

Torah: Num. 18:1-22:1

(1) 19:21. ***This will be for them a perpetual law. The one who shall make the aspersion of the water of purification shall wash his clothes and the one who shall touch the water of purification shall be impure until the evening.***

(2 Corin. 5:21 – He who knew no sin was made sin for us that we could be made the righteousness of G-d in Him) Paran Adamah – Adam’s Cow (Heb. 2:17; 4:15). He not only paid the price for sin, He destroyed its power by defeating it in His flesh. He can both remove the penalty from our lives and remove the power of sin in our lives.

(2) 20:1. ***All the assembly of the Children of Israel arrived in the wilderness of Tsin, the first month and the people stooped at Kadesh. That is where Miriam died and was buried.***

The 40 odd years of wandering are not extensively chronicled in the Bible, because nothing significant happened, except the old generation passed away. Sometimes we just have to wait – we have to survive in order to thrive. Miriam was not the last rebel to die. It was her time. Sometimes the promises do not get fulfilled in our time, but by faith we pass on the promises to the next generation and wait for the fulfilment of all things.

(3) 20:11. ***The Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water came out abundantly. The assembly drank as well as the beasts.***

Moses lost patience with the people and allowed this impatience to cause Him to cross a line with G-d. His punishment was not to take the people in. His contribution to their lives was great, but all of us are expendable – we need to learn not to strike out against G-d in our frustration with the way people in our lives act or with the way things turn out in our lives. Repentance is not an act of spiritual violence.

(4) 21:9. ***Moses made a bronze serpent and placed it upon a perch (pole) and whoever had been bitten by a snake et who looked at the bronze serpent conserved their life.***

The second generation had to learn that the mistakes of the first one were not to be repeated and they had to repent for listening to the serpent and their listening had to be crucified. The serpent was conserved and eventually became an idol (2 Kings 18:4), but was used by our Messiah as an image of His crucifixion. There is a valid and an invalid application of biblical symbols – the original meaning has to be retained. The Lamb took on Adam’s flesh and offered it as the perfect sacrifice for all of us. When we look at Him (At what He did) and accept both His verdict and His solution, then we are spared from the power of the fiery serpent. He is the Lamb who became both the cow and the serpent to deal with both aspects of our sin – penalty and defilement.

Haftarah: Jud. 11:1-33

**(5) 11:11 *And Jephthah departed with the elders of Gilead and the people placed him at their head and Jephthah repeated all the words which he had said before the L-RD at Mizpah.***

A couple of hundred years later, the Moabites take advantage of a period of Israel's weakness to reclaim land they had lost to the Amorites Sihon and Og. Some of the judges were regional and dealt with regional problems. Here is a man rejected by the people and who becomes their leader to deliver them and the people repent of their treatment of him.

**(6) 11:30,31 *and Jephthah made a solemn of (of destruction) before the L-rd and said: if you deliver into my hands the sons of Ammon, then whoever comes out of my doors to greet me at my happy return shall be consecrated to the L-RD as a burnt offering.***

This man made a foolish oath where he intended to celebrate the powerful deliverance of the L-RD with a human sacrifice – three things. He should not have made such a horrible oath (it was pagan to make it against your own people). He should not have been allowed to carry it out (he could have died in her stead). We need to be careful not to bind ourselves with foolish words and then follow up on them, instead of repenting of the foolishness- which repenting would have been the better reaction, because two wrongs do not make a right.

Brit Chadashah: John 3:10-21

**(7) 3:14, 15. *And as Moses raised up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of man must also be lifted up in order that whoever believes in Him might have everlasting life.***

There is an aspect of the Gospel which outlines the bad news for which our Saviour's death is the solution. It is not a question of how defiled or lost or foolish we are – it is really a question of where we are looking and how we are responding to our need for both salvation and atonement cleansing. We can make mistakes, some unwitting and some with full knowledge, but the crucified One forgives and heals those who look towards Him and who do not follow through on their spiritual folly, but repent of it- which repentance is the foundation (beginning) of spiritual wisdom.

The new generation prepares to enter and is shown and told to leave the mistakes of the past behind them (did they listen? Do you listen?)

The way we handle mistakes and the way we repent will often be just as great a source of victory as when we get it right, because the L-rd paid for our mistakes and wants us to learn to let go of them and not let them define the way we live. We need to own all aspects of His love for us: the Lamb who paid the price for us. The Cow who cleanses us from the stain of our sin. the Snake who crucified our sinful nature so that we could learn to walk with Him, as we identify the source of the problem and deal with it.