

FAMILY BREAKDOWN – THE REMEDY – WEEK NINETEEN.

“I don’t understand my own behaviour – I don’t do what I want to do; instead I do the very thing I hate! Now if I am doing what I don’t want to do, I am agreeing that the Torah is good. But now it is no longer “the real me” doing it, but the sin housed inside me. For I know nothing good is housed inside me- that is, inside my old nature. I can want what is good, but I can’t do it! For I don’t do the good I want; instead, the evil that I don’t want is what I do! But if I am doing what the “real me” doesn’t want, it is no longer “the real me” doing it but the sin housed inside me. So I find it to be the rule, a kind of perverse “torah”, that although I want to do what is good, evil is right there with me! For in my inner self I completely agree with God’s Torah; but in my various parts, I see a different “torah”, one that battles with the Torah in my mind and makes me a prisoner of sin’s “torah”, which is operating in my various parts. What a miserable creature I am! Who will rescue me from this body bound for death? Thanks be to God, [He will] – through Yeshua the Messiah, our Lord.” Romans 6:15-25 [CJB]

The human race battles constantly with itself. We battle as a collective, we battle as individuals. We do have a battle against good and evil within ourselves. This can be vastly different within various cultures and belief systems. What one culture or individual call good another calls evil and what some call evil others will call good. None the less the battle goes on, and it is no different for the Children of Israel.

It is obvious Shaul/Paul had this very same battle. He often found himself obeying the instructions that were sinful/evil, thus he was obeying the torah/instructions of sin and perversion. At other times he found himself obeying the instructions that were good, thus he was obeying the Torah/instructions of HaShem. Because Paul knew the difference between good and evil, [due to his knowledge of the Torah of Moshe] he found this behaviour abhorrent leading to a miserable existence.

Imagine the torment Paul was enduring. Here was one who was well schooled in what we would call today “Rabbinical Judaism”. He had learnt under the best. It is recorded that early in his life he persecuted the believers in Yeshua HaMoshiach with relentless vigour and passion.

“For I am the least of all the emissaries, unfit to be called an emissary, because I persecuted the Messianic Community of God. 1Corinthians 15:9 [CJB]

Remember Shaul/Paul was at the scene where the stoning of Stephen took place.

“.....and the witnesses laid down their coats at the feet of a young man named Sha’ul. Acts 7:58b [CJB]

“And Sha’ul gave approval to his murder.....” Acts 8:1a [CJB]

Stephen was stoned for his support of Yeshua as HaMoshiach. He was falsely accused of a crime he never committed, and it would appear that Shaul was implicated and would have supported these false accusations.

“...They argued with Stephen, but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by which he spoke. So they secretly persuaded some men to allege, “We heard him speak blasphemously against Moshe and against God.” They stirred up the people, as well as the elders and the Torah-teachers; so they came and arrested him and led him before the Sanhedrin. There they set up false witnesses who said, “This man never stops speaking against this holy place and against the Torah; for we have heard him say that Yeshua from Netzeret will destroy this place and will change the customs Moshe handed down to us.” Everyone sitting in the Sanhedrin stared at Stephen and saw that his face looked like the face of an angel.” Acts 6: 9b-15 [CJB]

At this stage of his life Paul had no time for those who followed the Master Yeshua. He had no interest in building the whole House of Israel. He was focused on the teachings of the Pharisees, and was not prepared to question their “theology”. I don’t believe I would be out of order in saying that if he were alive today and still practicing the tenets of his early belief system, he would be seen as an Ultra Orthodox Jew. He was a dedicated student of Gamli’el and was an ardent supporter of the Jewish laws that were taught as absolutes at that time. These Jewish laws were the cause of many arguments between Yeshua and the religious elite of His time. The Master obviously knew the vast difference between some of these “Jewish laws” and biblical Torah. Yeshua often spoke rather harsh words against many of these laws that actually bound the Children of Israel to the established institutions instead of bringing them closer to HaShem and release through HaMoshiach.

“One of the experts in Torah answered him, “Rabbi, by saying these things you are insulting us also.” Yeshua said, “Woe to you Torah experts too! You load people down with burdens they can hardly bear, and you won’t lift a finger to help them! Woe to you! You build tombs in memory of the prophets, but your father’s murdered them! Thus you testify that you completely approve of what your fathers did – they did the killing, you do the building!” Luke 11:45-48 [CJB]

“Woe to you Torah experts! For you have taken away the key of knowledge! Not only did you yourselves not go in, you also have

stopped those who were trying to enter!” As Yeshua left that place, the Torah-teachers and the P’rushim began to oppose him bitterly and to provoke him to express his views on all sorts of subjects, laying traps to catch him in something he might say. Luke 11:52-54 [CJB]

We need to understand that there can be a vast difference between Jewish law and biblical Torah. When Paul met Yeshua HaMoshiach on the road to Damascus, he began a journey that would bring him to a point that he could teach true biblical Torah to the nations. Let us read what Paul himself had to say on this matter.

“I used to think it was my duty to do all I could to combat the name of Yeshua from Natzeret; and in Yerushalayim I did so. After receiving authority from the cohanim, I myself threw many of God’s people in prison; when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. Often I went from one synagogue to another punishing them and trying to make them blaspheme; and in my wild fury against them, I even went so far as to persecute them in cities outside the country. On one such occasion, I was travelling to Dammesek with the full authority and power of the head cohanim. I was on the road, and it was noon, your Majesty, when I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and my travelling companions. We all fell to the ground; and then I heard a voice saying to me, in Hebrew, ‘Sha’ul! Sha’ul! Why do you keep persecuting me? It’s hard on you to be kicking against the ox-goads!’ I said, ‘Who are you, sir?’ and the Lord answered, ‘I am Yeshua, and you are persecuting me! But get up, and stand on your feet! I have appeared to you to appoint you to serve and bear witness to what you have already seen of me, and to what you will see when I appear to you in the future. I will deliver you from the People and from the Goyim. I am sending you to open their eyes; so that they will turn from darkness to light, from the power of the Adversary to God, and thus receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who have been separated to holiness by putting their trust in me.’ Acts 26:9-18 [CJB]

It wasn’t until Paul met the Master, that he could be used by HaShem to teach the Torah to the nations. Paul had a change that caused him to be persecuted, hated and despised by many of his past brethren. Paul underwent a “re-birth” from above. This put him at odds with the religious elite of Judaism whose actions and institutions actually kept people away from meeting and receiving HaMoshiach Ben Yoseph, the suffering servant who paid the penalty for our sin. It is the position of this author that this same One will return as HaMoshiach Ben Dovid. I pray and hope that we witness a scene as described in Zechariah and explained in John.

“When that day comes, I shall set about destroying all the nations who advance against Jerusalem. But over the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem I shall pour out a spirit of grace and prayer, and they will look to me. They will mourn for the one whom they have pierced as though for an only child, and weep for him as people weep for a first-born child. When that day comes, the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning for Hadad Rimmon in the Plain of Megiddo.” Zechariah 12:9-11 [NJB]

Because all this has happened to fulfil the words of scripture: “Not one bone of his will be broken” and again, in another place scripture says; “They will look to the one whom they have pierced.” John 19:36-37 [NJB]

Paul certainly looked and saw the One whom was pierced, and this One [Yeshua] changed his life. Paul was called by HaShem through meeting Yeshua, so he could bring the Good News to the People. After meeting Yeshua, Paul had the best mix of both Houses. Paul was brought up through the ranks of those who placed great importance on the Torah, so he knew the Torah of Moshe. He then met HaMoshiach Yeshua who touched him in a manner that began a journey of Light for him. Paul was then able to separate the Torah of Moshe from the torah/law of the established elite of the Judaism of that time. We could say Paul presented the Torah of Yeshua, thus Paul presented Biblical Torah. This dedicated student of Gamli'el became a dedicated follower of Yeshua, bringing a wonderful balance of Torah and the Light of Yeshua. Paul was able to communicate to a variety of audiences, because he had the compassion and wisdom of Yeshua and was no longer influenced by the politics of man.

“For although I am a free man, not bound to do anyone’s bidding, I have made myself a slave to all in order to win as many people as possible. That is, with Jews, what I did was put myself in the position of a Jew, in order to win Jews. With people in subjection to a legalistic perversion of Torah, I put myself in the position of someone under such legalism, in order to win those under this legalism, even though I myself am not in subjection to a legalistic perversion of Torah. With those who live outside the framework of Torah, I put myself in the position of someone outside the Torah in order to win those outside torah – although I myself am not outside the framework of God’s Torah but within the framework of Torah as upheld by the Messiah. With the ‘weak’ I became ‘weak’, in order to win the ‘weak’. With all kinds of people I have become all kinds of things, so that in all kinds of circumstances I might save at least some of them.” 1Corinthians 9:19-22 [CJB]

Paul was put in a position to bring about reconciliation between HaShem and His people and the various tribes of Israel. However it must be noted that this only

took place after he met the Master, and he could say that he upheld the Torah of Yeshua HaMoshiach instead of a perverted version of the Torah.

For all Children of Israel, it is vital that we have the balance of Torah and Yeshua in our lives. We all have “perversions” that cause us to stumble, and we will fight these “perversions” until we are changed in the twinkle of an eye. So until that time arrives we look for the “medication” that will heal our very souls, bringing us back into the Household of HaShem. Paul promotes the perfect recipe for us to adhere to. Yeshua and Torah bring healing to our souls, because it is the recipe of HaShem, the Holy One of Israel, blessed be His Holy Name.

Truly there is no God like our God, the God of Israel and no nation like the Nation whom He elected.

Blessings to all citizens of biblical Israel,

Rabbi [Prof] Philip [Yochanan] Hammond. PhD.