

Parashat Mishpatim

פרשת משפטים

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Selling ourselves into slavery by the work of sin

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Exodus 21:1-24:18

הפטרה: Jeremiah 34:8-22, 33:25-26

הברית: Mark 9

החדשה

Triennial cycle: *Shemot / Exodus 21:2-22:3*

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This week's reading, *Shemot / Exodus 21:3-22:3*, discusses how a man is to treat his slaves if he is a slave owner. The Scriptures detail selling one's self, selling one's daughter, and treating slaves fairly. *Shemot / Exodus* states that 21:7 'If a man sells his daughter as a female slave, she is not to go free as the male slaves do. 21:8 'If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master who designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He does not have authority to sell her to a foreign people because of his unfairness to her. 21:9 'If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters. 21:10 'If he takes to himself another woman, he may not reduce her food, her clothing, or her conjugal rights. 21:11 'If he will not do these three things for her, then she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money. (NASB)

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Attitudes have changed over the centuries toward slavery but regardless of whether slavery was approved of or disapproved of, God needed to instruct how to treat slaves in a humane way and with respect. Today, it is unthinkable that one could even bring one's self to sell his own daughter into slavery being a product of his flesh and bone. The fact that this existed is not contested because there are instances where in the Scriptures a man has sold himself into slavery because of a great amount of debt. This week I want to look at how yielding ourselves to sin, draws a parallel to what we are reading here on slavery from this week's Scripture portion? I believe that yielding ourselves to sin after we are redeemed by the blood of Yeshua, we are essentially selling ourselves back into slavery by the work of sin.

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שמות 21:7-10

7 וַיְבַדּוּ לְעַלְמִם: וְכִי־יִמְכַר אִישׁ אֶת־
8 בִּתּוֹ לְאִמָּה לֹא תֵצֵא כְּצֵאת הָעֲבָדִים: אִם־רָעָה בְּעֵינַי
9 אֲדֹנָיָה אֲשֶׁר־לָא יַעֲדָה וְהַפְדָּה לְעַם נְכָרִי לֹא־יִמְשַׁל
10 לְמִכְרָהּ בְּבַנְדוּבָהּ: וְאִם־לְבָנוּ יִיעֲדָנָה כְּמִשְׁפַּט הַבָּנוֹת
11 יַעֲשֶׂה־לָּהּ: אִם־אֲחֵרַת יִקַּח־לּוֹ שְׂאֵרָה כְּסוּתָהּ וְעִנְתָּהּ
לֹא יִגְרַע: וְאִם־שְׁלֹש־אֵלֶּה לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה לָּהּ וַיֵּצֵאֶה חַנּוּם

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Tehilim / Psalms say that "transgression" speaks within the heart of the ungodly. Have you ever caught yourself thinking about sin, or thinking about something that you like to do that is considered sin according to God's Word?

Shemot / Exodus 21:77-26
21:7 'If a man sells his daughter as a female slave, she is not to go free as the male slaves do. 21:8 'If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master who designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He does not have authority to sell her to a foreign people because of his unfairness to her. 21:9 'If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters. 21:10 'If he takes to himself another woman, he may not reduce her food, her clothing, or her conjugal rights. 21:11 'If he will not do these three things for her, then she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money. (NASB)

לְמַנְעַח לְעַבְד־יְהוָה לְדָרֶךְ:
 נֶאֱסַפְשַׁע לְרָשָׁע בְּקִרְבִּי לִבִּי
 אֵין פֶּחַד אֱלֹהִים לְנֶגְדִי עֵינָיו:
 כִּי־חָלַלְתִּיךָ אֱלֹהֵי בְעֵינָיו
 לְמַצָּא עֲוֹנוֹ לְשׂוֹא:
 דְּבִרְיֵי־פִי אֵין וּמַרְמָה
 חָדַל לְהַשְׂכִּיל לְהוֹמִיב:
 אֵין וַיַּחֲשֵׁב עַל־מַשְׁכָּבוֹ
 יִתְנַצֵּב עַל־דְּרָךְ לֹא־טוֹב
 דָּע לֹא יִמָּאס:
 יְהוָה כְּהַשְׁמִים חֲסִדֶךָ
 אֱמוּנָתְךָ עַד־שָׁחֲקִים:
 אֲדַקְתָּךְ אֶבְהַרְרֵי־אֵל
 מִשְׁפָּטֶךָ תְּהוֹם רַבָּה
 אָדָם וּבְהֵמָה תוֹשִׁיעַ יְהוָה:
 מִהֲיִקֵּר חֲסִדֶךָ אֱלֹהִים
 וּבְנֵי אָדָם בְּצַל כְּנָפֶיךָ יִחְסִיוּ:
 יִרְוּ מִדְּשֵׁן בֵּיתְךָ
 וְנָחַל עֲרֵנְךָ תִּשְׁקִים:
 כִּי־עַמְּךָ מִקּוֹר הַיָּם
 כְּאֹרֶךְ נְרָאֵה־אֹרֶךְ:
 מִשְׁעָךְ חֲסִדֶךָ לִדְעִידֶךָ
 וְאֲדַקְתָּךְ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל־לֵב:
 אֶל־תְּבוֹאֵנִי רִגְלֵךְ נֶאֱדָה
 וְדִדְשָׁעִים אֶל־תִּגְדְּנִי:
 שָׁם נָפְלוּ פְעָלֵי אֵין
 דָּחוּ וְלֹא־יָבֹלוּ קוּם:

Tehilim / Psalms 36

36:1 Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes.
 36:2 For it flatters him in his own eyes Concerning the discovery of his iniquity and the hatred of it.
 36:3 The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise and to do good.
 36:4 He plans wickedness upon his bed; He sets himself on a path that is not good; He does not despise evil. 36:5 Your lovingkindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. 36:6 Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; Your judgments are like a great deep. O Lord, You preserve man and beast. 36:7 How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. 36:8 They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house; And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights. 36:9 For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light. 36:10 O continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You, And Your righteousness to the upright in heart. 36:11 Let not the foot of pride come upon me, And let not the hand of the wicked drive me away. 36:12 There the doers of iniquity have fallen; They have been thrust down and cannot rise. (NASB)

The first four verses in *Tehilim / Psalms 36* speaks of the person who does not fear God. For the person that does not fear God, transgression speaks

to his heart. Verse 36:2 indicates that when sin is found out or made known to the ungodly it is flattering to him; he makes his sin a joke in his own mind. Verses 36:3-4 show the extent of this person's heart, that his mouth is full of wickedness and deceit and that his heart plans wickedness upon his bed setting himself on a path that does not despise evil. Yeshua said something similar about such wicked persons in *Luke 6:45* 'The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart. (NASB)

At this point in the Psalms (36:6) David writes of the loving kindness of God. David is essentially saying (36:6-10) that God is the creator and sustainer of life and every man, woman, and child, and not excluding the beasts of the field take from God's hand to live each day having the breath of life, drinking from rivers and eating from food that He (God) has provided. Whether the unbeliever recognizes it or not, he or she is sustained by the hand of God and each day is a gift from above according to the Psalms. In the end, David says that the doer of iniquity have been thrust down and will not be able to rise. In Hebrew it says in 36:12 "Sham naphlu poaley aven," the instrumental word here is "poaley"

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85 meaning “doing, deed, work” and in this context means “worker of iniquity or
sin.” In *Yeremiyahu / Jeremiah 22* and *Yoav / Job 7*, this word is used meaning
“the wages of work” and the “acquisition of treasure” in *Mishley / Proverbs 21*.
90 What is interesting about the use of this word is that the ungodly who works
iniquity and transgression in his or her heart is doing so for the “wages of sin” or
for the “acquisition of the rewards of sin (sins treasure)” which indicates to me
that the person who works iniquity has sold one’s self to sin (the selling of one’s
self into slavery). Yielding oneself to sin is described in terms of selling into
slavery to sin. The Story of Jezebel and Ahab provide for us another example, in
1 Malachim / 1 Kings 21.

95 ***1 Malachim / 1 Kings 21:15-26***

100 *21:15 When Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, Jezebel said to Ahab, ‘Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead.’ 21:16 When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab arose to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it. 21:17 Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 21:18 ‘Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth where he has gone down to take possession of it. 21:19 ‘You shall speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord, ‘Have you murdered and also taken possession?’ And you shall speak to him, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord, ‘In the place where the dogs licked up the blood of Naboth the dogs will lick up your blood, even yours.’” 21:20 Ahab said to Elijah, ‘Have you found me, O my enemy?’ And he answered, ‘I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the Lord. 21:21 ‘Behold, I will bring evil upon you, and will utterly sweep you away, and will cut off from Ahab every male, both bond and free in Israel; 21:22 and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked Me to anger, and because you have made Israel sin. 21:23 ‘Of Jezebel also has the Lord spoken, saying, ‘The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel.’ 21:24 ‘The one belonging to Ahab, who dies in the city, the dogs will eat, and the one who dies in the field the birds of heaven will eat.’ 21:25 Surely there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord, because Jezebel his wife incited him. 21:26 He acted very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the Lord cast out before the sons of Israel. (NASB)*

125 Here Elijah tells Ahab in *21:20* that “... you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the Lord.” The Hebrew says “la’asot hara be’eyney Adonai” where the operative word is “la’asot” meaning “to do” or “to perform a work.”

20 דָּם נָבוֹת יִלְקֹוּ הַכְּלָבִים אֶת־דַּמּוֹ נִסְ-אֶתְהָ: וַיֹּאמֶר
אֲחָב אֶל־אֵלֶיהוּ הַמְצֵאתָנִי אֹיְבִי וַיֹּאמֶר מְצֵאתִי יֶעֱן
21 הֲתִמְכַּרְךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה: הֲנִלִּי מִכִּי אֵלֶיךָ

130 This word is being understood as “to perform a work” and is translated as “sold”
135 meaning that Ahab had yielded to and sold himself to work sin in his life. For this
God pronounced a prophetic message, through the prophet Elijah (Eliyahu), that
he and his wife will die a horrible death.

In the ancient world, there were a number of ways a man might become a
135 slave, (i) he was born into slavery, (ii) he was captured by an invading army to be
led away and then sold into slavery, and (iii) he fell into much debt and was
forced to declare bankruptcy and sell himself into slavery in order to pay the debts
that he owed. In the last case, such a man that had hit economic disaster in his life
140 would be forced to sell himself into slavery in order to pay off his debts. In the
case of a man who has such overwhelming debt that he must sell himself into
slavery is quite different than the man who sells himself to work sin in his life.
The various ways of describing one working iniquity such as la’asot “to perform a
work” in *1 Malachim / 1 Kings 21:20*, and “poaley,” “doing, deed, work” in
Tehilim / Psalms 36:12, referring to a “worker of iniquity or sin” suggest to us
145 that it is possible to sell ourselves into slavery to sin by working to acquire the
treasure of sins pleasures. *Tehilim / Psalms 36* speak of a person whose daily
intent is to commit sin because they do not have the Spirit of the living God inside
of them. Those who are purchased, redeemed, and saved by Yeshua, struggle
with sin since the body and spirit are at war with sin. The Apostle Paul detailed
150 his struggle with sin in Romans chapter 7.

Romans 7:7-19

*7:7 What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the
155 contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I
would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, ‘You shall
not covet.’ 7:8 But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment,
produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead.
7:9 I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment
160 came, sin became alive and I died; 7:10 and this commandment, which
was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; 7:11 for sin, taking
an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it
killed me. 7:12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy
and righteous and good. 7:13 Therefore did that which is good become a
165 cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it
might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good,
so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful. 7:14
For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage
to sin. 7:15 For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not
170 practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate.
7:16 But if I do the very thing I do not want to do I agree with the Law,
confessing that the Law is good. 7:17 So now, no longer am I the one
doing it, but sin which dwells in me. 7:18 For I know that nothing good
dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the
175 doing of the good is not. 7:19 For the good that I want, I do not do, but I
practice the very evil that I do not want. (NASB)*

180 It seems the point that Paul is trying to make here is that he struggles with sin meaning that he commits sin even while trying not to. Paul seems to indicate that in his life, he struggles with sin and is defeated. Paul concludes that it is the sin that dwells within his flesh that commits the sin (*Romans 7:17-18*). Paul says *7:19 For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.* (NASB) indicates that he is struggling with sin that is a function of the flesh and not that of transgression speaking to his heart like it says in the *Psalms 36*. He does not sit on his bed at night making his way in life to love evil. Paul indicates that he is striving to stop sinning experiencing great difficulty in doing so. Have you strived with all of your might to not give into temptations (*Ivrit / Hebrews 12:4*)? At what level are you willing to go to resist sin and temptation in your life? Take for example a young man who says that he struggles with lust. What he may mean is that he fights against it a little but ends up giving into his lust. Is this what the Apostle Paul was referring to when he wrote *Romans 7*? The young man claims that he is “trying” not to sin but in reality he watches commercials that promote lust, watches movies and television programs that encourage lust, and listen to music that contains all sorts of sexual content in the lyrics. Can this person actually say that he is trying to overcome lust? Will the Lord believe them when they say that they tried to make “every effort” to enter into the kingdom of heaven through the narrow door? Yeshua said that many will try but few will be able to in *Luke 13:24*. Will the Lord believe you when you say that you tried to make every effort to stop sinning? Will the Lord say depart from me you worker of iniquity; you enslaved yourself to work sin in your life again, and again, and again.

200 In conclusion, according to these verses we have studied, a wholehearted follower of Yeshua is someone who struggles with sin and gains victory through Christ who gives him strength. We do struggle with sin that is a part of living here in a sin filled world. The key is to not sell ourselves to work iniquity (sin) in our lives causing us enter into a vicious cycle of try-fail-try-fail-try-fail... The Scriptures speak of a man selling himself into slavery because of his financial debt in order to pay off his debt. The Scriptures do not say that we are to sell ourselves into slavery to sin in order to pay off sins debt, the sin-debt that we have does not work that way. The sin-debt that is owed has been paid by Yeshua, our Savior, Lord, and King. *1 John 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever

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