

## FERVENT FIGHTING FAITH OR COMPROMISED CONTENTMENT?

### Shophetim/Judges 1

Shabbat Shalom family,

**Timotiyos Aleph/1 Timothy 6:12** “Fight the good fight of the belief, lay hold on everlasting life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession before many witnesses.”

Taking hold of everlasting life to which we have been called, and continually making the good confession before many witnesses, as we hear, guard and do the commands of Elohim as a true expression of our love for Elohim, is a fight – and it is a fight that we must be willing and able to continually give our all as we stand firm with great zeal and commitment as a called out and chosen priesthood. Our walk in Messiah is certainly called the good fight of the belief, because it is a fight as we sojourn here until our King returns, as we do our utmost to ensure that when He does come that He may find faith – that is a working, fighting faith of a faithful remnant who call upon and walk in His Mighty Name, as we guard to do His commands, amēn!

Understanding then that we are in a fight we must therefore recognise that in order to be a well-equipped fighter, we must be fit and strong in the doing of His clear instructions, clothing ourselves in His righteousness with the full armour of His Torah that will daily enable us to stand, stand and stand against the enemies attacks at trying to cause us to fall into compromise that leads to sin and destruction! In a message tonight called, “**FERVENT FIGHTING FAITH OR COMPROMISED CONTENTMENT?**” I would like us to be reminded once again that we are to guard against all forms of compromise, no matter how subtle it may be, in order to maintain a fervent fighting faith. Please turn with me to **Shophetim/Judges 1** as we look at what started out as complete commitment that turned into being content with compromise under the threat of the enemy. (Read)

At the end of **Yehoshua/Joshua** (Chapter 24) we see a nation who by their own confession declared their steadfast commitment to יהוה, and yet here in **Shophetim/Judges 1** we see a generation who quickly let go of the once confessed complete commitment, by allowing compromise to cause them to fall short of guarding the clear commands of Elohim. **Chapter 2** sums it up by saying that as long as Yehoshua or any of the elders who outlived Yehoshua, who had seen the great works of יהוה, were alive, the people served יהוה. But as soon as that generation died the new rose up who did not know יהוה. To ‘know’ in Hebrew which is the root word יָדָע ‘yada’ – **Strong’s H3045** means ‘*to acknowledge, clearly understand, to perceive, distinguish and discern*’ and in terms of knowing יהוה it implies the ability to respond to and recognise the Master’s voice and do what He says! יהוהשׁע tells us in:

**Yoḥanan/John 10:27** “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”

To follow Him means to follow Him completely without compromise, and any compromise in one’s claim in following Messiah through a disregard for His Torah reveals that they do not hear His voice and He does not ‘know’ them!!! Here we see the nation of Yisra’el go from being a nation with a fervent faith that turned into apathetic apostasy – in other words they had no interest or concern for the Torah of Elohim which caused them to abandon their once claimed loyalty to יהוה and His commands! But how you may ask? The answer is clear and the last verse in Shophetim/Judges sums it up:

**Shophetim/Judges 21:25** “In those days there was no sovereign in Yisra’el – everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

No king and everyone does what they want and does whatever is right in their own eyes! This was the very thing that Mosheh warned Yisra’el against in:

**Deḇarim/Deuteronomy 12:8** “Do not do as we are doing here today – each one doing whatever is right in his own eyes.”

While Judges contains some great moments of victory in just over a 300 year span, the sad picture of the inability to submit to the reign of Elohim by adhering to His Kingdom rules as outlined in the Torah is the same picture of apathy we see today by so many who seemingly claim to be believers, yet by their denial in the need to obey the Torah and follow the clear instructions, commands and statutes contained therein, they are in fact nullifying their acknowledgment of Messiah as Master and King by their wilful disobedience and acts of lawlessness towards the Kings Kingdom rules, despite the vain confession of their lips while their hearts reveals their claims of no effect as their actions show that their hearts are far from Him!

At Mount Sinai יהוה called and set Yisra’el apart to be a kingdom of priests under the clear instruction that they obey the voice of the Master and King of all creation and keep His Covenant! Our identity in Messiah as a called out and set-apart people must line up with our obedience to our Master and King:

**Shemoth/Exodus 19:5-6** “And now, if you diligently obey My voice, and shall guard My covenant, then you shall be My treasured possession above all the peoples – for all the earth is Mine – 6 ‘and you shall be to Me a reign of priests and a set-apart nation.’ Those are the words which you are to speak to the children of Yisra’el.”

Mosheh reaffirms the ‘Kingship’ of יהוה when he explained the Covenant to the next generation that would enter into the Promised Land, before they entered into Kena’an.

After the conquest of Yeriho and Ai, Yehoshua declared once again to all Yisra'el her Kingdom responsibilities, when he built a slaughter place out of unhewn stones and offered ascending offerings to יהוה, and in the presence of all Yisra'el he wrote on the stones a copy of the Torah of Mosheh, which he had written (no oral Torah)!!! He then read in the hearing of all, all the words of the Torah, with the blessings and the cursings according to all that was written! At the end of Yehoshua, shortly before his death, he reminded Yisra'el once again their duties and requirements in living according to the Kingdom rules as outlined in the written Torah for a nation and people who chose and claimed to serve and follow יהוה as their Elohim and King!

Gid'on, who was possibly one of the greatest judges in Yisra'el's history even told Yisra'el when they asked him to be their ruler that he could not be as they already had a ruler and king:

**Shophetim/Judges 8:23** “But **Gid'on said to them, “I do not rule over you, nor does my son rule over you. יהוה does rule over you.”**

**Debarim/Deuteronomy 6** is very clear as it tells us plainly that we are to love and obey יהוה with our all (in fact to love יהוה is to obey Him – **Yoḥanan Aleph/1 John 5:3** “**For this is the love for Elohim, that we guard His commands, and His commands are not heavy**”). **Debarim 6** also tells us that we have a responsibility to teach and train our children to do the same as we teach them His Torah day and night by teaching them all day long in all that we do (something lacking greatly today indeed!). We are also to be a separated people as we separate ourselves from all forms of pagan worship practices and lifestyles – all very simple really – yet time and time again we see so many who fail to simply obey and pay the price for compromise!!! Why? Because they neglect the True King and Master and therefore they do not diligently ‘**seek first His Kingdom and His Righteousness**’, but instead find themselves flirting with the idolatry and lusts of the nations around them – and it is no different today!!!

**Mishlë/Proverbs 14:34** “**Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to peoples.**”

Righteousness is equated with obedience to the Torah, while sin is lawlessness!

**Debarim/Deuteronomy 6:25** “**And it is righteousness for us when we guard to do all this command before יהוה our Elohim, as He has commanded us.**”

**Yoḥanan Aleph/1 John 3:4** “**Everyone doing sin also does lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.**”

Shophetim/Judges records for us some major lessons for us in regards to the consequences of neglecting to obey the Kingdom rules and commands of our Redeemer and King, and here in this first chapter we see a very eager start that lacked a faithful follow through when the going got a little tough in the fight against the enemy and as a result the enemy was not destroyed; and in being spared from total destruction which was commanded, caused Yisra'el to end up submitting to and eventually imitating the worship practices of the enemy as we see in Chapter 2 of how they worshipped and served Ba'al and the Ashtoreths! As a result of this these nations were not driven out by יהוה, but were left in their midst in order to try Yisra'el to see if they would guard the way of יהוה and walk in His Torah or not!

After the death of Yehoshua we find that Yisra'el did the right things and asked who should go up and fight first against the Kena'anites – and Yehudah was chosen, perhaps because it was the kingly tribe, from which Messiah would come, however they went up and called for Shim'on to help, and they had victory striking 10 000 men at Bezeq. They pursued and caught a fleeing Adoni-Bezeq and cut off his thumbs and big toes – the very thing that he had done to 70 other sovereigns and he acknowledged that Elohim had repaid him for what he had done. The 70 kings that he had struck is symbolic of him being the ruler of the earth and so in this vital victory we see a shadow picture of a counterfeit messiah having his authority stripped and removed, paving the way for Yisra'el to take Yerushalayim again under the rule of the True Messiah and King!

Yehudah had great victory and we also read of Kalëb's call for whoever would take Qiryath Sëpher could have his daughter, and Othni'el, son of Qenaz, Kalëb's younger brother stood up and captured it – this is the same Othni'el that we read about in **Chapter 3**, who יהוה raised up as a saviour for Yisra'el and destroyed the sovereign of Aram after which Yisra'el had rest for 40 years until Othni'el died, after which Yisra'el once again did evil in the eyes of יהוה!

So things were going great – for a while!!! And in verse 19 we see that it says that יהוה was with Yehudah, so they took possession of the mountains, yet were unable to drive out the Philistine's because of their iron chariots. This is a great lesson for us in that while יהוה is certainly with us as we face battles, we must realise that because He is with us does not mean that things will be easy to overcome – the battles we face will be tough – yet we must stand firm, no matter what weapons the enemy has formed against us.

**Yehudah** means “**praised**” and we must recognise that we are to be a praising and rejoicing people, no matter what we face:

**Ya'aqob/James 1:2-4** “**My brothers, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the proving of your belief works endurance. 4 And let endurance have a perfect work, so that you be perfect and complete, lacking in naught.**”

Just because the enemy has iron chariots does not mean that you are defeated – for we are to recognise that it is יהוה who fights for us and He goes before us – and iron chariots are nothing for Him to destroy:

**Yeshayahu/Isaiah 45:2** “I go before you and make the crooked places straight; I shatter the gates of bronze and cut down the bars of iron.”

**Binyamin** did not drive out the **Yebusites** – יְבוּסִי **Yebusi** – Strong’s H2983 - *sons of Yebus* – Strong’s H2982, which comes from the word בּוּס **bus** – Strong’s H947 meaning ‘*threshing, trample, trodden down, desecrate and utterly reject*’. This speaks plainly to rebellion and what it brings about in people. This speaks of those who suppress spiritual authority in fellow believers – in other words they refuse to submit to authority that יהוה has ordained and reject instruction from those whom יהוה has called to speak His Word. They represent those who will always criticise and break down all forms of community advancement and adherence to Torah principles. Binyamin, which means ‘*son of the right hand*’ not being able to destroy the ‘*sons of Yebus*’ is a picture for us today of not destroying all form of rebellion to the Torah from our lives, and therefore we must guard against the company that we keep, especially if they have an influence in our lives that may cause us to be in a place of rebellion to the pure authority of the Torah through subtle acts of compromise that often seem harmless, yet can bring great destruction and devastation in our lives without warning! How are you at submitting to authority, especially authority of those that יהוה has appointed? We would do well to not rebel – we know what happened in the Wilderness!!!

Compromise will cause one to overlook rebellion and eventually that compromise will result in the refusal to submit to the authority of the Creator and King – dangerous ground to be on!!!

**Menashsheh**, which means ‘*cause to forget*’ named so by Yosëph as he realised that יהוה had caused him to forget all his toil that he had suffered. Menashsheh did not dispossess 5 groups of people and their villages:

1 – Bëyth She’an - בֵּית שְׁעָן - Strong’s H1052 which means, ‘*house of ease, place of quiet*’

2 – Ta’anak - תַּעֲנָק - Strong’s H8590 which means, ‘*sandy*’

3 – Dor - דּוֹר - Strong’s H1756 which means, ‘*generation*’

4 – Yible’am - יְבִלְעָם - Strong’s H2991 which means, ‘*devouring the people*’

5 – Megiddo - מְגִדּוֹ - Strong’s H4023 which means, ‘*place of crowds*’

I find a very powerful picture here that reflects the sad reality of so many today. Recognising the true redemption that has been purchased for us by the Blood of Messiah and how he has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light in order to walk in Him and walk according to His Torah which lights our path and how He has caused us to forget our toil as He remembers our sin no more, should cause us to remember His Torah and stand firm on the Rock of our Salvation. Sadly many today have done the opposite – through compromise they conveniently forget that they have a Kingdom standard to live by, excusing it away as being of no effect anymore, and in so doing do not destroy the inherited lies of a counterfeit message that has led to the formation of a house of ease that is built on sandy foundations that has caused many generations to be devoured in the place of crowds as they gather in vain through a compromised man-made system of false worship that has neglected the very Torah and Kingdom standards of the True Creator and King!

יהושע tells us: “DO NOT THINK that He came to destroy the Torah and the Prophets” ... but rather that he came to fully meet its requirements and reveal to us through His life, death and resurrection how we are to walk as He walked, and so fully meet the requirements contained therein as we hear, guard and do all He commands! Sadly so many stop at “DO NOT THINK” and in the process are ‘caused by their lawlessness to forget’ to obey the Torah and end up living in a ‘house of ease’ that has no firm foundation that calls huge crowds together and in the process allows the enemy to devour the masses through inherited lies!

**Ephrayim** did not drive out the Kena’anites in Gezer. **Kena’anites** – כְּנַעֲנִי **Kena’ani** – Strong’s H3669 – and from its root can mean, ‘*zealous, lowlands people, brought down, defeated or made low*’. It represents for us a resorting to a low life in respect to addictions and perversions and exaggerations. Sedom and Amarah are portrayed as Kena’anite cities and we know all the low life stuff that went on there! This also pictures for us the battle against depression and anxiety and hopelessness. Are you struggling with anxiety and have little hope? Destroy it with faith in the One who knows what you need and do not worry – throw off anxiety and keep your eyes fixed on the Blessed hope we have in Messiah! They also represent those who seek to gain something for themselves by means of being people pleasers. They are people pleasers and will resort to very low and degrading means in order to do that. Herod’s daughter ‘danced’ here way to receiving what she wanted in getting Yohanan the immerser head cut off, by pleasing the fleshly sense of Herod. She ‘prostituted herself to get her way and this is what this spirit will do – cause you to resort to low life actions in order to get what you want as well as to please others as you do not want to feel out! We are to please Elohim by bearing the fruit of righteousness and not be man-pleasers bearing false fruits of compromise!

**Zebulun** did not drive out the inhabitants of Qitron and Nahalol:

1 – Qitron - קִטְרוֹן - Strong’s H7003 means, ‘*incense, great burning of incense or great smoke*’

2 – Nahalol - נַהֲלֹל - Strong’s H5096 means, ‘*pasture or watering station where one could rest*’

Who would want to put to death a place that was very hospitable and provided a refreshing stop and the sweet smelling fragrance of a well-crafted compound burned lured in weary travellers? Zebulun means 'exalted' and here is the test – they did not destroy the seemingly harmless aroma of the enemy and this pictures for us the falling prey to the false worship that is offered up to Elohim in vain through the man-made concoctions of an incense that is not worthy to be offered up on the altar of incense before יהוה, no matter how refreshing and soothing it may appear – if it does not line up with the Torah it is not true and pure worship!

This pictures the trap of the enemy that calls people into a false rest that assumes that obedience to the Torah is no longer necessary and their prayers are not heard!

**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 28:9** **“He who turns away his ear from hearing the Torah, even his prayer is an abomination.”**

**Tehillim/Psalm 50:16-17** **“But to the wrong Elohim said, “What right have you to recite My laws, or take My covenant in your mouth, 17 while you hated instruction and cast My Words behind you?”**

To truly exalt the Name of Elohim, we are to hear, guard and do His Torah – then our prayers are true and pure incense – any other prayers that are offered from the basis of a neglect for His Torah and His Covenant is false and abominable to His ears!!!

**Ashĕr** which means 'blessed one' and here we see that he they did not drive out the inhabitants of 7 places and what we recognise from this is that from the seeds of paganism that were allowed to stay here became the region that produced Izebel!

1 - עֶכּוֹ - Akko – Strong's H5910 means, **'his hemming in'**

2 - צִידוֹן - Tsidon – Strong's H6721 means, **'hunting as in hunting fish'**

3 - אֶחְלָב - Ahlab – Strong's H303 means, **'I will be fertile, fertile place'**

4 - אֶכְזִיב - Akzib – Strong's H392 means, **'I will deceive'**

5 - הַלְבָּהּ - Helbah – Strong's H2462 means, **'choicest part, fertile'**

6 - אֶפְקֵ - Apeh – Strong's H663 means, **'self-restraint'**

7 - רְחֹב - Rehob – Strong's H7340 means, **'wide-open or broad place'**

We must guard ourselves from that which tries to hem us in and hunt us as fish through deception and cause us to lose self-control in the wide open spaces of deception! The way of the blessed is narrow and few find it!!!

**Naphtali** which means, 'wrestling' did not drive out Bēyth Shemesh - בֵּית שֶׁמֶשׁ - Strong's H1053 which means, **'house of the sun, sun-temple'** and Bēyth Anath - בֵּית אֲנַת - Strong's H1043 which means, **'house of affliction, house of response, temple of Anath'**. Today so many are 'wrestling' with the reality of recognising the inherited lies and sadly most will be content to compromise and wrestle with the call to come out of sun-worship as they are unable to drive out deep rooted lies and traditions!

**Dan**, which means 'judge' was pressed by the Amorites and driven to the mountains and as a result we see that the Amorites had a recorded border in Scripture within the territory of Yisra'el – something that should not have been so if the Dan had done what was required! **Amorites** – אֱמֹרִי - Emori – Strong's H567 - meaning **'cave dwellers'** and comes from the word אָמַר - amar – Strong's H559 which means, **'utter, say, speak'** and can represent for us as meaning **"boasters"**. The Amorites, or Emori, were the biggest and strongest people in Kena'an. They were the 'mountain people' which speaks of the heights and give a picture of the tall ones or renowned ones – people who love self-exaltation. They are the prominent speakers or rather the **'big mouths'** and **'know it all's'**. They desire knowledge just to be superior to others and we know that 'just' knowledge without true application simply puffs up and pride becomes the result. Isn't pride the strongest of strongholds within each of us? Love builds up and love for Elohim is to guard to do all He commands – so love in action that builds is the correct application of knowledge. Watch out for the 'smooth talkers' and the big talkers! Amorites is a picture also of those who are arrogant and boastful in their speech, which always challenge everyone and want the last say and simply speaks of a form of rebellion.

How is your speech? Do you always want to be right, because you think you know it all? Kill any pride that may set in, quickly before it takes root!

What is very interesting to note from the accounts here in **Shophetim/Judges 1** is that there is no mention of the tribe of Yissasakar! Now while we may speculate on various reasons, what is certain here is that they were not mentioned as being unable to drive out the inhabitants of the land in their allotment, which can presuppose that they actually did what was required! Having said this we must recognise that in Messiah we have the ability to do all that has been commanded us as we fervently stand firm in Him and fight the good fight! In the song that Deborah and Baraq sang we see in **Shophetim/Judges 5:15** the mentioning of the princes of Yissasakar being with Deborah and we also have an account of one of the judges of Yisra'el, Tola, who was a man of Yissasakar (**chapter 10:1**).

In this chapter 1 which clearly makes mention of the nations that were not driven out and the effects of this as seen in chapter 2 shows us that by making no mention of Yissasakar makes it seemingly clear that they did what was required of them as commanded in the Torah of Elohim!

7 ½ tribes did not do what they should have done and as a result they ended up bowing to Ba'al and provoked יהוה as they soon lost their fervent fighting faith by resorting to a compromised contentment; and we must learn from these accounts. What compromises are there in your life that you have come to be content in having as a part of your life because to destroy them would cost you more than you are willing to pay? As we consider the lasting effects that Yisra'el's compromise to not drive out the enemy had for generations to come, may we recognise our need to drive out all from of sin and compromise from our lives, without fearing the outcome but trusting in and relying on the Mighty Creator, Redeemer and King who has bought us at a price and serve and follow Him with our all!

Will you stand up and get dressed in the Torah of Elohim, clothed in Messiah our King and fight the good fight of faith?

**FERVENT FIGHTING FAITH OR COMPROMISED CONTENTMENT** is the choice and the answer is obvious – be done with compromise and be ignited with fervency for our Coming Messiah King!

Shalom!