

מטות

Mattot

(tribes)

Bemidbar [Numbers] 30:2-32:42 In English Bibles 30:1-32:42

The Vow of a Man

Bemidbar [Numbers] 30:1-2

1 And Moshe spoke unto the heads of the tribes of the children of Israel, saying, "This is the thing which YHWH hath commanded.

2 When a man vows a vow unto YHWH, or swears an oath to bind his life with a bond, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth."

When a man makes a vow, YHWH expects him to keep that vow. Basically, we are expected to be a "man of our word."

There have been many times in the past when someone has come up to me and spoken words to the effect that they were promising to do something for me. Many times it never came to pass. While I forgave them, they are still accountable before YHWH for breaking their word (vow).

Because this has happened so many times, now I try to say something to the effect that they should not speak those words unless they truly intend to follow through on them.

Please note the following passage.

Mattithyahu [Matthew] 5:33-34

33 "Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO YHWH.'

34 "But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of Elohim."

I have heard this passage quoted many times in recent days trying to show that vows are against what Yeshua our Mashiach taught.

However, how could Yeshua, as Mashiach, teach something that was contrary to or against what the Torah teaches? Is He not the One that gave us Torah? To be sure, He is! So how could He contradict Himself? It doesn't make any sense, does it?

So, it must be a problem with the translation of the passage in either the Tanak (Old Testament) or with the passage in the Brit Chadasha (New Testament). And as we are about to discover the problem is with the translation of the passage in Matithyah.

Let us examine this passage from the English translation of the Hebrew Shem Tov Matthew.

Mattithyahu [Matthew] 5:33-34

<p>33 <i>“Again you have heard what was said to those of long ago: You shall not swear by My name falsely, but you shall return to YHWH your oath.</i></p> <p>34 <i>But I say to you not to swear in vain in any matter, neither by heaven because it is the throne of Elohim.”</i></p>	<p>מתתיה פרק י"ט עוד שמעתם מה שנאמר לקדמונים לא תשבעו בשמי לשקר ותשיב לה" שבועתך : ואני אומר לכם לבלתי השבע בשום עניין לשוא לא בשמים שכסא אלקים היא :</p>
---	---

When reading and examining this passage, we see that what Yeshua actually said, was that not only are we to take our vows seriously, but we should take everything that we say seriously, whether that is a vow or a promise or an implied commitment to do something.

Basically, what Yeshua is teaching us, is that when we say we are going to do something, we just need to do it – no excuses!

True to form, what Yeshua is doing is going beyond the Torah commandment to the intent of the commandment. He is showing and teaching His talmidim the way that He expects them to live and behave in their everyday living.

What He is not doing, is teaching against Torah, unlike what many antinomian teachers would like us to think.

The Vow of a Virgin

Bemidbar [Numbers] 30:3-5

3 *Also when a woman vows a vow to YHWH, and binds herself by a bond, being in her father's house, in her youth,*

4 *and her father hears her vow, and her bond wherewith she has bound her life, and her father holds his peace at her; then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she has bound her life shall stand.*

5 But if her father nullifies her vow in the day that he heard, none of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she has bound her life, shall stand; and YHWH will forgive her, because her father nullified her vow.

As a young lady grows up in her father's house, she is under his headship and authority. Her dad is her spiritual covering. Before she makes a vow she should consult her dad before any words come out of her mouth. We will examine why this is so later.

But if she were to make a rash statement, then at the moment that her father hears what she has said (vowed), he has two options: 1) to let it stand as she has stated; or 2) he has the option and authority to revoke the vow.

Likewise, young women should take to heart the words of Torah and the additional teaching of Yeshua our Mashiach. Words carry weight and have meaning. To walk in the fullness of His Set-apart Spirit means that we all (male and female alike) should guard the words that come out of our mouths with the greatest of care.

The Vow of a Married Woman

Bemidbar [Numbers] 30:6-8

6 And if she be (married) to a husband, when she vows, or makes the rash utterance of her lips, wherewith she has bound her life,

7 and her husband hears it, and holds his peace at her in the day that he heard it; then her vows shall stand, and her bonds wherewith she hath bound her life shall stand.

8 But if her husband disallows her in the day that he heard it, then he shall make void her vow which is upon her, and the rash utterance of her lips, wherewith she has bound her life; and YHWH will forgive her.

After a woman marries, her covering is transferred from her father to her husband. The main thing to understand, is that she is still under the covering of a man; the only difference is that it is now her husband rather than her dad. So now the husband has the same authority to revoke and make void her vows and rash statements that she makes.

Again, she should still be diligently guarding the words that come from her mouth.

The Vow of a Widow

Bemidbar [Numbers] 30:9-12

9 But the vow of a widow, or of her that is divorced, everything wherewith she hath bound her life, shall stand against her.

10 And if she vowed in her husband's house, or bound her life by a bond with an oath,

11 and her husband heard it, and held his peace at her, and did not nullify her vow; then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she bound her life shall stand.

12 But if her husband made them null and void in the day that he heard them, then whatsoever proceeded out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning the bond of her life, shall not stand; her husband has made them void; and YHWH will forgive her.

If a woman is widowed or divorced, then she alone is accountable for what comes out of her mouth. What this should teach all women, is that it would be good for them to learn to control their tongues before their husbands die.

Now here is a curious thing; it lists again almost verbatim, the same thing as we find in the vow of the married women. It is restated here for the divorced or widowed woman. Why?

What this should teach us, is that the status of any vows or rash statements that a woman may have made while her husband was living (or when they were still married), does not change after the husband dies (or a divorce happens).

So, if a husband heard her vow or rash statement before he died (or a divorce happened) and he did nothing, then her words stand; or, after he died (or was divorced) her words still stand. On the other hand, if her husband annulled her vow or rash statement before he died (or was divorced), then it remains annulled after his death. The death or divorce of a woman's husband does not change the status of any previous vow or rash statement. Those previous vows or rash statements remain in the same status as they had been before the death or divorce of her husband.

However, if she makes a vow or rash statement after her husband is gone, either by death or divorce, then she alone will answer for the vow or the rash statement. Her words must stand as spoken.

If she has been a woman who did not control her words when she had a husband, then after her husband is gone, she will cause herself a lot of grief.

The Responsibility and Authority of the Man

Bemidbar [Numbers] 30:13-16

13 Every vow, and every binding oath to afflict the life, her husband may establish it, or her husband may make it void.

14 But if her husband altogether holds his peace at her from day to day, then he establishes all her vows, or all her bonds, which are upon her; he has established them, because he held his peace at her in the day that he heard them.

15 But if he shall make them null and void after he has heard them, then he shall bear her iniquity.

16 These are the statutes, which YHWH commanded Moshe, between a man and his wife, between a father and his daughter, being in her youth, in her father's house.

Acquiescence on the part of the man, whether that be the father or the husband of the woman, depending upon in whose house she is living, is seen by YHWH as approval. So when a man is silent at the vow or rash words of his daughter or wife, then it is the same according to Torah as his giving his approval of that vow or rash statement.

On the other hand, if a husband of a wife or the father of a daughter hears her vow or rash statement, then he has the option and authority to annul it. However, this must be done the first time that he hears it, at the time that he hears it. It cannot be done later, for that is too late.

A Special Plea for the Ladies

Bemidbar [Numbers] 30:15

15 But if he shall make them null and void after that he has heard them, then he shall bear her iniquity.

While the man, whether that is the husband or the father that is over a woman, has the right and the authority to annul vows, oaths or rash statements of that woman, doing so brings guilt upon himself. If a husband or a father deems it necessary to void and annul a vow or rash statement of his wife or daughter, then he bears the guilt of that statement before YHWH.

YHWH views him as having made the vow or rash statement and then intentionally breaking it.

Ladies, please, for your father's or husband's sake, carefully guard your words. Please.

In carefully guarding your words, for your husband's sake, or father's sake, you will be showing a great kindness and love towards him.

Let me give you an example of this. Ladies, how many times have you "volunteered" your dear, sweet husband to do something for someone else? Every time that you do this, you are making a vow. If he does not keep this vow, then YHWH views him as having broken that promise and he will bear the guilt of that broken promise.

What can make that even worse for the man, is if you promise for him to do something for a widow or an orphan. Then YHWH would be against your husband, or father, for breaking that vow or promise.

It cannot be stressed enough that the words that we speak carry weight and we will be accountable for them all before YHWH.

Something to Consider

Most reading this will understand that Israel is the bride/wife of YHWH. Because this is true, YHWH has the right and authority to annul vows, oaths and rash statements made by His wife Israel.

However, in so doing, He will have to hold Himself accountable for that vow that was broken.

Israel has been guilty many times of going after and serving other gods. This is not pleasing to YHWH. Israel has paid a very heavy price for this sin.

However, what about the price that YHWH has paid for the sin of His wife Israel? And certainly worshipping and serving other gods is not the only sin that Israel is guilty of committing.

Some of the sins that Israel is guilty of committing; i.e., Israel's Torah breaking, carry the death penalty. So in order for these vows, oaths and rash statements to be annulled, the penalty is passed on to the One doing the annulling, namely, YHWH.

As we can see, this is one of the many reasons that Yeshua died upon the cross.

Be Sure Your Sin Will Find You Out

Bemidbar [Numbers] 32:23

23 But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against YHWH; and be sure your sin will find you out.

Specifically, what is being spoken about in this context, are the motives of the tribes of Reuven and Gad. Were they just trying to get out of doing what was right or were their motives pure?

If their motives were pure about wanting to stay on the east side of the Yarden, then they would want to, and in fact they would, go into battle with their brethren and help them secure their inheritance as well.

If they would not do this, then their sin would come to light.

The time is approaching for us to re-enter His Land. As that time nears, it seems most likely that it will have to be taken in battle again, much as it was the first time our forefathers entered the Land (the pattern and the foreshadowing).

ABBA YHWH, please give us strength and wisdom, that we as Your people can work together as one man to build Your Kingdom; in the Name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

zerubbabel@townsqr.com

www.onetorahforall.org