

ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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Pride vs. Humility

In the Race for Eternal Life

Ivrim (Hebrews) 12:1

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

Please notice that there are two different and separate things mentioned in this verse that hinder each individual person in the race he runs during his lifetime; that is, the race for eternal life. The first thing mentioned is “every encumbrance,” which consists of many things. These things are different from person to person. Whatever it is that hinders an individual from running a good race, i.e., attaining eternal life, he should set it aside, and not do it or have it to be a part of his life, in order that he might obtain eternal life.

The second item mentioned in the above verse that hinders is “the sin” which so easily causes each and every person to falter in this race. Please note that this sin is singular indicating that this sin is the same for every single person. This immediately brings up the question of just exactly what is this sin which is common to every single person and with which each and every one wrestles. Simply put, it is the sin of the self-will. It is the sin of self, exalting itself over everyone and everything. Scripture describes this sin as pride. This aspect of one’s fallen nature is perhaps one of the most resilient and most difficult to put aside because it is so very deceiving.

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 17:9

The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt; who can know it?

Self wants what it wants and will do anything to get it. It will lie, steal, cheat, and murder to get its own way. Yeshua taught this about the heart of man.

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."

Even though Yeshua lists pride as one of the evils that comes forth from the heart of man, it is also that which lies under each and every other of the evils listed. Self most accurately manifests itself in pride. Pride in itself is one of the evils manifested, but it is also the root of the others. The exaltation of self and the self needing to have its own way above every other thing or person is evil.

Mishle (Proverbs) 28:26

He that trusts in his own heart is a fool;

But whoso walks wisely, he shall be delivered.

Pride in a person's heart and life dictates that he will not trust in another, including YHWH. Pride dictates that there is no need to trust in any other except in self. Herein is the way that leads to death, because self cannot provide salvation nor escape from a certain terrifying judgment.

In these next two verses is an astonishing connection between pride and the way of destruction.

Matithyah (Matthew) 7:13

"Enter in by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby."

The English word "broad" comes from the Hebrew root word רחב – "rachav," which means "broad," "enlarge," or "widen." We find a form of this same word in the following verse.

Mishle (Proverbs) 21:4

A high look, and a proud heart,

Even the lamp of the wicked, is sin.

The English word "proud" in the above verse comes from the same Hebrew root word רחב. Yeshua, in teaching about the way that leads to death, is being very explicit in His teaching for those who have ears to hear and eyes to see - the way that is "broad" is the way of a proud heart.

Pride dictates that the problem cannot be "me," but rather, the problem has to be anywhere else but "me." Therefore, pride causes self to think that the solution is to be found elsewhere, that is, outside of self. For example, there are those who think that if the right person were to be president, then all the problems would be fixed. This is simply ignoring what Scripture teaches. On the other hand, perhaps some other political fix will do what is necessary, for example, the right law or the right policy, etc. However, there is simply nothing man can do that will fix his dilemma, politically or spiritually.

The problem is not in the wrong man being in office. It is not the fault of Congress. It is not all the crime or criminals. It is not the justice system run amok. It is not one's neighbor. It is not because more people have not accepted Yeshua as Mashiach. The problem is "self." Once a person comes to this realization, then a true fix is close at hand. The problem looks back at each individual person when he looks in a mirror.

Mishle (Proverbs) 16:25

***There is a way which seems right to a man,
But the end thereof is the way of death.***

Self and pride tell a person that his own way is the right way, but this way leads to nowhere good.

Mishle (Proverbs) 16:18

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

Please note this well: if there is pride in a person, then it is only a matter of time before destruction comes. The only way to stop this sure destruction from coming is to repent of the pride and to remove it completely from a person's life. Pride will tell a person that this may be true of others, but not "me." Pride will always result in death of the person who embraces it and allows it to be a part of his life.

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.***

Every single person who is proud of heart is an abomination to YHWH. That is the plain and simple truth of Scripture. A person can reason this away, but if he does, he does so to his own destruction. There are no exceptions; a person's heart cannot be lifted up with pride and not be an abomination to YHWH.

Furthermore, the phrase "hand join in hand" is an idiom that means that, though "many join together" believing that pride is okay, this will not stop the judgment from coming to each one of them.

Mishle (Proverbs) 11:2

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

Notice the contrast between pride and humility in this passage. With pride, there will be shame and destruction. There will be shame because self will be exposed for the great evil that it is for all to see during the judgment. However, with humility there is wisdom; the greater the humility, the greater the wisdom. Humility will be discussed more in detail shortly.

Mishle (Proverbs) 29:23

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

The choice before every single person is: Does one want honor? In the alternative, does he want to be dishonored? It is up to each individual. Pride deceives one into believing that honor can come through the exaltation of self. However, this is exactly opposite of the truth. Pride brings one down to dishonor. When one is humble of spirit, it shall bring him honor. The question is whether one is willing to pay the price and to remove all pride from his life.

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.***

Do you hate pride? It is easy to hate pride in others. In fact, there isn't any person who doesn't detest pride in others. The more pronounced the pride is in another person, the more disgusting that one thinks it is. However, does one hate that same pride in himself? Many times, it is not even seen for what it truly is, that is, the abominable sin before YHWH that He so greatly detests. This is due in large part to preaching which encourages this sin rather than puts this sin to death.

There are many ways in which pride manifests itself in a person's life. There are those who are proud of the things they have. Perhaps it is their home or land. Perhaps it is their car or boat. Perhaps it is their coin collection or some other trinkets they collect. Perhaps it is their prize pet or prize-winning livestock of which one is proud. If a person can possess it, then there is someone somewhere that is proud of it.

There are those who take great pride in their physical appearance. This can take many forms. For some it will be in the form of bodybuilding. For others it will take on the form of healthy nutrition and all that goes along with that mindset. For others still, it is all about what one wears and the designer clothes one must have to impress others. If what one is doing is to impress another, anyone at all, then pride is lurking somewhere in the shadows.

Then there are those who are proud of what they have done, their accomplishments. This can be anywhere from what one does as a profession, or employment, to his hobbies. It can even include what one has done for Messiah, like witnessing and bringing another to Messiah; or, perhaps going to the mission field on a mission trip. While many things in our lives can be, and are legitimate, it is what one does with them and how these things relate to one's everyday living that will make the difference between being prideful and being humble.

Still others are proud of the education they have attained. Others still are prideful in their personal abilities whether learned or natural. Then, there are those who may have had some type of special

experience of which they are particularly proud. There are those who are proud of whom they know and are not afraid to drop names whenever possible to elevate themselves in the eyes of another.

Perhaps there is no greater area in which one may find pride than in one's family. This is particularly so when it comes to one's children. It is very easy to be lifted up with pride in this area. One can be proud of what his child does. One has a tendency to be lifted up with pride whenever his children make noteworthy accomplishments in their lives. Furthermore, one is usually not afraid to let everyone know about it as well. Even if one is not proud of what they have done or who his children have become, one can be proud of them just because they are his children. Brothers and sisters in Mashiach, this is sin!

The truth is, that while a man may be the biological father of a child or a woman may have given birth to her child, that individual child still belongs to YHWH because He is the Creator of that child. The biological parents were only vessels YHWH used to bring that individual child into this world. Parents have nothing to be proud of in this matter. One's children are a gift from YHWH.

It does not matter what form pride takes. It does not matter the occasion of pride. Pride is sin. Moreover, this will lead one to destruction, no "ifs," no "buts," and most definitely, no exceptions!

Matityah (Matthew) 23:12

"And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted."

Therefore, many will say to me, "Well then, if I am not supposed to be proud of my children and what they have accomplished, then what am I to do?" I am glad this question has been asked. The answer is found in Scripture.

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 4:7

For who regards you as superior? 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 truth of the matter is this. There is not one single thing in one's life that he can rightly call his own. Every single thing a person has, he has received from somewhere or from someone, including the talents and abilities with which he was born or which he learned. Moreover, if he learned them, then he was given the ability to learn them, but did not come by them on his own. Shaul asks the question, since one has received everything that he has, why is one boasting as if he had not received it? That is a pretty good question; don't you think?

The same is true for one's children as well. They do not have anything that they have not received from somewhere or someone else. So, from where has one received all these things?

Ya'aqov (James) 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow.

The testimony is clear from cover to cover in Scripture: all that one enjoys is from our heavenly Father, the Creator. All the wonderful things of this world that one enjoys, water, food, even our next breath, is a gift from our Creator. There is absolutely no room for boasting. One exists because He has willed it so.

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 6:19-20

***19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which you have from Elohim? And you are not your own;
20 for you were bought with a price; glorify Elohim therefore in your body.***

Furthermore, not only has one received everything he has from his Creator, but also, Yeshua came in the form of a man and purchased redemption for His creation. He bought each person with His own Blood. Not only is all that one enjoys from our heavenly Father, but each individual belongs to Him. One does not belong to himself. Since one does not belong to himself, then where is there any room for boasting? There simply is no room for pride!

Now take careful note of what these next passages teach on how one is to relate to his children.

Mishle (Proverbs) 23:15-16

***15 My son, if your heart be wise,
My heart will be glad, even mine;
16 Yes, my heart will rejoice,
When your lips speak right things.***

When one's child does something noteworthy, then he is to be glad and he is to rejoice. When one's child shows wisdom, then he is to lift his voice in praise to Him who gave his child the talents and abilities to do what he has done.

Mishle (Proverbs) 23:24-25

***24 The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice;
And he that begets a wise child will have joy of him.
25 Let your father and your mother be glad,
And let her that bore you rejoice.***

In order for this joy to be complete, then one is to teach his child to rejoice also and to praise our heavenly Father for what He has enabled him to be able to do. One is to teach his children to walk in humility before our heavenly Father.

However, instead of teaching one's child to be humble, most parents teach their children to be full of pride. Surely, this will not only cause the downfall of the parent, but also his children. Let one be wise in the matters YHWH has taught him concerning pride and humility, and let him teach his children to be wise, walking before YHWH with knowledge and the understanding that he is not his own, that everything he has is from our heavenly Father, and that one is to do His will rather than his own will.

Each person should be careful not to think in his heart and mind that this is just a matter of semantics, for many will say that this is what he means when he says that he is "proud" of his children. If this is what one means, then he should stop saying it in a way that Scripture clearly condemns.

So how does one be humble? What does it mean for one to be humble?

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 8:3

"And He humbled you, and caused you to hunger, and fed you with manna, which you knew not, neither did your fathers know; that He might make you know that man does not live by bread only, but by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of YHWH does man live."

First, it begins with the knowledge and understanding that true life does not consist of the things found in this world. There is nothing in this world that is not temporary. That which true life consists of is every word that comes forth from YHWH. Even more specifically, true life is found in the Word made flesh, Yeshua our Mashiach.

Yochanan (John) 6:47-51

47 "Amein, Amein, I say to you, he that believes has eternal life.

48 I am the bread of life.

49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.

50 This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if any man eats of this bread, he shall live forever; yes and the bread which I will give is My flesh, for the life of the world."

Many start on the road towards humility only to turn back because the cares of this world remove their focus off Mashiach Yeshua. There is nothing in this world that can give one life. Owning certain things cannot give one life. Having certain people in a political office cannot give one life. Having the right pastor cannot give one life. Going to the right church cannot give one life. Only YHWH our Elohim through Mashiach Yeshua can give a person life, and that, abundantly! One needs to be focused upon His kingdom and doing His work. In this way, one will come to eternal life. This is not to suggest that one earns eternal life through what he does; but rather, this acknowledges that one has been given eternal life as a gift through Mashiach Yeshua and he is not squandering that gift through pride.

Matithyah (Matthew) 6:33

"But you seek first His kingdom, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you."

Pride attempts to convince each person that he needs to be seeking the things of this world in order to get by. However, YHWH has promised that if one will do His will, then He will provide for his every need. This is not to say that it will all be easy and a bed of roses. To the contrary, doing the will of our heavenly Father is a very challenging task, a task that takes all of one's focus and effort to do it well. However, if a person has pride in anything in his life, then this will be a great hindrance to him, and at some point, a decision must be made as to which one it will be: either His will or one's own will. Each person will make this decision.

Pride is a killer! If there is pride in your life, then get rid of it before it is too late.

ABBA YHWH, please remove every bit of pride from our lives and teach us to walk in humility before you at all times; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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