

מַטּוֹת

Mattot

(Tribes)

B'midbar [Numbers] 30:1-32:42

מַסְעֵי

Mas'ei

(Journeys)

B'midbar [Numbers] 33:1-36:13

הַבְּרִית הַחֲדָשָׁה

HaB'rit HaChadashah

(the new covenant)

Watch What You Say!

Ya'aqov (James) 4:11

Speak not one against another, brethren. He that speaks against a brother, or judges his brother, speaks against the Torah, and judges the Torah; but if you judge the Torah, you are not a doer of the Torah, but a judge.

There are many who misunderstand this passage. Let us look at what it is saying very carefully to see what the Spirit of YHWH will teach us.

Let us put this in the form of a list so that we can more readily manage this verse.

1. Do not speak against a brother.
2. One who speaks against a brother is guilty of judging his brother.
3. One who is guilty of speaking against his brother is also guilty of speaking against his Torah.
4. One who is guilty of speaking against the Torah is guilty of judging the Torah.
5. One who is guilty of judging the Torah is not obeying the Torah.

The writer is drawing a comparison between speaking against a brother which is the same as judging him without due process. This is equivalent to speaking against the Torah and not keeping it. First, let's discuss what it means to speak against a brother in this context.

Yochanan (John) 7:51

“Does our Torah judge a man, except it first hear from him and know what he is doing?”

There is a very specific process laid out in Scripture that a person must go through before he can be rightly judged. In the passage in Ya’aqov the what the writer is condemning is speaking against a brother who has not gone through that process. If a person has not gone through that process as laid out in Scripture, then the person who is speaking against a brother is acting as the judge. This is wrong and it is against Torah.

Furthermore, when such a person speaks against a brother who has not gone through the process as taught to us in the Torah, then that person is speaking against the Torah as well. Why? Such a person is speaking against the Torah because he has deemed the Torah not worthy of keeping it. Thereby, he is also judging the Torah as being inadequate and lacking. Such a person that does this is claiming that he knows better than the Torah. In fact, ultimately, such a person is acting as if he knows better than the One who gave the Torah to us. His actions proclaim that he is more knowledgeable than YHWH our Elohim. In essence, such a person who judges the Torah (which means not to do it – see verse 11) has set himself up as elohim. This is nothing short of idolatry.

Ya’aqov (James) 1:22

But you are to be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deluding your own selves.

The person who chooses to speak against a brother, which is the same as speaking against the Torah, is a person who is deluded. He has deluded himself into thinking that it is okay for him not to obey the Torah of YHWH. He has deluded himself into thinking that he is above the Torah.

Perhaps the saddest part of this whole scenario is the lack of realization that Mashiach Yeshua is the Torah made flesh.

Yochanan (John) 1:14

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

The Word of YHWH is equivalent to the Torah. The word is Torah. So when Scripture teaches us that the word became flesh, it is saying that the Torah became flesh. We have the written Torah and we have the living Torah. The living Torah is Mashiach Yeshua.

So, when we read this verse from Ya’aqov about judging the Torah, one can also understand this to mean that one who is speaking against his brother is judging his brother, thus speaking against and judging Mashiach Yeshua. Now, brothers and sisters, does that not seem to be the very pinnacle of folly? To be sure!

But even when a person is taken through the process to determine if the Torah was broken and what kind of punishment should be meted out, it is not the person who is being judged, rather it is the actions of the person. Herein lies the basic difference between what the process does and what an individual does when he speaks against a brother. When a person speaks against a brother he is really attempting to tear down the reputation of his brother in the eyes of those he is speaking to. This is wrong and it is a serious breaking of the Torah.

Tehillim (Psalm) 140:11

***An evil speaker shall not be established in the earth;
Evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.***

Surely those who practice this kind of evil shall surely perish.

Mishle (Proverbs) 18:21

***Death and life are in the power of the tongue;
And they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.***

He who sows life with his mouth, shall eat the fruit of that life. Likewise, he who sows death with his lips shall also eat that fruit.

Ya'aqov (James) 3:8-10

8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poison.

9 With it we bless we YHWH and the Father; and with it we curse we men, who are made after the likeness of Elohim;

10 out of the same mouth comes forth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

We should guard the words of our mouths with the greatest of diligence. But who can do this? He who can do this is a complete man. Let us bless and curse not. Just as our Master Yeshua did when He was reviled, did not turn in like manner and revile those who were reviling Him. Let us be a blessing to all men, regardless of how they treat us.

Romans 2:1

Therefore you are without excuse, man, whosoever you are that judges; for in how you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you that judge practice the same things.

Be careful what comes out of your mouth, for what comes out of your mouth is revealing what is in your heart. If a person condemns another for something, it is most likely because that same thing is in himself and he cannot stand it in himself. So, instead of addressing the real problem, which is inside, he attacks and condemns his brother.

Romans 2:13

For, the hearers only of the Torah are not justified before Elohim, but the doers of the Torah shall be justified.

The Torah of YHWH has gone forth throughout all the earth as a refreshing wind in our day. Many are being renewed by this refreshing wind. Let us not lose focus that while we are commanded to keep and do and obey all of His Torah, we can only do this through Mashiach Yeshua. It is His Spirit in us that enables us and empowers us to be able to obey His Torah. We are not the ones who are doing it. He is doing it through us as we surrender to Him. This is equally true of being in control of the words that come forth from our mouth. If one attempts to do this in his own strength and power, then he will fail and fail miserably, and thus be miserable.

Kepha Aleph (1st Peter) 3:8-9

***8 Finally, you all be likeminded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tenderhearted, humble minded;
9 not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing; for this were you called, that you should inherit a blessing.***

YHWH has called us to have a blessing. In order to receive the fullness of that blessing we must carefully guard our words so that our words are a blessing to others and not a curse.

Ephesians 4:31-32

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice;

32 and you be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as Elohim also in Mashiach Yeshua forgave you.

What we have received we are to freely give. We have received forgiveness and kindness and compassion from YHWH our Elohim. This we are to give to others. YHWH our Elohim is patient with us, continually forgiving our shortcomings, this we should do with our brothers and sisters in Mashiach.

ABBA YHWH give us wisdom and Your strength to guard the words of our mouth, always, in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach, Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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