



A command for cleansing, not for salvation

Parashat chuqat (39) – Institution

Torah: *Bemidbar* 19:1 to 22:1

Haftarah: *Shophetim* 11:1-33

Apostolic Scripture: *Ib`rim* 9:11-28

Another first in Scripture is the red heifer. The word originally used for this rule in Scripture is חֻקָּה (*chu-Qah*), institution, ordinance, something prescribed. Another word we notice frequently in Scripture regarding YAH's rules is מִשְׁפָּט (*mish-Pat*), which is also translated as ordinance, prescription, rule. There is therefore no real difference between the two words and they can be used interchangeably. We do not see *chuqah* or *chuqat* here for the first time, because it is already used from *Wayyiqra* 18:5 and then about 57 more times in the *TaNakh*. However, what makes the difference between the two words is that one is used for an ordinary rule, while *chuqah/chuqat* is mostly used for rules that are difficult to understand, or for which no explanation is given. Even *Shelomoh*, in all his wisdom, could not understand this rule:

“Solomon said: Concerning all these [ordinances of the *Torah*] I have stood and investigated [their meaning], but the chapter of the Red Heifer I have been unable to fathom. When I labored therein and searched deeply into it, ‘I said, I will get wisdom, but it was far from me’.”¹

The פָּרֵה אֲדָמָה (*pa-Rah `a-du-Mah*), red heifer, is to be offered as a sacrifice and the ashes will be mixed with water to create “water of purification” for people who have become unclean in various ways. One of the strangest things we notice here is that a clean person is made unclean during the preparation and sacrifice of the heifer, while it is later used to cleanse an unclean person! There is so much to learn here, something that could possibly take up a full week. So let us begin by seriously examining this verse:

Bemidbar 19² “This is a law of the *Torah* which יְהוָה has commanded, saying, ‘Speak to the children of *Yisra’el*, that they bring you a red heifer, a perfect one, in which there is no blemish and on which a yoke has never come.

Just as the *Mitsrian* idols were mocked by nine of the ten inflictions, we see in this command that YAH wants to teach the nation the exact opposite of what they were taught or experienced during their slavery. In *Mitsrayim*, a cow was seen as sacred to those people and was worshipped by the goddess *Isis*. Normally, the *Mitsrites* would use a bull as a sacrifice, which is why we see the female used here.

It had to be a red heifer, specifically, because red bulls were used as sacrifices to honour the evil demon, *Typhon*. The heifer had to be perfect and without blemish in every way – not even a single hair of any other colour, and she was never to have been yoked before. There is ample evidence from the writings of Homer,

¹ *Kohelet Rabbah* 7:36, Soncino Press Edition

Profiri, Virgil and Macrobius to prove that the Romans, Greeks and *Mitsrites* never used any animals as sacrifices that had been previously yoked. According to the pen of Dryden, citing poems by Virgil:

Four Altars raises, from his Herd he culls,
For Slaughter, four the fairest of his Bulls;
Four Heifars from his Female Store he took,
All fair, and all unknowing of the Yoke.

There are many striking similarities between the sacrifice of the red heifer and the sacrifice that *Yeshua* offered, some of which we will discuss here. To this day, nine calves have been slaughtered and offered according to this method²: the first by *Mosheh* and *El'azar*; the second by *Ezra* the priest and scribe; the third by *Shim'on HaTzadiq* (the righteous), a high priest during the second temple period. Later, the next high priest, *Yoḥanan*, offered two more; the seventh was offered by the prophet, *Eliyahu*; the eighth was offered by *Hanamel*, the *Mitsrite*; and the ninth by *Yishma'el*, son of *Piabi/Fiabi* during the reign of Herod. According to tradition, the tenth and final red heifer is to be offered by the Messiah when the third temple is built. However, when we look at *Ib`rim* 9:11-28, we learn that *Yeshua* came to fulfil exactly what the red calf was a foreshadow of. Now the question arises: should another red heifer really be slaughtered? In answer to this, let us go through all the similarities and see if we can agree with the tradition of the *Yehuḏim*.

Yeshua is the essence of the red heifer (cf. *Ib`rim* 9:24; 10:1-2); his sacrifice as our high priest according to the example of *Malkitseḏeq* preceded the rebuilding of the temple (cf. *Yoḥanan* 2:19), although this temple was not built by human hands, but by *Ruach HaQodesh* (cf. *Mattithyahu* 26:26-28; *Qorintiyim Aleph* 12:27; *Eph`siyim* 4:4, 11-12; *Qolasim* 1:24 et al). Followers of *Yeshua* are now part of the temple, his body (cf. *Qorintiyim Aleph* 3:16; 12:27) and are known as "living stones" (cf. *Kěpha Aleph* 2:5). The sacrifice of the tenth "red calf", *Yeshua*, ushered in a new priesthood according to the example of *Malkitseḏeq* (*Ib`rim* 5:10 with *Kěpha Aleph* 2:5) which replaces the *Lěwitical* priesthood of *Aharon* (*Ib`rim* 13:10).

The place and manner of the red heifer ritual provide a deeper insight than even the preparation of the ashes would, foreshadowing the events that *Yeshua* would fulfil on *Golgotha*. Just as *Yeshua* was nailed to the torture stake outside the temple grounds, the red heifer was taken outside the camp. The *Lěwites* let the Romans do their dirty work by letting an innocent man die and thus get blood on their (Romans') hands, but they (*Lěwites*) became unclean by it, just as *El'azar* became unclean after the death of the heifer and sprinkling of the blood. The priest who burned the calf became unclean just as the Roman soldiers became unclean by torturing and humiliating an innocent man. The person who gathered the ashes became unclean, just like the persons who took *Yeshua* off the torture stake and placed him in a tomb. Together, the cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet material, along with the ashes of the heifer, created the water that removes impurity. Some commentators view this as "red lye soap" a type of foreshadow of *Yeshua* making atonement for our sins. Just as *Yeshua* had to give his entire life outside the camp, the red heifer was burned to ashes outside the camp. By washing with this soap, the unclean person became physically and ceremonially clean:

Yeshayahu 1¹⁸ "Come now, and let us reason together," says יהוה. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

This compares well with the words of *Dawid*:

Mizmor 51⁷ Cleanse me with hyssop, and I am clean; Wash me, and I am whiter than snow.

2 <https://templeinstitute.org/red-heifer-the-tenth-red-heifer/>

Hyssop is a small plant that can even grow in the cracks of walls. It represents humility and is used as a disinfectant, but also in cleansing ceremonies. We find it in several places in Scripture (*Shemoth* 12:22; *Wayyiqra* 14:4-6; *Yohanan* 19:29 *et al*). Cedar wood represents strength or power; it is also mentioned many times in Scripture and according to the *Talmud* there were about ten different trees that *Yisra'el* referred to as cedars. The most famous is the cedar of *Lebanon*, a large tree that can grow up to 30 meters high with an average diameter of almost 3 meters, and although the wood is hard, it does not last as long as acacia wood, which was used for the tabernacle. The scarlet material represents *Yeshua's* blood. The red dye was obtained from a worm that left the red substance after it had laid eggs and died. It was also used for the priestly vestments, as well as during purification ceremonies. All in all, we see cedar, hyssop, and scarlet as symbols of our Messiah dying on a torture stake and how he is then officially qualified to act as our salvation.

Some commentators claim that the red heifer also has to do with the sin that most of the people committed less than a year ago with the golden calf. Although red and gold may not seem to be the same colour to most people, there are other translations that consider red and yellow to be similar. The word *adumah* translates as red. However, we see that the exegete, Saadia Gaon, translated the word from Judeo-Arabic صفرا (*sa-Frah*), translated as yellow. This is also confirmed in the Quran³ where *Mosheh* is instructed to slaughter a yellow calf. In order to clarify this discrepancy, *Yosēph* Qafih explains that the animal would have a light brown colour, the normal colour for a cow. According to him, it is common for *adom* in Hebrew and *safrah* in Arabic to refer to the same colour. The most important thing is that the animal would have a uniform colour throughout, whether red, yellow or light brown, but without any blemishes or abnormalities, had never been pregnant and would not have been yoked or otherwise used.

The red heifer leads us right through Scripture, so we learn an excellent lesson with much symbolism from the Apostolic Scriptures when *Yeshua* meets a woman from *Shomeron* at a well (*cf. Yohanan* 4:1-26). Residents of *Shomeron* in the north were considered unclean by their brother, *Yehudah*, in the south because they intermarried with *Ashurim*, an evil people who did not know *YAH's* rules and therefore didn't follow Him. The northern area where *Shomeron* is located was rarely visited by *Yehudim*. When *Yeshua* is on his way to *Galil*, he has to pass through the town of *Sichar*, formerly known as *Shekem*, a place that *Ya'aqob* had given to *Yosēph* years earlier. There is a spring, known to this day, as the well of *Ya'aqob*.

The people of *Shomeron* live in spiritual darkness because of their brother *Yehudah's* scorn, a form of captivity that has been passed down through the generations ever since the northern and southern tribes divided. Because of *Yehudah's* rejection of the rest of *Yisra'el*, the latter still walk in darkness (*cf. Melakim Bēt* 17:5-6, 24). However, we see a promise in Scripture that those who walk in darkness will see the Light and experience salvation:

Yeshayahu 9 ²The people who were walking in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death a light has shone.

Yeshua is tired after the journey and sits at the well of *Ya'aqob*. A woman from *Shomeron* arrives there to draw water and *Yeshua* asks her to draw water for him as well. She is surprised, because it is rare for *Yehudim* to visit the area, also for the man to strike up a conversation with her. When *Yeshua* asks the woman for water, we understand that he is actually drinking the cup of bitter water from the Law of Jealousy (*cf. Bemidbar* 5:5-31) which we discussed recently. That cup also contains the water of purification with the ashes of the red heifer (5:17). The woman of *Shomeron* represents those who are unfaithful to the marriage covenant made by *YAH* (*cf. Shemoth* 20:2-17) as well as the house of *Yisra'el* in the north who had become scattered and distant. *Yeshua* astonishes her by saying that she has already had five husbands, something that symbolises the five books of *Torah*, to which he also adds that she is currently outside of

3 *al-Baqara* ("The cow/heifer") 9.69. This is the longest chapter in the *Quran*.

marriage, that is, outside the marriage covenant, because she is acting without wisdom, without *Torah* (cf. *Yeshayahu* 29:1-12).

When she points out to *Yeshua* that their lineage is drastically different and that her people are looked down upon, we learn:

Yohanan 4 ¹⁰ **יהושע** answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift [of restoration] of *Elohim*, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me to drink [the cup that renews your marriage covenant],' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water [from the sacrifice of the red heifer]."

After many years of persecution and with what little dignity she has left, she makes *Yeshua* understand that the well belongs to her ancestor *Ya'aqob* and that all his sons and their flocks still drink from it. This is a direct reference to the covenant with *Abraham* and includes all twelve tribes. *Yeshua* realises her embarrassment and lifts her spirit with the following words:

Yohanan 4 ¹³ **יהושע** answered and said to her, "Everyone drinking of this water shall thirst again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water I give him shall certainly never thirst. And the water that I give him shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

Next we learn about impurity, especially when people come into contact with death. Death and life cannot coexist. Death is caused by sin (*Berēshith* 2:17; 3:3), disobedience to *YAH*'s commands. Therefore, if a clean person touches a dead person, he or she immediately becomes unclean:

Romiyim 6 ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the favourable gift of *Elohim* is everlasting life in Messiah **יהושע** our Master.

We learn from vv. 18 to 22 more wonderful symbolism in the way an unclean person is made clean by a clean person. The clean person (*Yeshua*) takes a hyssop branch (humility) and sprinkles cleansing water (offerings of *Yeshua* through his martyrdom) on the third day (after the resurrection in a glorified body) and on the seventh day (the perfect and blessed day on which *Torah*-obedient people gather in *YAH*'s presence). During Creation, the third day ensured man's basic existence on earth when the waters were separated, the land appeared and food was produced. There was a double blessing on the third day in the words we read: "*Elohim* saw that it was good." The third day of the week is therefore also the day on which most Hebrew marriages are confirmed, because there is an expectation for a healthy, blessed and fruitful marriage. After the cleansing on the seventh day, the person must wash himself (acknowledgement of guilt); he must also wash his clothes (new, pure life being put on).

While we have learned many rules and regulations and time has passed slowly, we now fast forward 37 years and come to the first month, forty years after *Yisra'el* had left *Mitsrayim*. The people are at *Qadēsh*, one of the places where they had previously camped (13:26). *Miryam*, sister of *Mosheh* and *Aharon*, dies and is buried here. She played an important role in the history of the people, but there is no mention of anyone mourning her. What does happen, though, is that the water is now finally finished and the people are thirsty again; they argue with *Mosheh* about their condition. Many of the older generation has already died, as *YAH* had promised them, but we also see apples falling not far from the trees. Just like their parents complained, this generation comes up and laments their fate over the lack of water. They even complain now because they have no place to sow!

When *Mosheh* invokes *YAH*'s counsel, he is told to take his staff and call the assembly together. He is to go with *Aharon* to a rock and speak to it, after which water will come forth. By this time *Mosheh*'s patience is exhausted and instead of just listening to the people, he and *Aharon* actually condemn them; he is

therefore speaking (scolding, condemning) to them, rather than to the rock! According to one commentator⁴, it was clearly *Mosheh* and not *Elohim* who was angry with the people, hence the pronoun 'we'. It is recorded as follows:

Bemidbar 20 ¹⁰And *Mosheh* and *Aharon* assembled the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels, shall **we** bring water for you out of this rock?" ¹¹Then *Mosheh* lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod. And much water came out, and the congregation and their livestock drank. [emphasis added]

With this action, *Mosheh* and *Aharon* were not only disobedient, but even showed a lack of trust. They were arrogant and gave no recognition to *YAH*, but claimed a miracle for themselves through *Mosheh's* words: "Shall we bring water for you out of this rock?" Despite this, *YAH* responded and brought water out of the rock, because He had heard the cries of thirsty people and animals. *Mosheh* and *Aharon* did not distinguish the difference between rebellion and thirst. As they were to represent *YAH* at all times in spirit and truth, they were not to pass any judgement, especially not towards a nation and animals that were thirsty. While *Mosheh* could get water out of the rock with *YAH's* rod, the Word, he did it with his own rod and brought revenge on both him and his brother. It is as if their hearts had become cold and this action caused them to receive the same judgement as the older generation who would not enter the promised land. The place therefore gets the name מְרִיבָה (*me-ri-Vah*), struggle.

There is a valuable lesson to be learned from this: favour should never be the basis for complacency or presumption. By reckless action, by sinful negligence, we can forever cancel the privileges of our heavenly calling. This does not detract from our salvation, but our opportunities to serve *YAH*, our usefulness in the Kingdom of heaven, are compromised or lost altogether.

Up to this point, *Mosheh* had not put a foot wrong. On the contrary, he regularly had to intercede for the nation and had to be prepared to resist accusations against him and his brother and sister. Many times he had to plead with *YAH* for the nation's lack of food, water and also manners. On a previous occasion he had to strike the rock (cf. *Shemoth 17:6*), because it was also a preview of the suffering that *Yeshua* would have to go through on our behalf. This time, however, would be a test, as with the previous generation that had died out. We also learn from this that the second plague would indicate the provision that *Yeshua* would have for His people:

Yohanan 7 ³⁷And on the last day, the great day of the festival, יהושע stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me, and let him who believes in Me drink. ³⁸"As the Scripture said, out of His innermost shall flow rivers of living water."

Sha'ul refers to *Yeshua* as the rock. Although there were physical rocks in the wilderness and two of them were used for water, these rocks were also symbolic of *Yeshua* accompanying the nation everywhere and providing in all their needs:

Qorintiyim Aleph 10 ⁴and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed, and the Rock was Messiah.

From *Qadēsh*, the shortest route to the promised land would be through the land of *Edom*. This is the area that *Ėsaw* entered after parting ways between him and *Ya'aqob* many years before. There was never any real reconciliation between the brothers or their descendants. *Mosheh* sends a delegation to the king of *Edom* and asks permission to pass through the land, but it is refused. The land of *Edom* could have made a fortune by selling water and food, but the arrogance of the king and his people cost them dearly. The major cause of this is unforgiveness, something that most people experience, and a serious problem within their

4 Elmer Smick, "Numbers", p. 138

lives to this day, also the biggest cause of physical illness. There is no prophecy in Scripture that mentions any form of restoration for *Edom* (cf. *Amos* 1:11; *Obadiah* 1:3-4). Because of their revenge, hatred, envy, and violence, *Edom* forfeited their right to a good future:

Obadiah 1¹⁸ “And the house of *Ya‘aqob* shall be a fire, and the house of *Yoseph* a flame, but the house of *Esau* for stubble. And they shall burn among them and they shall consume them, so that no survivor is left of the house of *Esau*.” For יהוה has spoken.

After a day’s journey east from *Qadēsh*, through a broad, dry riverbed, the nation reaches Mount Hor. The original text for “Mount Hor” is again a type of pun and reads: “הַר הָהָר”, har ha-Hor. The literal translation of this is “mountain upon [a] mountain”, while some commentators describe it as a small apple upon a larger apple. *Mosheh* receives instructions from יהוה to call the nation together and inform them that *Aharon* would soon die. *Aharon*’s official garment, the uniform in which he performed his office as high priest (cf. *Wayyiqra* 8:7-9), is taken from him in order that his son, *El‘azar*, can don it and be confirmed in office. Without any farewell, with an uninterrupted continuation of the office, it is passed from *Aharon* to *El‘azar* (cf. *Melaḳim Aleph* 19:19).

Within one day of *YAH* pronouncing the sentence on *Aharon* and *Mosheh*, the execution of *Aharon*’s sentence takes place. There is a solemn stateliness surrounding this narrative, appropriate to the occasion and in keeping with the setting. As the whole nation watches, *Mosheh*, *Aharon* and *El‘azar* ascend the mountain; in his full priestly dress *Aharon* walks to his burial. He is fully aware of this, as is everyone in the camp, who are watching for the last time this high-ranking person who has led them in set-apartness for 40 years. When *Aharon* takes off his robes of office, he is no longer a priest, but merely an ordinary part of *Yisra‘el* and is gathered to his people. *YAH* draws a veil of silence on what happens between the three on the mountain, but then the new high priest, *El‘azar*, comes down from the mountain with *Mosheh* to the nation, who watches on in awe and absolute silence. When they realise that *Aharon* is dead, they mourn him for 30 days.

Shortly before his death, *Yeshua* was also stripped of his garments, similar to what we just experienced in the case of *Aharon*. After *YAH* resurrected him and he was accepted as the first-fruits offering from the dead (cf. *Qorintiyim Aleph* 15:20-28), he was clothed with the everlasting office of high priest:

ib‘rim 4¹⁴ “Therefore, since we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, יהושע the Son of *Elohim*, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a High Priest unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who was tried in all respects as we are, apart from sin.

During the mourning period, the *Kena‘anite* king of *Araḏ* gets the idea that *Yisra‘el* is a threat to him. He fights against them and even takes some prisoners. The nation of *Yisra‘el* realise where their help lies and take an oath to completely destroy them and their cities if *YAH* would give the enemy into their hand. This happens, and the place gets the name חֲרָמָה ([*Hormah*], *chor-Mah*), dedicated or dedication. Some commentators, however, are not entirely sure that all the *Kena‘anites* were exterminated; they even surmise that this verse may have been added later. After the nation entered the promised land, the same names and events are mentioned (cf. *Yehoshua* 12:14). Regardless of commentators, this is the first victory that *Yisra‘el* achieved over *Kena‘an* and it therefore becomes a great incentive for future skirmishes.

When the nation leaves *Hor* and move around the southern border of *Edom*, towards *Ėylath*, the nation becomes impatient and also rebellious about the *man* they have to eat every day; they call it by an inferior name קֶלֶקֶל (*qel-o-Qel*), “unnutritious, unreal, stomach-churning things”. For 40 years the people ate *man*; they travelled through the wilderness which was literally riddled with dangerous insects, snakes and other animals, but they never had any problems with them. This unthankfulness causes *YAH* to release the snakes which bites many people and cause some to die. We see in the original text the term הַנִּחְשִׁים הַשֹּׂרְפִים

(*ha-ne-cha-Shim ha-se-ra-fim*), hot or fiery serpents. The root word נָחָשׁ (*na-Chash*), which is translated here as snake, however, is difficult to understand, as it can also be translated as prediction, divination or omen. The root word for 'fiery' is שָׂרָף (*sa-Raf*), which is also translated as "celestial being with six wings" (cf. *Yeshayahu* 6:2, 6), even "poisonous viper". In a letter to their fellow countrymen, one or more men write:

Ib`rim 1 ⁷And of the messengers indeed He (יהוה) says, "... who is making His messengers spirits and His servants a flame of fire." [emphasis original]

The majority of commentators are of the opinion that the bites of the venomous snakes would have caused severe inflammation, producing a burning pain. We also know that the *Sinai* Peninsula and the *Arahah* region are infested with striped snakes of various sizes, with red spots and wavy stripes, some of which are the most venomous in the world. There are some commentators who claim that these could have been flying snakes or even dragons, but this cannot be confirmed from Scripture, so we will leave it for now.

When the nation eventually acknowledge their sin of murmuring, *YAH* shows *Mosheh* how they could survive after having been bitten. The secret was to look intensely at a bronze serpent hanging on a pole, something *Mosheh* had to construct and erect. By looking at this imitation serpent, they would receive life; in other words, what they would look at, would save them from death. We can learn from this that what is before our eyes can have a great influence on our lives. What enters through our physical and spiritual eyes can kill or give life. When *Hawwah* saw that the forbidden fruit looked good to eat, she died. When the nation saw the bronze serpent, they continued to live. It is important to set our vision on that which gives life, not death! From a well-known passage in Scripture we learn:

Yohanan 3 ¹⁴"And as *Mosheh* lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so the Son of *Adam* has to be lifted up, ¹⁵so that whoever is believing in Him should not perish but possess everlasting life. ¹⁶"For *Elohim* so loved the world that He gave His only brought-forth Son, so that everyone who believes in Him should not perish but possess everlasting life.

All of us suffer from the poison of sin and are on the road to death and destruction. The only solution for survival is to fix our eyes on the miracle that *YAH* has set up for us. The word we see in v. 9 as 'pole' appears in the original text as נֶסֶם (*nes*). However, it also translates as 'sign' and 'miracle', something that is lifted up, something extraordinary. *Yeshua's* death and resurrection were both a miracle and a sign. The son of man had to be lifted up, then die, to save the nation of *Yisra'el* and all who align themselves with the nation, from eternal death. *Yeshua* is the only solution for humanity. Without him, no one will escape eternal death. Those who look at him seriously and through spiritual eyes, at what he left for us through *Ruach HaQodesh*, will be able to enter eternity. It is almost ironic that the medical world's sign is also a serpent on a pole...

Mosheh made this substitute from durable material, which also indicates to us that *YAH's* salvation is eternal and does not need to be repeated. Copper is the representation of humiliation. The nation of *Yisra'el* preserved this image of the serpent and later even offered incense before it (cf. *Melakim B't* 18:4). Eventually, King *Hizqiyah* destroyed it so that it could no longer be used as a type of idol. Several other encampments are mentioned as the nation of *Yisra'el* continued their journey. A specific book that has unfortunately been lost to time, the Book of Wars, poetises the *Arnon*, now known as Wadi Mujib, a river that flows into the Dead Sea. This book was apparently written by *Mosheh* and poetises the joy and excitement of the nation as they approached the promised land. For this reason, we see something that could possibly come from this book:

Bemidbar 21 ¹⁷*Yisra'el* then sang this song: "Spring up, O well! Sing to it,

This well was in *Be'ēr*, a word that simply indicates that a well had been dug there. This was also the new method of getting water; they would no longer be able to simply strike a rock or talk to it. From now on, the nation had to learn that only by their own hands would they be able to survive (*cf. Berēshith* 3:17-19).

For the third time *Mosheh* wants the nation to pass through another nation's territory and for the third time they are refused. The city of *Heshbon* is conquered as well as the territory of *Bashan*. These victories gave *Yisra'el* possession of all the lands east of the *Yardēn* and west of the border of *Ammon*. However, at the command of יהוה, they did not battle against *Edom*, *Mo'ab* or *Ammon*, since they were related to *Yisra'el*. The great victory over *Og* brought further assurance that *YAH* will give them a complete victory on the other side of the *Yardēn*.

The nation now stands east of *Yeriho*, the city to be conquered first. Less than 40 years earlier, 10 spies had brought the death penalty upon themselves and their contemporaries when they feared fortified cities and giants. However, the famous commentator, Matthew Henry, says⁵:

"Giants are but worms before God's power."

Shabbat shalom!

Hein Zentgraf

hein@zentgraf.org

[Silver Trumpet Ministry](#)

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Sources:

We prefer to not use the word 'God', because of personal conviction. In most cases, unless quoted from another source, it will be replaced by '*Elohim*' or inflections of the same word.

All citing of Scripture is taken from *The Scriptures* 2009, unless indicated differently.⁶

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⁵ Matthew Henry's Whole Bible Commentary, p. 165

⁶ <https://isr-messianic.org/>