

ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah
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The Spirit of Division

How to Recognize and Combat It

The spirit of division is running rampant throughout the believing community in our day. Part of the reason for this seems to be the lack of ability to recognize it; and if this spirit of division cannot be seen for what it is, then how can it be combated effectively?

One of the difficulties in recognizing this pervasive spirit is that it comes in so many different forms. However, whatever form it takes there is one basic element that will always be present and that is separation. Some form of separation will be present and attempting to assert itself. If there is some form of animosity welling up between people for any reason, then there is a spirit of division at work.

Regardless of the type of manifestation of this insidious spirit, one item that will nearly always be in the mix is some type of secrecy. The spirit of division cannot operate in the light and out in the open. The spirit of division operates in a covert manner working behind the scene attempting never to draw attention to itself. This reality is one of the things that makes this spirit so difficult to detect and recognize. Recognizing that there are legitimate reasons for confidentiality, we must also be able to distinguish illegitimate reasons as well; and there are many more of those types than the former.

The basic building block of society is the family. Without the family there is no society. Destroy the family and society crumbles! This is where the attacks of the spirit of division are focused: upon the family. Please understand that the kingdom of Elohim is family-based, for Scripture states when we accept Yeshua as Mashiach we are adopted into His family and we become known as the sons of the living El. We are all family. So, there are two basic types of attack that need to be identified and recognized: the attack upon the physical family unit and the attack upon the larger spiritual family as a whole. A successful attack upon either one of these sends ripples through the other.

Secrets have some of the greatest potential for damage of all the words that one can utter. Sure, there are legitimate times when it is right and good for one to keep something confidential. However, there are many more times when the words of Yeshua should be

applied when He said that what we hear in secret we should shout from the housetops. The very nature of secrets divides! Let us never forget that simple truth! If one person tells information to another person and then asks them not to tell a certain third person, then the first person has put a division between those two people.

We as humans like secrets. We like to hear them and we like to tell them. What no one likes about secrets is to be on the outside of a secret! This is especially true when that secret somehow affects us personally. The spirit of division is the spirit of exclusion. Humans are gregarious creatures. We have a need to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. It is the way our Creator created us to be. For another person to take action to exclude us through the use of secrecy, in effect to divide us from the herd, will always be seen and perceived as a personal attack, and rightly so.

Recently, I was required to write an ethical essay for an English class. One of the elements of this paper was secrets, particularly secrets between children, and secrets between an adult and a child. Doing this paper opened my eyes to the potential heinous nature of secrets and their proclivity for doing harm to others. As I began contemplating secrets in the context of the kingdom of Elohim, my eyes were opened to see the intimate correlation between secrets and the spirit of division. I also began to see some of the challenges we have faced within my own personal family because of secrets dividing. This in turn led me to see this same phenomenon happening within the family of Elohim.

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It is for this very reason Yeshua commanded us to go privately to someone with whom we need to work out any type of differences in order to combat the spirit of division. One of the difficulties arises when this is attempted but the other party refuses to listen. Most likely, such a person does not understand the spirit of division is at work. When a person does not see or understand that the spirit of division is at work dividing one person from another, then that same spirit infects others. The closer one is to these people, the more likely such a person is to become infected with this same spirit of division.

What is really sad is when a person goes about infecting others and such a person does not even realize what is happening. For example, when a person goes from person to person telling about a situation between himself and another person, the spirit of division is at work by secretly confiding confidences to the exclusion of a third party. There are times when this is done under the guise of seeking advice or perhaps even a prayer request. However, when one person asks another person to keep what is being told in confidence, the person hearing it needs to step back and prayerfully analyze the situation, for the spirit of division may be at work. If it is, immediate steps need to be taken to quash it before it gains too large a foothold in the body of Mashiach.

Another tactic the spirit of division has in his arsenal is the ploy of not saying something directly to the one person to whom it should be spoken under the guise of “protecting” that person. It is pretty amazing sometimes when we think about it, how willingly we participate in these schemes of darkness to bring division into the body of Mashiach. We all know what Scripture

teaches us, but we go about acting as if we have never even heard of a Bible, much less read one. It's pretty sad; wouldn't you agree? Are we that deceived that we cannot see what is happening before our very eyes? Are we so willing to participate in the works of darkness that we fail to see the heinous nature of these kinds of deeds?

What is it that is so difficult about going to a person privately and speaking to them in love with the intent of restoring a relationship? Do we care so little for that other person (or even ourselves) that we would rather speak to other people first seeking self-justification for our own personal position in a given matter? When will we learn that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves? I am confident we know these things, but doing them is another matter altogether!

Can we be honest enough with ourselves to see that what this comes down to is simply a matter of personal choice? The truth is, if one is willing to be brutally honest, we choose not to go to the person in private as Mashiach Yeshua commanded us to do. Why? Is it possible that in the depths of our heart, because we are hurt we are striking out to hurt the one who hurt us? Can we be that honest with ourselves? We certainly need to be if we are going to be the people YHWH desires for us to be!

The truth is, each and every one of us can do better at going to our brother or sister in private before talking about another person to a third party! In fact, if another person comes to us to talk about a third party, we should ask if they have talked to that other person first. If not, we need to refuse to hear what they have to say; that is, if we truly desire to walk according to His ways and not the ways of this world.

It is a choice. What choice you and I make will declare to our heavenly Father who we are following. We cannot rightly say we are following Mashiach Yeshua if we choose to ignore His commandments in this matter!

ABBA YHWH, open our eyes to this insidious spirit at work in our midst and help me to do my part in casting it out of our midst; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

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www.onetorahforall.com

zerubbabel@onetorahforall.com

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