

Chukat חֻקֹת

“Ordinance of”

In this week's Parasha we learn that the Children of Yisra'el's (Israel) forty years of wandering in the wilderness had come to an end. An entire generation had died and now a new generation had arrived at Kadesh. Only Moshe (Moses), Aharon (Aaron), Miryam (Miriam), Kalev (Caleb) and Y'husha (Joshua) were left of the older generation. In this Torah reading we will read of Miryam and Aharon's lives coming to a close. We will learn of Moshe's disobedience to God when he struck the rock for water instead of speaking to it as God commanded. God will demonstrate to the Children of Yisra'el that He alone could save them from the consequences of sin and finally we will see this Parasha is about kings and kingdoms standing against The King and His Kingdom. We will learn that God fights for His people. Yisra'el was coming near to their destination of the Promised Land.

Focus Passage: Numbers 20:1-21:35

The entire generation which left Egypt had died, and the new generation was ready to enter the Land. The Children of Yisra'el entered into the Land of Zin in the first month and they stayed in Kadesh. There Miryam, who was the sister of Moshe and Aharon, died and was buried. Once again the Yisra'elites were in need of water, and as they had done in the past, they went to Moshe and Aharon with their complaints. They immediately questioned why they were taken into the desert. They longed for Egypt. They had plenty of food and water in Egypt and now they did not trust in God's promises to deliver them into the Land flowing with milk and honey. They complained about their current circumstances and this did not allow them to trust in the promises of God. Many have said when studying this portion of Scripture that they would not make this same mistake the Children of Yisra'el made. Before we make that same statement, we must ask ourselves this question, how often do I get focused on my circumstances and challenges rather than

Pray First

Father God,
Thank You, because You are our Deliverer in our time of trouble. We praise You because Your word tells us that You will fight for Your people. May our eyes be open to the truth of Your Word.

In Yeshua's name we pray,
Amen

Read next
Numbers 19:1 - 22:1

So Yisra'el made a vow to the LORD, "If you will indeed deliver this people into my hand then I will utterly destroy their cities." And the LORD listened to the voice of Israel and delivered up the Canaanites, and they utterly destroyed them and their cities.
- Numbers 21:2

focusing on the promises of God? When presented with these complaints, Moshe and Aharon did the only thing they could do. They left the congregation and went to the door of the Tabernacle of Meeting and fell on their faces before God. There the Glory of the LORD appeared to them and the LORD gave them instructions on what they were to do.

The LORD instructed Moshe, in Numbers 20:7-8, to take the rod, and with Aharon gather the congregation together. Moshe was to SPEAK to the rock before their eyes, and it would yield it's water for them, and give drink to the congregation and their animals. Moshe took the rod and went to the rock with the Children of Yisra'el. There Moshe spoke harshly with them and said, "Hear now you rebels! Must we bring water to you out of this rock?" Then with his focus off of what the LORD had commanded, he STRUCK the rock twice. Water came out abundantly and the congregation and their animals drank. In Numbers 20:12 the LORD spoke to Moshe and Aharon and told them, "Because you did not believe ME, to hallow (which means to honor) Me in the eyes of the Children of Yisra'el, therefore you shall not bring the assembly into the Land which I have given them." Moshe did what he thought was right because he had done it before, not what the LORD instructed. It is also clear to the reader that Moshe did not give glory to the LORD when he said, "Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" Moshe had put the attention on himself and Aharon for the provision of water taking credit for what the LORD had done.



Numbers 20:14 says that Moshe sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of Edom, explaining that they knew all that Yisra'el had gone through, and asked if the king of Edom would let Yisra'el pass through his country. Moshe understood that the Children of Yisra'el were large in number so he promised not to pass through their vineyards, nor drink water from their wells. He stated that they would go along the King's Highway and pay for any water they drank. They would not turn aside to the right hand or to the left until they had passed through their territory. The king of Edom responded with a firm NO. Edom came out against Yisra'el with many men and a strong hand, so Yisra'el turned away from Edom.

The Children of Yisra'el left Kadesh and came to Mount Hor. There the LORD spoke to Moshe and Aharon and told them that Aharon would be gathered to his people because he was not to enter the land that God was giving to Yisra'el. God instructed Moshe to take Eleazar, Aharon's son, and Aharon up to the top of Mount Hor. Aharon's garments were to be removed and they were to be placed on Eleazar who would assume the position of the High Priest. Moshe did as the LORD instructed and when Moshe and Eleazar came down the mountain, the Children of Yisra'el knew that Aharon was dead and the entire congregation mourned for thirty days.

When the thirty day period of mourning was over, the Children of Yisra'el were once again on the move. The king of Arad, the Canaanite, who dwelt in the South, heard that Yisra'el was coming. He decided to fight against Yisra'el and take some of them as prisoners. The Children of Yisra'el then went before the LORD and made a vow to Him. They asked Him to deliver the people into their hands and if He did, they would utterly

destroy their cities. The LORD listened to the voice of Yisra'el, for the LORD will fight for His people and deliver them from those who oppose them. Yisra'el utterly destroyed the Canaanites and their cities.

The Children of Yisra'el then journeyed from Mount Hor by way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. The souls of the people became very discouraged on the way. The people spoke out against the LORD and Moshe. The people repeated the argument that they brought to Moshe before. They asked why did you bring us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? Their eyes were once again on their circumstances and not on God Who had redeemed them out of Egypt. How quickly they forgot all that God had done. Numbers 21:6 says that in response to these complaints, the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and many of the Children of Yisra'el died.



The Children of Yisra'el came to Moshe and said "We have sinned against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents for us." So Moshe interceded for the people and prayed to the LORD. The LORD instructed Moshe, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole: and it shall be that everyone who is bitten when he looks at it shall live." Moshe obeyed God and made a bronze serpent and put it on a pole. If they were bitten by the serpents, all they had to do was to look at the bronze serpent and the LORD would heal them. God was teaching them that sin leads to death and must be defeated. He wanted them to understand only God is able to

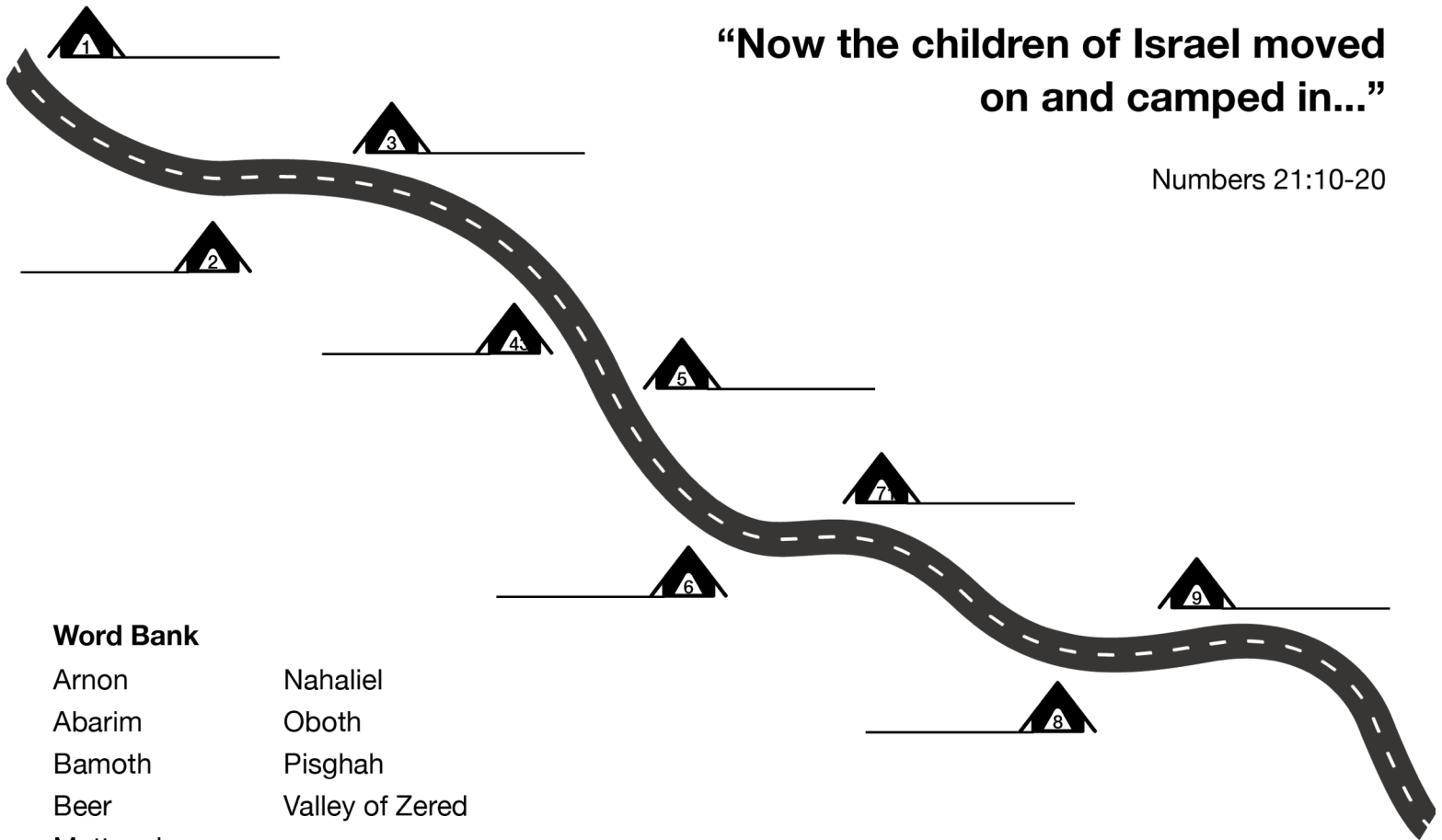
defeat sin that leads to death. Anyone who trusts in Him to take away their sin will not die. Messiah Yeshua referred to this portion of Scripture in John chapter three. He said in the same way Moshe lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up. Only those who trust in Messiah Yeshua's work on the tree to defeat sin that leads to death will be delivered from death to life.



Scripture carefully describes the Yisra'elites' last journey, can you name all the places they went?

“Now the children of Israel moved on and camped in...”

Numbers 21:10-20



God fights for His people and He will fulfill His promise for Yisra'el to enter the Land!

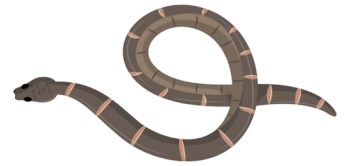
Which king said that Yisra'el could not pass through the Land in Numbers 21:21-24? _____

Which king went out to battle against Yisra'el at Edrei? _____

This entire Torah section is filled with kings and kingdoms which stood against The King and His Kingdom. We are to look to God and obey Him and trust that He will fulfill His promises. When the trials of life come, will we fix our eyes on the LORD or on our struggles? Do we get distracted by earthly kings and circumstances? We, like the Yisra'elites can choose to rebel against God, His will, and His promises, or we can choose to receive from Him all that He promises to provide. All we need to do is trust, believe, and wait on Him. Obey the LORD, He is our deliverer and has provided the Redeemer Messiah Yeshua to deliver us from sin.

Torah Quiz

1. What does Chukat mean?
2. What happened after Miryam's passing?
3. What did God say would happen to Moshe when he disobeyed him by hitting the rock instead of speaking to the stone as God commanded?
4. How did Edom respond when Moshe asked if the Yisra'elites could pass through their land?
5. What did Moshe do with Aharon's garments prior to Aharon's death?
6. How long did the people mourn Aharon's death?
7. What did God tell the people to do to save themselves from the venomous snake bites?
8. What other countries besides Edom did the Yisra'elites ask if they could pass through to get to the Promised Land?



Answers to Map of Yisra'el's Journey

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| 1. Oboth | 6. Mattanah |
| 2. Abarim | 7. Nahaliel |
| 3. Valley of Zered | 8. Bamoth |
| 4. Arnon | 9. Pisghah |
| 5. Beer | |

Answers to Inline Torah Questions

- Sihon
- Og King of Bashan

Answers to Inline Haftarah Questions

- Edom
- Moab
- Amorites

Answers to Torah Quiz

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Ordinance or Statute | 4. He said no and threatened to bring out his army against Yisra'el |
| 2. There was no water and the people grumbled against Moses and Aaron | 5. They would not go into the Promised Land |
| 3. They would not go into the Promised Land | 6. He placed them on Aaron's son, Eleazar |
| 4. He said no and threatened to bring out his army against Yisra'el | 7. To look at the serpent Moses had been commanded to make and place upon a pole |
| 5. They would not go into the Promised Land | 8. Sihon, king of the Amorites |
| 6. He placed them on Aaron's son, Eleazar | |
| 7. To look at the serpent Moses had been commanded to make and place upon a pole | |
| 8. Sihon, king of the Amorites | |

Haftarah - Judges 11:1-33

Jephthah was a brave and mighty man of valor. He was the son of a prostitute. His father was married to another woman and had sons with her. When these sons grew up, they informed Jephthah that he would have no inheritance from his father's house, because he was the son of another woman. Jephthah then fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob (Tov).

Now the people of Ammon made war against Yisra'el. The elders of Gilead went to Jephthah and asked him to be their commander so that they could fight against the people of Ammon. Jephthah responded to them in Judges 11:7, "Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?" The elders answered and told him if he fought against the people of Ammon, he could be the head over all of the inhabitants of Gilead. Jephthah was wise in his response and demonstrated his faith and trust in the LORD when he answered, "If you take me back to your home and I fight against the people of Ammon, and the LORD delivers them to me, shall I be your head?" He knew who his deliverer was and that God would fight for His people. Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head commander over them.

Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon. He asked, "What do you have against me, that you have come to fight against my land?" The king of the Ammonites answered and said, "Yisra'el took away my land when they came out of Egypt, from the Aron as far as Jabbok, and to the Jordan. I would like you to restore those lands to Ammon peacefully. "

Jephthah knew the history of Yisra'el and said, "Yisra'el did not take away the land of Moab, not the land of the people of Ammon; for when Yisra'el came up from Egypt, they walked through the wilderness as far as the Red Sea and came to Kadesh. Then Yisra'el sent messengers to the king of _____, asking him to please allow them to pass through their land, but the king would not let them. Yisra'el sent a request to the king of _____, but he also refused to allow Yisra'el to pass through. So Yisra'el remained in Kadesh. Yisra'el then went along through the wilderness and by-passed the land of Edom and the land of Moab, and encamped on the other side of Arnon. They did not enter the border of Moab for Arnon was the border of Moab.

Jephthah explained that Yisra'el sent messengers to Sihon, king of the _____, asking to pass through the land. He did not trust Yisra'el to pass through his territory. So Sihon fought against Yisra'el and the LORD delivered Sihon and all of his people into the hand of Yisra'el and they defeated them. Yisra'el gained the possession of all of the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country. They took possession of all of the territory of the Amorites.

God was teaching His children that He would fight for Yisra'el. Jephthah knew this and he had faith

and trust in God to be his defender. He knew what the Scriptures said about the history of Yisra'el. It is vitally important for us to remember what the Scriptures say about the history of Yisra'el. God is a covenant keeper and He will fulfill His promises.

Jephthah went to ask the king of Ammon, "Will you possess whatever your god gives you? Whatever the LORD our God takes possession of before us, we will possess." Jephthah understood that God is the One and Only God and their false god could give them nothing. Jephthah informed the king that he had not sinned against him but that the king of Ammon was wrong to fight with him about this. In Judges 11:27, Jephthah said, "Therefore, I have not sinned against you, but you wronged me by fighting against me. May the LORD render judgment this day between the Children of Yisra'el and the people of Ammon."

Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed through Mizpah and towards the people of Ammon. Jephthah then made a vow to the LORD, and advanced toward the people of Ammon to fight against them and the LORD delivered them into his hands. Jephthah defeated them from Aroer as far as Minnith to Abel Keramim, with a very great slaughter. The people of Ammon were subdued before the Children of Yisra'el.

Jephthah believed and trusted in the One and Only true God, the God of Yisra'el. As believers we should put our trust and faith in God. Jephthah understood that it was not about taking sides in an earthly conflict but that it was about standing on the truth of God's Word. He knew the covenant that God had made with Yisra'el. God is not done with Yisra'el and He will fight in a mighty way to deliver Yisra'el from her enemies.

We have so many influences and voices around us from social media to mainstream media, from friends and family with various opinions on the world around us. Emotions can escalate fast, as many do not believe the truth of Scripture and believe that the Land does not belong to Yisra'el. As we have learned in our Parasha and Haftarah this is a false teaching. Jephthah reminds us to stand on the truth of God's Word. He will fight on behalf of His people. Ask God to give you the strength and courage to stand on the truth of Scriptures, as you face the lies of this world. He will equip you and He will fight on your behalf.

GOD will **FIGHT** for
HIS people!

New Testament

John 3:10-21

“ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”
- John 3:14-15

Pray First

Father God,
We thank You for sending
Your One and Only Son,
Yeshua, so that we can have
eternal life. Teach us to look
only to You and to walk in
Your truth so that we may
serve You.
In Yeshua's name we pray,
Amen

In our New Testament study this week Yeshua was having a discussion with Nicodemus regarding being born again. Nicodemus needed to respond to the truth of God in order for God to work in his life. Nicodemus was ruler of the Judeans, who were the Pharisees. Nicodemus was also a member of the Sanhedrin and he had exceptional knowledge of Judaism. One night he approached Yeshua to speak with Him. Nicodemus understood that Yeshua was the Messiah. But he had a dilemma, his problem was that the Pharisees did not want a suffering Messiah. They wanted a Messiah that would deliver them from the Romans and give them an earthly kingdom for them to rule, not a kingdom where God ruled. Yeshua said to him in John 3, “Unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus had a hard time understanding this and asked Yeshua, “How can these things be?”

Yeshua responded in John 3:10 and questioned Nicodemus, “Are you the teacher of Yisra'el and do not know these things?” Yeshua told him that if He had explained earthly things to him and he did not believe, how would he believe heavenly things if Yeshua told him? The Sanhedrin had removed themselves from the truth of God and embraced the traditions of man. Because of this Nicodemus struggled to understand what Yeshua was saying. We as believers often do this today and it is something for us to guard against. We should always seek God's truth not the ways of man.

Yeshua explained in John 3:13, “No one has ascended into heaven but He Who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.” There are great theological implications in this statement. Yeshua explained that His origins were heavenly. Yeshua is the Son of Man and the Servant of humanity. He came that we might have deliverance from sin. Through Him we no longer have to live under the bondage of sin that results in death. In John 3:14 Yeshua referenced a portion of Scripture that we studied in our Torah lesson. Yeshua told Nicodemus just as Moshe lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up. The Children of Yisra'el who were bitten by the serpents only had to look up to the bronze serpent in obedience

and they would be saved. The Children of Yisra'el were to rely on God for their salvation. Yeshua was teaching this lesson and pointing to the promises of God He came to fulfill. In this same way, Messiah Yeshua would be lifted up on the cross for the purpose of proclaiming victory over sin. He was the provision for sin, so that all who look to Him and believe in Him can escape the condemnation and the punishment of sin. John 3:16 -17 says that God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. God did not send His Son into the world to condemn it but so that it might be saved. Yeshua said the light has come into this world, but men loved the darkness more than the light because their deeds are evil. Light is always related to illumination and light allows us to know the truth. Men love darkness more than light for their works are evil.

Scripture tells us that our hearts are deceitful and Messiah Yeshua told Nicodemus (and us) that man's works are evil. We can be deceived by our heart if we rely on it. Many people then and now behave in a way that serves their will, not God's. In the Bible evil simply means that which is not in the will of God. Our will is against the purposes and plans of God. It's motivation is for us to please ourselves, which is evil.

We should seek the Light of Yeshua and want God's order in our life. In John 3:20 we learn that those who follow their will practice evil. They do not come to the light and do not want their deeds to be exposed. They do not want anyone to see what they are doing because it is not right. The one who is walking in truth comes into the light so that his deeds may be clearly seen. An obedient follower of Yeshua lives in the light, because Yeshua has freed them from darkness.

For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

John 3:20

When we walk in the light of truth we can have peace. When we are constantly concerned about someone finding out about a sin we have hidden, we have no inner peace. We want to confess our sins to God so that He can deal with them properly. When we confess our sin we are agreeing with God. This is called repentance. It is only when we repent and look to Messiah Yeshua, Who was lifted up on the cross to pay the price for our sins, that we receive God's grace. That grace brings things into the proper order of God. When we are in the proper order and have received redemption from Messiah Yeshua then we can reflect the light of Messiah Yeshua in the world.

Are you seeking out truth as Nicodemus was, so that you can walk in the Light of Messiah Yeshua? Do you want God's order in your life so that your faith is expressed through your deeds?

