

משפטים

Mishpatim

(ordinances)

Shemot [Exodus] 21:1-24:18

Flee Falsehood

Shemot (Exodus) 23:7

“Keep far from a false word; and do not kill the innocent and righteous; for I will not acquit the guilty.”

YHWH commands us in His Torah that we are to keep as far away from anything false as possible. Whether that be a false charge against a brother, or a matter that has some kind of falseness associated with it, we are to stay away from it. When the innocent or the righteous are killed, there is falsehood present in that matter, for man has justified his actions with false words.

There are many ways in which the innocent and the righteous may be killed. The pashat (literal) intent of this verse is talking of a literal killing which involves one’s physical life. However, at a different level it also means the killing of the innocent and righteous one’s reputation and good name. When a person speaks defaming words concerning one person to another, they have participated in killing the innocent and the righteous. This is a very serious sin because of what YHWH says following the warning not to do these things. He says that He will not acquit the guilty. Those who are guilty of killing the innocent and righteous by either taking their physical lives or by slander, libel, and gossip that takes away one’s good name, He will not let go unpunished.

It is common practice in Babylon to bear false witness, to be involved in matters that involve some kind of falsehood, and to kill the innocent and the righteous. Let us consider some of these things more closely so that we may rightly choose to stay away from them all.

One way in which this commandment is often violated is used by those who climb the corporate ladder of success. In climbing this ladder, any manner of falsehood that will propel them upwards has not only a blind eye turned towards it, but is often encouraged as well. For when a person will commit to false words and deceit, then that gives those who know this, a lever by which they can later solicit favors from the one who has walked the path of falsehood.

Those who do not walk on the path of false words are open game to those who do. Those who do walk the path of false words often prey upon those who do not. Those who do not walk this path often do nothing in the way of counter measures of what is being falsely spoken concerning them. This is the proper response. Attempting to defend oneself from gossip can be a never ending task and it simply robs one of time; time that should be spent in building His kingdom. Please consider how Yeshua responded to false charges brought against Him.

Matithyah (Matthew) 27:13-14

13 Then says Pilate to Him, "Do you not hear how many things they witness against You?"

14 And He gave him no answer, not even to one word; insomuch that the governor marveled greatly.

People are going to believe whatever they want to believe regardless of what anyone else says or does. Sadly, this is just as true among those who claim to follow Mashiach Yeshua as well. For the vast majority of people, truth is just not part of the equation as to what is held dear to one or not.

Yeshua, knowing what was in the heart of men realized that it was of no value to defend Himself to Pilate. It would have changed nothing. In fact, when a person is silent it actually says much more than words could ever say.

Tehillim (Psalm) 46:10

***"Be still, and know that I am Elohim;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."***

When a person chooses to be silent in the face of his accusers, then this opens the door wide for YHWH to do His very best work in a person's life. When we are still and His shalom fills our heart and life, then He can and will be exalted.

All too often when a person attempts to defend himself, then falsehood ends up coming out of his mouth. It is better to just remain silent and let those who are accusing us think whatever they want to think.

Mishle (Proverbs) 13:3

***He that guards his mouth keeps his life;
But he that opens wide his lips shall have destruction.***

There are many such proverbs that are actually based upon this Torah commandment. It would do us well to guard the words of our mouths well. Oftentimes, in discussing a matter in order to make a point, one will overstate his position. This is wrong and it would be better to remain silent. A proverb teaches us that even when a fool remains silent it is seen as wisdom.

Mishle (Proverbs) 17:28

***Even a fool, when he holds his peace, is counted wise;
When he shuts his lips, he is esteemed as prudent.***

More than likely, in all the cases that had come before Pilate for him to hear and to give a judgment, he had never seen such a case as that which was before him with Yeshua and His accusers. Pilate was a governor, and as such he was selected for this position because of his intelligence, cunning, and shrewdness. He was nobody's fool, to be sure. More than likely he knew that these charges against Yeshua were contrived and had no basis. This is what amazed him: knowing that these charges had no substance, yet the man charged standing before him remained silent.

How many times would His kingdom be better served for us to remain silent than to attempt to defend ourselves in a situation where it is not going to make any difference on the outcome anyway? This is where walking in His Spirit is a must: to be able to know when to be silent and when to speak up and knowing what to say and what not to say. If one is not walking in His Spirit and attempts to answer according to one's own thoughts and one's own wisdom, then it surely will not lead to YHWH being exalted!

Mishle (Proverbs) 14:16

***A wise man fears, and departs from evil;
But the fool bears himself insolently, and is confident.***

This particular proverb is pretty much stating what the Torah commandment is saying above. We are to flee from falsehood, to flee from evil. We are to walk in fear of YHWH our Elohim. Walking in the fear of YHWH our Elohim should keep one from doing evil in His sight.

However, the fool does not see this clearly, if at all. The fool lifts himself up in pride. He is proud of what he knows. He is proud of who he knows. He is proud of all sorts of things in his own life, none of which count for anything before YHWH our Elohim. He looks upon us and sees all the best that we can muster and it is simply not good enough!

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 64:6

For we are all become as one that is unclean, and all our righteousness are as a menstrual rag; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

Honestly speaking, one's own righteousness is downright disgusting to YHWH. Our righteousness is no better to Him than a bloody rag which a woman having her period discards after it has been used. It is when we begin to see this truth clearly that we will stop attempting to make our own way to YHWH and turn away from all that and walk in the fullness of His ways. The beginning of this walk starts with accepting Yeshua as Mashiach. Then it is furthered along by asking to be filled with His Spirit and to be immersed in His Spirit. Then we walk in His Spirit day by day and moment by moment, doing His will rather than our own.

It is in this way that one will stay far away from a false matter, regardless of what it is. If one is not walking in His Spirit moment by moment, then he cannot expect to stay far away from a false matter. For Satan is always prowling about seeking whom he may devour. He devours those who are not on guard against walking in the flesh and in the wisdom of their own minds and hearts.

Mishle (Proverbs) 12:15

***The way of a fool is right in his own eyes;
But he that is wise hearkens to counsel.***

Let us determine in our minds, hearts and spirits that we will listen to and obey the counsel of Scripture. Scripture teaches us to stay far away from anything that is false. If it is false, flee from it! Do not reason within yourself that it will be okay and YHWH will understand. YHWH has told us straight out that He will not acquit the guilty in this matter!

Mishle (Proverbs) 26:12

***See a man wise in his own conceit?
There is more hope for a fool than for him.***

When a person is filled up with his own self-worth and believes himself to be better than another person, then what hope is there for such a man? This proverb teaches us that there is more hope for a fool than for such a man. And Scripture teaches us that there is not much hope for a fool.

I have been in religious circles all my life. I have seen numerous ways in which pride is justified in a person's life. Pride in one person invariably leads to the death in another person through assassination of character. This can manifest itself in subtle innuendos that may or may not be true, to outright disparaging remarks about a person; oftentimes these kinds of remarks masquerade in the form of concern and prayer requests. Brothers and sisters, this is sin.

We are to be our brother's keeper and as such this means that we are to protect one another. We are not to tear one another down! If we need to ask for prayer for another, then the gory details do not need to be aired. Furthermore, when something is spoken to another, it should be done in such a way as to lift the other person up in the eyes of the person who is hearing what we say, not tearing them down. Brotherly love behaves in such a way as we show that love towards one another at all times whether together or separated.

To be a part of the body of Mashiach is to be a part of life. Let us stop tearing at one another and weep and cry for one another; as we would desire from others, so let us give it to all those who are a part of His body!

Finally, let us consider the words of Ya'aqov as he also speaks words similar to the commandment in the Torah.

Ya'aqov (James) 4:1-4

1 Where do the wars and fighting come from among you? Do they not come from your pleasures that war in your members?

2 You lust, and have not; you kill, and covet, and cannot obtain; you fight and war; you have not, because you ask not.

3 You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it in your pleasures.

4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with Elohim? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of Elohim.

It would seem that these four verses pretty well sum up this Torah commandment. It should be noted that it would seem from this context that the usage of the word "adulteresses" is in a spiritual context indicating that he is saying that one so engaged in this type of life is an idolater or spiritual adulteress.

It is the way of Babylon to be friends with the world. To be a part of the Babylonian system and to participate in it to move upward as they would understand it, is to be an enemy of YHWH our Elohim. Rather than living in this manner, let us live as friends of YHWH our Elohim which will make us enemies of this present world.

ABBA YHWH, let all the words that come forth from our mouths give life and not death; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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