

Tree of Life Messianic Ministries

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Message 2-21-09
Mishpatim-Judgments
Exodus 21:1-24:18
Jeremiah 34:8-22, 33:25-26
Acts 5:43-47

Introduction

This week's portion sets forth legislation whose aim is justice and fairness in the lives of individuals and in society as a whole.

Exodus 23:1-9

1 "You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. **2** "You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert *justice*. **3** "You shall not show partiality to a poor man in his dispute. **4** "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again. **5** "If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it. **6** "You shall not pervert the judgment of your poor in his dispute. **7** "Keep yourself far from a false matter; do not kill the innocent and righteous. For I will not justify the wicked. **8** "And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the discerning and perverts the words of the righteous. **9** "Also you shall not oppress a stranger, for you know the heart of a stranger, because you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

In verse 9 we see the word stranger being used several times. The Hebrew word used here is *ger* or *gerim* and has been used to define the Children of Israel in Egypt. In fact the Holy One of Israel makes reference to this in this passage. The reason I am pointing this out is because *ger* is

commonly used in the Apostolic Scriptures as a reference for a God-fearer, one who is not Jewish but follows the God of Israel. The Holy One constantly brings up the *ger* in the Torah and guarantees rights and equality to them. They are included in passages of the Torah that cover the poor. We know that the Almighty has a special place in His heart for the widow and orphan and those who are not native born to Israel but who have chosen to become part of Israel.

Rather than being born into Israel through one of the twelve tribes the *ger* has made a conscious decision to join themselves to Israel and its God and His ways.

Leviticus 25:35 `If one of your brethren becomes poor, and falls into poverty among you, then you shall help him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you.

Numbers 35:15 `These six cities shall be for refuge for the children of Israel, for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them, that anyone who kills a person accidentally may flee there.

Job 31:32 (*But no sojourner had to lodge in the street, for I have opened my doors to the traveler*).

Psalms 39:12 "Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear to my cry; do not be silent at my tears; for I *am* a stranger with You, a sojourner, as all my fathers *were*."

In all of these passages we see references to the stranger and sojourner. They are granted the same status as the native born. In some cases they have been commended for a higher sense of faith by no other than the Messiah. When Yeshua spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well He commended her faith as He did the Roman soldier who came to him to ask that He heal his servant. In the Roman's case Yeshua was going to go with him to his home but the soldier told him it was not necessary because he knew that if Yeshua said he was healed he trusted that it would come to pass.

This is the kind of faith we need today. This passage talks about not passing around a false report. We are to avoid joining ourselves to the wicked. We are to avoid crowds who are out to do evil as in the case of Yeshua being condemned to death by the cries of the crowd.

Matthew 27:16 And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. **17** Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, "Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Yeshua who is called Messiah?" **18** For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy. **19** While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him." **20** But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Yeshua.

As we go through the weekly Torah portions we find ourselves reading familiar passages that show us that man denied the Torah of the Holy One. Even before the Torah was given to Israel at Mount Sinai there was a Torah. The Torah of Mount Sinai was a Torah for a nation while the Torah that existed before this was for men that the Holy One chose because He knew their hearts. You might be asking at this point "What the heck is he talking about, a Torah before Mount Sinai?" I would point you to Genesis 26:5 as my answer.

Genesis 26:5 "because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My Torahs."

Most translations translate Torahs as laws but the Hebrew is Torah, which is plural. Remembering that Torah is defined as teachings this would explain the plural form of the word but more importantly we see that the Torah was before Mount Sinai. The Almighty was dealing with individuals prior to Mount Sinai. From Mount Sinai forward He was dealing with a nation that He had called out as His own special people.

Adam had the Torah because the Holy One had instructed him not to eat of the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Cain and Abel knew the Torah because they knew they were to bring the first-fruits or the best of their flocks or crops and make an offering to the Almighty. Noah knew the Torah because he knew the difference between clean and unclean animals and he built an altar after the flood and made an offering to the Holy One of Israel. The list goes on and on but the bottom line or the point I am trying to make here is that the Torah did not just appear at Mount Sinai. It existed before then because the Torah exists when the Almighty speaks to man. Whatever words the Holy One speaks they are teachings coming from our Creator.

The Father used the Son to create everything there is. The Son is the Word of the Father brought forth as flesh and the Word of the Father is Torah, so Yeshua is the living Torah of the Almighty.

Is Yeshua equal to the Father as the Church teaches? **Not at all!** He is submissive to the Father's will and we are told this in Scripture.

1 John 4:14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.

Mark 13:32 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

Yeshua is the Son of God and while God as well I believe, and this is just my opinion, He has inherited the traits of His Father or His Godhood. Yeshua Himself says that only the Father knows certain things. Yeshua came to be the Savior of the world because His Father asked Him to do this and He was in total submission to the Father. What we see in their relationship is what we are supposed to see in the relationship of a husband and his wife. The wife willingly follows her husband's lead if he loves her more than his own life as Messiah loved us because He loves His Father more than anything else.

I realize that there will be those who disagree with me and I have no problem with that. I am not denying the deity of Yeshua but simply commenting on how I see His relationship with His Father. The Church has for far too long, taught the equality of the Godhead. The Godhead is not about equality but about relationship and the unity of how a multiple unit can work in unison for the good of all of mankind. Nothing can take away Yeshua being the Son of God and God come in the flesh but Yeshua willingly submits Himself to His Father and once all of His Father's enemies are put down Yeshua will turn over the throne to His Father.

1 Corinthians 15:23 But each one in his own order: Messiah the firstfruits, afterward those *who are* Messiah's at His coming. **24** Then comes the end, **when He delivers the kingdom to God**

the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. **25** For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. **26** The last enemy *that* will be destroyed is death.

Yeshua will give over the kingdom to the Father. He will be at the right hand of the Father in the Kingdom as He now is at the right hand of the Father interceding on our behalf.

Jeremiah 33:25-26

25 "Thus says the LORD: 'If My covenant is not with day and night, *and if* I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, **26** 'then I will cast away the descendants of Jacob and David My servant, so that I will not take *any* of his descendants *to be* rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For I will cause their captives to return, and will have mercy on them.' "

The Creator is making a declaration that His covenant stands forever with His people. He talks about the descendants of Jacob and David which tells me that even if you are not born into Israel you have been grafted in and have received adoption as joint heirs with Messiah. Jacob was a man who struggled with the Almighty until, in the end, he surrendered his will to His and the Holy One raised Jacob up and made him into Israel. It has nothing to do with birth to be a part of Israel. It has everything to do with our relationship to the Father through the Son. **The written Torah cannot save on its own but the Torah, as the Living Word, can!** He has not abandoned His people, nor will He ever do that. He will bring back the captives because He has mercy. His mercy is found in His love for Israel and all who have been called to be a part of it.

We must always remember that it is not who we are by birth or station in life, it is about who we are in Messiah.

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Messiah Yeshua.

Colossians 3:11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Messiah is all and in all.

Romans 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

We are nothing without Messiah. It makes no difference who or what we are because all of that means nothing in light of who we are in Messiah. Everything is taken away except for our identity in Yeshua. As Yeshua and the Father are one, so too, are we one with Yeshua.

1 Corinthians 8:6 yet for us *there is* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Yeshua the Messiah, through whom *are* all things, and through whom we *live*.

There is God the Father and Yeshua the Messiah, the Son of God. We barely understand how the mind of God works, let alone understanding how their relationship works. We need to be careful as to how we define who Go the Father is and the Son as well as the Ruach HaKodesh (the Holy Spirit). We can see types and shadows of God in the Creation. We can see types and shadows of the Messiah throughout the Tanach. The Tanach is the revelation of the Messiah from the beginning. It was through the Tanach that our forefathers knew of the promise. Yeshua said the Torah, Prophets and Psalms testify of Him.

Luke 24:44 Then He said to them, "These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Torah of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me."

Yeshua has always existed in the pages of the Torah, Prophets, and the Psalms. Those who have gone before us knew about Him and looked forward to His coming. Though they may have died they know of the promise and were part of the covenant that we all enter into through Yeshua. He was not hidden from them. They saw Him and some of them had encounters with Him. One may make the argument that it was actually the Father who appeared to some of them but if Yeshua Himself says that to see Him one has seen the Father then Yeshua is the revelation of the Father, who is Spirit. I believe we will see the Father in His glory in the Kingdom to come but until that day we can see Him revealed through Yeshua.

Acts 5:43-47

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR [Leviticus 19:18, Deuteronomy 23:3-6] and hate your enemy.' **44** "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, **45** so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous. **46** "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? **47** "If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?"

How easy is it to love your neighbor especially if you like him to begin with? How many of us can love a neighbor that we don't like? This is where Yeshua separates the men from the boys by requiring something better from His people. We are expected to be different from those who are attached to this world. I have always been saddened by the fact that I watch how Believers behave and the behavior of a non-Believer is better than that of a Believer. That is a sad commentary on the state of the Holy One's people. It seems to me that the Spirit of the Almighty is slowly removing itself from this world. It appears that we are being prepared to have to deal with the full impact of the evil of the Adversary.

Are you ready for this or are you waiting for the great take-away as I call the "*rapture*"? I am amazed at how much the Church and even Messianic's are waiting for the *catching away*. Why do we put our hope in an event and not in the Eternal One? Our faith needs to be rooted in Him not in the hope of something that may or may not happen depending on how you view Scripture. The only **sure thing** is Yeshua and the gift of redemption and eternal life through Him. For some time now I have felt this tugging in my spirit that the people of the Holy One of Israel are not ready because they are looking here and there instead of straight ahead directly at the Messiah – the Anointed One of Israel.

Our faith should be in Him who can redeem us not in the men or women of the world. The Almighty sets up kings and kingdoms and takes them down. He has created all that there is including the ruler of this world Satan. The day is rapidly approaching when we will no longer have The Holy One's protection. We will be given over totally to the evil one and his servants because this is what the Word of the Holy One says will be. Are you ready if you will have to face the Adversary? Are you putting your faith in men or in possibilities rather than in the redemption of the

Holy One of Israel? He will come back as He left coming in the clouds as He returns to redeem the Creation. We were meant to be in the garden and one day soon we will be once again forever.

Improve your own character first, then that of others...Moses ibn Ezra

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Tony Robinson at www.devoted.to/Torah (sign up)

Mark R. Ensign at mrensign@arn.net (request to be added to list)

Ardelle Brody [abrody@mchsi.com](posted on Mordecai's website along with his Torah commentary-an excellent woman's perspective)

May the Lord bless you and yours... *Mordecai Silver*

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