

The Obedience of Phinehas

The Obedience of Phinehas – Numbers 25:1-18

For Your Admonition #22

This study reviews the exploits of a man of God named Phinehas, who stood up for Christ and received a blessing for his obedience. We unpack this story and the Scriptures with the intended admonition for those given ears to hear. May we all be like Phinehas and be obedient to the Lord's commandments. Lest we forget the purpose for which the history of flesh Israel was written, may we take heed of the lesson and not fall.

1Co 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

1Co 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Baal Worship at Peor:

Let's set the stage for the lesson by discussing what happened to Israel on their way to the promised land. Peor is a spiritual mountain we all pass by east of the Jordan River on our way to salvation. Remember that the promised land is our overcoming of sin; salvation is found only in Christ Jesus. Baal is a false god, one of many representing the lies and false doctrines (unbelief) that still live and abide inwardly in us. The Lord manifests these false gods to try our faith and, in time, make us faithful.

Num 25:1 And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

Num 25:2 And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.

Num 25:3 And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.

Num 25:4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.

Num 25:5 And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor.

Num 25:6 And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who *were* weeping *before* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Num 25:7 And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw *it*, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand;

Num 25:8 And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.

Num 25:9 And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand.

The Moabites and the Midianites represent carnal thoughts, doctrines, and reasoning that are contrary to our faith. We

won't dig into these words and symbols for brevity, but know the Midianites sold Joseph (type for the elect, Christ) into slavery in Egypt [the world], and the Moabites originated from Sodom. Keeping these two nations' mindsets far away from us is important in fighting the fight of faith. So, we can already see what this story is about and how it applies to our walk on the narrow path.

Christian orthodoxy, and all of us in our former blindness, see this story only outwardly as a history lesson. The real lesson and admonition that the Lord's people learn and apply from this is invisible to the world and all of Christian orthodoxy. When the Lord's people, the true Israel of God, mix the truth with carnal reasoning (lies), we have departed from Christ, as there is no lie in the truth. The result is the manifestation of death within our heaven and earth. The mingling with the Midianites and Moabites causes a plague of death to fall upon the Israel of God because:

Rom 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death ... [believing lies, false doctrines, and reasoning that are contrary to faith]

The Lineage of Phinehas

The Phinehas we are studying is the son of Eleazar, whose name means God's helper. Phinehas is the grandson of Aaron, who was the first high priest of Israel. Aaron and his sons and descendants are types for the Elect of God in the shadows of the Old Testament.

Exo 6:25 And Eleazar, Aaron's son, took him one of the daughters of Putiel to wife; and she bare him Phinehas: these are the heads of the fathers of the Levites according to their families.

The Lord's purpose is to use the election, the sons of Aaron in type, and in this case, Phinehas, to minister to the flock and bring Israel out of the world and into the promised land. Phinehas, like his grandfather Aaron, became a priest, a leader of the army, and a godly example in the assembly.

The name Phinehas conceals the Lord's purpose for His chosen ones. According to Strong's dictionary, Phinehas means "mouth of a serpent," and according to Brown's Bible Dictionary, it means "mouth of brass". This links Phinehas to the symbolism of holding up a serpent of brass to be delivered from the plague of serpents, which represents lies, carnal thoughts, and spiritual death. The plague of the serpents is only stopped when we lift up Christ, His Word, meaning His commandments, and look to Him. Doing so brings eternal life and stays the plague of Satan and his many serpents (carnal lies).

Num 21:8 And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

This Old Testament event is a shadow of Christ's coming, who later connects this incident with His death and our death on the tree [cross]. When the Lord's commandments, the Word, that is Jesus Christ, is lifted up and we look to that Word, then we are being saved from abiding in spiritual death.

Joh 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

Joh 3:15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

The Lord is jealous of His people, demanding all of our hearts and attention. When we join ourselves to these false gods of Moab/Midian (carnal thoughts and doctrines), it kindles His anger [chastening grace] against Israel.

Exo 34:14 For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:

Exo 34:15 Lest thou make a covenant [of death] with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice;

The wages of our worshipping other gods is spiritual death, and the Lord begins the process of turning our hearts back to Him when we are straying. Judges are called to action to remedy the worship and the joining of Israel to Baal.

Num 25:3 And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel.

Num 25:4 And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel.

Num 25:5 And Moses said unto **the judges of Israel**, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor.

We are commanded to take all thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ. This commandment is said here in Numbers using spiritual language. Hanging the heads [mindset, thoughts] of these enemy nations, against the fiery sun (Son) that represents the Word, is taking carnal thoughts captive. Here in the shadow of Christ's commands, Moses commanded the judges of Israel to slay all that were joined to the false god of Baalpeor. The elect of God is

already in down payment form, judging the tribes of Spiritual Israel within ourselves and also in our assemblies and the world [without].

Mat 19:28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

The battles we fight and the judgment we execute are first and foremost in our inward heavens. Bringing all things into submission to Christ is how salvation works its way from the inside of our cup to the outside.

Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heaven

Judging righteous judgment is the call of all the Lord's ministers, priests, and disciples. We engage in this fight, or we are easily overcome by the millions of Moabite and Midianite thoughts that exalt themselves against the truth.

2Co 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

2Co 10:4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

*2Co 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity **every thought** to the obedience of Christ;*

2Co 10:6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

Phinehas is an example of faith in action, one who was ready to avenge the disobedience in the congregation. Upon seeing the whoredom with Baal in the congregation and the open harlotry with the Midianite woman, Phinehas arose and acted swiftly.

Num 25:6 And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping before the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Num 25:7 And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from among the congregation, and took a javelin in his hand;

Num 25:8 And he went after the man of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.

We examine our walk and are always to guard our gates, the entryway into our minds. This requires an active watch to be set up on the walls to protect what comes into the city of God.

Eze 3:17 Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

Here is a New Testament commandment regarding this call to vigilance to destroy all the lies and whoredom (carnal thoughts and lies) that enter into the house of God.

2Ti 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

2Ti 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

2Ti 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. [carnal lies, worship of Baal, false gods, etc]

The carnal reasoning of the Midianites and Moabites, if left unchecked and allowed to fester, is leading God's people away from sound doctrine and off the narrow path of eternal life. These errors, when spotted, are to be dealt with swiftly using the truth, which is the javelin that pierces through the lies.

Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

It is important to note that the slaying of the enemies of Israel is what we are doing in Spirit or inwardly. Outwardly, we are to love our enemies and never engage in physical violence, much less kill another person. When we see an error in the congregation, we speak the Word in truth in all sincerity with meekness and gentleness. The Word does the correcting, not our flesh.

2Ti 2:24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

2Ti 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

2Ti 2:26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

The Lord's Word accomplishes all He intended in the appointed time. Along the way, we lose brethren who, when confronted with the truth, part ways with the little flock that is always being winnowed.

1Jn 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

1Jn 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

Phinehas stood in the gap for the assembly, gave of himself, and saved the day. For his obedience, he was recognized and blessed by the Lord.

Num 25:10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Num 25:11 Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.

Num 25:12 Wherefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace:

Num 25:13 And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel.

The story of Phinehas is a big deal and one we are not forgetting because our faith and expressed zeal for the Lord is going to be tested. It is far easier to keep silent and avoid controversy with others, versus making a stand for Christ and confronting those who have strayed. When we see this in ourselves and in others, we are to act swiftly, show no pity, and destroy the lies and the worship of devils from our lives.

1Co 10:20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

1Co 10:21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

1Co 10:22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

Phinehas proved to be a mighty warrior for the Lord in Israel's time of need. Phinehas was memorialized for his actions in Psalm 106, and his actions were cited as executing judgment.

Psa 106:30 Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and so the plague was stayed.

Psa 106:31 And that was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

Standing up for Christ and His commandments is exercising judgment. We are judging the household of God now, within and without, as we are being prepared for a broader role to judge the entire world, via Christ's Word, in the age to come.

1Co 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

We also learn that the people killed by Phinehas were both “chiefs” among their people, meaning they were big lies that take us away from Christ, who is the truth. Exercising judgment requires us to stand against the chief ones in our congregation, including Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees.

Num 25:14 Now the name of the Israelite that was slain, even that was slain with the Midianitish woman, was Zimri, the son of Salu, a prince of a chief house among the Simeonites.

Num 25:15 And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain was Cozbi, the daughter of Zur; he was head over a people, and of a chief house in Midian

The Midianite woman was the daughter of Zur, one of the five princes of Midian who were later smitten and killed, as detailed in Numbers. According to BBD, the name Zur means rock. There is the rock that is Christ, but there are also fake rocks, otherwise known as false gods, lies, carnal reasoning, and even “another Jesus”. There is only one Truth and one Lord who is the Rock. The fake gods and rocks lead one back into bondage to sin.

Deu 32:31 For their rock is not like our Rock, Even our enemies themselves being judges.

Deu 32:32 For their vine is of the vine of Sodom And of the fields of Gomorrah; Their grapes are grapes of gall, Their clusters are bitter.

Deu 32:33 Their wine is the poison of serpents, And the cruel venom of cobras.

There is more to unpack and reveal in these stories if one takes the time to dig for the hidden jewels.

Pro 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter

These Old Testament stories depict experiences we spiritually fulfill as part of the living Body of Christ, which is also the Israel of God. We never forget the lessons from our plagues of the past; otherwise, we are destined to repeat them. The incident at Peor is mentioned later in our journey to find the promised land, as it cannot be forgotten.

Jos 22:17 Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD,

Jos 22:18 But that ye must turn away this day from following the LORD? and it will be, seeing ye rebel to day against the LORD, that to morrow he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel.

After Phinehas executed judgment in the house of God, the Lord spoke to Moses and gave additional commandments. Israel was commanded to go smite all the Midianites that continued to vex and deceive (beguile) Israel. So, it is to this day that we are to do likewise.

Num 25:16 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Num 25:17 Vex the Midianites, and smite them:

Num 25:18 For they vex you with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake.

The flesh (the Midianites and Moabites in us all) lusts against the Spirit and always leads us to think and do things contrary to faith and the Lord's commandments. We are always prepared for battle and ready to execute judgment, as in the example of Phinehas.

As the Lord's people, we are invited to His wedding feast. These carnal nations and thoughts within us delay our coming. Yet a day comes when the King of Kings sends forth His armies (you and me with the Word) and destroys these inward nations that hate the ways of Christ.

Mat 22:7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

In the day of the Lord, Christ is victorious, as greater is He that lives within us than the carnal nations that define this world.

Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

The story of Phinehas teaches us that without the obedient actions of the elect to be shepherds of the sheep and execute judgment in the house of God, a plague of spiritual death arises from false doctrines and carnal thinking. Ongoing vigilance is always required in the household of God.

Living By Every Word:

The kingdom of God is within us, and that is where the feats of Phinehas play out almost daily in our lives as the people of God. The Lord is trying our faith [gold tried in the

fire] and creates opportunities within ourselves and without, to try us and to see if we keep His commandments or not. Maturity comes through having our senses exercised.

Heb 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

These prophecies can apply outwardly in our lives and the fellowship, and that is an experience we had a few years ago. We share that story for the learning and edification of the Body.

Some questions arose regarding physical marriage and on what grounds one could divorce their husband. The commands of Christ were mixed with carnal reasoning to beguile some brethren into thinking they could divorce a spouse and justify it by claiming they could bear greater fruit for God as a result. This was a complete lie and came about from a twisting of the Scriptures and an inability to see **the simple truth** in the Lord's commands.

Mat 19:6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

The truth, the commandments of the Lord, and our corrections were not widely received, although some did initially receive them. We were inspired to reason with those in the camp and even wrote a paper [[The Very High Calling of Marriage](#)] on the topic. Our standing for Christ and teaching His commandments thrust a sword into the bellies of the Midianites within, and those who had been deceived by the carnal rationalizations justifying divorce. Those who believed the Midianite lies regarding the marriage commands were struck with the plague of death, and their gatherings

soon fell apart. When Christ, His Word, or commandments, are killed in their heart, the flock of God is scattered. Only a third part makes it through this spiritual fire and calls on the name of the Lord, which is the Gospel of Christ. It is a narrow way that is always getting narrower.

Zec 13:7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

Zec 13:8 And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.

Zec 13:9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

Some who saw the truth later fell away for fear of being kicked out of the fellowship, which is also a prophecy being fulfilled in their lives. The same people who had raised us [our spiritual parents], from whom we were first given our spiritual eyesight, betrayed us for fear of men.

Joh 9:22 These words spake his parents [of the blind man that was healed], because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

In time, some mighty in the faith had completely fallen away into the plagues of the Moabites and Midianites. We boast in none of this, as our only boast is in the Lord. Our house has been blessed despite many hard trials since then,

to know we have an everlasting covenant of peace for standing up and executing judgment in the house of the Lord.

2Co 10:17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

Phinehas was not a one-and-done executor of judgment for Israel, and neither are we. Lord willing, we are continuing to stand and fight the Midianites and, like the armies of ancient Israel, are slaying all five of their chief princes as Israel did in Numbers 31. Our battle against the flesh and carnal mind is “always on,” as the Scriptures attest.