

**Chukat**                      **Ordinance of**                      **Time to Come Home**

**Torah:**                      Num. 19:1-22:1

(1) **19:2:** This is what is ordained by the Law which the L-RD prescribed saying... The rite of the Red Heifer (Paran Adamah- Adam's cow - Heb. 2:17 made like His brethren in every respect – He bore Adam's flesh without sin) was not attached to any particular date in the Festival Cycle because the water of atonement (real holy water) was used all year and when it ran low, another heifer could be prepared. We have to learn to deal with our defilement (I John 1:9) whenever it happens and we need to take the time to be cleansed – not by any particular cleansing ceremony, but directly by prayer and confession before Him, our heavenly Red Heifer. The Law here refers to ceremonies which allow us to keep the Ten, which never changed nor was replaced (Matt. 5:17-20).

(2) **19:19:** The one who is pure shall sprinkle the water on the one who is impure, the third and seventh day. Contact with a dead body rendered people impure and the ash water from the red heifer cleansed them and they had to wash themselves and their clothes and it took seven days before they were allowed back into the tabernacle – they had to isolate themselves. The pure One in Heaven is the one who purifies us and sometimes it takes time for His cleansing to fully remove the stain (pain), so we need to come back to Him until He declares us clean. Kind of like He hunts down all the stain in all the dark corners of our hearts and removes it.

Have you let the clean One cleanse you? (vs. 21, the one performing the ritual was unclean until the evening, not because it was contagious but because the atoning water was made with ashes of a dead heifer – He became sin who knew so sin, so we could become righteousness in Him – 2 Cor. 5:20)

(3) **20:3** The people (new generation) sought a quarrel with Moses and Aaron and asked why they were not allowed to die with those who had already died before the L-rd. They were suffering from wilderness wandering fatigue and their impatience infected Moses and Aaron, who struck the rock they were supposed to only speak to. We need to be careful not to let other people's spiritual impatience cause us to become like them.

(4) **22:1:** The children of Israel left and camped on the plains of Moab on the other side of the Jordan. We are given no details of the forty years wandering and here it comes to a dramatic ending, with three military victories and two setbacks (waters of Meriba and the fiery serpents). The last of the lost generation have died and the new one is poised to enter the Holy Land without Miriam, Aaron or Moses. It was on these plains that Moses gave the book of Deuteronomy and that the leadership was transferred to Joshua (it has already been transferred from Aaron to Eleazar). We need to be prepared to face whatever changes come our way so that the unchanging purposes of G-d are fulfilled in our lives.

**Haftarah:** Judges 11:1-33

(5) **11:26** Behold 300 years which Israel inhabits Heshbon, Aroer and the cities on the edge of the Arnon, why have you not taken this land back before? Sometimes we have to put up a fight to keep that which the L-rd has already given us – learning not to lose territory we have acquired is an important lesson – defensive and offensive spirituality are both important.

(6) **11:31** Jephthah makes a foolish oath where he dedicates to destruction whatever comes out of his home upon his return. We should not seek to punish or diminish ourselves or beat ourselves up because of who we are and where we came from. It was a sacred oath meant to be applied to our enemies, not to ourselves. Be careful not to obligate G-d. The people stopped Saul when he made a similar oath, no one stopped Jephthah – who is going to stop you? He had a shady beginning, but was used of G-d. It does not matter where we come from, it is who we are in Him which counts.

**Brit Chadashah:** John 3:15-21

(7) **3:14** The Lion of Judah, who is also the Lamb of G-d, is also the crucified snake who defeated the enemy and paid our ransom to the Father, so that as the Red Heifer He can cleanse us fully and grant us everlasting life. It is time to come home – have you come home? What do you have to conquer in your life so that His kingdom can rule in you unimpeded?

(Jack, pp. 85,87) **Ps. 95 Jewish Hero: Eyal Yifrach, Gilad Shaar, Naftali Frankel**  
**L-rd's Table**

I would like to use several scriptures to speak to you today about moral stability which is the practical side of doctrinal and devotional stability. One of my motivations for wanting to talk to you about moral stability is that we live in a morally volatile society which not only wants to attack all that we believe, but also wants to undermine and overthrow our adherence to biblical moral standards. It is a society which seeks to decriminalize that which the Bible calls criminal and to criminalize that which the Bible righteous and just.

It takes things a step further and wants to portray moral people as narrow minded, judgmental bigots who want to stop people from having some harmless fun and pleasure – sort of like the grumpy nurse who says” go and see what the children are doing and tell them that they mustn’t”. In other words, our society would have us believe that being moral is the opposite of having fun and that in order to find the satisfaction (which Mick Jagger is still not able to get), we have to violate moral standards because satisfaction and fun only come when you are liberated from biblical morality.

There is nothing further from the truth because morality is the key to a healthy heart and to a healthy life – to an inexhaustible feast of joy and satisfaction and of peace and love and joy. Lets look at the passages which I have selected.

***Woe to those who call evil good and who call good evil and who change the darkness into light and who change bitterness into sweetness and sweetness into bitterness.***  
(Isaiah 5:20)

***Behold that which I declare to you in the L-rd: you should no longer walk like pagans (unbelievers), who walk according to the vanity of their thoughts. Their understanding has been darkened and they are strangers to the life of G-d because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all feeling, they have given themselves over to sensuality to commit all kinds of impurity, with a continual lust for more. But you, it is not in this manner that you have come to know the L-rd. (Eph. 4:17-20)***

Immorality was a problem in Isaiah's day and in Paul's day and truly, the current international rise of immorality as a supposedly acceptable, even supposedly noble lifestyle is one of the signs of the end of the world which Yeshua talked about. It is not possible to separate our spirituality from our morality and people who feel that they can be spiritual without being moral are only deceiving themselves. Spirituality and morality are as inseparable as faith and obedience.

Morality is not opposed to authentic satisfaction and is really the key to finding a satisfaction which will not ravage your life and bring you to ruin. It is like the vigorous furnace which heats your home – a controlled flame versus arson which wants to burn down your whole house. It is a set of disciplines which motivate us to make healthy choices and motivate us to avoid those unhealthy choices which will hurt us and eventually destroy us.

I am saddened by the crowds of young worshippers who enter those temples of debauchery to drink and dance and drug themselves into fits with boring regularity. I am not against all bars as such and there are some where friends can gather to watch the game or to have a drink and there is nothing wrong with dancing per se. It is when the limits are pushed and where extreme behaviour crosses over in violence and debauchery that problems arise – where the boundary between pain and pleasure is crossed and where nothing is considered pleasurable unless it is violates moral standards and promotes immoral behaviour.

I grew up in the hippy era where people said sin is in and sin is fun and where moral standards were bowled over so that sex and drugs were seen as the keys to personal fulfilment and freedom. This was happening at the same time when evolution was replacing the Bible as the acceptable explanation for the meaning and purpose and origin of life. The Bible speaks of the return great apostasy that enveloped the world in the days of Noah and we are seeing the same darkness build momentum globally.

You see authentic spiritual warfare occurs in two realms – what you believe and how you live – and in the eyes of most people in our society the Bible is now seen as a discredited source which can no longer be believed or used as a guide on how to live. The enemy is targeting our faith and our morality with increasingly concentrated sophistication.

Judaism teaches us that we are obliged to participate in Tikkun Olam (the healing of the world) and we do live in a world full of things that need to be fixed and of problems which need to be solved – from world hunger and disease and poverty to violence, murder and genocide and oppression and racism of all kinds. But there is a new twist to this valid desire to be part of the solution and not part of the problem – religion is seen more and more as part of the brokenness which needs to be fixed and not as part of the solution for a fallen and broken world which needs to be fixed.

Our passages spoke of a twisting where immorality and debauchery are given the status which used to be occupied by morality and religion. A solid moral stability means that we resist the redefinition of right and wrong which our world is developing globally and which is now almost universally accepted. It means that we both defend a biblical approach to sexuality and that we practice biblical morality in every areas of our lives.

I am reading in the book of Acts where the early Messianic Moment had to contend with an enormous influx of pagans who had no concept of G-d or the truths of the Bible. The first council of Jerusalem both defined what it meant to come to authentic faith and what the authentic paganism was which had to be avoided. Broadly speaking, it falls into two categories: idolatry and fornication and even when the terminology is cleaned up, the rise of global paganism is our greatest threat as believers.

This is not just because our faith is attacked and our morality is challenged, but because we are seen as those who need to be delivered from our supposed ignorance and primitive belief system. We are seen as the pagans who need to be converted and civilized and brought to the truth which our modern secular world holds to be the only true and acceptable meaning and purpose which people should be living their lives by.

Many attempts are being made to bring this brand of idolatrous fornication into the church and the synagogue and any resistance is seen more and more as a brand of undesirable ignorance from which we have to be delivered.

How do we relate to this upsurge in immorality? Three ways. First we have to accept what the Bible teaches as true and real. Next we have to build a dialogue with our lost world which challenges them to abandon their paganism and join us, and not the other way around. Lastly we have to avoid allowing any of the beliefs or practices of this globalizing paganism to take root in our lives – like weeds – dandelions of the soul.

The Ten commandments define a morality which is non negotiable and which will under increasing attack as the return of the L-rd draws closer. Where do you draw your understanding of morality from? What standards are you setting and maintaining in your life? I am surprised at the number of believers, Jew and Gentile who no longer accept the truth of G-d's Word and the morality it teaches. I know others who are embarrassed to admit that they are creationists who believe that the only acceptable expression of human sexuality is in a marriage for life between one man and one woman.

Now, I am prepared to discuss the reasons of the hope which is in me with gentleness and respect (I Peter 3:15), but I am not prepared to accept any pagan definitions of the origin of life and the purpose of life. I will dialogue with any evolutionist, but I will never accept evolution in any form as an acceptable explanation of where life came from and where it is going. I will dialogue with young people about biblical sexuality, but I will never accept any expression of sexuality which is not biblical.

I will discuss reasons why I believe and I find most exchanges with people quite profitable and challenging – and they keep me sharp and relevant, but these discussions are not becoming bridges or bridgeheads for any kind of paganism to take root in my heart or life.

Moral stability in the L-rd is no longer considered politically correct as the silent slaughter of infants in the womb continues to be seen as a right which women need to have access to and as sexually transmitted diseases are becoming the biggest health problem globally.

I do not want to call light dark or bitterness sweet and I do not want my understanding to become darkened as I lose all ability to feel and sink deeper and deeper into immorality and debauchery and come to believe that this is a form of authentic spiritual expression and freedom.

Our greatest challenge as believers in our globally immoral society is to maintain as firm a grip on our biblical morality as we do our our Bibles. We do not want to do this because we are ignorant practitioners of a faith which is no more valid than any of the primitive mythologies ancient people believed in before modern science disproved all of them. We do not do this because we hold on to outdated ideas about sexual morality which no longer apply as sex in our modern world is seen as both a form of recreation and as a way of saying hello.

We do this because we want to abandon all and any forms of paganism, both in what we believe and in how we live. Evolution is a recycled form of old paganism and the modern sexual revolution is a revamped version of the criminal sexual immorality which the pagans practised before they knew any better.

Spiritual ignorance and immorality and debauchery are virulent forms of paganism which want to infect our lives and overthrow both our faith and our morality and chain us to an oppressive form of spiritual slavery which wants to burn down our house of faith and ravage our souls and those of our children and grandchildren.

As we come to the L-rd's Table, let us do the same level and kind of moral and spiritual introspection which Paul required from the erring Corinthian assembly so that they would not come under the judgment of G-d, either in this life or in the one which is to come.

Have you let any pagan beliefs or immorality take root in your heart and life? Solid moral stability is the only safe way to live in our darkening immoral world, even though it places us under the relentless assault of the politically correct paganism which wants to take control of your life and soul. Don't settle for anything less than solid biblical moral stability.