

## **#16 Beshalach Exodus 13:17-17:16**

By Moshe Schwab

While Praying:

- \* The result of the Fall in Eden is more reliance on ourselves. Even little things can be viewed as difficult; we often have a personal or philosophical view of work (also called work ethic).
- \* Stay God focused and kingdom focused. We are to **not** live in this world like the worldly do.
- \* We sometimes play with life and take chances spiritually. Why go there and do that? Viewing life as God's kingdom people results in peace and so much more.
- \* God brings a steady flow of peace and blessing into our lives. Don't allow darkness to rule your life; instead allow God to rule our life.

Beshalach means, "when he let go." This portion begins with God leading Israel to the Suf Sea (which we now know is the Gulf of Aqaba) instead of through the land of the P'lishtim. Also, Israel picks up Joseph's bones from Succoth on the way. God hardens Pharaoh's heart while they are on their way and Pharaoh then chases after Israel with more than 600 chariots and men, but Moshe says that God will fight for them. God tells Moshe to lift up his rod over the sea, the sea parts, and the pillar of cloud that led them is now behind them, protecting them from the Egyptian army. Israel went through the sea on dry ground between walls of water. The Egyptians tried to follow them through the sea the next day, but Moshe held his rod over the sea and it covered the Egyptians. Then the people sang a song of victory to the Lord. In the song they exalted God and praised God for saving them. Also, Miriam the prophet and sister of Aharon sang a song and the women joined her with tambourines and dancing.

Now on the other side of the sea, the people grumbled and the Lord provided water for them at Marah. Then they came to Eilim which had 12 springs and 70 palm trees. Then as they proceeded in the desert the people grumbled again and God provided manna ("man hu" in Hebrew; which means "what is it") and quail for them to eat. The manna, "was like coriander seed and it tasted like honey cakes," it says in Deut. 16:31 CJB. They gathered only enough manna for every day, except the sixth day they gathered two days manna. The people rested on Shabbat. They put away some manna to be kept through the ages and they ate manna for forty years.

While camped at Refidim, the people grumbled about having no water, so Moshe struck a rock and water came out from it. Amalek's army came up against Israel there and Israel prevailed while Moshe's arms were raised. They held up Moshe's hands and Israel defeated Amalek. The Lord said he will blot out the memory of Amalek.

Israel left Egypt by the power of God and God protected them and provided for them. Now that they were on the other side of the sea there was no turning back. It was an impassible barrier. In a sense, they died to their old lives when they passed through the sea. In the same way, when we are immersed with the Holy Spirit when we believe in Yeshua the Messiah, it is also a defining moment in our lives and there is no turning back from the truth that God is present in our lives. Rabbi Shaul tells us in the New Testament that we are to die to our old selves in Romans 6:6 and so leave our old lives behind.

The Haftarah for Beshalach is Judges 4:4 to 5:31. In this portion, D'vorah (Deborah) the prophet tells Barak to take 10,000 men to fight against Sisra and his army. Because he asks D'vorah to go with him, D'vorah says a woman will get the credit for Sisra's death. Israel defeats Sisra's army and a woman kills Sisra. They then sang a song extolling those who volunteered, praising God, and praising the woman who killed Sisra.

Just as God defeated the Egyptians at the Gulf of Aqaba, God continues to help Israel to defeat its enemies after they enter Canaan. Also, we should consider that although we seem to be at risk in the present, God is at work on our behalf. In the end, God will be victorious even though the people of this

world can be so against the things of God. Judges 4:23 CJB says: "Thus God on that day defeated Yavin" (Jabin) "the king of Kena'an" (Canaanites) "in the presence of the people of Isra'el."

The result of the Fall in Eden has caused mankind to have more reliance on ourselves. Even little things can sometimes be difficult; we often have a personal or philosophical view of work (work ethic). I had a simple work ethic when I was young: work hard, do a good job, listen and do what I'm told to do, be respectful of others, and be honest. It seemed to work because it took me two days to get promoted at this one job I had. At other places, at least I kept my job and I can be proud of my work whether I was sweeping the floor or designing circuit boards and writing firmware (computer code).

My work ethic didn't come from a desire to be successful or get ahead, but from the Bible. It says we are to do all in the name of Yeshua the Messiah; I took that literally and tried my best to do a good job. Colossians 3:17 NKJV says, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." It's good to give our employers an honest day's work.

I remember this one guy I worked with. When I began working with him, the bosses told me he works fast and gets his job done and he did great work. Those in charge probably wished they all had people like him. I learned a lot from watching him work. People have different reasons for the work they do.

How are people's worldly attitudes different from a believer's attitude of work?

\*They may be expecting something in return and when that doesn't happen, they may become lazy or ungrateful for their job.

\*Some don't have a good work ethic; they may work slow or may not do a good job.

\*Some people's work ethic is entirely selfish.

\*Some people don't understand that they are representing themselves and God by how they work.

\*Some don't understand that their bad behaviors could cause harm for the people who rely on their employer to stay solvent and provide for themselves.

It's always better to stay God focused and kingdom focused. We are to not live in this world like the worldly do. The above is a good example of godly focus versus being worldly focused. The person who acts out at work can have a negative impact on the work environment, cause people pain, and be a test to others instead of a help to others. Wouldn't it be great if we all had great attitudes?

The following verses are good advice for loving our neighbor (Leviticus 19:18). "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you;" Philippians 4:8-9 NKJV. Have a good attitude; think and do what is right.

Don't we all want to know the truth? God's word is truth and we can trust God. What about our words? Are we an honest person? A dishonest person causes pain and distrust. Whereas, an honest person brings peace and trust. What about a person who is noble; that is a person who does what is good? Those are people who are refreshing and make our hearts light. Being just and fair communicates goodness. Being pure communicates a desire to be a blessing and be good. Surely those who have good virtues are a blessing to others and society.

Why play with life and take chances spiritually? Why go there and live like that? A good life has so much to offer? Viewing life as God's kingdom people results in peace and so much more. A good life and a

godly attitude offers so much to us and others. Ya'akov said in James 4:10 NKJV, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up." When we do what is right, we take the things of God seriously; life will go a whole lot better and God will also work on our behalf. How God does that is up to Him. The Bible says that God won't forget the good we do. Hebrews 6:10 NKJV says, "For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love." Doing things God's way is the best way and God will not forget that.

We are to love God with all our heart. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up;" Deuteronomy 6:5-7 NKJV. God cares about us enough to reach out to us and give us a good way to live. Why not take that seriously?

God brings a steady flow of peace and blessing into our lives. God keeps everything going even though mankind seems to tax the earth's existence by selfishness, violence, and a lack of compassion and virtue. I recommend understanding good attitudes and virtues better. Possibly read a book on virtues. Bring good into your life. Don't allow darkness to rule your life; instead allow God to rule your life.

Shaul (Paul) said in Colossians 3:12-17 NKJV, "Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

Be holy, be tender, be kind, be humble, be meek, be patient, bear with each other, forgive each other, let go of your complaints, love and have a generous attitude towards others. Doesn't that sound great? Let the peace of God rule in you. Put on peace and be peaceful. Do all in the name of the Messiah Yeshua and be a person of thanks for all God has given us. We are to do it, so do it. These are good things; don't we all want what is good?

Just as Israel was changed as they went through the sea, we need to be a changed people with the help of the Torah, the scriptures, and the Holy Spirit through the Messiah Yeshua. Israel left Egypt behind and we should leave our old natures behind and put on good and godly ways. The Israelites were immersed into Moshe and ate food and drink given them by God (1 Corinthians 10:1-4). In the same way, but in a spiritual sense, Yehovah gives us spiritual food to live by so that we can live a kingdom life. A life that is different than the worldly point of view; a much better way to live.