

בְּשַׁלַּח

## B'shalach

(send away)

### Shemot [Exodus] 13:17-17:16

#### Quick and Easy

##### *Shemot (Exodus) 13:17*

***And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had sent away the people, that Elohim led them not by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for Elohim said, "Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and they return to Egypt."***

This is one of those verses that is quite intriguing to us today. This verse tells us that even though YHWH was going to take His people Israel into the Promised Land, He did not do it immediately. In the overall scheme of things, the land into which YHWH was actually taking them was not all that far. It was only about 140 miles away. One of the things that this passage tells us, is that it was YHWH's choice not to take His people by the quickest way. YHWH even tells us why He did not take them directly there to the Promised Land.

YHWH was concerned that His people would change their minds about being His people and return to living in Egypt when they saw war. Notice that YHWH does not say "if" they see war, but rather "when" they see war. Going into the Promised Land, one is pretty much guaranteed to see war of some kind. Just look at it today. It is torn by war. This is mostly due to the reality that those who live there do not live according to Torah in the way that is pleasing to YHWH. It is only when we live in the Land that He promised to Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'aqov according to His ways which He commanded us through Moshe, that He will give us peace.

In following after YHWH, one of the lessons that we must all learn, is that following YHWH does not mean always taking the easy way. In fact, it rarely, if ever, means taking the easy road. The easy road is typically taken by those who want things their own way and they want them right now. This is the road offered by Satan to those who would follow after him.

Three times it is recorded for our instruction that Satan came and tempted Yeshua with the easy and quick way. Each time Yeshua refused to take the easy way, but rather continued to walk on the path

that was difficult, long and trying. He walked the path of purification. Not that He personally needed to be purified, but to show us the way to YHWH.

***Matityah (Matthew) 7:13-14***

***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.***

***14 For narrow is the gate, and difficult the way, that leads to life, and few are they that find it."***

Yeshua in teaching His talmidim, taught them that the way to life was fraught with difficulties and that only a few actually travel that path. The majority of people actually travel the path this is easy to follow. In electronics and electricity it is called the path of least resistance. This is the path that electricity will naturally follow.

Likewise, those who choose to walk in the natural, also known as walking in the flesh, will take the path of least resistance.

***Qorintyah (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians) 2:14***

***The natural man doesn't receive the things of Elohim's Spirit, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned.***

YHWH Himself through one of His prophets tells us that His thoughts are far above ours.

***Yeshayah (Isaiah) 55:8-9***

***8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," says YHWH.***

***9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."***

In part, the way of YHWH is to shun the easy way of the unrighteous and wicked and to walk the path which is full of hardship and difficulty. This way is a way of purification. It is through the trials of life that YHWH brings forth from the depths of our hearts, what is there for us to see and to correct, so that little by little the image of His Son Mashiach Yeshua can be perfected in us.

Here is the question that we are constantly dealing with in this life: How badly do I want eternal life?

Do I want eternal life badly enough to give up what stands between myself and gaining this most precious of gifts? Or, do I simply desire to take the path of least resistance? When I get into a tough and difficult situation do I look for the easiest and shortest route back to my life of ease and comfort? If so, then such a one is most likely not walking the path that YHWH would desire for us to walk.

Let us consider Avraham as he walked with YHWH. Do not suppose that it was easy for Avraham to bind his son to offer him up as a burnt offering to YHWH. It was no easier for Avraham to do this than it would be for you or me to do this. Yet he chose to walk the narrow way. Or, let us consider Yitzchak in

allowing himself to be bound. He was a young man in the prime of his strength and his father Avraham was well over a hundred years old. Yitzchak could have easily overpowered his own father and said “no”, yet he submitted to the will of his father, believing that his father knew what he was doing. Would you do that?

Or, let us consider Ya’aqov when he deceived his own father at the prompting of his mother and suffered the murderous hate of this brother Esau as a result of this action. Yet, YHWH greatly blessed him for his effort in obtaining the birthright and the blessing; and the promises YHWH gave to Avraham and then to Yitzchak were passed on to him. By Ya’aqov’s own testimony, most of the days of his life were bitter as he testified about his life to Pharaoh.

Or, let us consider Moshe, who in leading the stubborn and stiff-necked people Israel allowed his anger to get out of control and was banned from crossing over the Yarden (Jordan) River. Yet, he continued to lead the people of Israel all the rest of his days knowing that he would not be allowed to cross over. He was sorely tried again and again by his own people, yet he loved them all with the love of YHWH.

We could consider many more as recorded in Scripture and even more as recorded in history. The point of us considering this is to show that the true path to YHWH is full of difficulties, trials, and tribulations. And how are we to respond to these as they come our way?

***Ya’aqov (James) 1:2***

***Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials.***

When we enter into a difficult situation or trial or tribulation we are to consider it a joy. Why?

***Ya’aqov (James) 1:3***

***Knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.***

It is this trait of endurance that we absolutely need for eternal life. Let’s face it, eternity is a very long time! And if a person does not have the trait of endurance he just will not be able to last through eternity. Therefore, YHWH in His great wisdom takes us on a journey in this life to produce this very important and needed trait in each one of us.

***Luqa (Luke) 21:19***

***“By your endurance you will gain your lives.”***

Yeshua taught us that it is through one’s own endurance that he gains life. This is not to say that salvation is through one’s own efforts or works or actions. However, once a person has been given the gift of life from Mashiach Yeshua, then it is what he does with that gift that will make the difference. As with any gift a person can misuse and squander a gift or a person can use the gift as it was intended to be used by the giver of that gift. This is no less true of the gift of eternal life. If one squanders the gift of

eternal life, then he will not retain the gift for long. However, if one allows YHWH to produce in him the quality of endurance, then the gift of eternal life will endure forever.

***Luqa (Luke) 9:62***

***But Yeshua said to him, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of the Elohim."***

Once we step onto the path towards Elohim, there is no reason to look back. The idea of looking back is exemplified in the life and actions of Lot's wife, who after having fled for their lives, looked back after having received the commandment not to look back. When she did, she turned into a pillar of salt. Looking back at one's former life implies a longing for the things of this world, a longing for the things of the flesh which only lead to death and destruction.

This is one of the essential differences between being a part of the kingdom of Elohim and being a part of the kingdom of this world. This present world is passing away and all that is in it. Those in this present world stop the pain as soon as possible by any means possible. This present world thinks only for the moment. It does not consider its actions for the long term. The motto of this present world is: "If it feels good, do it!"

However, to be a part of the kingdom of Elohim means that one does take careful consideration for the long term, for eternity. It means that one is willing to go the distance. It means that one is willing to go through whatever pain, trials, suffering, or tribulation YHWH sees fit to take us through. And to do it with joy!

ABBA YHWH, we give You permission to take us through whatever is necessary for us to have eternal life; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein!

Shabbat Shalom

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