Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi **(Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)**

Numbers 21: 13-20

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank God, it's time to read the Bible again. We continue to read Numbers chapter 21. Today we will read verses 13-20.

The Israelites set out from Mount Hor and had to go around the land of Edom, because God had already given the land of Seir to the descendants of Esau, the Edomites. Therefore, the Israelites had to travel south first and then turn northeast, adding a great deal of distance to their journey. The mountain roads were also rugged and difficult to travel. The Israelites of the older generation who had not yet died began to take the lead in complaining. God then loosened His protecting hand, and fiery serpents entered among the people. These serpents were highly venomous, and many Israelites were bitten and died. I believe that most of those who were bitten and died were from the older generation, while many more Israelites were bitten but survived. The new generation of Israelites then came to Moses, confessed their sin, and asked Moses to pray for the people. God told Moses to make a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. Whoever had been bitten by a serpent, when he looked at the bronze serpent, would live. Moses did exactly as God commanded, and those Israelites who had been bitten by the serpents were saved.

In the New Testament, God Himself told Nicodemus that He was the One who was lifted up on the pole like the bronze serpent. He personally bore God's judgment, taking the place of the guilty as the One who was without sin. Everyone who believes in Him will receive eternal life. After this, the Israelites continued their journey. They camped at Oboth and then at Ije Abarim, and eventually came to the area on the border between Edom and Moab. At that time, the lands of Edom and Moab were separated by the Zered Brook. The Israelites then camped in the Valley of Zered. Moses tells us in Deuteronomy 2:14 that from the time they first left Kadesh and began wandering in the wilderness until they camped in the Valley of

Zered, a full thirty-eight years had passed. By this time, all the Israelites of the older generation who had been counted in the census had died, except Joshua and Caleb.

Verse 13: "From there they moved and camped on the other side of the Arnon, which is in the wilderness that extends from the border of the Amorites; for the Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites."

The Arnon River is about forty kilometers north of the Zered Brook. Like the Zered Brook, it flows from east to west and empties into the Dead Sea. The area enclosed by the Arnon River, the Zered Brook, and the Dead Sea was where the Moabites lived. The origin of the Moabites is recorded in Genesis 19:36–38. After Lot fled from Sodom, he lived in a cave. He committed incest with his older daughter, and she bore him a son, who became the ancestor of the Moabites. He also committed incest with his younger daughter, who likewise bore him a son, who became the ancestor of the Ammonites. The Moabites and Ammonites therefore became descendants of Lot. They lived on the plains east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River. This was the area where Lot had chosen to live when he separated from Abraham.

The origin of the Amorites is recorded in Genesis 10:15–18. They were descendants of Canaan, who was a descendant of Ham. Canaan had many sons, most of whom became inhabitants of the land of Canaan, and among them were the Amorites. In the time of Abraham, Abraham had once made an alliance with the Amorites and went with them to rescue Lot after he had been taken captive. In Genesis 15:16, God foretold to Abraham that his descendants would dwell in another land and be afflicted for four hundred years. After that, they would return to the land of Canaan. The reason was that "the iniquity of the Amorites" was not yet complete. Here, God used the Amorites to represent all the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. God was prophesying that by the time of Moses, the Amorites would become one of the most powerful peoples in the land of Canaan, and that they would become exceedingly wicked, with their iniquity reaching its full measure.

In the time of Moses, there were seven peoples living in the land of Canaan. The Amorites originally lived west of the Dead Sea, but they later expanded their territory to the east of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. Sihon, king of the Amorites, had taken the land belonging to the Moabites and Ammonites. He occupied the territory east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan River, north of the Arnon River, extending as far as the Jabbok River. The Jabbok River is about one hundred kilometers north of the Arnon River. It is a tributary of the Jordan River. Jacob once wrestled with God at the ford of the Jabbok River.

Another Amorite king, Og, had taken the land of the Ammonites and occupied the region east of the Jordan River and north of the Jabbok River, known as Bashan. Moses led the congregation of Israel from the Valley of Zered and camped at the Arnon River. From there, they came to the border between the land of the Moabites and the Amorites. The Moabites and Ammonites were descendants of Lot. In Deuteronomy 2:9 and 19, God instructed Moses not to harass or distress the Moabites and Ammonites because they were descendants of Lot. Therefore, Moses led the congregation of Israel along the eastern side of the land of Moab.

Verse 14-15: "Therefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the Lord: 'Waheb in Suphah, The brooks of the Arnon, And the slope of the brooks That reaches to the dwelling of Ar, And lies on the border of Moab.'"

The Book of the Wars of the LORD should have been a song of victory praising God for leading the Israelites in battle. It was later lost. Wahab was probably a place name, but its location can no longer be determined. The word Suphah originally means "sea," perhaps referring to the Dead Sea. Wahab may have been the name of a place near the Dead Sea. The Arnon River was the boundary between the Moabites and the Amorites. Ar was the capital of Moab at that time, located along the Arnon River. These two verses were probably intended to describe the location and boundaries of the land of Moab.

Verse 16: "From there they went to Beer, which is the well where the Lord said to Moses, 'Gather the people together, and I will give them water.'"

The Israelites set out from the Arnon River and continued northward. They came to a place called Beer. The word Beer means "well." More than two million Israelites had been sustained by God throughout their years in the wilderness. Every day, God sent down manna as their food. When they arrived at this place called Beer, God would provide water for them from a well. God commanded Moses to gather the people together and bring them to the well.

Verse 17-18: "Then Israel sang this song: 'Spring up, O well! All of you sing to it. The well the leaders sank, Dug by the nation's nobles, By the lawgiver, with their staves.' And from the wilderness they went to Mattanah."

These two verses describe the scene of the Israelites receiving water from the well. When the older generation of Israelites had no water to drink, all they could do was complain and blame Moses, asking why he had brought them out of Egypt. The new generation of Israelites, however, had been cultivated and built up in faith. When they heard Moses gathering them together at the well, they opened their mouths in praise and sang: "Spring up, O well!" The people of Israel gathered around the well and sang. Although they had not yet drunk any water, they knew that since this was God's command, it would certainly be accomplished. So they first sang praises and commanded: "Spring up, O well!"

As the people began to praise, the leaders and nobles among them began to dig with the rods and staffs in their hands. The rod was a symbol of the authority of the leaders, while the staff was a means by which the nobles provided guidance. Among the older generation of Israelites, the leaders and nobles were often the ones who took the lead in rebelling against God and opposing Moses. But among the new generation of Israelites, the leaders and nobles took the lead in digging the well. They used their authority to lead the Israelites to dig the well together. The leaders and nobles were no longer standing high above everyone else and merely directing others. Instead, they took the lead in doing the work themselves and

serving. The Israelites then worked together under their leadership. With songs of praise still on their lips, everyone worked together in one accord, following God's command. They dug the well together, enjoyed the provision of living water together, and lifted up their voices together in praise to God. What a joyful and harmonious picture this was!

Dear brothers and sisters, the church today is the same. Jesus Christ is the source of living water for the church. In John 4:14, Jesus said: "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." Every believer has a well of living water within. As long as our hearts are not blocked by the money, power, and reputation of the world, the well of living water can spring up and quench the thirst of many people.

Therefore, every time we gather on the Lord's Day, we should also sing to the well within us, just as the Israelites did: "Spring up, O well!" If the well of living water in every saint's heart in the church can spring up with living water and supply one another—one person singing hymns, another praying, and everyone singing and making melody with their hearts, giving glory to God—this will be the most beautiful and highest worship that the church can offer to God. The Israelites traveled from the wilderness to Mattanah. They crossed the Arnon River and continued northward, entering the territory of the Amorites. The name Mattanah means "the gift of Jehovah." They enjoyed the living water that sprang up from the well. This living water was the gift of Jehovah, helping them journey through the wilderness until they arrived at Mattanah.

Verse 19: " From Mattanah to Nahaliel, from Nahaliel to Bamoth"

From Mattanah they went to Nahaliel. The name Nahaliel means "torrents of God," the torrents of God. As the Israelites followed God's way, their path became wider and wider. From the living water springing up from the well, they came to the torrents of God. This speaks of God's overflowing and abundant grace, becoming waters deep enough to swim in and flowing along with the Israelites as they moved

forward. Then from Nahaliel they went to Bamoth. The name Bamoth means "a great high place." The torrents of God's grace brought them to God's great high place.

When we look back at the thirty-eight years of wandering in the past, they could hardly make any progress. They wandered around in the wilderness, going in circles, without direction and without a goal. But once the older generation of Israelites had all died and the new generation of Israelites began to follow God in faith, the future truly became bright before them. As they moved forward, they went from strength to strength, and God's provision became increasingly abundant. The living water sprang up from the well, then God's grace overflowed like a mighty stream, and that stream carried the Israelites to the high place. It turns out that following God's way is so much easier than we think. We only need to put off the old man and follow God through faith. Then our new man can rise higher and higher step by step, until we reach the high place that God has prepared for us.

Verse 20: "And from Bamoth, in the valley that is in the country of Moab, to the top of Pisgah which looks down on the wasteland."

From Bamoth, the high place, they went down into the valley of the land of Moab and then went up to the summit of Pisgah. As the people followed God in their hearts, whether they were in a low valley or on a high mountain, they had God's leading, and there was also God's good purpose. Pisgah was one of the peaks of Mount Nebo. It was located east of the place where the Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea. Therefore, when they stood on the summit of Pisgah, they could look south toward the land of Moab, northeast toward the plains east of the Jordan River, and west toward the good land of Canaan.

Before Moses died, because he was not permitted to enter the land of Canaan, God brought Moses up to the summit of Pisgah so that he could look out over the good land of Canaan. God told Moses that this was the land He had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, his forefathers. The new generation of Israelites followed God's leading in faith, and they soon arrived at the summit of Pisgah. The name Pisgah

means “cleft.” In typology, this refers to the cleft of the rock. Christ is the everlasting Rock. Moses struck the rock, and a cleft was produced. This typifies Jesus receiving the judgment of the Law on the cross. His body was broken, and blood and water flowed out, in order to redeem us who were under the Law. Therefore, the cleft of the rock is the safest place for us to hide.

Let us pray together: Lord, thank You. We see that the new generation of Israelites followed God’s leading in faith. They worked together in one accord to dig the well and receive living water. Their path became wider and wider, and their future became brighter and brighter. Very quickly, as they followed Moses, they arrived at the summit of Pisgah. Lord, thank You for reminding us that in the New Testament age, our burden is light and our yoke is easy. As long as we are willing to lay down our own choices and completely follow the leading of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord has promised that whoever believes in Him will have living water springing up from within. This living water will gather together and become a river, carrying us to the high place, carrying us to the summit of Pisgah. Bless the church where You have placed me. May every Sunday worship gathering experience the flowing of living water, and may we also experience the mighty protection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us rest safely in the cleft of the Rock. Continue to lead the church where You have placed me. We pray in the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!