

## **Family Breakdown-The Remedy Week 39** **By Rabbi Philip Hammond, Ph.D.**

When we involve ourselves with other people we cannot but help engage in discussions that result in agreements and disagreements. Simple discussions on sport, work, clothes, hobbies, enjoyments and the like will create areas of agreement and disagreement. It is the result of discussion that people often circumnavigate the topics of politics and religion. Perhaps this is wise advice, but if you are involved in either then it is impossible to avoid discussions on these subjects and agreements and disagreements are sure to follow.

Writing on the topic of the “Family Breakdown” between Judah and Ephraim one has to embrace the subjects of religion and politics, as both dominate the discussion. This is nothing new, and with the arrival of Yeshua and His associated teaching, the “discussions” have always had an element of both.

*“<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, through the hands of the emissaries many signs and wonders were happening among the people. And they were all together in Solomon’s Portico. <sup>13</sup> But no one else dared to join them, though the people continued to think highly of them. <sup>14</sup> Yet more than ever those trusting in the Lord were added—large numbers of men and women. <sup>15</sup> They even carried the sick into the streets and laid them on stretchers and cots, so that when Peter passed by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. <sup>16</sup> Crowds were also gathering from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing those who were sick or tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all being healed. <sup>17</sup> But the kohen gadol rose up, and all those with him (that is, the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with jealousy. <sup>18</sup> They grabbed the emissaries and put them in a public jail. <sup>19</sup> But during the night an angel of ADONAI opened the prison doors, and leading them out he said, <sup>20</sup> “Go, stand in the Temple and speak to the people the whole message about this Life.” <sup>21</sup> Now when they heard that, they entered the Temple at daybreak and began teaching. When the kohen gadol and those with him arrived, they called together the Sanhedrin, even the council of elders of Bnei-Yisrael, and sent to the prison to have the prisoners brought in. <sup>22</sup> But when the officers came, they did not find them in the prison. So they returned and reported, <sup>23</sup> saying, “We found the prison locked with maximum security and the guards standing at the doors; but when we opened up, we found no one inside.” <sup>24</sup> When the captain of the Temple and the ruling kohanim heard these words, they were perplexed about them, wondering where this would lead. <sup>25</sup> But someone came and reported to them, “The men you put in prison are standing in the Temple and teaching the people!” <sup>26</sup> Then the captain went off with the officers and brought the emissaries—but not with force, because they feared they might be stoned by the people. <sup>27</sup> When they had brought them, they placed*

*them before the Sanhedrin. The kohen gadol questioned them, <sup>28</sup> saying, “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name—and look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring on us the blood of this Man!” <sup>29</sup> Peter and the emissaries replied, “We must obey God rather than men. <sup>30</sup> The God of our fathers raised up Yeshua, whom you seized and had crucified. <sup>31</sup> This One God exalted at His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and removal of sins. <sup>32</sup> And we are witnesses of these events—as is the Ruach ha-Kodesh, whom God has given to those who obey Him.” <sup>33</sup> Now when they heard this, they became enraged and wanted to kill them. <sup>34</sup> But a certain Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Torah respected by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while. <sup>35</sup> Then he said to them, “Men of Israel, be careful what you are about to do with these men. <sup>36</sup> For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody; and a number of men, maybe four hundred, joined up with him. He was killed, and all who followed him were scattered and came to nothing. <sup>37</sup> After this fellow, Judah the Galilean rose up in the days of the census and got people to follow him. He also perished, and all who followed him were scattered. <sup>38</sup> So now I tell you, stay away from these men and leave them alone. For if this plan or undertaking is of men, it will come to an end; <sup>39</sup> but if it is of God, you will not be able to stop them. You might even be found fighting against God.” They took his advice, <sup>40</sup> called in the emissaries, flogged them, ordered them not to continue speaking in the name of Yeshua, and let them go. <sup>41</sup> So they left the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they were considered worthy to be dishonored on account of His name. <sup>42</sup> And every day, in the Temple and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming Yeshua as the Messiah.” Acts 5:12-42 [TLV]*

Here we have the typical discussion when religion and politics come into play. Decisions are made with an eye on the “politics” and the agenda is heavily influenced by the political framework. At the time of this discussion the 70 members of the Sanhedrin were almost all Sadducees, with the Pharisees occupying very few seats, thus their decisions were usually based on the “Laws” of the Sadducees. This is important to note, because the Sadducees were the ruling elite, they were Jewish aristocracy, wealthy and had close political ties to the Romans. The High Priest was a Sadducee and thus called the shots. The Sadducees and Pharisees differed on three important doctrines. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the body, Angels and Demons and of course the immortality of the soul. The Sadducees rejected these doctrines. You can quickly see why they had such a problem with Yeshua and His Talmidim. You can also appreciate the Sanhedrin being perplexed as how that the prisoners had escaped, as they rejected the presence of angels. None the less they brought these “vagabonds” before the council to question them and were horrified at their answer. Let us view the scene. **“When they had brought them, they placed**

***them before the Sanhedrin. The kohen gadol questioned them, saying, “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name—and look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring on us the blood of this Man!” Peter and the emissaries replied, “We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Yeshua, whom you seized and had crucified. This One God exalted at His right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and removal of sins. And we are witnesses of these events—as is the Ruach ha-Kodesh, whom God has given to those who obey Him.” Now when they heard this, they became enraged and wanted to kill them.***

Talk about waving a red rag before a bull. Firstly Peter was saying the laws of the Sadducees [hence the Sanhedrin] were mostly based on the laws of man. Secondly Peter was belittling their rejection of a bodily resurrection. Thirdly Peter was saying there was another Leader, King established by HaShem that should be followed. Is it no wonder the majority of the Sanhedrin wanted to kill them. These “vagabonds” had upset and continued to upset the status quo and something needed to be done about it, as their message was popular with the people. Typical of bullies and those protecting their positions through lies and intimidation, they had to kill the messenger, because they couldn’t kill the truth of the message. Fortunately a Pharisee by the name of Gamaliel came forward and spoke some sense. The Pharisees were more popular with the everyday person than the Sadducees and because the Sanhedrin had “feared the people”, they would have paid some attention to Gamaliel for political reasons. So the “vagabonds” were flogged and sent on their way with a stern warning, yet they continued with their politically incorrect message of truth, proclaiming Yeshua as HaMoshiach. The situation has not changed. The ruling elite do not want messages of truth upsetting their ivory towers. The “Sanhedrins” of today try very hard to shut down any who challenge the status quo. I am not talking about a disrespectful challenge I am talking about a calm rational discussion on biblical matters. As an “institution”, Judah will not entertain a rational discussion on the subject of Yeshua. As an “institution” Ephraim will not enter into a rational discussion on the Torah. This is perplexing and concerning as both the Torah and HaMoshiach are vital to the redemption of a wayward nation [The nation of Israel] and are the very pillars of our faith and faithfulness to HaShem. Thank God some individual “vagabonds” are bucking the status quo and beginning to dialogue in a mature respectful manner.

Gamaliel offered some sound counsel before the Sanhedrin, he said, *“For if this plan or undertaking is of men, it will come to an end; but if it is of God, you will not be able to stop them. You might even be found fighting against God.”* The message of Yeshua as HaMoshiach continues to this very day, and we witness the strength of this message on a daily basis. The message of Torah continues to this very day and we witness the strength of this message on a daily basis. However I don’t witness many Sadducees or High Priests at this time. HaShem will have His way despite our best efforts at times to prevent it. Judah and Ephraim have spent countless hours fighting the ordained plans of HaShem. Men have tried over and over to stop the message of Yeshua as HaMoshiach and the

message of the need to follow and embrace the Torah, yet both messages remain.

There are not many things you can guarantee in this world, but it is the belief of this author that you can guarantee the continued messages of Yeshua as HaMoshiach and the need for all biblical citizens to embrace Torah. Man will not stop these messages, as politically incorrect as they may be. The discussions will go on. We require wise counsel and we should endeavour to seek that which HaShem has ordained over and above what man has ordained. This will take courage, patience, understanding and wisdom stemming from Torah and experience. May we take on board wise counsel from Gamaliel and Peter and not fight against HaShem, and be about obeying the commandments of HaShem rather than the commandments of men.

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,

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