



Nasso

(lift)

B'midbar [Numbers] 4:21-7:89

הברית החדשה

HaB'rit HaChadashah

(the new covenant)

Yochanan [John] 8:1-8

We have chosen this portion from the Brit because it reminds us of that passage from this week's Parasha concerning the separation of someone suspected of infidelity.

Some may be wondering why we are taking the time to comment upon this particular passage from the Brit since it is not in all the Greek manuscripts. This portion is not contained in many of the earliest manuscripts. The earliest manuscript it is found in is Codex Bezae. Some manuscripts place it at the end of John's Gospel and others even place it at the end of Luke's Gospel. It is most likely a recounting of a true incident from the life of Yeshua, but where should one put it? It would seem to us that this is the correct place. Why? Because this is where the Aramaic Peshitta places the story. It would seem that this is the correct location and we are convinced that the Peshitta verifies and validates this portion of Scripture's authenticity.

Prayer Time!

Yochanan [John] 8:1

And Yeshua went to the Mount of Olives.

It was common for Yeshua to go to the Mount of Olives for prayer when He was in this area. This was particularly true during the last week of His life in which He spent time in the Temple preaching and teaching, but then would go to the Mount of Olives to pray.

Luqa [Luke] 22:39-41

39 And He came out, and went, as His custom was, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him.

40 And when He was at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you enter not into temptation."

41 And He was parted from them about a stone's throw; and He knelt down and prayed.

It was in this place that Yehudah (Judas) brought the temple guards and betrayed Yeshua into their hands with a kiss.

Luqa [Luke] 22:47

While He was still speaking, behold, a multitude, and he that was called Yehudah, one of the twelve, went before them; and he drew near to Yeshua to kiss Him.

When a person has the blessed habit of praying, those close to him will know it, and it is not unusual for Satan to make an attempt to use that against him. We see this same thing happen to Dani'el when the other men of the king's court were jealous of him and used his devotion against him to trick the king into throwing Dani'el into the lions' den.

Men who are used mightily of YHWH are men of prayer and devotion to YHWH.

Taught By the Master

Yochanan [John] 8:2

And early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down, and taught them.

What a blessing these people were experiencing and they were not even aware of it! A good portion of what we know that Yeshua taught during this last week is recorded in the four Besorot (Gospels). From Matithyah chapter 21 forward, from Marqos chapter 11 forward, from Luqa chapter 19 forward, and from Yochanan chapter 12 forward, all contain the teachings of Mashiach Yeshua during the final days of His life. This is a significant portion of the Besorot. The religious leaders of Israel had been conspiring against Yeshua to put Him to death almost from the very beginning of His public ministry.

Marqos [Mark] 3:6

And the Pharisees went out, and immediately with the Herodians took counsel against Him, how they might destroy Him.

Notice that this is right at the beginning of His public ministry. While these leaders conspired for over three years on how to kill Him, it seems apparent to us that His teaching in the temple this last week of His life was more than they could stomach. It seems to have literally pushed them over the edge and caused them to act against Him.

We know that at least one of the incidents of Yeshua chasing out the money changers out of the temple happened during these last few days.

Matithyah [Matthew] 21:12

And Yeshua entered into the temple of the Elohim, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold the doves;

Even in this type of incident He was teaching those who would follow Him. He was showing to us the path of walking a righteous life, a path that oftentimes puts one at odds with the religious leaders of one's time. Such is the case here. While the passage that we are studying in this week's Brit portion does not take place during the last week of Yeshua's life, it nonetheless shows us the contention that was building between Yeshua and those who wanted to rule over the people in a manner that was not pleasing to YHWH.

The Scribes and Pharisees

Yochanan [John] 8:3

And the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery; and having set her in the midst,

We learn in the previous chapter (7:2) that this was at the time of Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths. This is significant, because there were prostitutes that went from booth to booth offering their services during this time of Israel's history. It was not uncommon for the men (particularly the religious leaders) of that day to partake of such wanton pleasure. Surely, they were not conducting themselves in a manner to bring the Spirit of the Holy One of Israel upon them or into their midst!

These same scribes and Pharisees had made an attempt just the day before, to trap Yeshua and had failed; failed in utter humiliation at the hand of Yeshua. This day they had come up with a plan during the night that in their own twisted minds they were convinced would do what they wanted it to do: give them occasion to accuse Yeshua before the people.

They placed before Yeshua an either/or choice. He could choose to keep the Torah Moshe and at the same time violate the Roman law. Or, He could choose to keep the Roman law and violate the Torah Moshe. They saw no way out for Him. To them it was a perfect setup!

The Set-up

Yochanan [John] 8:4

they say to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been taken in adultery, in the very act."

The wickedness of this plan is revealed from the very beginning. For if she was actually taken in the act of adultery, and there is no doubt that she was, then where was the man who was just as equally guilty of adultery? This woman was set up! It was most likely that she was lured into bed by one of the very religious leaders that stood there that day accusing her. She was guilty of adultery; that is unquestioned.

However, Yeshua knew that if this was genuine, there should also be a man present before Him as well.

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 20:10

And the man that commits adultery with another man's wife, even he that commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

This commandment is also found in Devarim 22:22. In both places it clearly state that both the man and the woman caught in adultery are worthy of the death sentence.

Standing before Yeshua this day was only the woman. Most likely it was part of the trap that they were setting for Yeshua that day as well as an indication of this trap's own unrighteous nature.

The Bait and the Trap

Yochanan [John] 8:5

"Now in the Torah Moshe commands us to stone such; what then do you say?"

The Pharisees and scribes then "quote" the Torah to Yeshua; who just happened to be the Author of the Torah! However, they didn't really quote it, just kind of made reference to it. They knew full well that they could not quote it and still appear to be righteous, for they each knew the unsavory plot that they were each involved in perpetrating upon Yeshua could not be done without twisting the Torah.

The bait they were using was the Torah itself. How could any wise and well-respected Torah teacher disagree or teach against what the Torah Moshe clearly stated? The bait was to get Yeshua to cast the first stone.

Of course, what they did not understand was that He had every right; in fact, He was the only one in that crowd that day who did have the right to condemn that women for this sin or any other sin.

The trap had been set with the bait set squarely before Yeshua. Would He take the bait? They would soon know!

A Gentle Answer

Yochanan [John] 8:6

And this they said, trying Him, that they might have reason to accuse Him. But Yeshua stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground.

What Yeshua did next was totally unexpected by the Pharisees and scribes.

I have had the occasion a few times in my life, in which, while I was preaching a message, if a pin were to have been dropped, it could have been heard. I suspect that such was this time. The people also knew that the Pharisees and scribes were trying to trap Yeshua. The tension in the air at this very moment must have been extreme! The scribes and Pharisees were wanting to trap Yeshua and literally waiting with baited breath. The crowd, somewhat caught in the middle and not knowing what to do, gazed on with great anxiety, hoping that somehow their favorite teacher of the Torah would be able to get out of this ingeniously set trap. Then there were the twelve, who understood the gravity of this situation only a little, yet enough to realize that not only was Yeshua's life in jeopardy, but their own lives could also hang in the balance right along with Yeshua's. So with trepidation, they looked on, scarcely breathing.

Then there was Yeshua Himself, calm, collected, and in control! After politely allowing them to present their well thought out trap to Him, He simply bends down and begins writing in the dirt, ignoring them for the moment.

Truly, Yeshua understood this proverb.

Mishle [Proverbs] 15:1

***A soft answer turns away wrath;
But a grievous word stirs up anger.***

If more of us would learn this lesson, and maintain our silence for a season before we answer, our lives would be filled much more with peace and tranquility! It is when we answer quickly, when the emotions are flooding in upon us, that we do harm to ourselves and to those whom we love, and at times even to His kingdom.

A Perfect Answer

Yochanan [John] 8:7

But when they continued asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her."

After Yeshua bent down and began writing, they looked at one another in disbelief. Was He just going to ignore them? What was He doing? They grew impatient to spring their trap. So, they pressed Him for an answer.

The one thing that these Pharisees and scribes did not expect was for the trap to be laid back upon themselves. They had spent the night season coming up with what they thought was a perfect trap. And here in an instant, they themselves were about to be caught in it.

Mishle [Proverbs] 1:10-18

- 10** *My son, if sinners entice you,
Do not consent.*
- 11** *If they say, "Come with us,
Let us lay wait for blood;
Let us ambush the innocent without cause;*
- 12** *Let us swallow them up alive as Sheol,
And whole, as those that go down into the pit;*
- 13** *We shall find all precious substance;
We shall fill our houses with spoil;*
- 14** *You shall cast your lot among us;
We will all have one purse."*
- 15** *My son, do not walk in the way with them;
Refrain your foot from their path;*
- 16** *For their feet run to evil,
And they make haste to shed blood.*
- 17** *For in vain is the net spread
In the sight of any bird;*
- 18** *And these lay wait for their own blood;
They ambush their own lives.*

These men who choose to go after the innocent in an attempt to destroy, only serve to destroy themselves; as the trap that one lays for an innocent man, YHWH lays back upon those who do the entrapping. May it ever be so!

Kohelet [Ecclesiastes] 3:7b

a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

Yeshua truly understood this!

Writing?

Yochanan [John] 8:8

And again He stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground.

Yeshua then bends down and writes in the dirt once again. What Yeshua wrote on the ground we are not told. There have been many postulations as to what He wrote in the dirt that day. Some have supposed that He wrote the Ten Commandments. Some have guessed that He wrote the names of those men with whom this woman had slept. There have been a variety of things suggested as to what Yeshua wrote. Let us consider two passages of Scripture in the context of this study that also contain incidents from the Tanak concerning writing.

Dani'el 5:5

In the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

The message written here was one of impending doom upon the intended recipient of the message. Could Yeshua have written those same words this day?

But my personal favorite is the following passage.

Yermeyah [Jeremiah] 17:13

"YHWH, the hope of Israel, all that forsake You shall be put to shame. They that depart from Me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken YHWH, the fountain of living waters."

Yeshua wrote twice in the earth. Perhaps He wrote the above passage the first time and then the second time He bent down, He began writing the names of those who had forsaken YHWH underneath this passage he had already etched in the dirt; those from the Tanak that did not have a portion in the Olam Haba. If this is what He did, it would be a startling object lesson; one that they would not soon forget.

Perhaps as the realization of what Yeshua was doing began to dawn upon these men, perhaps they began leaving before He had an opportunity to add their name to the list.

Eldest

Yochanan [John] 8:9

And they, when they heard it, went out one by one, beginning from the eldest, even to the youngest; and Yeshua was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the midst.

It is amazing what age and experience brings us. Hopefully, it is wisdom, but it is not always so. Even though these religious leaders, some apparently aged, had conspired against an innocent man, whatever it was that Yeshua wrote in the dirt, there was a momentary breakthrough in the hardness of their hearts. That momentary dawning began with the eldest and went down the ranks of age.

Tehillim [Psalm] 95:6-11

- 6 Come, let us worship and bow down;
 Let us kneel before YHWH our Maker;***
- 7 For He is our Elohim,
 And we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.
 To-day, that you would hear His Voice!***
- 8 Harden not your heart, as at Meribah,
 As in the day of Massah in the wilderness;***
- 9 When your fathers tempted Me,
 Proved me, and saw My work.***
- 10 Forty years long was I grieved with that generation,
 And said, "It is a people that do err in their heart,
 And they have not known My ways;***
- 11 Wherefore I swore in My wrath,
 That they should not enter into My rest."***

We need to be very careful about doing things that harden one's heart. For if we do what hardens the heart, at some point one's heart will become so hard, that the only thing left to do is to break the person.

Yeshayah [Isaiah] 30:14

And he shall break it as a potter's vessel is broken, breaking it in pieces without sparing; so that there shall not be found among the pieces thereof a shard wherewith to take fire from the hearth, or to dip up water out of the cistern.

For further study read Yermeyah 19:1-15.

Yeshua Speaks to the Woman

Yochanan [John] 8:10

And Yeshua straightened up, and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no man condemn you?"

When Yeshua knew that all the men who had brought this woman before Him had realized their folly and had left, He stood up and spoke to the woman. It is interesting to note that Yeshua already knew the answer to His question that He posed to this woman. But He posed it not to gain knowledge, for He already knew, but rather so that the woman would come to the realization of what had just happened.

No Condemnation!

Yochanan [John] 8:11

And she said, "No man, Adon." And Yeshua said, "Neither do I condemn you; go your way; from now on sin no more."

She had been taken in the act of adultery. She knew from the beginning that she had been set up and was most likely about to die. She knew what Torah said. She knew she was worthy of being stoned. As such, she remained silent until spoken to by Yeshua. She did not beg or plead for mercy throughout this whole ordeal. She must have been resigned to what appeared to be her fate – death. It seemed rather sure from her perspective.

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Mashiach Yeshua, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

My brethren, we need to learn this lesson quickly and well, realizing that the flesh profits us nothing. We need to stop pursuing those things of the flesh and pursue those things of the Spirit that have eternal value and will not only lift up and edify ourselves, but especially the whole household of faith!

Galatians 5:1

For freedom did Mashiach set us free; stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage.

And what is bondage? It is sin!

Romans 8:10-16

10 And if Mashiach is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.

11 But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Yeshua from the dead dwells in you, He that raised up Mashiach Yeshua from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwells in you.

12 So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh;

13 for if you live after the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of Elohim, these are sons of Elohim.

15 For you received not the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father."

16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are children of Elohim.

Let each one of us endeavor in our every action and word to walk not after the flesh, but rather that we walk after the will of Him who not only raised Yeshua from the grave, but gives life to all who come through Yeshua our Mashiach to the Father of all life, YHWH our Elohim!

ABBA YHWH, we ask that we each understand that if You do not condemn us, then there is no room for condemnation between us. Let us each walk in the Spirit, understanding the times in which we live, so that You may be made manifest through each one of us; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach we pray. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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