

February 14, 2023

Family Likeness

Shalom,

“Our Father in Heaven.” These are more than familiar words! Let them sink in! Our relationship to God is not about religion. It’s about being children of a loving Father Who cares for His family with a pure love that is free from any corrupting influence. His love for us is the same love He has for His only begotten Son.

*But to as many as did receive Him, to those who put their trust in His person and power, **He gave the right to become children of God**, not because of bloodline, physical impulse or human intention, but because of God. (John 1:12-13 CJB)*

*I united with them and You with Me, so that they may be completely one, and the world thus realize that You sent Me, and that **You have loved them just as You have loved Me**. (John 17:23 CJB)*

In this week’s Torah portion, called **Mishpatim** or **“Ordinances”** found in **Exodus 21:1–24:18**, God lists a variety of areas that all people confront in life and shows **His judgment** in those areas, or **His will**, concerning them. Yeshua spoke of the **Kingdom of God** in **Matthew 5–7**, and how the citizens of His kingdom were to live or, more to the point, **He told us what to do and showed by His own actions the way to conduct ourselves in the realm of life**. We are given **laws for living** that will keep us in line with God’s will concerning **generosity**, the **sanctity of life**, the **treatment of parents**, **living in harmony with others**, our **relationship to those in authority**, **property rights**, and a variety of other situations that we may encounter in our daily lives. **God is a God of order**, and **He created us to live and prosper in His order** by paying attention to, and obeying, His Ordinances. These verses are put forth in the Older Covenant and the Newer Covenant and are confirmed by the teachings of Jesus and the Epistles.

Some of the areas regarding behavior toward servants dealt with the people of eras that most of us are not familiar with, but we can see that **God deals with all people of all times to walk in love toward others and treat them with kindness and respect, never allowing cruelty nor ill-treatment toward any of His creatures**.

It is very important that we understand that these laws do not represent the directives of an angry God, but rather that a loving Heavenly Father is relating **His attitudes**, or **His way of doing things**, and is instructing His children on **how to walk in His ways** which produce harmony and shalom. It is certain that keeping these instructions have

nothing to do with our being justified before God for **the only way to attain righteousness is through trusting in Messiah Yeshua.**

God made this sinless Man be a sin offering on our behalf, so that in union with Him we might fully share in God's righteousness. (2 Corinthians 5:21 CJB)

Since righteousness can only be received through trusting, is there any reason for us to keep the Father's instructions, or His laws, for living? Remember, He didn't give us these instructions to limit us or to rule over us. In fact, these words reveal that it is His perfect will for all who trust Him to walk in His ways **for their own good and perfect prosperity**, and the only hope anyone has of maintaining this level of obedience is through faith, or trust, in God. **The righteous walk by faith, and the ways of God, as they were shown by Jesus, portray what a true faith-walk looks like. Therefore, to be like our Father, we will choose to walk as Jesus walked in perfect harmony with the Father.**

Therefore, if anyone is united with the Messiah, he is a new creation—the old has passed; look, what has come is fresh and new! (2 Corinthians 5:17 CJB)

For we are of God's making, created in union with the Messiah Yeshua for a life of good actions already prepared by God for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10 CJB)

Great rewards and supernatural blessings belong to those who hold fast to the teaching and instruction of God **by trusting, and it is that trust in God that gives us a relationship “in Him”** that produces new-man activities that make us look like Jesus — that is, we look and act just like our Father.

Living in new creation reality,
Terry

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