

16: ¹ Therefore by the like were they punished worthily, and by the multitude of beasts tormented. ² Instead of which punishment, dealing graciously with thine own people, thou preparedst for them meat of a strange taste, even quails to stir up their appetite: ³ to the end that they, desiring food, might for the ugly sight of the beasts sent among them lothe even that, which they must needs desire; but these, suffering penury for a short space, might be made partakers of a strange taste. ⁴ For it was requisite, that upon them exercising tyranny should come penury, which they could not avoid: but to these it should only be shewed how their enemies were tormented. ⁵ For when the horrible fierceness of beasts came upon these, and they perished with the stings of crooked serpents, thy wrath endured not for ever:

The same created forces that smite the ungodly are then re-ordered to sustain the covenant people.

Those who persist in ungodliness receive like-for-like judgments; Israel receives warnings and course-corrections instead of annihilation.

There's what's called elemental reversal - same world, different outcomes.

Meaning יהוה can take the same creature/element and make it curse for the wicked yet benefit for the righteous.

In the Torah for example:

- Water as judgment (Nile to blood, Ex 7) and water as life (Ex 17; Num 20).
- Quail as indulgence/judgment (Num 11:31–34) whereas manna as faithful provision (Ex 16).
- Hail/fire that devastates Egypt (Ex 9) but spares Goshen.

Torah base:

- Num 21:4–9 (bronze serpent): the sign mediates יהוה healing; later, when it's idolized, Hezekiah destroys it (2 Kgs 18:4).
- And later in John 3:14–16—as Moshe lifted the serpent, so the Son of Man must be lifted up.

In the Solomonic texts it's all about measure, number, weight because Wisdom orders creation precisely; Solomon insists on right order (times, names, consecrations) because power is יהוה implements becoming channels never actual sources like the heathen.

- In Exodus 7–12 (Plagues) we see nature punishes empire, yet spares covenant people.
- In Exodus 16 / Numbers 11 - Manna & Quail - we see provision vs. punishment through food itself.
- In Numbers 21:4–9 Serpents - healing by obedient gaze - not by metallurgical magic—which totally anticipates John 3.
- John 3:14–16 typology of the lifted sign - the Cross, meaning it's relational faith, not artifact faith.
- 1 Cor 10:1–13 Paul reads the Exodus account to the worldly Corinthians to teach them you can have the same elements, but have two outcomes (it's a warning for us).
- In 16:3–4 Creation is not neutral –it becomes either a scalpel or a sword in the hand of Elohim.
- Then in 16:5 Signs don't save; יהוה saves—through signs rightly received.

Same street, different outcome. Why? Alignment (Measure-for-measure cuts both ways.)

Discipline now is mercy later. (Heb 12—take the correction; skip the collapse.)

vv. 5–7 will immediately flow into the serpent scene from Numbers 21.

We're going to see Word over weapon: healing by the true source:

⁶ But they were troubled for a small season, that they might be admonished, having a sign of salvation, to put them in remembrance of the commandment of thy law. ⁷ For he that turned himself toward it was not saved by the thing that he saw, but by thee, that art the Saviour of all. ⁸ And in this thou madest thine enemies confess, that it is thou who deliverest from all evil: ⁹ for them the bitings of grasshoppers and flies killed, neither was there found any remedy for their life: for they were worthy to be punished by such. ¹⁰ But thy sons not the very teeth of venomous dragons overcame: for thy mercy was by them, and healed them. ¹¹ For they were pricked, that they should remember thy words; and were quickly saved, that not falling into deep forgetfulness, they might be continually mindful of thy goodness.

Wisdom of Solomon 16:6–12 looks back on two intertwined wilderness events:

1. The venomous serpents sent among Israel (Numbers 21:4–9).
 2. The bronze serpent raised by Moshe as a sign of deliverance – healing came not from the object, but from יהוה Himself.
- In Numbers 21:4–9 The fiery serpents in the wilderness: Israel's sin leads to serpents, but the bronze serpent becomes a signpost of repentance and faith.
 - In Exodus 16 & Numbers 11 The quail and manna episodes: יהוה provides food in miraculous and unexpected ways, but also uses it to test the heart posture of His people.
 - In Deuteronomy 8:2–3 – Man shall not live by bread alone... – physical provision is secondary to the sustaining power of יהוה's Word.

- John 3:14 Yahusha links His own crucifixion to the bronze serpent, declaring that faith in Him brings eternal life.
- In James 5:15 The prayer of faith will save the sick – pointing again to the divine Word, not ritual objects, as the source of healing.
- Then in Hebrews 12:5–11 Elohim’s chastening is always restorative, producing righteousness.

So the takeaway: just as healing in Numbers 21 came not from the bronze serpent itself but from YHWH, the cross is not mere wood – it’s the redemptive act of יהוה in Messiah.

The Word is not just speech but an active, healing agent.

Torah + Spirit = healing; medicines and doctors are secondary channels, never true primary sources.

In a world of distractions we need to keep the main thing the main thing. If we get distracted by tools, symbols, or temporary props, we lose control of the outcome.

¹² For it was neither herb, nor mollifying plaister, that restored them to health: but thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things. ¹³ For thou hast power of life and death: thou ledest to the gates of hell, and bringest up again. ¹⁴ A man indeed killeth through his malice: and the spirit, when it is gone forth, returneth not; neither the soul received up cometh again. ¹⁵ But it is not possible to escape thine hand. ¹⁶ For the ungodly, that denied to know thee, were scourged by the strength of thine arm: with strange rains, hails, and showers, were they persecuted, that they could not avoid, and through fire were they consumed. ¹⁷ For, which is most to be wondered at, the fire had more force in the water, that quencheth all things: for the world fighteth for the righteous. ¹⁸ For sometime the flame was mitigated, that it might not burn up the beasts that were sent against the ungodly; but themselves might see and perceive that they were persecuted with the judgment

of God. ¹⁹ And at another time it burneth even in the midst of water above the power of fire, that it might destroy the fruits of an unjust land.

The Word that heals, the world that fights for the righteous

- Numbers 21:8–9 The bronze serpent did not heal; YHWH healed those who looked in faith.
- Exodus 15:25–26 At the waters of Marah, healing is tied to the covenant name: I am YHWH your healer - יהוה Ropectha!
- Deuteronomy 8:3 – Sustenance and restoration are from every word that proceeds from the mouth of יהוה.
- Deuteronomy 32:39 *I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal...*
- 1 Samuel 2:6 – Hannah’s song shows us יהוה’s power to bring down to Hell and raise up.
- In Numbers 16 and the rebellion of Korah shows us there’s no escape from the hand of YHWH.

We have elemental judgment in Exodus 9:18–26– Hail mixed with fire during the plagues – that’s a deliberate suspension of natural law!

Then in Exodus 14:21–28 – waters become an agent of deliverance and destruction simultaneously.

This is truly the theology of Sovereignty - divine prerogative over mortal life span.

Because Creation is a judicial agent - the chaotic elements (fire in water, hail with fire) meet out divine justice.

Time for a self inventory: are you leaning on herbs and plaisters (human systems) or the Word that heals all things?

²⁰ Instead whereof thou feddest thine own people with angels' food, and didst send them from heaven bread prepared without their labour, able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste. ²¹ For thy sustenance declared thy sweetness unto thy children, and serving to the appetite of the eater, tempered itself to every man's liking. ²² But snow and ice endured the fire, and melted not, that they might know that fire burning in the hail, and sparkling in the rain, did destroy the fruits of the enemies. ²³ But this again did even forget his own strength, that the righteous might be nourished. ²⁴ For the creature that serveth thee, who art the Maker, increaseth his strength against the unrighteous for their punishment, and abateth his strength for the benefit of such as put their trust in thee. ²⁵ Therefore even then was it altered into all fashions, and was obedient to thy grace, that nourisheth all things, according to the desire of them that had need: ²⁶ that thy children, O Lord, whom thou lovest, might know, that it is not the growing of fruits that nourisheth man: but that it is thy word, which preserveth them that put their trust in thee. ²⁷ For that which was not destroyed of the fire, being warmed with a little sunbeam, soon melted away: ²⁸ that it might be known, that we must prevent the sun to give thee thanks, and at the dayspring pray unto thee. ²⁹ For the hope of the unthankful shall melt away as the winter's hoar frost, and shall run away as unprofitable water.

The people are sustained not by the natural process of agriculture but by supernatural provision – “angels’ food” (manna).

So that means Creation itself is reversible and responsive to יהוה's covenant purposes – fire doesn't melt ice, hail burns, and elements alter their nature for the righteous.

- In Exodus 16:4, 14–15, 31 The bread from heaven provided daily, white like coriander seed, tasting like wafers with honey.

- Psalm 78:24–25 Man ate the bread of angels; He sent them food in abundance.

Provision and discipline— manna was daily, preventing hoarding (Exodus 16:19–20).

We have elements obeying יהוה's purpose (vv. 22–24)

- Exodus 9:23–26 Hail mixed with fire destroyed Egypt's crops but spared Israel's land.
- Joshua 10:11–13 Hailstones and sun standing still – creation fights for covenant purposes.
- Numbers 11:31–32 יהוה alters the wind to bring quail into the camp.
- Psalm 5:3 In the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.
- Lamentations 3:22–23 Mercies are new every morning.

Fire in water, ice enduring heat is a sign of dominion over the natural order.

Wisdom 16 reveals that dominion belongs to יהוה alone and is delegated only under covenant authority.

The true key to life is by alignment with divine Word, then, creation itself *“serves thee... increasing strength against the unrighteous”* (v. 24).

This is nature restored to its true service.

Every appetite finds satisfaction in יהוה's provision when aligned with His will. Creation itself is covenantally reactive.

The ultimate nourishment is *dabar* YHWH – the spoken and sustaining Word. Agricultural cycles, markets, and economies are secondary.

Our greatest strategic asset is relational covenant with יהוה - our source, not just the operational excellence of our skills on any given day.

The manna principle: daily dependence disciplines destiny.

In the wilderness, יהוה taught Israel – and still teaches us – that survival, success, and satisfaction are not the fruit of natural processes alone but of supernatural provision.

Creation will fight for you *or against you* depending on who your Source is. Align with the Word, and even the elements will be on your side.