

## That I may answer him that reproacheth me

My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me. (Prov. 27:11)

<sup>13</sup>For it was not an enemy who insulted me; if it had been, I could have borne it. It was not my adversary who treated me with scorn; if it had been, I could have hidden myself. <sup>14</sup>But it was you, a man of my own kind, my companion, whom I knew well. <sup>15</sup>We used to share our hearts with each other; in the house of God we walked with the crowd. (CJB, Psalms 55:13-15; KJV 55:12-14)

**A**re there Scriptural guidelines for handling false accusations? Am I even supposed to be falsely accused? Isn't it better ignored? How are we to handle other people's opinions? Shouldn't we consider the source, and if the critics are out of order themselves, why pay attention to their poison? *Parashat Nasso* has answers for such questions.

Accusations are inevitable in the walk of a believer. If you do anything for *Adonai*, you will be falsely accused: "How blessed you are when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of vicious lies about you because you follow me! Rejoice, be glad, because your reward in heaven is great - they persecuted the prophets before you in the same way." The KJV states: "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." (Matt. 5:11-12). Vicious lies will "provoke" your life, either positively or negatively. If you are in ministry, you will be scrutinized, examined, dissected, contemplated, studied, watched, second-guessed, and evaluated continually. It is not a question of whether or not you will be falsely accused, the question is how will you react to it when it comes—and it will come. All the KS families (and friends who regularly visit) are in spiritual leadership and ministry. We, my friends and *mishpacha*, will be scrutinized. Are you ready for *Adonai*'s purposes in allowing such trials?

<sup>12</sup>Dear friends, don't regard as strange the fiery ordeal occurring among you to test you, as if something extraordinary were happening to you. <sup>13</sup>Rather, to the extent that you share the fellowship of the Messiah's sufferings, rejoice; so that you will rejoice even more when his *Sh'khinah* is revealed. <sup>14</sup>If you are being insulted because you bear the name of the Messiah, how blessed you are! For the Spirit of the *Sh'khinah*, that is, the Spirit of God, is resting on you! <sup>15</sup>Let none of you suffer for being a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or a meddler in other people's affairs. <sup>16</sup>But if anyone suffers for being Messianic, let him not be ashamed; but let him bring glory to God by the way he bears this name. <sup>17</sup>For the time has come for the judgment to begin. It begins with the household of God; and if it starts with us, what will the outcome be for those who are disobeying God's Good News? - <sup>18</sup>"If the righteous is barely delivered, where will the ungodly and sinful end up?" <sup>19</sup>So let those who are suffering according to God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator by continuing to do what is good. (1 Pet 4:12-19)

### **We Must Pass the Trial of Bitter Water - Numbers 5:11-31**

In this week's Parasha (*Nasso*) we find the Biblical guidelines for when a woman/wife is publicly attacked and accused. She must take the cup of bitter water, drink it and wait. So must we drink of the bitter cup, all the while thanking *Adonai* for the trials He is giving us.

<sup>11</sup>ADONAI said to Moshe, <sup>12</sup>"Tell the people of Isra'el, 'If a man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him; <sup>13</sup>that is, if another man goes to bed with her without her husband's knowledge, so that she becomes impure secretly, and there is no witness against her, and she was not caught in the act; <sup>14</sup>then, if a spirit of jealousy comes over him, and he is jealous of his wife, and she has become impure - or, for that matter, if the spirit of jealousy comes over him, and he is jealous of his wife, and she has not become impure - <sup>15</sup>he is to bring his wife to the cohen, along with the offering for her, two quarts of barley flour on which he has not poured olive oil or put frankincense,

*because it is a grain offering for jealousy, a grain offering for remembering, for recalling guilt to mind. <sup>16</sup>The cohen will bring her forward and place her before ADONAI. <sup>17</sup>The cohen will put holy water in a clay pot, and then the cohen will take some of the dust on the floor of the tabernacle and put it in the water. <sup>18</sup>The cohen will place the woman before ADONAI, unbind the woman's hair and put the grain offering for remembering in her hands, the grain offering for jealousy; while the cohen has in his hand the water of embitterment and cursing. <sup>19</sup>The cohen will make her swear by saying to her, "If no man has gone to bed with you, if you have not gone astray to make yourself unclean while under your husband's authority, then be free from this water of embitterment and cursing. <sup>20</sup>But if you have in fact gone astray while under your husband's authority and become unclean, because some man other than your husband has gone to bed with you ..." <sup>21</sup>then the cohen is to make the woman swear with an oath that includes a curse; the cohen will say to the woman, "...may ADONAI make you an object of cursing and condemnation among your people by making your private parts shrivel and your abdomen swell up! <sup>22</sup>May this water that causes the curse go into your inner parts and make your abdomen swell and your private parts shrivel up!" - and the woman is to respond, "Amen! Amen!" <sup>23</sup>The cohen is to write these curses on a scroll, wash them off into the water of embitterment <sup>24</sup>and make the woman drink the water of embitterment and cursing - the water of cursing will enter her and become bitter. <sup>25</sup>Then the cohen is to remove the grain offering for jealousy from the woman's hand, wave the grain offering before ADONAI and bring it to the altar. <sup>26</sup>The cohen is to take a handful of the grain offering as its reminder portion and make it go up in smoke on the altar; afterwards, he is to make the woman drink the water. <sup>27</sup>When he has made her drink the water, then, if she is unclean and has been unfaithful to her husband, the water that causes the curse will enter her and become bitter, so that her abdomen swells and her private parts shrivel up; and the woman will become an object of cursing among her people. <sup>28</sup>But if the woman is not unclean but clean, then she will be innocent and will have children. <sup>29</sup>This is the law for jealousy: when either a wife under her husband's authority goes astray and becomes unclean, <sup>30</sup>or the spirit of jealousy comes over a husband and he becomes jealous of his wife, then he is to place the woman before ADONAI, and the cohen is to deal with her in accordance with all of this law. <sup>31</sup>The husband will be clear of guilt, but the wife will bear the consequences of her guilt.'" (Numbers 5:11-31)*

### **How Do We Pass the Trial of the Water of Embitterment and Cursing**

- Thank God for the benefits you will obtain by going through it (*"In everything give thanks, for this is what God wants from you who are united with the Messiah Yeshua."* 1 Thes. 5:18).
- Expect friends to stay back and watch and wait (*"My friends and companions shun my disease; even the closest keep their distance."* Ps 38:11) Why? They are waiting to see if you get bitter, for if you do, that proves you are guilty. An undeserved curse has no more effect on a person than a bird flying through the air. (*"Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest."* Prov. 26:2, NIV)
- Realize that bitterness on your part proves that your critics are right.
- Bitterness will also defile you, your family and others (Heb. 12:15). God wants to add more grace (the desire and the power to do His will), but grace only comes through humbling experiences. (James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6)
- Get the rewards of passing the test—those who do not revolt, He blesses. The rewards are cleansing, freedom and increased fruitfulness (Nu. 5:28). The real concern should not be what people think (this is our strongest bondage), but instead it should be what He thinks! If you pass the test you will experience freedom from the fickle attitudes of people.
- Scripture tells us to rejoice (without anger or bitterness) when we are falsely criticized/accused (Matt 5:12). New fruitfulness will come to our lives when we respond in love and joy in all situations.