

מִשְׁפָּטִים

Mishpatim

(ordinances)

Shemot [Exodus] 21:1-24:18

We Will Obey!

Shemot [Exodus] 24:1-3

1 And He said to Moshe, "Come up to YHWH, you, and Aharon, Nadav, and Avihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and they shall worship afar off;

2 and Moshe alone shall come near to YHWH; but they shall not come near; neither shall the people go up with him."

3 And Moshe came and told the people all the words of YHWH, and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, "All the words which YHWH has spoken will we do."

This is the second time the entire nation committed to obeying YHWH in all that He had commanded them. The first time is found in Shemot 19:8. We find this commitment twice in this chapter; here in verse three, and below, in verse seven. There is one other place in which the entire nation committed to obeying YHWH in all that He commanded them through Moshe; and that is found in Devarim 5:27.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 5:27

"You go near, and hear all that YHWH our Elohim shall say; and you speak to us all that YHWH our Elohim shall speak to you; and we will hear it, and do it."

The only difference in these two passages, is that in the passages in Shemot, it is the generation which came out of Egypt which committed to obeying His Voice. In the passage in Devarim, it is the next generation, as all the generation that had come out of Egypt had died by that time; except, of course, for Yehoshua and Calev, who had the promise to enter into the land for their faith and obedience.

So we have in these two passages, two generations of Israelites committing to obey YHWH's Torah commandments. This should teach us something important. Each generation must commit for itself to obey His Voice. It is not adequate for the next generation to attempt to enter into His Kingdom on the

commitment of the parents. The lack of future generations not making this commitment, brings to pass what is recorded in the book of Judges; i.e., a repeated falling into sin and the worship of false gods.

Ultimately, this cycle of a lack of commitment to hear and obey His Voice, culminates in the division and taking into captivity of the nation of Israel, and so its division into two separate houses. Conversely, it will be the commitment to hearing and obeying His Voice (obeying Torah), that will enable us to return to His land.

We Will Obey – Really!

Shemot [Exodus] 24:4-8

4 And Moshe wrote all the words of YHWH, and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar under the mount, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

5 And he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen to YHWH.

6 And Moshe took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that YHWH has spoken will we do, and be obedient."

8 And Moshe took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which YHWH has made with you concerning all these words."

Now, here is something that I find really interesting. In verse four, we read that Moshe wrote down all the words of the Torah. Hummm... that verse (and others) pretty much puts to rest, the concept of a so-called "oral Torah." But Moshe not only put in writing the Torah commandments that YHWH spoke to him, he then took those written commandments before the people and read them – all of them.

So what is recorded in verse seven above, is that Moshe took the Torah that he had written down, and stood before the people and read to the people, the record of what YHWH had commanded them to do. The people's response to hearing the Torah read to them, once again, is that they would do it; they would be obedient to His Torah.

One wonders if there is perhaps a strong correlation between hearing and obeying? Let us consider that for a moment.

Melekim Bet [2nd Kings] 22:8-11

8 And Chilqiyah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law in the house of YHWH." And Chilqiyah delivered the book to Shaphan, and he read it.

9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, "Your servants have emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen that have the oversight of the house of YHWH."

10 And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, "Chilqiyah the priest has delivered me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king.

11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

Please notice, that the book of the Torah had been misplaced. This is most likely, because the Israelites were not using it regularly as they should have been using it, which means that they were not living in obedience to YHWH. And when the book of the Torah was found and read to the king, he was alarmed, saddened, and frightened, all at the same time. King Yoshiyah (Josiah) had a heart for YHWH! This is quite apparent, in that, when he heard the book of the Torah read, he knew that things were not right between YHWH's people and YHWH.

Melekim Bet [2nd Kings] 23:1-3

1 And the king sent, and they gathered to him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem.

2 And the king went up to the house of YHWH, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great; and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of YHWH.

3 And the king stood by the pillar, and made a covenant before YHWH, to walk after YHWH, and to keep His commandments, and His testimonies, and His statutes, with all his heart, and all his soul, to confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book; and all the people entered into the covenant.

After seeking YHWH through a prophet, Yoshiyah then called all the people together, along with all the elders, priests, and prophets of Israel. He left no one out. He called all Israel to the hearing of the Torah. After he had the Torah read to all the people, he entered into a covenant (commitment) to obey the commandments of YHWH. All the people did likewise.

Again, this shows us that each generation is responsible before YHWH to make a commitment to keep and obey His Voice (commandments). If a generation fails to do this, then by default, they will not keep His Torah. The record of books of Kings (and Chronicles), shows us that each generation moved further and further away from YHWH, until such time that He had no choice but to remove them from His land.

However, when a righteous king arises and leads the people back to His Torah, and they make a commitment to obey His commandments, then all is well.

Melekim Bet [2nd Kings] 23:25

25 And before him there was no king like him, that turned to YHWH with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moshe; neither after him arose there any like him.

This is such a wonderful testimony to the heart of Yoshiyah, king of Judah. In all the history of the house of Judah, there was no other king who had a heart to turn the people back to YHWH like he did. He did this, not only by hearing the Torah himself; but he also called all the people to hear the Torah as well. It is the hearing of the Torah that moves us to obey it.

Romans 10:13-14

13 for,

Whosoever shall call upon the name of YHWH shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

Shaul tells us very plainly, that it is not possible to believe and be saved, unless one actually hears. And how shall one hear, unless there is one to speak His words? It is not possible!

This demonstrates the importance of hearing His Torah regularly. For if we ignore the Torah (foundation), then what kind of structure is one building? It is a structure that will not stand through the tests that come. Let us diligently let ourselves and our children hear His Torah being spoken among us, as something that is normal. And even more importantly, let us be doers of those things which we hear spoken to us from His word!

A Vision of Elohim

Shemot [Exodus] 24:9-11

9 Then went up Moshe, and Aharon, Nadav, and Avihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel.

10 And they saw the Elohim of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as clear as the sky itself.

11 And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He laid not His hand; and they beheld Elohim, and did eat and drink.

YHWH gave Himself numerous witnesses, that it was He, and He alone, who was speaking these commandments. He wanted all questions put to rest, as to whether these commandments were coming from Him, and not from Moshe alone.

So, He gave Aharon, Nadav, Avihu, and the seventy elders of Israel this vision, so that they would be able to convey to the entire nation, what it was that they had seen. What these men had witnessed was awe-inspiring, and these words most likely do not do the justice which is due to Elohim!

However, we are then told, that YHWH did not lay His hand upon these others, but rather, upon Moshe alone. It was Moshe whom He anointed to bring His Torah to His people. These witnesses also were able to testify to this reality as well.

Disputes

Shemot [Exodus] 24:12-14

12 And YHWH said to Moshe, "Come up to Me on the mount, and be there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, and the law and the commandment, which I have written, that you may teach them."

13 And Moshe rose up, and Yehoshua his servant; and Moshe went up on the mount of Elohim.

14 And he said to the elders, "You stay here and wait for us, until we come again to you. Behold, Aharon and Hur are with you; whosoever has a dispute, let him come near to them."

People being what they are, are bound to have disputes between themselves. This is pretty sad, but that is the reality of our world. Moshe knew this, and made provisions for this, before He went up on the mount. Aharon and Hur needed to know that they had the authority to settle disputes while he was gone. The people also needed to know this, so that when Aharon or Hur ruled on a question, then it was settled.

Where are our judges today? May YHWH raise up from among us righteous men in whom resides His Spirit, that they may have the understanding of the ages, in order to rightly divide His word for His people today!

Into His Presence

Shemot [Exodus] 24:15-18

15 And Moshe went up on the mount, and the cloud covered the mount.

16 And the glory of YHWH abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and the seventh day He called to Moshe out of the midst of the cloud.

17 And the appearance of the glory of YHWH was like consuming fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.

18 And Moshe entered into the midst of the cloud, and went up on the mount; and Moshe was on the mount forty days and forty nights.

When Moshe went up onto the mount to be in the presence of Elohim, he walked into the cloud and disappeared from sight. For all practical purposes, he was gone. Now consider carefully what the text tells us in verse seventeen. We are told that what these witnesses were seeing, was an all-consuming fire on top of the mountain. When Moshe walked into that cloud of smoke, then as far as they could tell, he may have been consumed in that fire.

This is important for us to keep in mind, because of what happens later, when the nation goes after other gods and plays the harlot with the golden calf. The text in that place, tells us that they did not know what had happened to Moshe.

Here is the thing about how our minds work. When someone is expected to arrive at a certain time and they are late, then our minds begin to conjure up all sorts of possible scenarios as to what might have taken place. And usually, the things that come into our minds are mostly bad. It is just the way we are, unless we fight against that and resist it.

So, Moshe had been gone for what seemed to the Israelites as being longer than he should have been. The longer he was absent, the more the people talked about how he was probably not coming back. After all, was not the top of the mountain consumed in fire? And is this not where Moshe went? Then how could he survive such a thing? They convinced themselves in the flesh that he was gone, and that they were without a leader. They wanted a leader. They demanded a leader to follow. At the very least, they wanted a god that they could see. Thus, the tragic events that followed.

But let us consider these verses carefully, as to how they might pertain to us today.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 12:29
for our Elohim is a consuming fire.

What does this mean for us today that “Elohim is a consuming fire”?

Shemot [Exodus] 20:5
“You shall not bow yourselves down to them, or serve them, for I YHWH your Elohim am a jealous El, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate Me.”

YHWH wants our undivided loyalty. He wants us to serve Him, and Him alone.

Matithyah [Matthew] 6:24
“No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve Elohim and riches.”

The truth of the matter, is that each one of us is serving only one master. The question that we need to find the answer to is, “Who is the master that I am serving?” This may take some hardcore honesty to truly answer this question. But we need to do the hard work of answering this question, because our life depends upon it!

When a person is said to have a passion for something, what does this mean? Depending on the person and the degree of passion that one might have, it can mean that they have a fervor, ardor, obsession,

zeal, and devotion for that thing. They are fixated upon that thing. This is where their interest lies. This is what their attention is focused upon most of the time, if not all the time. This is what holds their loyalty and allegiance.

If one answers this question, "What is your passion?", then I submit to you, that is what that person serves!

Some people are passionate about cars, some about just one car in particular. Others are passionate about sports. I have known people who could answer any question about sports, and sports personalities of any sport or time. They are totally consumed by this interest of theirs. It is the only thing that matters to them. Even the clothes that they wear reflect this passion.

What consumes you?

If it is not YHWH, then you may be in serious trouble.

Please consider, that Elohim being an "all-consuming fire," means two things. First, He wants to consume us in this life, so that there is nothing left of ourselves (sinful self), and that the image of Mashiach is stamped upon us.

Yochanan [John] 3:30

"He must increase, but I must decrease."

Yochanan haMatbiel (John the Immerser), speaking to his disciples, tells them that Mashiach must increase while he decreases. May each and every one of us learn to live in this truth!

Second, if He is not increasing in our lives; i.e., consuming us from within, then what will happen, is that on the Day of Judgment, He will consume us from the outside and we will perish. Those are the two alternatives that we are given when it comes to Elohim being an "all-consuming fire." We can choose to have Him consume us now. Or, He will consume us later. But one way or the other, He will consume us. He just lets us choose when and how.

Let us choose with wisdom, to have Elohim consume us now, so that Mashiach shines through us now!

ABBA YHWH, please consume everything in me that is not pleasing to You, and remove it far away from me forever and ever; in the Name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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