

#39 Chukat Numbers 19:1-22:1

By Moshe Schwab

While Praying:

- * All that we know and see will come to nothing someday.
- * Man builds great things, but it is nothing compared to what God can do.
- * We can set our minds on worldly things. Instead, let us set our minds on greater things, the work of God and the Holy Spirit.
- * Take time to grow and learn about God; it will help us to be consistent in our spiritual walk.

Chukat means, “ordinance of” or “decree.” This portion begins with God telling Moshe the details about the sacrifice of the red cow. It is to be without blemish and never to have had a yoke on it; it is to be sacrificed outside the camp. The ashes are to be kept for the water of purification. When anyone touches a corpse, they are to be sprinkled with the ashes that are mixed with water. Anyone who comes in contact with a corpse is unclean for 7 days. Miriam dies in this portion in the desert in Kadesh.

There are many symbolic things in the Old Testament portion that the people back then could understand as being symbolic. There are also things done in the Old Testament portion that symbolically refer to our Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ). The offerings were to be without blemish so also the people understood they were to stay away from the blemish of sin. Yeshua sacrificed himself for our sins as an offering without blemish. 1 Peter 1:18-19 CJB says, "You should be aware that the ransom paid to free you from the worthless way of life which your fathers passed on to you did not consist of anything perishable like silver or gold; on the contrary, it was the costly bloody sacrificial death of the Messiah, as of a lamb without defect or spot." Also, we see another symbolic shadow picture of Yeshua in the red cow. Just as the red cow was to be killed outside of the camp, Yeshua gave His life outside the gate to make us holy (Heb. 13:12).

The people then complained that they had no water and God tells Moshe to speak to the Rock and tell it to bring forth water. Instead, Moshe speaks to the people and then strikes the rock twice. Water pours out of the rock, and the people drink and water their livestock. God told Moshe and Aharon they would not be allowed to enter the land because they did not trust Him and hit the rock instead of speaking to it.

Hitting the rock the first time was symbolic of Yeshua dying for us. The rock provided water and saved their lives. Shaul (Paul) refers to this symbolism in 1 Corinthians 10:4 CJB, "For they drank from a Spirit-sent Rock which followed them, and that Rock was the Messiah. The second time, Moshe was to speak to the rock because when Yeshua comes again he will not suffer, but be among us (Revelation 21:3). Yeshua the Messiah saves us because He died for the forgiveness of our sins and through Him, we can receive the Holy Spirit; those who trust in God and work at keeping His commandments, will receive eternal life. Faith requires action the Bible says (James 2:17). As we can see by this Torah portion, God expects us to actually do what He tells us. Some say we don't have to; that is false teaching.

Moshe then asks Edom if they may pass though, but Edom refuses. So, they traveled to Mt. Hor where they made El'azar high priest because Aharon was about to die. Aharon died there at Mt. Hor and they mourned him for 30 days. Some of the Kena'ani in the Negev attacked Israel and God allowed Israel to attack them and destroy their cities.

Israel went around Edom. Then some of the people complained, so God sent venomous snakes. God had Moshe make a bronze snake and put it on a pole and anyone who was bitten looked on it and was healed. About 900 years later, the Bible tells us in 2 Kings 18:4 that Hezekiah had the bronze snake destroyed because people were worshipping it. Exodus 20:4-5 NKJV says, "You shall not make for yourself a carved image —**any likeness of anything** that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God,

am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations." So it is today that so called believers pray to statues, crosses, pictures, and so called saints (dead people) instead of God and this abomination is passed down from generation to generation.

The snake being lifted up for the healing of the people is also symbolic (a picture) of what Yeshua did for us. Yeshua explains to Nicodemus that he must die for us. Yeshua says of Himself, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life;" John 3:14-15 NKJV (also see John 12:32).

Israel then went through the desert with Moav on the east. Israel came to the land of the Emori (Amorites) and they asked them if they could pass through, but Sichon, King of the Emori would not let them pass. Instead, the Emori attacked them. Israel defeated them and took control of the land. Sichon was a Nephilim and the brother of Og also a Nephilim (Deuteronomy 3:11). Because of this, Og the king of Bashan came to fight Israel. God said He would be with Israel and they defeated Og and took control of his land. After that Israel camped opposite the Yarden (Jordan) River near Jericho.

The Haftarah portion is Judges 11:1-33. Amon had attacked Israel so the leaders of Gil'ad went to get Yiftach (Jephthah) and asked him to lead them and told him if he did that, he could be their leader. He had been banished because he was the son of a prostitute. They made him their leader and Yiftach told Amon that God had given them the land and that they should go home. The people of Amon didn't listen to Yiftach and he ended up defeating them.

Yiftach said if he won, he would sacrifice the first one to come out of his house when he came back. His daughter came out first. Some say he didn't sacrifice her, but the Bible doesn't talk about the matter any further. We know that killing others is forbidden in the Torah and is murder.

It is different with Yeshua. God allowed Yeshua to be crucified by the Romans (all the Jewish leadership were appointed by Rome and they didn't want to lose their Roman appointments)¹ and since He was not due punishment for anything He did, God rose Him from the dead. Kefa (Peter) said in Acts 2:24-25 CJB, "But God has raised him up and freed him from the suffering of death; it was impossible that death could keep its hold on him. For David says this about him;" In Psalm 16:10b NKJV David said prophetically, "Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption." This proves the Messiah was to give Himself for us (also see Isaiah 53).

Deceitful people explain Yeshua's death as human sacrifice; Yeshua rose from the dead, is still alive, and the Bible says He will judge those who do not believe in Him. "For we must all appear before the Messiah's court of judgment;" 2 Corinthians 5:10 CJB. If you haven't accepted Him as the Messiah, don't wait.

In this portion and in the Hartarah, we see certain people groups opposing Israel and God. They were not successful. It is certainly foolish for anyone to think they can oppose God and be successful. People often trust in themselves, and can take great pride in the things they have and in their abilities. It is not bad to have things or to be an accomplished person. Just trusting in things and the world though will all come to nothing someday. Kefa (Peter) talks about this.

¹ Even those who were accusing Yeshua were paid to do that by the Roman leadership in Jerusalem. The Romans turned the tables on what the scriptures say. It was the Romans that killed Yeshua and not the Jews. Their religion is steeped in idolatry; Shaul said no idol worshipper will enter the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:19-21) and perhaps it is paying for its killing of the true believers and its lie.

2 Peter 3:10-13 NKJV

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

The Bible says there will be no more pain, tears, or death (Revelation 21:4) in the new future kingdom with Yeshua. We will treat each other well, and we will experience an amazingly wonderful life for eternity. Man may build great things, but it is nothing compared to what God can do. Yochanan (John) describes the New Jerusalem,

"The construction of its wall was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst. The twelve gates were twelve pearls: each individual gate was of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass;" Revelation 21:18-21 NKJV.

We can set our minds on earthly things that will be burned up for all eternity or on God. Let's set our minds on greater things, the work of God, and the work of the Holy Spirit. God is a great and awesome God. In Nehemiah 1:5 NKJV it says, "I pray, Lord God of heaven, O great and awesome God, You who keep Your covenant and mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments." God is great and mighty, so why not follow Him? In Jeremiah 32:19 NKJV it says, "You are great in counsel and mighty in work, for your eyes are open to all the ways of the sons of men, to give everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings." God knows us and knows all that we do. He will reward us for keeping His commandments.

God wants us to keep His commandments because they are good works.

"Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is to us, for whatever reason we may call upon Him? And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day." Deuteronomy 4:5-8 NKJV.

God will give us the Holy Spirit to help us when we believe in the Messiah (Acts 2:38). God gives us power through the Holy Spirit. Yeshua said, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth;" Acts 1:8 NKJV. It says we will receive power from the creator God and His people will be witnesses for God anywhere and everywhere there is a believer.

God gives believers in the Messiah the Holy Spirit and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Since these gifts come from God, they are not natural abilities. In other words when it talks about wisdom, it is direction given

by God. Shaul lists wisdom (wisdom is action), knowledge (information), faith, gifts of healing, miracles (supernatural events), prophecy, discerning spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues in 1 Corinthians 12. In Romans and Ephesians, he lists other gifts, "charisma" it says in Romans. We operate the gifts (so to speak), but it is wisdom, knowledge, healing, tongues ... from God, not from us. 1 Corinthians 12:11 CJB says, "One and the same Spirit is at work in all these things, distributing to each person as he chooses."

How amazingly exciting is that! Take time to grow and learn about God, His commandments, and the Holy Spirit; be consistent in your spiritual walk. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord;" 1 Corinthians 15:58 NKJV. Our labors of love for God will not be without purpose.

Have you ever accomplished a task and felt great about it, but you soon became uninterested? We can look back on the tasks in our life only to think what did I really accomplish? That is never true with God.

Keepings His commandments give life:

"How happy are those who observe his instruction, who seek him wholeheartedly!" Psalm 119:2 CJB.

"I rejoice in the way of your instruction more than in any kind of wealth;" Psalm 119:14 CJB

"See how I long for your precepts; in your righteousness, give me life!" Psalm 119:40 CJB

The Holy Spirit brings amazing results and blessings:

"So if you, even though you are bad, know how to give your children gifts that are good, how much more will the Father keep giving the Ruach HaKodesh from heaven to those who keep asking him!" Luke 11:13 CJB.

"But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men;" 1 Corinthians 14:3 CJB.

"Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. ... For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified. I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all;" 1 Corinthians 14:13-15, 17-18 NKJV.

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Romans 12:6-8 NKJV.

By our faithfulness we bring good into the world.

"And to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good;" Deuteronomy 10:13 NKJV.

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will

listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart;" Jeremiah 20:11-13

"Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths;" Proverbs 3:3-6 NKJV.

"You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess." Deuteronomy 5:33 NKJV.

"And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed." Deuteronomy 31:8 NKJV.

"Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord;" Jeremiah 17:7 NKJV.

After all we've done, we get rewarded.

"Whatever work you do, put yourself into it, as those who are serving not merely other people, but the Lord. Remember that as your reward, you will receive the inheritance from the Lord. You are slaving for the Lord, for the Messiah;" Colossians 3:23-24 CJB.

"For God is not so unfair as to forget your work and the love you showed for him in your past service to his people- and in your present service too. However, we want each one of you to keep showing the same diligence right up to the end;" Hebrews 6:10-11 CJB.

"For we must all appear before the Messiah's court of judgment, where everyone will receive the good or bad consequences of what he did while he was in the body;" 2 Corinthians 5:10 CJB.

"For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;" 2 Peter 2:4 NKJV.

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God. 1 John 5:13 NKJV.

Nothing we do in life matters more than our spiritual life, be consistent in your spiritual walk. Have you ever given up on something and wished you hadn't? Years ago, I gave up on baseball for some silly reasons, but I could have had a lot more fun playing if I hadn't quit. Some of us have given up on relationships and regretted it, some of us have given up on school and wish we hadn't, and others of us wonder if we had only not given up on something, what could have happened.

Sometimes we worked hard and accomplished some task which is wonderful, but what about God? I don't regret being faithful to God; it has been an amazing journey. I have seen countless people healed and experienced God personally in my life. How exciting is that. Do not give up, keep on pursuing God, keep pursuing what is right. God sees and knows us. "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him;" 2 Chronicles 16:9 NKJV.

All that we know and see will come to nothing someday. Those who do what is right and believe in God will be rewarded for all eternity in an amazingly wonderful new kingdom. We can set our minds only just on earthly things and what we can accomplish, but it is nothing compared to what God can do. Why not set our minds on greater things, the work of God and the Holy Spirit? Take time to grow and learn about God; it will help us to be consistent in our spiritual walk.

Be strong, be courageous, and be faithful. In the end, we will receive eternal life from God for being faithful to His word. Moshe was not allowed to enter the promised land for not following God correctly. Symbolically, this can apply to us. It matters what we do. God will forgive us for our shortcomings through Yeshua our Messiah, but we need to try to be faithful and do what is right. It is well worth it; be strong and be faithful to God.