

Sometimes God sovereignly leads us to bitter waters



*4You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; 5and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him; 6For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives." Hebrews 12:4-6*

## **Bitter Waters**

Are you surprised by the challenges in this season? As is often consistent with this 50-day season of counting the omer, God brings a number of things to the surface through challenges in our lives (both internal and external). Did you know that after the initial Passover that Israel was tested significantly during this fifty days? A couple of the more notable tests were a delay of food (Exodus 16) and water two times (Exodus 15:22-26 & 17:1-7)--these vital resources are obviously needed for their survival and God never rebuked them for coming to Him through Moses with these needs.

One of the answers to Israel's lack of water (for three days!) was bitter water (Exodus 15:22-26). Jamie Buckingham, in His book entitled, "A Way Through the Wilderness" points out some interesting observations.

*He writes that the water of Marah was filled with magnesium, which is a powerful laxative that would have expelled mostly amoeba, parasites and death-dealing germs the people would have brought with them out of Egypt. Magnesium also forms the basis of a drug called 'dolomite', which is basically used in extremely hot weather to control heart fibrillation and muscle spasms. God had provided the right medicine to purge their systems and prepare their bodies for the long, arduous journey through the desert.*

*The Israelites' first stop in the wilderness was not a place of despair, but a place where God had provided medicinal water. They drank the water and then came to Elim where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees; a restful place with plenty of fresh water where they set up camp. We all visit the bitter waters, but again and again, it is a means of God's blessing in which He works to bring us to our own 'Elims', where we find rest in the full sufficiency and provision of Christ.*

In this season, are you facing some bitter waters? Something that YHWH has brought you to that is not pleasant but you believe is something ultimately good for you? Don't lose heart dear saint. God has not forgotten you and is working for your good. Keep seeking Him; continue repenting of sins He brings to the surface; continue to release others and walk in forgiveness towards all around you; and finally don't yield to the temptation to compare yourself with others around us. He is working for your good so keep the faith!

In closing, may we actively pray for and encourage each other as we continue on through the challenges towards the joy and blessing of Shavuot.