

Walking in the Truth and Light of His Word

This weeks reading is from Parashat Beha'alotcha (*Bamidbar / Numbers 4:21-7:89*), the Lord instructs Moshe to cleanse the Leviim; the purification process includes sprinkling of water, removing all hair, and to wash their bodies and clothing (8:6-7). The Priests are purified then by an offering made in the blood of a bull for a Chatat Korban (Sin Offering) and a Mincha Korban (Grain Offering) mixed with oil (8:8). The priests are presented before God (8:9) as a wave offering and are qualified to perform their duties before the Lord (8:11). During the Sacrifices, the Priests are to lay their hands upon the head of the bulls to represent the transference of sin (8:12). It is written in *Bamidbar / Numbers 9:18* *At the command of the Lord the sons of Israel would set out, and at the command of the Lord they would camp; as long as the cloud settled over the tabernacle, they remained camped.* (NASB) according to the lips/mouth of the Lord (עַל-פִּי יְהוָה) the people would set out or encamp. During the wilderness journey, the people were led by the Lord (YHVH) to move or to stay indicated by the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. The Scriptures also say *11:1* *Now the people became like those who complain of adversity in the hearing of the Lord; and when the Lord heard it, His anger was kindled, and the fire of the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp.* (NASB) The people complained of the Manna and the Bread God provided and longed for the fish, cucumbers, and melons that were available in the land of Egypt.

שְׁדוּקָה יִתַּח / The Holy Scriptures

ספר במדבר פרק ט

טו וּבַיּוֹם הַקִּיּוֹם אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן כִּסָּה הָעֶנָן אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן לְאַהֲלָהּ הָעֵדוּת וּבָעֶרֶב יִהְיֶה עַל-הַמִּשְׁכָּן כְּמֵרָאֵה-אֵשׁ עַד-בֹּקֶר: טז כִּן יִהְיֶה תָמִיד הָעֶנָן וְכִסְּנוּ וּמֵרָאֵה-אֵשׁ לַיְלָה: יז וּלְפִי הָעֵדוּת הָעֶנָן מֵעַל הָאֹהֶל וְאַחֲרָי כִּן יִסְעוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבִמְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכֹּן-שָׁם הָעֶנָן שָׁם יִחַנוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: יח עַל-פִּי יְהוָה יִסְעוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל-פִּי יְהוָה יִחַנוּ כָּל-יְמֵי אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכֹּן הָעֶנָן עַל-הַמִּשְׁכָּן יִחַנוּ: יט וּבִהְאֲרִידָה הָעֶנָן עַל-הַמִּשְׁכָּן יָמִים רַבִּים וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-מִשְׁמַרְתּוֹ יְהוָה וְלֹא יִסְעוּ:

Bamidbar / Numbers 9:15-19

9:15 Now on the day that the tabernacle was erected the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the testimony, and in the evening it was like the appearance of fire over the tabernacle, until morning. *9:16* So it was continuously; the cloud would cover it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. *9:17* Whenever the cloud was lifted from over the tent, afterward the sons of Israel would then set out; and in the place where the cloud settled down, there the sons of Israel would camp. *9:18* At the command of the Lord the sons of Israel would set out, and at the command of the Lord they would camp; as long as the cloud settled over the tabernacle, they remained camped. *9:19* Even when the cloud lingered over the tabernacle for many days, the sons of Israel would keep the Lord's charge and not set out. (NASB)

Reading *Bamidbar / Numbers 9:18*, it says “*At the command of the Lord...*” translated from the words עַל-פִּי יְהוָה meaning “upon the lips/mouth of the Lord,” is paralleled to the cloud moving. When the cloud would move, the people knew it was time to go, and when the cloud stopped the people knew that they were to stop. A parallel is made between the physical manifestation of God moving and the Word that proceeds from His mouth. In *Tehillim / Psalms 19:5-7* a parallel is drawn between “light” and “speech.” Studying the word “light” how many ways is the word “light” used in Scripture? The difference between light and darkness can be understood as a parallel between the knowledge of good and evil. In the light one is able to judge how one walks and to choose the right path to walk in. Darkness is used to hide ones evil ways, to walk in wickedness without others observing what you are doing. Light has also been used to illustrate the choice between following the commandments of God and hope for His eternal rewards, and darkness to follow the enticing of the devil which persuade man to do evil and become captive and damned to hell in eternal darkness. These concepts are also incorporated into the first epistle of John chapter 1. John says that God is Light and in Him is no darkness. The Aramaic Targum states *Psalms 19:4* *There is no utterance of complaint, and there are no words of confusion, for their voice is not heard.* (EMC) Darkness is paralleled to the utterance of complaint and words of confusion. In the Lord God Almighty, there is no darkness. God is not the author of confusion. And using this analogy, John says that if we say we have fellowship with the Lord and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. Thus, the difference between light and darkness is also understood as knowing the difference between truth and falsehood. The people in the wilderness journey moved according to the word of the Lord in their midst (*the cloud, 9:15-19*), yet they complained of the gifts God had given them to eat and to live (*11:1*). John says that if we walk in the light (*see 1 John 1:7-9*), just as He is in the Light, we have fellowship with Him, and with one another. The people of God in the wilderness however walked in the light of God's presence each day yet they did not appear to have real fellowship with Him. The people longed for their former lives of bondage and sin. Do you think this happens today amongst some of the people found in our congregations? The Apostle John said in *1 John 1:7-9* that, the blood of Yeshua His Son cleanses us from all sin, however, if one walks in sin (*practices sin, walks in darkness*), there is no fellowship. Does the blood of Christ cleanse when one practices walking in darkness? The point of this week's Torah portion is that you may find yourself living in the midst of the congregation of God, but do you truly desire to turn from sin, to seek His face and to seek forgiveness? (*Mark 9:43-49*) This is a call for personal reflection and examination; the blood of Yeshua cleanses from sin only if we truly seek Him and His truth!