

12 Tammuz, 5763 (July 12th 2003) **Summer Sunshine: Real
Compassion** J. M. Terrett

Chukay/Balak Ordinance of/Balak (Destroyer)

Rebellion, Sorcery and Three Animals

Today's double portion deals with the end of the wilderness wandering, and the final rebellion of the people before they prepare to go into the land. They have defeated the strongest enemies – the last conquerors of Canaan (Sihon and Og) and are to go in the front door, after having kicked it in. They have dealt with their two besetting sins (idolatry and fornication) and are ready to Hear the Word again – to receive their spiritual mandate, so that they will know how to live in the land.

After twelve rebellions, and forty years of wandering, they are finally ready to go in. The Hafarah portion reflects this readiness, by saying G-d will gather scattered Israel and judge the nations. Both Brit Chadashah portions deal with these two themes. G-d will judge (John 3) and gather Israel (Romans 11).

I want to focus on three animals that reflect three aspects of our Messiah's wonderful redemption, cause it's a full meal deal. He is the **Lamb** who delivers us from the oppression of Egypt. He is the **Heifer**, who takes upon Himself the nature of Adam to cleanse us from our sin (2 Cor. 5:21 and I John 1:9) and He is the **Serpent** who delivers us from the wrath we so justly deserve, if we come to the light.

No physical or spiritual opposition can prevent believers from entering the promised land (living in His promises in this life, while we wait for our Final Home to arrive). We can only be prevented by the two most heinous henchmen of the enemy, idolatry and fornication, who turn us in enemies of our Redeemer, and cause us to self-destruct- unless we forsake our sin and cling to the cross.

He knows our real problems and in Yeshua, He has presented a real solution. **Come to the Lamb, who became a Heifer and died as an atoning Serpent, so you can be delivered from spiritual oppression, rebellion and the defilement which would stain our souls.** Your spiritual condition is your destiny, all the rest is details. You either come to the L-rd who became three animals for our redemption, or we become animals ourselves, and refuse to come to the healing light. **Cling to Him, not to your problems.** Here are the verse my meditation was based on.

Torah: Num. 19:1-25:9

The Red Heifer, big time gap, death of Miriam at Kadesh, rebellion of new generation, Moshe strikes the rock, Edom's refusal, Aaron's death on 1st Av, 40th year after exodus, second rebellion of new generation, burning serpents, arrival at plains of Moab, retrospective about Sihon and Og, Balam and Balak and last Rebellion of new generation (12th since Egypt) First was idolatry with fornication, so was last.

- (1) 21:9 – crucifixion of serpent for penitent rebels
- (2) 23:23 – spiritual opposition (sorcery and divination) useless against Israel

- (3) 24:9 – blessing and cursing of Israel boomerangs
(4) 25:4 – crucifixion of guilty fornicating idolaters

Haftarah: Micah 5:6-6:8

Gathering of Israel, judgment of nations, goodness of G-d towards rebellious Israel, atonement His responsibility, repentance is ours.

- (5) 5:6 – the destiny of Israel's does not depend on man
(6) 5:14 – G-d will judge the nations who refuse to listen

Brit Chadashah: John 3:10-21(L) Rom. 11:25-32 (F)

Purpose of the cross (Lederer), Final Destiny of Israel (Feinberg)

- (7) John 3:14 – The Lamb who became a serpent

Sermon: Real Compassion

Rom. 12:15, 16: "**Rejoice** with those who rejoice, and **weep** with those who weep. Be of the **same mind** toward one another. Do not **aspire** to high things, but allow yourself to be **attracted** by that which is humble. Do not be **wise** in your own eyes."

Life is not always easy in the L-rd. Life is not always easy in the world. Life is not always easy. We will always have ups and downs. Learning to handle the downs is as important as handling the ups.

I want to briefly indicate three aspects of this handling which will help us to show real compassion, instead of using other people's pain and problems to make us feel better.

First of all, we need to be aware of what is going on in people's lives and in our community, respond appropriately, because many different things will be going on simultaneously. We should not try and make everyone's life conform to what is happening in our own life, and we can be part of each other's lives, no matter what is going on in our own life. We meet in the middle.

So we rejoice for others, when they succeed. We weep with them when they fail. The same reality response should be extended to us. We will always have reason to rejoice and to weep, because these are signs of the outer workings of the inner life. The inner life needs to digest, and respond to life's fluctuations, during our pilgrimage home – as we turn our little adventures and tragedies into a song, into a story, which we tell one another, and which we offer to our true CEO and Life Coach and Personal Spiritual Trainer.

Secondly, we need to be of the same mind. We need to learn to react to things spiritually, from Ps. 23 and Romans 8- from I Cor. 10:13, Matt. 6:33,34, Heb. 12:13 and similar life response verses. Counsellors, doctors, teachers, and all the other helping professionals are good resources for the details of our pilgrimage, but together as a community of believers, we need to keep our eternal focus and our spiritual response, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile.

What is that focus and response? We are on our way home forever, and all we can take with us is the contents of our hearts. Work it out, both weeping and rejoicing, until that awesome day when He will finish any business you don't. Believers and unbelievers will get judged according to their business of their hearts.

We need to help each other stay focused on our heart business, and make sure our spirituality stays intact, both in faith and in obedience – all the rest is details and will sort itself out, in this life (if we do our homework and want a reward), or in the next (if we bury it deep and won't let go).

Which brings me to my final point. Getting ahead and being too smart for your own good. Prov. 23:4 talks about the folly of defining the good life materially. Micah 6:8 and Jer. 9:23,24 speak of the folly of defining the good life in any other terms than spiritually.

Rav Sh'aul talks about what is really valuable (I Tim. 6:6-10) in this life – holiness. Don't leave home without it and take care of it above all things – it is your life, now and forever. The condition of your soul is how you really are – rich, poor, healthy, sick, educated and powerful or ignorant and oppressed. Our eternal destiny can only be moulded in this life, by our reactions to what happens to us, never by what happens to us (Rom. 8:18 and 8:28).

So don't get attracted by the elevated things of this temporary life, which shall evaporate and vanish like a dream. Don't get smart in your own eyes, so you can figure out how to get ahead on the journey, and forget to prepare for the destination. Unless you are living every day for the day which is to come, and unless you are wrestling with your heart, until it reflects the spirituality of His triple redemption (the Lamb who delivers, the Heifer who cleanses and the Serpent who saves) - you are dumb, blind, sick and naked.

Now I am not saying we should ignore the things of this life and all live in caves, and eat locusts and wild honey. What I am saying is that unless we know who we are and where we are going, we are in danger of falling into the two besetting sins of Israel – idolatry (worshiping this life I John 2:15,16 – lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life) and fornication (Prov. 27:20 and 20:17 – Is. 55:2 allowing the sensual satisfaction of this life to deprive us from our spiritual fulfillment).

Who are you? I Peter 2:9-11.

Where are you going? Matt. 6:33 and Ps. 23

How are you doing? (Prov. 4:23 and Romans 12 and other similar passages)

No, really. Compassion looks at our real condition and intervenes to restore spiritual perspective through joy, comfort, and any other appropriate support – whether by comfort, or by confrontation – to keep our focus on the day when our life will really begin, and the mould we are building will shape our hearts and our lives in eternity.

Change is only possible in this life, and is the only constant in this life. We need to help each other through our changes, so that our inner treasure remains intact. Real compassion keeps us spiritually real. Are you seeking for exalted things which are useless before G-d? Are you so smart for the things of this life that you are stupid for the things of the life which is to come?

Smarten up. Pull together and let the ministry of the L-rd turn transform you. Let the Lamb deliver you. Let the Heifer cleanse you. Let the Serpent heal you. He became three animals, so that we did not have to live like animals who are given over to idolatry and fornication.

May His love and may our love guide us and fill us with all the compassion we need to finish our course with as little spiritual damage as possible. Next week: the Joy of Defeat (Wed. the Fast of Tammuz) and Real Peace.

Lets Pray.