

**Message 7-16-16**  
**Chukkat-Ordinance of**  
**Numbers 19:1-22:1**  
**Judges 11:1-33**  
**John 3:14-15**

**Introduction**

As the Israelites continue on their march, the people again start to complain about God and Moses. As punishment, God sends serpents, which bite and kill many of the people.

**Numbers 21:4-9**

**4** From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Reed Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. <sup>5</sup> And the people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food." <sup>6</sup> Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. <sup>7</sup> And the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. <sup>8</sup> And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." <sup>9</sup> So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live. (ESV)

Every time the people complained against God and Moses, they were punished, and every time Moses would intercede for the people, God would stop the punishment, but they never seemed to learn the lesson. The lesson to be learned here and that is valid for us today is to trust in the Lord, and He will see you through whatever situation where you may find yourself. This is a very important concept to understand, and despite the fact that bad things happen to good people, particularly believers, it should not shake our faith but strengthen it. That was the Israelites problem. One minute they were up, and the next they were down. They were like children who are happy when they get what they want, and when they don't, they pout and sit in the corner. We are not that much different from them even if we think we are not. We pray to God and ask for things, but are we asking for the right things? Are we asking for the Lord to strengthen our faith to help to walk the Torah lifestyle which has to be done by faith and not by blind obedience? This is the problem, and we should know what the solution is. Unless we follow the Lord's instructions, we will always have problems. Even though we try our best to do what the Lord wants us to, we still live in a fallen world, and we will face tests every day of the

week. It's how we handle these tests that will make or break our relationship with the Father and the Son.

We need to look to the example of Messiah to see how we are to live a life that is pleasing to God. No matter what He encountered in His life, He was always connected to His Father. Every test that came His way, He prayed about it and did what the Torah instructed. He never veered off course, and that should show us what we should be trying to do. It is not easy to do what God asks of you. It's difficult in this life to walk out Torah through our faith in Yeshua. The world looks at things one way and God another. Who do you follow?

**Mark 12:16** And they brought one. And he said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said to him, "Caesar's." <sup>17</sup> Yeshua said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at him. (ESV)

Yeshua made it very clear that we are to do as the law of the land where we live but also to give to God what belongs to Him. Many say that everything belongs to Him, and that is true because everything comes from Him, but Yeshua is telling us that in certain situations we are to do what the law of the land tells us where we are responsible. We may be under God's Torah all the time, but if we are not living in His kingdom but in a country with its own laws, we have to learn how to balance what the law of the land requires and what the law of God requires. It is a hard path people. I am not making light of it, and if push comes to shove and the law of the land tells us to do something that is against God's Torah, then we have to make a choice, and it can make us deal with a difficult situation. What if you are being asked to do something that involves your employment that is against God's Torah? What if you are told to keep your religious beliefs to yourself? These are real situations and problems that all of us face every single day, and we are faced with decisions that can affect our relationships with friends and family. What do we do?

**Matthew 5:11** "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. <sup>13</sup> "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. <sup>14</sup> **"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. <sup>17</sup> "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. <sup>18</sup> For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (ESV)**

You are the light that shines in the darkness and if you hide that light, what good will it do you? This does not mean we try to shove our beliefs down someone's throat or get in their face about it. It is about walking the way of Messiah, of Torah, and being an example through our lives. Be a light by example. Remember that someone may be where you once were. We all stood where someone else is now standing. When a door opens, enter and share about your walk, but remember to explain to them that Torah and faith in Messiah Yeshua go hand in hand.

### **Judges 11:5-11**

**5** And when the Ammonites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah from the land of Tob. <sup>6</sup> And they said to Jephthah, "Come and be our leader, that we may fight against the Ammonites." <sup>7</sup> But Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me and drive me out of my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?" <sup>8</sup> And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That is why we have turned to you now, that you may go with us and fight against the Ammonites and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead." <sup>9</sup> Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you bring me home again to fight against the Ammonites, and the LORD gives them over to me, I will be your head." <sup>10</sup> And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "The LORD will be witness between us, if we do not do as you say." <sup>11</sup> So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and leader over them. And Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD at Mizpah. (ESV)

This is an interesting story from the Haftarah portion. Jephthah was driven out of his father's home by those who were now coming to him to ask for his help to fight the Ammonites. It would appear that turnabout is fair play; they ask Jephthah to be their leader, he tells them that if he defeats the Ammonites, then he wants to return home, and he wants to be their leader. Those gathered there called upon God to be their witness that what Jephthah said would be done, and they did what he asked. The moral of this story is be careful of what you ask for because in the excitement of the moment, Jephthah made a vow to the Lord that would cost him dearly. Be very careful what you promise to God because He will hold you to it, He never changes, and is always the same. We are the only ones who change, my friends. It is we who compromise the Torah, but at the same time, we must not ask anyone to do something in Torah if we are not willing to do it also. While the Torah has a literal level, there are also three other levels to consider as well. This study is called PARDES, which is an acronym for Peshat, Remez, Drash and Sod. Always stay anchored to the Peshat or literal level before you try to go deeper into the Torah because if you lose sight of the Peshat, you may wind up losing your way.

The same is true if you are so tied to the literal level of Torah that you refuse to listen to anyone else's opinion. You never know where a word of truth will come from, so always be willing, but don't be willing to argue where nothing is gained, all you do is get mad at one another, and go stomping off.

### **John 3:14-15**

**14** And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. (ESV)

Don't you find it interesting that in order to cure the snakebites that God was punishing Israel with, the solution was to look upon the image of a serpent to be healed? In John 3:14, the Shaliach Yochanan (Apostle John) compares the lifting up of the serpent that gave life to the people who looked upon it to that of Messiah being lifted up in order for us to have life, but even more than that to have the gift of eternal life.

**Isaiah 9:6** For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (ESV)

This passage from Isaiah is one that most believers know. It is an affirmation of the birth of the Messiah Yeshua, and in much the same way as the serpent was lifted up, so is Messiah. He has been raised up from the very beginning because man fell from God's grace in one act of disobedience in the garden. God takes His Torah seriously. Why, you may ask – because the Torah is the living Word of the Father, Yeshua, brought forth by the Father to be His representative between man and God. The way was paved for us to reach the goal. All you have to do is to reach out and walk the right road that leads to eternal life. At the end of that road is the Messiah waiting to greet you and welcome you home.

Blessings in Messiah Yeshua,

Mordecai Silver

***Torah Man says: "A gracious word is an easy obligation."***

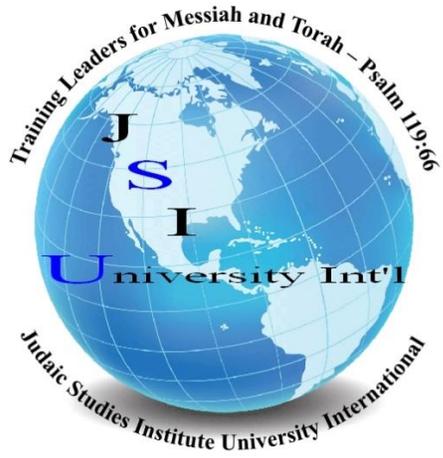
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