”

This meaning is exemplified in the story of Joseph and his brothers. Joseph had spent twenty-two years in Egypt before he was reconciled to his brethren. As an “olive branch” extended to his guilty family, his



forgiveness brought them back into “the light.” He had been separated from his beloved father for twenty-two years. Now his brothers were truly repentant. As the number twenty-two connotes, Joseph’s forgiveness brought warmth and comfort to guilt-ridden hearts.

Tov (also spelled *tob*) is the Hebrew word “good.” It has the numerical value of “17,” the age of Joseph when he was sold into slavery. But, the Gematria for “very good,” or “wholly good” (*Tov Vav*) is “22.” Thus, Joseph, sold into slavery at the age of seventeen, was taken to Egypt for the “complete good,” -the ultimate blessing of Israel.⁸⁶ This Joseph acknowledged directly, as is written:

And Joseph said unto them, Fear not. . . ye thought evil against me; but YAH meant it unto good (tov), to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive, Genesis 50:19-20.

For twenty-two long years, Joseph’s brothers had been living in deception and guilt. But, Truth revealed brings opportunity for the blessing of forgiveness and restitution. Even confessing one’s sin glorifies *Yahweh* (See Joshua 7:18-19). *Yahweh* used Joseph’s “lowlands” experience of being sold into slavery to pour out a double blessing upon him and his father’s family. It truly brings a ray of light to any cloudy experience, when we recognize that *Yahweh* has only allowed the trial for our “good”!

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love YAH, to them who are the called according to His purpose, Romans 8:28.

Think of it! When we belong to *Yahweh*, the Tahaths of our lives are only for our “good”!

Interestingly enough, the combined values of the words “good” and “wholly good” are derived by adding the numerical value of the individual letters which comprise the words. To see how we arrive at this Gematria for these Hebrew words, consider the chart on the following page:⁸⁷

| Hebrew Word | Meaning | Total Value | Numerical Value of the Letters in the Hebrew Word |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---|
| <i>Tov</i> טוב | good | 17 | <i>Bet</i> (2)+ <i>Vav</i> (6)+ <i>Tet</i> (9) 2+6+9 = 17 (<i>Joseph was 17 when sold into slavery</i>) |
| <i>Tov Vav</i> טוב | very good (doubly good) | 22 | <i>Heh</i> (5) + <i>Bet</i> (2)+ <i>Vav</i> (6)+ <i>Tet</i> (9) 5+2+6+9 = 22 (<i>Twenty-two years passed before Joseph and hisbrothers were reunited.</i>) |

THE NUMBER OF LIGHT

While the name of this encampment denotes a dark, experiential “lowlands,” the number of this campsite represents the comfort needed to pass safely through these trials and discouragements. The book, *Biblical Mathematics, Keys to Scripture Numerics, How to Count the Bible*, explains the spiritual meaning of the number 22. According to evangelist and author, Ed Vallowe, this number reveals a “Manifestation of Light.” When we walk with *Yahweh*, we are counted as “children of Light,” (1 Thessalonians 5:5). When “14,” signifying “deliverance,” is added to “8,” for “new birth,” the sum is “22,” - “the complete good of enlightenment.”⁸⁸

Thus, in the combined message of this campsite's name AND number, we may find our calling. As *Yahweh's* children, we are to “Let our light shine” (Matthew 5:16), no matter the circumstances.

The purpose of Light is not only to enlighten us, lift other’s burdens, and glorify *Yahweh*, it is also our protection for facing our own future “lowlands.” When we walk in true Light, we are clothed with Heavenly Armor. Our awareness of the “clothing” aids in dispelling the darkness of any cloud-covered “lowlands.” Paul wrote:

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light, Romans 13:12.

"It is especially significant that the Gospel of John uses the word 'light' twenty-two times!"

Oh, how we need to be clothed in the "armor of light"! The word "Light" is found 264 times in the Bible, which, when divided by twelve, -the number of "The Kingdom" and *Yahweh's* "Administration" of it, -produces "22," the number of "Light." Considering this, it is especially significant that the Gospel of John uses the word "light" twenty-two times!⁸⁹

Bearing the Light of the Kingdom is the work of all who are called into the Father's priesthood. Notably, 22,000 priests served in the wilderness Tabernacle.⁹⁰ The "22" denotes the work of bearing the Light. But, what is the meaning of the thousand?

The number "thousand" is often used figuratively in Scripture to indicate the infinite glory and purpose of *Yahweh*. When we sing, "He owns the cattle on a thousand hills," from Psalm 50:10, we are not counting! Certainly, we know that the Heavenly Father also owns the cattle on hill number one-thousand-and one! The Hebrew concept of a thousand is used to signify "totality and completeness." By adding the thousand to the end of the number twenty-two, *Yahweh* gives us the message that His priests were to fully carry His Eternal Light to the whole world.



This calling is no different for *Yahweh's* children today. We are all called to be kings and priests in our Father's Service (Revelation 5:10). When we face the testing of *Tahath*, in the Last Days, we are to be found faithfully administering the Light, lifting faces upward when they have been brought low, and enlarging the Kingdom of *Yahovah!*

This work, we carry to its enth, bringing the Light of *Yahweh's* Word to the whole world!

LIGHT BRINGS BLESSED HUMILIATION

As we have seen, Moses named this 22nd encampment *Tahath* to express that it was a “lowlands.” The Heavenly Father guided them here for their 22nd lesson to reveal that Light is the Heavenly antidote for such difficult times. But, there are even deeper levels of meaning and understanding to be gained from the camp-name itself. So, we will now plumb the depths of the Hebrew word “*Tahath*” to gain a full appreciation of this experience.

Tahath was the name of one of the sons of Ephraim (1 Chron. 7:20), and means to hit “bottom,” or “deep humiliation.”⁹¹ Interestingly, often gaining Light, or the experience of “seeing the Light,” can be quite humiliating, especially when it shines on an area where, before, we defended ourselves while walking in darkness.



This is well illustrated in the story of the Apostle Paul, then called Saul, on the Damascus road. Saul “saw the light,” the “manifestation of Light,” that brought deliverance, salvation, and the purpose of Light into his life. In that dazzling Light, his “darkness.” was dispelled.

For Paul, his encounter with this Light was not only a jarring and eye-opening experience for his mind, it was also a shocking and humiliating slam to his spirit. Yet, it was through this overwhelming encounter that Paul was converted. Being confronted by the true Light was a life-changing experience, transforming the once proud and persecutory “Saul” into the self-distrusting and evangelizing “Paul.”

Nothing could stop Paul from faithfully serving the One Whom he had so zealously rebuffed. And he did it willingly and boldly, considering the love of *Yahweh* well worth any price, even that of martyrdom.

...I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Yahshua my Adonai; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, Philippians 3:8.

Not only does our encounter with the Light of Heaven bring us to instant meekness, this humbling experience also serves as the classroom in which *Yahweh* prepares us for a closer walk with Him.

*If we resist
Yahweh's humbling
lesson (in our
spiritual Tahath),
we are rejecting the
Heavenly Father's
offer of true sonship!*

Of all the parallels to be observed by walking with Israel through the desert, one of the most important of them may be at this station of *Tahath*, the “lowlands.” On the way to the Heavenly Canaan, every child of *YAH* meets challenging and humiliating experiences; but, as we submit to Him, even in our experiential *Tahath*, we learn meekness. By this, our trust is rewarded and strengthened, and we are enabled to pass through these “lowlands,” in victory. Humility, that virtue expressed as a “consciousness of being lower,”⁹² is at the core of our strength as sons and daughters of the King.

Sadly, when Heaven brings us into the Valley of Humiliation, the experiential “lowlands” of *Tahath*, our carnal reaction is to brace ourselves to resist the humbling experience. But if we resist our Heavenly Father’s humbling lesson, we are rejecting true sonship. Rebellion against *Yahweh*’s chastening is choosing to be a spiritual bastard (illegitimate), as is plainly explained in Hebrews 12:5-8.

... My son, despise not thou the chastening of (Yahweh), nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: For whom (Yahweh) loveth He

chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, (YAH) dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons," Hebrews 12:5-8.

So, how can you tell whether the test of *Tahath* is still needed in your own heart? Prayerfully ask the following questions, for they unmask a spirit of pride:

- Do you defend yourself when accused, scolded, or berated?
- Do you seek recognition?
- Do you enjoy compliments on your looks, your job well done, your top grades, or your car?

If you said “yes” to any of these questions, the lesson of *Tahath* is for you. *Tahath* is not only an experiential “low-lands,” it also means “contrition” or “breaking”⁹³ as in breaking the “callused will.” This was the state of the congregation in the aftermath of the faithless spies, the Korah rebellion, and the *Kohath* coveting of the priesthood. For many in the remaining congregation, wills were finally broken so that only contrition was left. No wonder they trudged along through the wilderness “with their heads bowed like the bulrushes.”⁹⁴

If we, like Paul, face our spiritual Tahath with contrition and submission to Yahweh, we will be transformed and strengthened by the experience.

But if we, like Paul, face our spiritual *Tahath* with contrition and submission to *Yahweh*, we will be transformed by the experience, strengthened by the encounter, and better fitted to serve *Yahweh* as His loving sons and daughters on this journey.

Our level of contrition (sorrow for sin) is directly related to our comprehend of our offenses in *Yahweh*'s Eyes. Such insight is gained only when our lives are prayerfully measured by the pure Word of *Yahweh*.

WHAT IS TRUE HUMILITY?

In Isaiah 66:2, we read:

But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word.

In this passage, “contrite” means “smitten, maimed, and dejected.” In the following verses “contrite” means to be “bruised, humbled.”⁹⁵ Therefore, we see that this heart condition is the response of those who rightly handle the humbling of *Tahath*.

There are many powerful promises for those who face Heaven’s humbling tests with contrition. Here are a few:

(Yahweh) is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit, Psalms 34:18.



The sacrifices of (YAH) are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O (Yahweh), Thou wilt not despise, Psalms. 51:17.

For thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, Whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones, Isaiah 57:15.

The Hebrew word for “broken,” as is used in Psalm 51:17, is from the root word which means “to crush,” “be broken in pieces.”⁹⁶ This certainly was an apt description of Saul’s experience on the Damascus Road. It was in the expression of David when the “light” flooded upon him through Nathan’s words: “Thou art the man!” (2 Sam. 12:7). Peter also experienced this crushing brokenness when the

Saviour's sad gaze caught his eye, seconds after vehemently denying Him: "I know not the Man."

In our understanding of the concept today, experiencing "brokenness of spirit" does not always lead to lasting "contrition." The prophets' use of the word, however, means to be so broken so as to never be the same again. It is to be so completely emptied of self that there is no room in the life for it. This is *Yahweh's* goal, in bringing His children into an experiential *Tahath*.

Humility does not mean you think less of yourself. It means you think of yourself less.

Actually, the very miserable "lowlands" experience which seems so punishing at the time, is one of the most loving ways *Yahweh* deals with us as His children. For it is only because He loves us that He chastens us, bringing us into an experiential *Tahath* test, that we can be fitted for Canaan at last! Ultimately, only the "meek" will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5), and only the "poor in spirit" will possess the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 5:3). The ending words of a Christian song, written by Lanny and Marieta Wolfe, are appropriate here: "Whatever it takes for my will to break, that's what I'll be willing to do."

Many believe that humility is contempt for self, or a divinely sanctioned inferiority complex. But, this is not what true humility is about, at all. As the well-known leadership trainer, Ken Blanchard, once said, "Humility does not mean you think less of yourself. It means you think of yourself less."⁹⁷ Thus, we see that Humility is not primarily an attitude toward oneself; but rather, it is primarily demonstrated in a focus on YAH and love for others.

Thou shalt love the Yahweh thy El with all your heart...and thy neighbor as thyself,... Matthew 22:37, 39.

Are you praying for the experience of *Tahath* to bring you into blessed humiliation? Perhaps you have felt easily surprised into sin, lured into deception, or drawn into deceit. The Loving Heavenly

Father knows your heart, and He will complete what He has begun in you, as you repent and submit at each testing event (Philippians 1:6).

*Yah, Your Ways are past finding out,
Your Thoughts, so much higher than mine.
I don't understand all the facets of Your Love,
But, I know when it's Your Hand from Above.*

*You hold me down with the one Hand,
And lift me up with the other.
Chasten me with one, and comfort with the other –
Yahweh, I love You – on the one Hand and the Other!*

*YAH, You bring me to tears of contrition,
Yet fill me with joy so complete.
You show me my fears and my failures,
But You don't leave me there in defeat.*

*You hold me down with the one Hand,
And lift me up with the other.
Chasten me with one, and comfort with the other –
Yahweh, I love You – on the one Hand and the Other!*

*Your Severity has been my salvation,
And Your Goodness has helped me abide.
Your Gate, it is strait, but Your Kindness is broad,
Your Way is narrow, but Your Mercy is wide.*

*You hold me down with the one Hand,
And lift me up with the other.
Chasten me with one, and comfort with the other –
Yahweh, I love You – on the one Hand and the Other!
YAH, You love me – with the One Hand and the Other!*

(Adapted from lyrics of the song:
“On the One Hand and the Other,”
composer/song writer unknown)



SUMMARY OF CHAPTER EIGHT

- *Tahath*, Israel's 22nd campsite, means "lowlands" and "great humiliation." It also signifies "contrition" and the "breaking" of the "stubborn will."
- In Hebrew, the number 22 (as this is the 22nd campsite) signifies "light" and "enlightenment offered by two witnesses."
- As He did for Israel, of old, *Yahweh* purposely brings His children into *Tahath* circumstances, which catapult them from their comfort zone into an emotional and physical lowland. This is because He uses our spiritual experiences of *Tahath* to teach us humility, submission and meekness.
- *Yahweh* "chastens," or brings about "lowlands" circumstances, in the lives of all His children. Accepting the "chastening" experiences from *Yahweh* is a vital part of sonship.
- If we reject *Yahweh's* "chastening," and resist being humbled and enlightened at spiritual *Tahath*, we become spiritual bastards (illegitimate) rather than sons of the living *Yah*.
- It is spiritual maturity to praise and worship *Yahweh* equally in times of trial and times of blessing.
- We are enabled to reach this point of spiritual maturity by understanding and accepting *Yahweh's* demonstration of love **both** in chastening and in comforting His children.