

ONE TORAH FOR ALL

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It's a Sure Killer: Pride

Mishle (Proverbs) 16:18

*Pride goes before destruction,
And a haughty spirit before a fall.*

The diversity of things that people can be proud of, is as diverse as the people themselves. Some are proud of the job they hold or do. This can be because of the workmanship involved or the position itself or perhaps it is because the remuneration of the work is quite lucrative. Other people are proud of who they are because they come from a lineage with well known or well to do people. Still others are proud of the sports team that they follow, even to the point of collecting all sorts of memorabilia and even dressing in that team's colors and jerseys. Others may be proud of who they know, knowing or having met someone of importance or renown. Many follow and are proud of certain actors or singers. Then there are those who are proud for no apparent reason; they are just simply proud.

Then there is the whole health and fitness pride. Some are proud of how they look physically, which may include one's physique all the way to one's tan upon his skin; while others are proud of their diet and how healthy they eat. Some are even proud of what they wear, wearing only designer clothing and spending hundreds of dollars, even thousands of dollars upon their wardrobe. Or, for those in the Hebrew Roots movement it is not too uncommon to find the prideful attitude of: "My clothes are more set-apart than your clothes!" Or, perhaps there is pride in how one ties his tzitziot or even the color of the techelet (blue) thread that is in the tzitziot. Or, perhaps one is proud because one bought his tzitziot directly imported from Israel.

Then perhaps the most common thing of all to be proud of is one's own children or grandchildren. This pride is perhaps the most pervasive; and it is most difficult to see its destructive nature. But it is every bit as destructive as any other kind of pride, perhaps even more so for it tends to be passed on from one generation to the next. We will see below that being proud of one's children is not the proper Scriptural response to his children.

There are even those who are proud of their religious upbringing or spiritual knowledge and understanding. Christians are often taught from preachers and pastors to be proud, which is in

direct opposition to the teachings of Scripture. It is often taught that there is a good kind of pride and a bad kind of pride. But this concept is completely foreign to Scripture. The truth is, as we will discover in this present study, that pride, all pride, is evil and against the very nature of YHWH our Elohim.

One of the surprising things today is the number of people in the Hebrew Roots movement who are full of pride because they have come out of Christianity and “know more” than the Christians and therefore are somehow better than they are. Even within the Hebrew Roots movement, there is contention among the talmidim of Yeshua. Pride says, “My Torah keeping is better than your Torah keeping.” Then there are those who state that they have been keeping Torah longer, thus in their minds this somehow makes them better or more authoritative than who is listening to them. Then of course there is this whole question of how to pronounce and spell the name of the Father and the Son. There is so much pride in this area that it breeds strife and contention between brothers in Mashiach. This mindset is wrong and against everything that Mashiach Yeshua taught us. It is time for us to put to death all vestiges of pride in all things and walk in the humility of His Spirit.

Marqos (Mark) 7:21-23

21 “For from within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries,

22 covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness;

23 all these evil things proceed from within, and defile the man.

Yeshua, in teaching on what defiles a man, gives a list of evil things that come out of the heart of man, which in turn defile the man they came out of. One of those things that Mashiach Yeshua listed is pride. Please note that He does not qualify this by saying “evil pride”, but rather that pride is evil; which simply means that it does not matter what one is proud of, it is evil and thus defiles the man.

Also note the other things listed by Mashiach Yeshua in this passage as being evil. Let us take, for example, adultery. It is evil. All adultery is evil. Can you imagine someone teaching that some forms of adultery are good? How foolish is that! Notice that foolishness is evil and comes out of the heart as well! But this is exactly what happens when someone teaches that some types of pride are okay. It would be the same as saying that some types of adultery are okay. Or, that some murders are okay. This is utter and complete foolishness. Can you see this?

Mishle (Proverbs) 14:3

In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for his pride;

But the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

Please note well the strong connection between foolishness and pride. These two go hand in hand. Where one is found the other will also be there as well. What does a man have that he has to be proud of? What does he have that he can rightly boast in it?

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 4:7

For who makes you better? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

The question asked in this passage is a question which each and every one of us needs to come to terms with. The truth is that we do not have anything at all that we have not received. And if we have received it, then we are not truly the owner of it, but rather a steward of it.

D'varim (Deuteronomy) 10:14

"Behold, unto YHWH your Elohim belongs heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that is therein."

YHWH is the rightful owner of all creation, because He is the Creator. He made it all and He did not receive it from anyone. This includes you and me as well. He is the Master and Creator of us and therefore, He is also the rightful owner of us. We are only stewards of what He has made. This stewardship includes, is but not limited to, one's life as well as all those things with which He blesses us, including one's family.

Ya'aqov (James) 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.

The blessings that one enjoys in his life come from the hand of our heavenly Father. However, if one is taking pride in something, then one is not giving due respect and honor to the One who gave it to him to begin with.

All that a person is, all that a person is able to do, his talents, gifts and abilities, all these things are from the Creator, YHWH our Elohim. It is the desire of our Creator for us to use all of these things to do His work and to bring glory and honor to Him. This is why He has created us in the first place. But if one is taking pride in some talent that he has, or some ability, then he is actually robbing YHWH. When this happens, then one is surely headed for destruction.

Mishle (Proverbs) 16:18

***Pride goes before destruction,
And a haughty spirit before a fall.***

The darkness of one's heart attempts to deceive him into not coming into the fullness of His light. His light reveals to each man that which is not pleasing in His sight. It is then at that point that one must either make some changes or face the consequences in the form of discipline or perhaps just the natural consequences of his own poor choices in doing things his own way as well as taking pride in what he has done.

Yochanan Aleph (1st John) 2:16

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

It is easier to see the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes compared to seeing the boastful pride of life. One can certainly see the boastful pride of life in another person. No one likes to be around a braggart for very long! But it is much more difficult to see this in oneself; for even if one is not really a braggart but just takes a lot of pride in what he does or who he is, then it can be difficult for him to see it in himself. For YHWH should get the credit and glory for what He does through an individual. But usually what happens is that the person is lifted up with pride and takes the credit for himself, when he should be giving it to YHWH.

Pride in oneself is a very difficult thing to come to terms with. It is difficult to see it. It is difficult to admit it, whether to oneself or to another. Usually, if not always, YHWH will have to be the one to show us this ugly pride within us. When YHWH holds a mirror up to us for us to see ourselves, then we need to look carefully.

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 13:12a

For now we see in a mirror, darkly;

When a person looks at himself, it is difficult for him to see clearly. It is not an easy thing for one to admit to himself that he has pride in a certain area. However, it is a Scriptural truth that each one of us must face, that if there is pride in us, then it is not pleasing to YHWH our Elohim. So the thing that we must realize is that if one is going to have a true understanding of what is in his own heart, then he must not rely upon himself, but rather he must rely upon Mashiach Yeshua, for He knows what is in the heart of man and He will show it to us. All we need to do is to be willing to listen to Him and accept what He shows us and then do the hard work of changing that which He shows us that is not pleasing to Him.

Yochanan (John) 1:5

And the light shines in the darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

It is only when we come into His light that the pride that is within each one of us will be revealed for what it truly is: evil in His sight. The truth is that pride inside of us is not a pretty thing to behold. It is not pretty to YHWH. It is not pretty to others. And it should not be pretty to oneself.

And when YHWH holds up a mirror for us to see ourselves in it, often one's first reaction is denial of what one is seeing, thinking that, "such an ugly sight surely cannot be me." This is where some hardcore honesty will need to be manifested in our lives, if YHWH begins to point out some area in which one is prideful.

Kepha Aleph (1st Peter) 5:5

Likewise, you younger, be subject to the elder. Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another; for Elohim opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

It takes humility to serve one another. If humility is not present, then there will be no true service, because true service comes from a heart filled with His love. There is no room in a man's heart for both His love and man's pride. One will crowd out the other; for as Yeshua taught us, no man can serve two masters. And in this case, one cannot serve both his own pride and YHWH as his Elohim. Such a man is double-minded and not stable.

It is for this very reason that YHWH is opposed to the proud. If we truly desire his grace to be bountiful in our lives, then we absolutely must root out all vestiges of pride in all forms in our lives. Only in this way will YHWH be able to pour out His grace in its fullness into our lives. Surely this is what each one of us desires: the fullness of His grace. But are we willing to lay down our pride and focus our lives upon Yeshua rather than upon self?

If one is not careful, over time pride will attempt to creep back into one's life in very subtle forms. This is something that must be guarded against at all times. We must be diligently watchful at all times that we stay in close communication with our heavenly Father so that if this begins to happen, then we can in all humility lower ourselves before Him and before all men in order that pride cannot take root in us. And if it does begin to rise up, then YHWH can through His Spirit alert us so that it can be effectively taken care of before it takes root in us and causes us to stumble.

Typically, those things that one will be tempted to take pride in after pride has been rooted out will be the smallest of the small things. It will be in this way that the enemy will attempt to get one to move his focus off of YHWH and onto any other thing. It does not matter to the enemy what that thing is, just as long as it is not YHWH. And if he can get one to take pride in anything, regardless of how small a thing it is, then he has gained a foothold into one's life and then can bring about further attacks and cause more damage in one's life and relationship with our Mashiach Yeshua.

Tehillim (Psalm) 138:6

***For though YHWH is high, yet He regards the lowly;
But the haughty He knows from afar.***

There are times when we have heard someone say that they feel YHWH is far away or that He is not hearing his prayers. Perhaps you are reading this and you have even felt this way at times. I know I have felt this way at times. One of the questions that we must face head on is this: "Is YHWH far away from me because there is pride in my heart?" Now the truth of the matter is that each one of us would like to be able to say a resounding "No" to this question. But can we be honest enough with ourselves at this point to understand that if there is pride in our hearts, then YHWH will be far away from us?

Please understand that any pride which may be present does not want to be revealed for the evil that it truly is. For if it is revealed for what it truly is; then it will have to die. And it does not want to die; it wants to live. So it will come up with all sorts of devices in order to deflect attention away from itself onto other things and onto other people in order not to be nailed to the cross.

So, in order to answer this question truthfully and honestly, one is going to have to allow YHWH to answer it for us. But when He does answer this question and shows us that we do have pride in us, then we have to be willing to accept the hardcore answer that He has revealed to us that there is pride in us. This is not something that pride will willingly admit, this is for sure.

Vayyiqra (Leviticus) 26:18-21

18 "And if you will not yet for these things listen and obey Me, then I will chastise you seven times more for your sins.

19 And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass;

20 and your strength shall be spent in vain; for your land shall not yield its increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruit.

21 And if you walk contrary to Me, and will not hear and obey Me, I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins."

YHWH wants to get our attention. He will use whatever means necessary to do so. If there is pride in us, then He will use all things available to Him to break that pride. And since He is the Creator and Sovereign of the universe, He has everything we could imagine and more at His disposal to use to break one's pride. The longer it takes for one's pride to be broken, the more costly it will be for him personally. A good example of this is Pharaoh, in which, because Pharaoh refused to humble himself before YHWH, plague after plague was put upon him and all of Egypt. Wisdom says that the sooner that one is humble before Him, the better off he will be and the sooner that His grace and blessings will be poured out into his life, rather than curses and plagues.

Mishle (Proverbs) 13:10

By pride comes only contention;

But with the well-advised is wisdom.

This is surely a difficult matter. Pride fights against any and all wisdom (remember that pride and foolishness go hand in hand), especially against that wisdom which would rightly point its presence out. When this happens, pride will go into full swing and make every attempt to divert attention off itself onto anything else or anyone else.

But as this proverb rightly points out, it is only contention that comes along with pride. And as we saw demonstrated in the verse above this one, YHWH is fully capable of contending with a man whose heart is full of pride. But not only is YHWH capable of contending with such a man, the very fact that a man's heart is full of pride brings contention between himself and his fellow

man. And if there is contention between brothers, then where is the love of Mashiach? It has fled because of pride.

Romans 12:10

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;

It is the heart that is able to listen to wise counsel and to get past the initial emotional response that rises up within him, which will be blessed. It will not be an easy task to listen to wise counsel that points out one's pride. However, if one has any wisdom at all, then he will take this counsel to heart and take it before YHWH and ask him if there is any truth and veracity to what has been said. If so, then he will respond in repentance to YHWH.

Mishle (Proverbs) 16:5

***Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to YHWH;
Though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.***

There are several examples of YHWH punishing the prideful recorded in Scripture. Let us look at one such example of a man's heart being lifted up with pride and then YHWH disciplining him as a result of the pride.

Daniel 4:37

"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven; for all His works are truth, and His ways justice; and those that walk in pride He is able to bring low."

YHWH warned Nebuchadnezzar through a dream a year before He disciplined him. Yet, Nebuchadnezzar forgot the warning and his heart became filled with pride. At that point YHWH took Nebuchadnezzar's mind from him and made him like the beasts of the field. He was like this until he came to the realization that YHWH is the one and only true Sovereign of creation and He alone lifts up and brings low and no one can stay His hand. After Nebuchadnezzar realized this truth, then YHWH restored him to his throne which YHWH had given to him in the first place.

This is a valuable lesson for all of us if we will learn it. YHWH is able to bring low those who exalt themselves. This is what pride does in a person; it exalts self. It is not YHWH's will for any of us to do this. His will is for us to exalt Him. If a person is exalting someone other than YHWH, then he is exalting a false god and this is idolatry. Only YHWH is worthy of our worship, praise and adoration! Let us always be careful to exalt Him, rather than exalting ourselves! When one exalts himself, then it is not pleasing to YHWH our Elohim and he will be disciplined for it.

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 49:16

"As for your terribleness, the pride of your heart has deceived you, you that dwell in the clefts of the rock, that holds the height of the hill; though you would make your nest as high as the eagle, I will bring you down from there", says YHWH.

In this passage YHWH tells us that pride in a man's heart deceives him. There is not one among us who desires to be self-deceived! Yet, any man who harbors pride in his heart and life is doing this very thing: deceiving himself. But make no mistake about it; YHWH is fully capable of bringing such a man down. In fact, He clearly states that He will do that very thing: bring down those who have exalted themselves; and it does not matter how high they think that they have risen for He will bring them down from the lofty heights they have made for themselves.

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 2:12

“For there shall be a day of YHWH Tzava’ot upon all that is proud and haughty, and upon all that is lifted up; and it shall be brought low.”

The truth of the matter concerning pride is this. Each person must make a choice as to whether to let go of his pride and have YHWH remove it from his life. Or, he will be brought low in the judgment to come. It will be one way or the other. Of this, no man has a choice. His choice consists of whether he will submit to YHWH's correction now, or in the judgment later. But one way or the other every man will be brought low!

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 50:32

“And the proud one shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up; and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all that are round about him.”

If a man refuses to humble himself before YHWH and before all men, then when it is time, YHWH will do it. When that time comes for YHWH to humble a man, then he shall not rise again! He cannot raise himself up and no other man can raise him up. YHWH put him down and down he will stay as long as it is YHWH's will for him to be down!

Mishle (Proverbs) 11:2

***When pride comes, then comes shame;
But with the lowly is wisdom.***

The wisdom which comes down from above is not of this world. Worldly wisdom promotes pride and arrogance. Worldly wisdom promotes the exaltation of self. But this is in opposition to the will of YHWH for any man. His will is that each man humbles himself and chooses to serve Yeshua our Mashiach. If a man will make this choice, then YHWH will bless him with the wisdom which comes down from the heavenly Father.

If a man chooses to follow the pride of his own heart, then he will be brought to shame. In the end he will be alone and no one will be there for him to have fellowship with. He will not have fellowship with YHWH nor will he have fellowship with his fellow man, for the pride in him has broken all the fellowship that had been available to him. Then he will have no one to fellowship with. Such is the price one will pay for having pride in his life and allowing it to take control and consume him.

Tehillim (Psalm) 119:21

***You have rebuked the proud that are cursed,
That do wander from Your commandments.***

According to Torah, anyone who chooses not to hear and obey His commandments will receive all the curses YHWH put upon Egypt plus many more. It is YHWH's way of getting our attention. His purpose is to turn us back to Himself and His commandments. However, if the early attempts fail to turn us back to Him, then more and more curses and plagues will be piled upon us. If one hardens his heart against what YHWH is doing in his life through these curses and plagues, then at some point destruction is what will happen to him. One often finds the attitude that when something bad happens to us, then it must be Satan attacking us. But what if this is not true? What if it is actually YHWH disciplining us and attempting to get our attention? Should one not take a more humble approach and ask YHWH if there is something in his own life that is not pleasing to Him when some tragedy happens?

Then if that man repents and turns back to YHWH and to hearing and obeying His commandments, then YHWH will bless him rather than curse him.

Malachi 4:1

"For, behold, the day comes, it burns as a furnace; and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble; and the day that comes shall burn them up," says YHWH Tzava'ot, "that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."

Just to make sure that we understand how complete the destruction will be of one who is full of pride, YHWH clearly states that such a person will not be left with either root or branch. In other words, it will also include one's offspring.

Now mind you, if one's offspring repents and returns to YHWH, then he alone will receive the mercy and compassion of YHWH, but the rest of that man's family will not.

Mishle (Proverbs) 8:13

***The fear of YHWH is to hate evil, pride, and arrogance,
And the evil way, and the perverse mouth, do I hate.***

It is easy to hate pride in another when we see it. It is a pretty disgusting thing to see. However, do we as followers of Mashiach Yeshua also hate pride in ourselves? We should actually hate it more in ourselves than in others. This will show that we actually fear YHWH. However, if there is not any fear of YHWH, or very little fear of YHWH, then one will allow pride to take root and he will actually foster and nurture it so that it grows. Eventually, that pride will take complete control of a person and he will actually lose his eternal life, unless he repents and returns to YHWH.

One cannot have any pride and have the fear of YHWH in his heart and life that he needs to have. One or the other will be in a man's heart, but not both. The fear of YHWH will give a man

wisdom and YHWH will exalt him. Or, a man's heart can be full of pride and he will attempt to exalt himself, but YHWH will bring him low.

Mishle (Proverbs) 29:23

***A man's pride shall bring him low;
But he that is of a lowly spirit shall obtain honor.***

It is YHWH's desire to give to us His very best blessings. However, He cannot and will not give us His blessings if we are full of pride. For not only does pride elevate self up against YHWH, but it also elevates a man against his fellow man. Pride in a man brings contention with his brother.

Tehillim (Psalm) 119:69

***The proud have forged a lie against me;
With my whole heart will I keep Your precepts.***

Within the idea of forging from the above passage is the idea of taking a piece of metal and heating it up so that it can be beaten, bent, and twisted into some other shape. This is what the proud do with facts. They take those facts and twist them into something else to suit their own means. They twist them so much that these seeming facts are no longer dealing with something that is true. Rather, now they have forged the truth into lies. There will be elements of truth in these lies, which make them very appealing to the flesh of man. But they are still lies none the less.

However, as the Psalmist points out, regardless of what the proud of heart do with truth to form lies against us, still we will keep His commandments.

Tehillim (Psalm) 119:85

***The proud have dug pits for me,
Who are not according to Your Torah.***

Those who are proud go about setting traps and snares for others to fall into. Those who do such things will surely be put to shame as YHWH at some point will cause them to fall into their own pit.

Please note that those who set traps and dig pits for others to fall into are not living according to Torah. This is perhaps one of the greatest deceptions of self that can take root in a man's heart and mind. All the while he is setting traps and digging pits for others to fall into he may well be thinking that he is doing it because of Torah, or for the sake of His commandments. But Scripture clearly teaches us that such a man as this is not living according to Torah.

Mishle (Proverbs) 15:25

***YHWH will root up the house of the proud;
But He will establish the border of the widow.***

As we saw above in Malachi 4:1, YHWH will destroy all the family of one who is full of pride. That same idea is present here in this verse when it states that “YHWH will root up the house of the proud.” Please note the connection between the house of the proud and the widow. Those who are proud often take a stance against the widow as they are seen as an easy mark. This could be as simple as not helping the widow when the widow needs help. YHWH takes note of such things.

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 13:15

“You hear, and give ear; do not be proud; for YHWH has spoken.”

My brothers and sisters in Mashiach Yeshua, listen well to His Spirit in this matter! YHWH has spoken: “Do not be proud!” To disregard YHWH in this matter will bring destruction upon you as well as your whole house. Listen to the Voice of His Spirit and turn completely away from all forms of pride and turn fully towards Him and walk in the humility of His Spirit! It is time to stop listening to those who are proud of heart and their words of self-exaltation. Let us listen to His Voice in this matter and respond in a favorable way to Him.

Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 7:8

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof; and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.

This is surely a difficult matter. But if one will do the hard work of rooting out all forms of pride in his life, then surely it will yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness and YHWH will pour out His blessings upon any who would do so.

Now before we close, let us make one final note as to how we should respond to our children in particular. One can surely then apply this to all other areas in which one might be tempted to be lifted up with pride.

Mishle (Proverbs) 27:11

***My son, be wise, and make my heart glad,
That I may answer him that reproaches me.***

Please note that this passage of Scripture teaches us that when our child does something noteworthy, it this should bring gladness and joy to us, not pride! When our children show wisdom, then this gives us something to show to those who are full of pride. For it is the one who is full of pride who reproaches us!

When one of our children does something good, right and wonderful, then we should teach them to give praise to YHWH for giving them the ability to do what they have done. In this way we are teaching them not to be full of pride, for in reality they have nothing to be proud of! It also teaches them to be children of our heavenly Father, singing His praises and exalting Him at all times and for all things!

There are other passages which teach this same principle of being glad and joyful in our children (as well as each other) rather than being proud of them. See also Mishle 10:1; 15:20; 23:15, 16, 24, 25; Yochanan Bet (2nd John) 1:4; Philemon 1:7, 20. In each one of these passages we learn that we are to be joyful and glad, but we are not to be proud.

Brothers and sisters, this is not just a matter of semantics. This is a matter of the heart. What will you choose to do? Will you choose to continue on in your pride? Or, will you humble yourself before YHWH and before all men so that He may bless you with His richest blessings?

It is your choice.

Shabbat Shalom

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