

The Torah on God Buying and Selling

This weeks reading is from Parashat Ha'azinu (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-32:52*), Moshe writes a song that he spoke to the children of Israel in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-52*. In last week's Parashah, the Lord God told Moshe that Joshua will lead the people after his death. The Lord told Moshe to write down this song (ועתה כתבו לכם את השירה הזאת) and the song will be a witness against them (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:29-30*). In the opening verse of Parashat Ha'azinu Moshe calls Heaven (השמים) and Earth (הארץ) as witnesses to the covenant (האזינו השמים ואדברה ותשמע הארץ אמרי-פי). Does this suggest that the unmovable things are watching as witnesses of our lives? Note what Yeshua said in *Luke 19:40* regarding the rocks that would cry out if the people did not give praise to the Lord for the Messiah. Moshe calling the solid unmoving (unchanging) Heaven and Earth as a witness implies that these things are watching should the children of Israel break the covenant and disobey God. Moshe proclaims the name of the Lord (כי שם יהוה אקרא) saying He is our Rock (הצור), that His work is perfect (תמים פעלו), all of his ways are in truth (כי כל-דרךיו משפט אל אמונה), there is no injustice (אין עול), only righteousness (צדיק) and that He is straight (ישר) meaning that God is upright and just. Moshe then says *"They have acted corruptly toward Him, They are not His children, because of their defect; But are a perverse and crooked generation."* While reading these opening verses, do we take for granted the mercy of God today? Do we examine our hearts and our ways properly today as a devotion to the Lord? Does our life demonstrate that you are covenant member of the Kingdom of God?

שדוקה יבתח / The Holy Scriptures

ספר דברים פרק ל

ו הליהוה תגמלו-זאת עם נבל ולא חכם הלוא-הוא אביך קנה הוא עשה ויכנה: ז זכר ימות עולם בינו שנות דר ודר שאל אביך ויגדה זקניך ויאמרו לך: ח בהנחל עליון גוים בהפרידו בני אדם יצב גבלת עמים למספר בני ישראל:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:6-8

32:6 "Do you thus repay the Lord, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you. 32:7 "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of all generations. Ask your father, and he will inform you, Your elders, and they will tell you. 32:8 "When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, When He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the sons of Israel. (NASB)

While reading Moshe's song to Israel, in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32* he makes the statement on how the foolish and unwise people repay the Lord. Moshe states that God is "faithful and without injustice, He is righteous and upright," whereas the foolish and unwise repay the Lord with corruption instead. Moshe then states in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:6* "... Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you." It is interesting how Moshe states that God has bought us and established us, and the context is that of being bought (purchased) out of slavery, from the bondage of Egypt. Another way of understanding this is in the parallel of the Lord God being our Redeemer who has redeemed us from slavery. Moshe continues in his song saying in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 27* Had I not feared the provocation by the enemy, That their adversaries would misjudge, That they would say, "Our hand is triumphant, And the Lord has not done all this." 32:28 "For they are a nation lacking in counsel, And there is no understanding in them. 32:29 "Would that they were wise, that they understood this, That they would discern their future! 32:30 "How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Unless their Rock had sold them, And the Lord had given them up? 32:31 "Indeed their rock is not like our Rock, Even our enemies themselves judge this. 32:32 "For their vine is from the vine of Sodom, And from the fields of Gomorrah; Their grapes are grapes of poison, Their clusters, bitter. 32:33 "Their wine is the venom of serpents, And the deadly poison of cobras. (NASB) כו לולי כעס אויב אגור פן-ינפרו צרימו פן-יאמרו ידנו רמה ולא יהוה פעל כל-זאת: כח כי-גוי אבד עצות המה ואין בהם תבונה: [חמישי] כט לו חכמו ישפילו זאת יבינו לאחריהם: ל איכה ירדה אהד אלה ושנים בניסו רבבה אם-לא כי-צורם מקרם ויהוה הסגירם: לא כי לא כצורנו צורם ואבינו פלילים: לב כי-מגפן סדם גפנם ומשדמת עמרה ענבמו ענבי-רוש אשכלת מרת למו: לג חמת תנינם יינם וראש פתנים אכזר: In this portion of verses from Parashat Ha'azinu, Moshe says that because of Israel's sin, the enemy would say "their God (Rock) has sold them." Moshe is using this imagery of the Rock (הצור), (*Note the LXX translates צור as "Theos" (θεός, God)*) and of the children of Israel being bought and sold by God. What is Moshe trying to say here on God buying and selling the children of Israel? Are there any other stories in the Torah that speak of buying and selling? Thinking on the story of Bilaam from Parashat Balak (*Bamidbar / Numbers 22:2-25:9*), the core issue is that Bilaam had been commissioned by the enemy to curse Israel whom God had blessed. The way in which Bilaam acted contrary to God's will is a little difficult to discern. Bilaam's error is so significant that Jude (*1:11*) parallels Bilaam with Cain and the rebellion of Korach (see Parashat Korach). In addition to this, Yeshua's words in *Revelation 2:14* states that Bilaam taught Balak to be a stumbling block to Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of sexual immorality. What is interesting here in this week's study is the subtlety of sin in our lives. Bilaam became guilty when he continued with Balak. The children of Israel foolishly continued in their sin after having been bought and they become guilty before the Lord. Today, having been bought by the blood of Christ, if we continue in sin (*i.e. not having a concern for sin with regard to what we do and think*) thinking on these Scriptures and elsewhere in Scripture (*i.e. Hebrews 10:26-28*), what would happen such a person? Does willful sin cause us to sell ourselves to the enemy? How does willful sin effect what God has done with regard to "Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you?"