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## NEWS

### IMMERSIONS IN THE JORDAN RIVER

Meeting at the Jordan River On Sabbath June 25 two congregations of Israel were full of Joy. People wanted to accept Yeshua as their Messiah and personal Savior. One of the congregations was the Hebrew speaking congregation of Tel Aviv. We have been happy to see that one "sabrá" was immersed by Rabbi Shalom David.



### NEXT IMMERSIONS SERVICE

Our next immersion service in the Jordan River will be in two weeks, on July 9th. If some of you are visiting Israel and would like to join us, come to Yardenit at 11:00 am.

### DANIEL SEMINAR IN BUENOS AIRES

David Barzola is really very active in his congregation of Buenos Aires. organizing a seminar on the prophet Daniel. It is interesting to remember that it is a very important study for Jews. First because this book is not very well known by the Jewish people, the first reason

## Parashat Shukat, Shabbat 2 July 2011 30 Sivan 5771

of this ignorance is that several chapters of the book were written in Aramaic and most of the Jews don't read Aramaic anymore. The second reason of that ignorance is that Daniel is classified in the Tanach (Jewish Bible) among the Scriptures (Ketubim) and not among the prophets (Nevi'im), thus Jews do not give so much attention to this biblical book. This book is also interesting to study with a Jew because it describes a Jewish life and situation which is very closed to the life and situation of Jews today. Daniel lived in Diaspora, he was confronted to anti-Semitism, and persecutions. Many questions about his religious life (cashrut, prayer, worship etc..) came also to his mind. The title of this seminar is "The Destiny of the World According to the Book of the Prophet Daniel". The teacher is Matias Katz.

**El destino del mundo en el libro del profeta Daniel**

del 28 de junio al 1 de julio a las 19:30 hs.

Caos y Esperanza en un libro clave para entender el presente y el futuro.

Presentado por: **Matias Katz**

**Frias 275**  
(entre Drago y Vera)

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Comunidad Hebrea Adventista  
**Bet Bnei Tzion**

# OVERVIEW

## CHUKAT

### Numbers 19:1-22:1

The laws of the “para aduma” (the red heifer) are detailed. These laws are for the ritual purification of one who comes into contact with death. After nearly 40 years in the desert, Miriam dies and is buried at Kadesh.

The people complain about the loss of their water supply that until now has been provided miraculously.

Aharon and Moshe pray for the people’s welfare. G-d commands them to gather the nation at Merivah and speak to a designated rock so that water will flow forth. Distressed by the people’s lack of faith, Moshe hits the rock instead of speaking to it.

He thus fails to produce the intended public demonstration of G-d’s mastery over the world, which would have resulted had the rock produced water merely at Moshe’s word. Therefore, G-d tells Moshe and Aharon that they will not bring the people into the Land.

Bnei Israel resume their travels, but because the King of Edom, a descendant of Esav, denies them passage through his country, they do not travel the most direct route to Eretz Yisrael. When they reach Mount Hor, Aharon dies and his son Eleazar is invested with his priestly garments and responsibilities.

Aharon was beloved by all, and the entire nation mourns him 30 days.

Sichon the Amorite attacks Bnei Yisrael when they ask to pass through his land. As a result, Bnei Yisrael conquer the lands that Sichon had previously seized from the Amonites on the east bank of the Jordan River.

## PARA ADUMAH OR RED HEIFER

Rabbi Zev Leff says that “The Midrash (Kohelles Rabba 7:23) relates that King Solomon made a special effort to understand the reasons for para adumah (red heifer). In the end he concluded that the

subject was still far from his understanding. Para adumah remained the classic example of a *chok* (a Divine Law) whose purpose completely eludes us.

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 21b) explains that the reasons for the mitzvot were not revealed because in each case in which reasons were given, even Solomon, the wisest of all men, was led to err.”

And Rabbi Ari Kahn says “The rite of the Red Heifer is one of the most obscure commandments, and serves as the prototypical example of *chok* — the type of commandment that transcends human understanding. Not only is the response — the rite of the Red Heifer — difficult for man to comprehend, but the cause — death — is also ultimately beyond human understanding.”

Jews have some difficulties to understand the reasons of some laws as the Red heifer because most of the laws related to sacrifice are in connection with the Mashiach, without the mashiach we cannot go deeply to the meaning of these laws.

Roy Gane put the red heifer sacrifice described in Numbers 19:1-10 in connection with the cleansing of a corpse contamination described from the verse 11. He said that Number 19 prescribes a unique procedure to remedy corpse contamination consisting of two parts (1) An unusual ritual outside the camp, labeled “a purification offering” and officiated by a priest, involved burning a reddish cow, thereby producing a supply of ashes to be stored for future use. (2) When an Israelite needed cleansing, a few of the ashes were mixed with water as a ready-made, instant” purification offering, and a layperson sprinkled them on the affected individual.<sup>1</sup>

An other author says “The children of Israel were anciently commanded to make an offering for the entire congregation to purify them from ceremonial defilement. This sacrifice was a red heifer and represented the more perfect offering that should redeem from the pollution of sin. This was an occasional sacrifice for the purification of all those who had necessarily or accidentally touched the dead. All who came in contact with death in any way were considered ceremonially unclean. This was to forcibly

impress the minds of the Hebrews with the fact that death came in consequence of sin and therefore is a representative of sin.” and also “This heifer was to be red, which was a symbol of blood. It must be without spot or blemish, and one that had never borne a yoke. Here, again, The Mashiach was typified. Yeshua came voluntarily to accomplish the work of atonement. There was no obligatory yoke upon Him, for He was independent and above all law.”

The sacrificial [red] heifer was conducted without the camp and slain in the most imposing manner. Thus Yeshua suffered without the gates of Jerusalem, for Golgotha was outside the city walls.

The body of the heifer was burned to ashes, which signified a whole and ample sacrifice. The ashes were then gathered up by a person uncontaminated by contact with the dead and placed in a vessel containing water from a running stream. This clean and pure person then took a cedar stick with scarlet cloth and a bunch of hyssop, and sprinkled the contents of the vessel upon the tent and the people assembled. This ceremony was repeated several times . . . and was done as a purification from sin.

Thus Yeshua, in His own spotless righteousness, after shedding His precious blood, enters into the holy place to cleanse the sanctuary. And there the crimson current is brought into the service of reconciling God to man. Some may look upon this slaying of the heifer as a meaningless ceremony, but it was done by the command of God and bears a deep significance that has not lost its application to the present time. . . . (FLB 199-200).

## DEATH OF MIRIAM AND AHARON

**R**abbi Yosi the son of Rabbi Judah says: “Three good leaders had arisen for Israel, namely Moses, Aaron and Miriam, and for their sake three good things were conferred [upon Israel], namely, the Well, the Pillar of Cloud and the Manna. The Well, for the merit of Miriam; the Pillar of Cloud for the merit of Aaron; the Manna for the merit of Moses. When Miriam died the well disappeared, as it is said,

And Miriam died there, and immediately follows [the verse], And there was no water for the congregation; and it returned for the merit of the [latter] two. [Talmud Ta’anith 9a].

## THE SIN OF MOSES AND AHARON

**T**he Torah states, “But the L-rd said to Moses and Aaron, ‘Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.’ These were the waters of Meribah, where the Israelites quarreled with the L-rd and where he showed himself holy among them.” (Numbers 20:12-13). Moses and Aharon have failed their mission; consequently entering, conquering, and most importantly settling the land will take place without them and will be led by Joshua. They will not cross the Jordan; The promised land will remain a goal beyond their reach.

But what was the sin? Moses and Aharon failed to demonstrate enough trust by speaking to the rock rather than striking it. Gane affirms that “They likely believed in their hearts that the L-rd could make water flow if they verbally addressed it, but because they did not follow through on such trust, it was functionally useless.” (673)

Rabbi shaul gives us a special light on this text when he said in his letter to the believers of Corinth “**They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Mashiach.** (1 Corinthians. 10:3-4).

According to Shaul, the rock was in fact a personification of the Mashiach, the Mashiach was among the Israelites and when Moses strike it instead of speaking to it.

Moses and Aharon were faithful people before this story, this punishment G-d shows that no amount of human merit amassed through past obedience can atone for even one sin.

1. Gane, R. (2004). *Leviticus, Numbers: The NIV Application Commentary from biblical text. . . . to contemporary life.* Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan.

## WHAT IS THE ANSWER?

In traditional Torah societies one looks for a son-in-law who excels in learning Torah. The story is told of well-to-do Jewish farmer in Poland who was looking for an appropriate match for his daughter. Being a Talmud Chacham, a learned individual, he arranged to give a lecture at the local yeshiva with the proviso that whoever could solve the Talmudic problem he presented would be considered for his son-in-law.


He presented a brilliant presentation which dazzled the students. However, since none of the young men could find a solution, he got onto his wagon and started to head to the next yeshiva in a nearby town. Glancing back after he had driven for a few minutes, he saw one of the yeshiva lads running with all his might to catch the wagon. Stopping the wagon, he waited for the young man to catch up and to catch his breath.

"So," says the farmer, "You have an answer to my kasha (question)?"

"No," replies the young man, "but I have to know. What is the answer?"

"Ah," smiles the farmer, "a young man like you is someone I want to consider for a son-in-law!"

## YOU SAVED YOUR LIFE...

 Our sages tell us that even when we think that we are making a personal sacrifice to help another person, in the long run we benefit from this. The following story illustrates this point.

Two peddlers were walking from village to village to sell their wares. One cold winter day it began snowing heavily and walking became treacherous. After many hours, one of them was so overcome by the cold and exhaustion, that he fell to the ground.

The partner, also shivering from cold, realized that his friend would freeze to death if left alone. He immediately went to work on his friend, massaging him, moving his hands, feet and limbs, so they wouldn't freeze. He worked for many hours, even though he too was freezing from the cold. Finally, a coach drove by, picked them up and brought them to the city where they were attended by a doctor.

The one who massaged his friend boasted that he saved his friend's life. But the doctor said to him, "True you saved his life, but he saved your life too... for had you not massaged him and used your hands and feet to help him, you too would have suffered from frostbite!"

## WHY A LEFT EYE?

The previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, tells the following episode: "When I was a small child, I once asked my father, 'Why did G-d create man with two eyes? After all, we can see even with only one eye?'"

His father answered, "Every person needs two eyes so that with the left eye, they should look at themselves in order to find his/her faults and correct them. On another person, however, one should always look with the right eye - which represents compassion and kindness."

## EDITOR

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## HAFTARA

### Judges 11:1-33

**I**n the text of the parasha we have the story of Israel crossing the Negev and coming to the land of Edom. They ask permission to pass. **"Now let us pass through your land"** (Num. 20:17). But Edom refused. **"You shall not pass through, or we will come out with the sword against you"** (Num. 20:18). Israel did not insist and turned back and went around the land of Edom (Num. 21:4).

The same thing happened with the Amorites (Num. 21:21-26). However this time Israel did not accept the refusal of the Amorites and took their land and cities.

**HAFTARA:** The story in our Haftara occurred about three hundred years later, during the time of Jephthah the Gileadite, the son of a prostitute (Judg. 11:1). The Ammonites came to provoke Israel for what happened during the time of Moses. **"After a time the Ammonites made war against Israel"** (Judg. 11:4). The people of Israel called Jephthah to help them in this situation. Even though Jephthah was not happy, he sent a delegation to the Ammonites. **"What is there between you and me, that you have come to me to fight in my land?"** (Judg. 11:12). The king of the Ammonites recalled to Jephthah what had happened a few centuries before (Judg. 11:26) and pretended that he wanted to get back his original territory, **"Because Israel, on coming from Egypt, took away my land from the Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan; now therefore restore it peaceably"** (Judg. 11:13). However, Jephthah did not want to accept this demand from the Ammonites. It was impossible, because the land had been given to the people of Israel by the L-rd himself. **"So now the L-RD, the God of Israel, has conquered the Amorites for the benefit of his people Israel. Do you intend to take their place?"** (Judg. 11:23). In fact Jephthah asked the Amorites if they wanted to oppose the will of G-d. They had not opposed G-d's decision for three hundred years; it was better to continue that way if they did not want to be in trouble with G-d. The king of the Ammonites refused. **"But the king of the Ammonites did not heed the message that Jephthah sent him"** (Judg. 11:23). Of course the conclusion is the victory of Israel. It is crucial for us to know whether or not we oppose G-d's will. Victory is in the hand of G-d, but only if we obey him.

## BRIT HACHADASHA

### 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

**T**his text written by Rabbi Shaul is in connection with the text of our parasha. It gives us a special light about the rock which followed the people of Israel in the wilderness, saying that this Rock was the Messiah **"They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Mashiach."** (3-4) This affirmation of Rabbi Shaul could surprise many of our readers. We know that Mashiach, Yeshua, was born two thousand years ago in Bethlehem that means fifteen centuries after the Exodus and the experience of Israel in the desert, how is it possible that this rock was the Mashiach?

It is important to remember who is the Mashiach. The prophet Micah says in his book **"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."** (Micah 5:2). The Messiah who would be born in Bethlehem and who would be the ruler over Israel has his "origins from the old, from ancient times". That means his origin is much older than the day of his birth in Bethlehem. He existed before his birth. It the same idea that Yochanan gives us in his first verses **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."** (1:1-3) We ask who is the character called "the Word" in the verse 14 it is said **"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."** This word who became flesh is Yeshua, His origins is from ancient times. So it is not surprising if he was there also in the time of Moses and Israel in the desert. Then according to Rabbi Shaul the rock which followed the people of Israel in the desert was Yeshua who was with G-d and appeared to Israel as a rock, giving them water and refreshment in a hot wilderness.