**פרשת בשלח / Parashat Beshalach**

Shabbat Shevat 13, 5769, February 7, 2009

32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d

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**Are we spiritually better off today?**

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| **השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week’s Reading****Shmot / Exodus 16:4-10**16:4 Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction. 16:5 ‘On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.’ 16:6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, ‘At evening you will know that the Lord has brought you out of the land of Egypt; 16:7 and in the morning you will see the glory of the Lord, for He hears your grumblings against the Lord; and what are we, that you grumble against us?’ 16:8 Moses said, ‘This will happen when the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for the Lord hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against the Lord.’ 16:9 Then Moses said to Aaron, ‘Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come near before the Lord, for He has heard your grumblings.'‘ 16:10 It came about as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. (NASB) |
| **תורה:****הפטרה:****הברית:****החדשה:** | Exodus 13:17-17:16Judges 4:4-5:31John 6:15-71 |

 In this week’s Torah portion, Parashat Beshalach, we find some very important theologically foundational scriptures. In Shmot / Exodus 16:4 HaShem answers the peoples grumblings by providing bread from heaven to fill their stomachs. The people had not yet realized the true meaning of Torah. Perhaps if the people had a real grasp for the true meaning of Torah they could have better understood how to be partners with G-d in creating

**16:4-10 שמות**



 The response of a community held position, one I have heard quite often, is related to the differences between the “old covenant” and the “new covenant” in the sense of what is “old” and “new” is today we do not need the Torah because of the new covenant in Yeshua. A common reply is “the spirit works now in ways He never did before” with some proof texts such as what we find here in this week’s Torah portion the people had a lack of faith, grumbled, was discontent, etc. The argument goes along the lines that He, the Holy Spirit, equips every saint, every believer, He indwells every believer not on a temporary basis as He did with a few select individuals in ancient Yisrael, for the Spirit now indwells all believers eternally. He fills the believer with His presence and equips each person to function in the body of Messiah by drawing each of us together in a community that far surpasses ancient Yisrael. The purported proof of this higher level of spirituality we enjoy today is suggested further by contrasting the new covenant with the old covenant by speaking of this new work of the spirit in the New Covenant as opposed to the somewhat temporary and sporadic work in the Old Covenant. It is taught we are today at a level of spirituality that far exceeds that of the saints of old along with the following proof texts.

***Yochanan / John 7:39***

*7:39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. (NASB)*

***Yochanan / John 14:17***

*14:17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. (NASB)*

 The idea that after Yeshua our spirituality exceeds that before Him is based upon certain misconceptions. The first misconception is related to the concept of “New” verses “Old” covenants. The classical understanding is the old covenant describes G-d’s people prior to the coming of Yeshua and the new covenant describes life after the coming of Yeshua. There are no scriptures found in the entire bible which define this type of thinking, there is no biblical basis for viewing the Hebrew scripture’s as the “old covenant” and the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) as the “new covenant.” The writers of the scripture did not define “old” and “new” covenants as successive eras or generations where “old covenant” refers to back then and “new covenant” refers to the present future. The “New Covenant” in fact was prophecied in the book of Jeremiah which gives us a little insight into its meaning.

***Jeremiah 31:31-34***

*31:31 ‘Behold, days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 31:32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,’ declares the Lord. 31:33 ‘But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ declares the Lord, ‘I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 31:34 ‘They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,’ declares the Lord, ‘for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.’ (NASB)*

Here Jeremiah is saying the covenant is a national covenant that is made with the House of Yisrael and with Judah in which the Torah of Sinai will be written upon their hearts for the first time in history the nation will be loyal to her G-d through faith in His Messiah, Yeshua. The New Covenant is based upon faith through which is obtained the forgiveness of sins.

 Instances where “old covenant” are used in the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) such as in 2 Corinthians 3:14, Shaul (Paul) actually is referring to a Jewish person who reads the Tanach apart from the illuminating work of the Spirit.

***2 Corinthians 3:14***

*3:14 But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. (NASB)*

 This doesn’t mean the Torah is passed away but that as long as one reads the Tanach as mere letters without the Spirit elucidating them, the Jewish believer will not see the Messiah because a veil is over his/her heart. Until one receives the Spirit one will never see the Messiah of whom the prophets spoke of. The “old covenant” does not describe the life of G-d’s people before the coming of the Messiah because the term old covenant is a phrase Shaul (Paul) used to describe the faithlessness of the people which is the very thing that defined Yisrael when the nation fell into idolatry or away in grumblings and not trusting in HaShem in *Shmot / Exodus 16:4-10*. The “old covenant” is Shaul’s term for living with the knowledge of the Torah but not receiving it by faith and therefore missing the very goal of the Torah. So you may ask what is the goal of the Torah? Yeshua actually spoke on the verses for this week’s parsha in *Yochanan / john 6:24-36*.

***Yochanan / John 6:24-36***

*6:24 So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the small boats, and came to Capernaum seeking Jesus. 6:25 When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, ‘Rabbi, when did You get here?’ 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. 6:27 ‘Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.’ 6:28 Therefore they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?’ 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’ 6:30 So they said to Him, ‘What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform? 6:31 ‘Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.'‘ 6:32 Jesus then said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. 6:33 ‘For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.’ 6:34 Then they said to Him, ‘Lord, always give us this bread.’ 6:35 Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. 6:36 ‘But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. (NASB)*

 Yeshua is the goal of the Torah. When the Torah is accepted apart from faith it comes as a letter of condemnation and death, not the live-giving tree G-d intended for His elect ones such as you and I. The point of the Torah is not that one keeps the mitzvot (commandments) to get into the covenant but that the mitzvot (commandments) are kept precisely because we are members of the covenant. Obedience to G-d is the hallmark of our covenant membership. Another way of saying it is “loving G-d” is the mark of a true covenant member. What did Yeshua say?

***John 14:13-16***

*14:13 ‘Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14:14 ‘If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. 14:15 ‘If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. 14:16 ‘I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; (NASB)*

 Let’s have a look at what Yeshua said in Yochanan / John 6:24-36. The attitude of the people in *Shmot / Exodus 16:4-10*, draws a parallel to the attitude of the crowd in Yeshua’s day which generates the message Yeshua gives in Yochanan. The miraculous sign which Yeshua was demonstrating should have awaken consciousness of G-d, however these people are conscious only of their own physical needs, just like those in Shmot after G-d performed such a wonderful miracle by the dividing of the Red sea. The people ask what they need to do in order to perform the good works of G-d. The people are probably not asking how to do miracles but how to please G-d. This is accentuated by their question “what miracle will you do?” this is a strange question for people who have just seen Yeshua do one in *Yochanan / John 6:10-14*. They yet seem determined on the importance of having a greater miracle but stating “our fathers ate manna in the desert (*Shmot / Exodus 16:4, 15; Bamidbar / Numbers 11:8*). Yeshua corrects his questioners on the Tanach by speaking of the food which passes away and the food that stays on unto eternal life. Yeshua is that food, through faith, we have eternal life.

**Conclusion**

 So when someone asks you what you have done for the Lord, don’t think of it in terms of earning favor or earning some sort of reward or even salvation which is so erroneously taught in the church today. Yeshua gave us the example *Yochanan / John15:13 ‘Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. (NASB)* If one accepts this definition of “love” then the “details” of the covenant rather than being a burden becomes the opportunity to “know” G-d at every level of one’s life and in every activity. The apostle Shaul (Paul) understood this when he wrote: *1 Corinthians 10:31 “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”* Even as a husband and wife who genuinely love each other desire to know even the details of each other likes and dislikes, so our love for G-d should drive us to know the “finer points” of what He in His infinite holiness desires for us and what He despises. Surely we know what He desires, all is written in the Holy Scriptures, shouldn’t we start living as He desires? The idea of greater spirituality among the people of G-d after the appearance of Yeshua is a tradition of men not warranted when looking at the biblical text. The fact is the Scriptures everywhere from the book of Genesis to Revelation speak of only one means of salvation for all people, in all generations. The Scriptures further point to the fact that the Spirit must be active in all areas of our life this relates to how we live and what we believe. It is unfortunate the description of the life of a believer today has become compartmentalized where one believes in (i) Yeshua and the Bible and (ii) “real life” where someone Yeshua and the Scriptures have no place in life? The placing of the role of the Spirit and the Scriptures outside of day to day life makes living for the Lord extremely difficult. If we remove from our lives G-d’s way of holiness, life is difficult because society expects of us one think while G-d expects another, can a person who lives like this be called a child of G-d or even a covenant member? It is time to seriously consider whether you have compartmentalized your life and bringing somehow less meaning to the Word of G-d and the role of the Spirit in your life today. If you have don’t this can you really say spiritually we are better off now than before?

**Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!**

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**הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:**

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,

“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever