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Submission

Ephesians 5:23

For the husband is the head of the wife, as Mashiach also is the head of the assembly, being Himself the savior of the body.

Submission comes in two basic forms. It can either be forced or freely given. There are ample examples of both in Scripture, with more examples of forced submission. In this study we will examine some of both. This is a very important subject today as there are many in the Hebrew Roots movement who are attempting to force the matter of subjection upon others. While this may appear to work on the surface, true submission must be manifested in the *heart* of each individual.

This reminds me of the story of the little boy who went to school after the first day of summer. Needless to say, he was not real thrilled about being back in school. When it came time for all the children to sit down in their chairs this particular little boy continued to stand. The teacher told the boy to sit down. He told his teacher that he was not going to sit down; he wanted to stand. The teacher went to the little boy and sternly told him to sit down. To which he replied, "No!" The teacher, exasperated, forced the little boy to sit in his chair. As the teacher walked away, the little boy called out to the teacher, "I may be sitting down on the outside, but on the inside I am still standing."

The teacher could force submission in the outward appearance, but she could not change the condition and desire of the little boy's heart. Likewise, this is also true in other relationships, particularly the husband and wife relationship. It is the husband/wife relationship that has captured our interest in this study as it has a direct correlation to the relationship between Mashiach and His bride. The ideal husband/wife relationship is mirrored in the relationship between Mashiach and those who are closest to Him. But is this what one sees today among those who claim to follow Mashiach? Honestly, this is not what is seen very often.

There are other things that enter into this discussion concerning submission regardless of whether it is dealing with husband/wife, authority/civilian, parents/children, or one to another. These other concerns are authority and rebellion. We have already written articles on

[authority](#) and [rebellion](#), so in this study they will only be touched upon briefly as they pertain directly to submission.

One of the major struggles of individuals when it comes to submission is control; specifically, relinquishing control. This, in turn, has its roots in the exaltation of self – the self-will, selfishness, and all sorts of other words hyphenated with “self” rather than the subjugation and death of self; i.e., selfish desires. When it comes to self, if allowed self will do nearly anything at all to be in control of any given situation. If self is not in control, then it often attempts to rear its ugly head and put itself in control by any means possible. Self does not want to be in submission. Self does not want to be controlled, but to control.

Ya’aqov (James) 4:1

What is the source of the quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures which wage war in your members?

All conflicts and quarrels have their roots in one or more persons not getting his or her way and then that person(s) attempting to achieve that which has heretofore eluded him/her. Dealing with such a person can be frustrating, even bordering on impossible.

One of the key elements of submission is the element of trust. Trust is nearly always absent in conflicts. This trust also comes in two basic forms: trust of our heavenly Father and trust of one another. While trust of man is tenuous many times, this is not true of YHWH our Elohim. He is altogether trustworthy. In order to understand this concept we need to examine one particular word. Here is a passage in which this word occurs twice in some form.

Yochanan (John) 3:12

“If I told you earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?”

The word in which we are interested at present in the above passage is translated as the word “believe.” It comes from the Hebrew word אָמַן – “emun.” It is often seen in the form of אֱמוּנָה or אֱמוּנָה – “emunah,” which means “faith” or “trust.” The Hebrew root means “to depend upon.” It is when we begin to understand the root meaning that we begin to understand the basic concept of what it means to have faith. To have faith in another means that one puts his dependence in and upon that other person. In order for one to depend upon another means that he is in submission to that other person.

In our case we absolutely depend upon our Creator for the air we breathe. While most of the time we do not consciously recognize this blessing or this dependence, let alone acknowledge it, it is true. But we depend upon Him not only for the blessing of the air we breathe, but also for the earth upon which we walk, which in turn provides the food that we eat. The water which we drink and with which we bathe is also a great blessing upon which we greatly depend. Now, we typically do not put our trust or faith in these things, and rightly so. However, should

one not put his faith and trust in the One who provides these things that are absolutely necessary for our lives? To be sure!

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 33:16

he shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; his bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.

The truth is that we are dependent upon our Creator, especially for His daily provisions; however, most do not wish to be in submission to Him.

Contained within the very idea and concept of faith is the concept of submission. They cannot be separated. If one is going to truly have faith in his Creator, then He must submit to Him. Without that submission or dependence upon Him, then there is no true faith.

Ya'aqov (James) 2:23

and the scripture was fulfilled which says,

And Avraham believed Elohim,

and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness;

and he was called the friend of Elohim.

We see in this example that Avraham believed what Elohim told him. But what does this mean exactly that he “believed” Elohim? This verse is quoting B’reshit 15:6 and the word used to denote “believed” in that passage is a form of the word אָמַן – “emun.”

Ya'aqov (James) 2:21

Was not Avraham our father justified by works, in that he offered up Yitzchaq his son upon the altar?

YHWH told Avraham that he would become a great nation through his son Yitzchaq. But then YHWH told him to go and offer up this very son as a burnt offering. Avraham believed and depended upon YHWH so much that he acted in obedience to His word to him. Scripture states that Avraham “believed” Elohim. Do you see that when it makes this statement it also means that Avraham “submitted” to Elohim? There can be no true relationship between the Creator and one of His creatures without submission. Submission brings obedience to His will, to His Voice.

It is this that each person must also come to embrace. If we are going to be a part of His kingdom, then we must submit to Him, to His every word. But this submission must be from the heart, not just outwardly. All too many down through the ages and even today simply do what they perceive as being required of them by Elohim and nothing more. Many have the attitude of: what is the minimum that can be done and still gain eternal life? In fact, many do that, and then do as much in the world as they seemingly can get away with. This is not a heart of submission. This is a heart of rebellion and it is not pleasing to YHWH our Elohim. With this type of attitude one will not gain eternal life.

With these things in mind, let us reconsider this passage.

Yochanan (John) 3:12

“If I told you earthly things and you believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of heavenly things?”

Now that we understand more fully this idea of “believe” could we not also render the above passage in this manner and also do justice to it?

“If I told you earthly things and you submit not, how shall you submit if I tell you of heavenly things?”

Here is the truth of this matter. If one cannot submit to earthly authority, then he will not submit to heavenly authority! This is so because all earthly authority is established by YHWH our Elohim and has its authority granted by Him.

Before Avraham became known as the “friend” of Elohim, he was known as His servant. One must be a worthy servant before he can be elevated or promoted to the position of “friend.” This no less true when we consider our relationship with YHWH our Elohim. If one cannot serve Him with a pure heart, then how can such a person be His friend? Honestly, he cannot!

There are many examples in Scripture of one person or a nation forcing another into submission. This may seem to work for a season, but eventually if a person or a nation is not being in submission to those in authority over them by choice, then at some point open rebellion will be manifest, for this is what is in the heart.

Whether a person is in submission to another or not is a matter of choice. Each person decides to whom he will be in submission. Some decide that the only person to whom he will be in submission is himself and no other. Others decide that they will be in submission to some higher authority, whether that is earthly or spiritual. But what we need to understand at this point is that every person makes this choice for himself. As we pointed out above, while a person can be forced into submission outwardly, it is what is in the heart that truly counts. And it is here that true submission can never be forced!

Sadly, we have seen submission forced on others way too often. When this attempt is made, it never has a good outcome. Our heavenly Father’s Torah is not some club to be wielded against others, to be used to force subjugation of those who see things differently. All too often this is seen in the husband/wife relationship. While it may be more common for the man to do this towards his wife, it also happens in the reverse at times, particularly when the wife comes to the knowledge of the truth before her husband. In her desire for her mate to also come to know the truth, sometimes she attempts to force the truth into him. This does not work.

However, the more common example is the husband being too authoritarian. If a husband is oppressive towards his wife or children, he will most likely drive them away from himself and possibly even out of the kingdom of YHWH our Elohim.

Matithyah (Matthew) 18:6

“But whoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on Me to stumble, it would be better for him that a great millstone should be hung around his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.”

Yes, Scripture does teach us that the husband is the head over his wife. And this is supposed to be in the same way that Mashiach Yeshua was the head of His people. And how did Mashiach treat His people? Did He not lay down His life for them? To be sure! In the same way then, the husband is to lay down his life for his wife.

Sadly, when a man does his very best to be this type of man, centered in Mashiach and hearing and obeying His Voice and treating His wife the way that he should, following the example of Mashiach, the wife all too often takes advantage of this. All too often she will see this as weakness and attempt to take authority in the family and rule, because she does not understand the quiet strength of her husband.

Do you remember the centurion who came to Yeshua because his servant was sick and needed healing?

Matithyah (Matthew) 8:9

“For I also am a man under authority, having under myself soldiers; and I say to this one, ‘Go’, and he goes; and to another, ‘Come’, and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this’, and he does it.”

When Mashiach Yeshua heard these words He said that He had not found such great faith in all of Israel. Do you see what Mashiach Yeshua is saying? If one is to have authority he must be in submission to authority over him. Wives, do you understand that in order for your husband to be the authority figure that YHWH created him to be, he must be in submission to all the authority of his Creator? So when he serves you and lays down his life for you, it is not weakness, but great strength and faith. When he does not mistreat you, do not give back to him harshness just because he does not and will not respond in like manner!

Let us also not miss that this “great faith” that Yeshua spoke of in this centurion was the result of his being in submission to those in authority over him. True faith, yea, even great faith always has within it the element of being in submission to all those in authority over us. Always! In fact, one cannot have great faith without being in submission to those in authority over us. If one wants to have great faith, then this must be true in his life for that great faith to be realized.

Now we have said all that up to here to come to this point. The bride of Mashiach Yeshua must be in submission to her Husband. If one is not in total and complete submission to Mashiach, then such a person cannot be a part of His bride. Furthermore, Mashiach Yeshua will never force one into submitting to Him and His authority. Never!

If you truly have a desire to be a part of His bride, then you must make the choice to be in submission to Him in all things. This means that you must hear and obey His Voice. This means that you must submit to all authority that He has set over you. Furthermore, this submission must come from the heart. It must be done willingly and lovingly.

Yochanan (John) 14:15

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”

This is a voluntary matter. It is not something that can be forced in any way. Keep this in mind as we learn to submit to Him in all things. Keep this in mind for your fellow brothers and sisters as they also learn to submit to Him in all things. If you want the grace of YHWH to reign in your life, then give it abundantly.

Please let us understand that our Creator is not an Elohim of confusion.

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 14:33a

For Elohim is not an Elohim of confusion, but of peace.

It is because YHWH our Elohim is an Elohim of order that He placed in this world an order for all things. It is when things get out of order that others get hurt. If things are in order, then no one can get hurt. There are those in this world who have been given authority to maintain His order. If one goes against the authority that YHWH established, then he is going against YHWH Himself and is not in submission to YHWH. And if he is not in submission to His authority, then he cannot be a part of His bride.

Now we need to clarify a couple of things at this point with regards to earthly authority and our submission to it. Sometimes that earthly authority goes awry. When that happens what are we to do as followers of Mashiach Yeshua?

Matithyah (Matthew) 10:23

“But when they persecute you in this city, flee into the next; for verily I say to you, you shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of man has come.”

In all my studies of Scripture for these many decades I have never once found where we are commanded to “fix” the worldly system. What I see is that we are to be in submission to it. However, we are to do this only up to and until that point that it transgresses the commands of YHWH, thereby attempting to force His people to transgress His commandments as well. Do you realize that the Babylonian system cannot be fixed? Do you realize that the Babylonian system has been slated for destruction by YHWH? Do you understand that this is why we are

commanded to come out of that system at the appropriate time so that we too will not be destroyed? But then one must be in submission to YHWH and to all of His ways in order to see these things in their proper light. We are not commanded to fix the worldly Babylonian system, but to come out of it and to build His kingdom, not the world's kingdom!

We are commanded to be in submission to man's authority that YHWH has set up in this world. However, there are times when that authority of man goes contrary to the authority of YHWH. When that happens then we are to flee. When that happens there is no fixing it!

We as His people are to be in submission to every word that proceeds from His mouth. We cannot make exemptions or exclusions. We cannot make excuses. We must submit to His authority in every way. We cannot afford for even the smallest root of rebellion to be present in our minds or hearts.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 8:3

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

According to Torah, this submission to YHWH, to His commandments, to His Voice, is an all or nothing proposition. No man has the luxury of going through and picking and choosing which commandments he wants to keep and which ones he will not keep. We must obey them all. If we break even one commandment, then we are guilty of breaking them all.

Ya'aqov (James) 2:10

For whosoever shall keep the whole Torah, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all.

And if one does not keep the whole Torah, then according to Torah, that man is cursed.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 27:26

"Cursed is he that confirms not the words of this Torah to do them. And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'"

Can you say, "Amein"? Whether a person says "amein" or not, whether a person agrees with this or not, if he does not do all of Torah, then he is cursed by YHWH. Plain and simple! This is what Torah says.

This is what submission is about: submitting to every word that has come from the mouth of YHWH our Elohim. Submission is about understanding that we are totally and completely dependent upon YHWH our Elohim for our life and everything in it.

To be in submission to YHWH our Elohim means that we are hearing and obeying His Voice; in a word, “shema.” When we shema His Voice, then we are in submission. When we do not shema His Voice, then we are not in submission.

To whom are you in submission?

Ephesians 5:23

For the husband is the head of the wife, as Mashiach also is the head of the assembly, being Himself the savior of the body.

Does your life testify to those around you that Mashiach Yeshua is your Head? Do you live in submission to Him in all things?

Submission is not about those who are under your authority. Submission is about to whom you are submitted. So, to whom are you submitted?

Ephesians 5:21

subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Mashiach.

Do not forget, brethren that your earthly wife is also your sister in Mashiach Yeshua. Likewise, dear sisters, do not forget that your earthly husband is also your brother in Mashiach. As such, we are to be in submission to one another, because this is right in His eyes. Let us be careful not to lord it over one another as is the custom in the world.

Matithyah (Matthew) 20:25

But Yeshua called them to Himself, and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.”

ABBA YHWH, give us willing hearts to be in submission to You, to Mashiach, and to one another, in the love of Mashiach; for it is in His name we pray.

Amein and amein.

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