

The WildBranch Ministry *...thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Romans 11:18*

Be Ye Transformed Romans 12:9-16

Romans 12:9

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."

Paul has now warned us not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought. He has taught us that the Spirit of God has many giftings designed to be distributed to all who believe. Now Rav Sha'ul will follow with some exhortations concerning our behavior one to another. Paul, a well versed student of Rabbi Gamliel, knows full well what the Tenakh teaches concerning true love and the nature of humans. He is all too familiar with those who can say they love. Sha'ul is prepared to teach the biblical concept of love in the very next chapter.

Romans 13:8-10

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

From Paul's point of view, love has little to do with 'I love you' or 'I am in love with you'. Biblical love is obeying the commandments of God that teach us how to love. This brings us to verse nine. We are to love without dissimulation or hypocrisy. This word in the Greek is *anupokritos*. This word should look familiar for it is the Greek root of where the English word 'hypocrisy' comes from. Paul is saying that our love toward one another is to be in sincerity, i.e., not saying one thing and doing another. Fathers and mothers understand this truth. It is delightful to hear "I love you, dad" or "I love you, mom" from our children, but

the expression of love that truly melts our hearts is when our children listen and obey. The hypocrisy that Sha'ul is referring to is found many times in the Tenakh.

Yechezk'el 33:30-31

"Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from YHVH. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness."

Mizmor 55:21

"The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords."

Mishlei 26:25

"When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart."

Y'shua addresses this kind of hypocrisy in Mark 7:6 when dealing with the religious left who expressed their love for YHVH by circumventing His ways for their ways, even while professing with their mouths their undying love for their Savior.

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Yesha'yahu prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."

Most of the occurrences of this Greek word are directly associated with God's truth.

2 Corinthians 6:6-7

"By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love UNFEIGNED, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,"

1 Kefa 1:22

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto UNFEIGNED love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:"

The next line in Paul's exhortation helps to solidify the kind of hypocrisy he is referring to, and it's context with Torah. We are to abhor evil and cling to that which is good. Only Torah defines what is good and only Torah identifies what is evil. We must remember that because of the fall of Adam and the adamic nature present in all of us, we still desire to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It is now our life long objective to live His way and not our own.

Mizmor 34:11-14

"Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of YHVH. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

We are told to cling to that which is good. The Hebrew word used here is *davaq*. It means to 'join with'. There must be an intense desire to be one with what is good and not just seek it.

1 Corinthians 6:17

"But he that is JOINED unto YHVH is one spirit.

Ruth 1:14

"And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth CLAVE unto her."

Mizmor 119:31

"I have STUCK unto thy testimonies: O YHVH, put me not to shame."

D'varim 4:4-5

"But ye that did cleave unto YHVH your God are alive every one of you this day. Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as YHVH my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

I can almost assure you that virtually all mentions of clinging and joining are directly associated with obeying the words of God. These same words and exhortations by Rav Sha'ul are prophesied of the only people that are in the Brit Chadashah or New Covenant.

Yirmeyahu 13:11

"For as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto me the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah, saith YHVH; that they might be unto me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear."

The omniscient nature of our Redeemer is fully aware that His people will not listen and that He must consistently send messengers to bring His people back. I find it no coincidence that Paul uses terminology here that is commonly used in families. It has always been my contention that all the scriptures are written to family members that were established in the beginning with a Father and a house. God knows the destiny of all of those who are His, and tells His children in advance their future and revelations of their past. The two divided houses of Israel are both represented by two men in both covenants. Two brothers that have gone separate ways, one has remained near, while the other has gone far away. The house of Judah, represented by Judah, has remained in the east, it's tribal designation according to the first chapter of B'midbar (Numbers). The house of Israel represented by Joseph and Ephraim, has been scattered to the west, it's tribal assignment as well. These two brothers, featured in the parable of the two sons, are prophesied to once again be reunited and to love one another.

Romans 12:10-12

"Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving YHVH; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;"

In this passage Sha'ul begins with two Greek words that are family or brotherly words. The words 'affectioned' and 'brotherly' both contain the Greek word *philos*. As a matter of fact, the first word of this verse is literally *philadelphia*. This is the title of one of the seven churches in Asia in Hitgalut 3. One cannot

help but notice, among many other things, that this is the church that has 'kept His word and has not denied His name'. These brothers are to prefer or honor one another, recognizing that they are all of the same family. We are not to be slothful in our work, but to be fervent in spirit for we all serve the same God. We are to be rejoicing in our hope, patient in our tribulations and diligently continuing in prayer. Is this the manner of the saints, great and small, that we are witnessing in this move of God in the last days?

Romans 12:13-15

"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

There is a call by Sha'ul here concerning the saints. The KJV use of the word 'distributing' is somewhat, if not blatantly, confusing. The word in the Greek here is *koinoneo*. It is the word we commonly associate with fellowship or having things in common. The complete Jewish Bible translates it quite well in stating that we are to 'share' with each other. Once again, in the Hebrew and the Greek, this term is profoundly familial. The word in Hebrew is *chever*. This word means to 'couple together'. It is generally translated as fellowship, coupled, joined and companions. One of the more obvious occurrences of this word is in Yechezk'el 37:16.

"Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his COMPANIONS: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his COMPANIONS:"

Is it just a coincidence that virtually all New Testament references to the so-called church find their roots in the only two entities that are in the New Covenant, the house of Israel and the house of Judah? I find it absolutely fascinating and par for the course for our God, that most roads in the scripture lead back to the people of His Torah and the Torah of His people. It is with this in mind that Rav Sha'ul exhorts us about the relationship between Torah and love in this chapter. There is a particularly poignant application today, with our move back to the Torah of our God, and this is the basis, I believe, for Sha'ul's

concern. In our zeal to move us all back to the commandments of our God and teach the truth, we have, especially much of the leadership, left the love of God in the dust. I am currently witnessing the same pattern of self-serving arrogance that I have seen in the nominal church all my life. In our struggle to cling to Torah and only Torah, many of us have forgotten that the whole foundation of Torah is love. It is Torah that binds us as one and keeps us a family. In our quest to be 'right' we have crushed much of the house of Israel and their companions. Jealousy, strife, envy, resentment, covetousness and one-up-manship have risen their ugly heads and are capable of turning this burgeoning move of God into another fleeting 'movement'.

My fellow brothers in Messiah, the same penman who warns us here is the same writer who besought us to endeavor to keep the unity of the faith. In the same way that Yechezk'el prophesied that we would be joined together as one, Sha'ul admonishes us to be of the same mind one toward another. Once again, Sha'ul connects evil with conceit in Romans 12:16.

"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

Once again, Sha'ul directly connects this first sentence with the prophecies of the Tenakh. The writings of the prophets teach quite extensively concerning the same people that Sha'ul is writing to.

Yirmeyahu 32:37-39

"Behold, I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them:"

As we discussed earlier in this teaching, in the Hebrew culture and language, the heart is used interchangeably with the mind. They will be of one heart together because that is what God foretold they would be. But God knows the old nature of man. He knows that it is part of man's base nature to let himself get in the way. To fight this fundamental nature, Sha'ul advises that we take to ourselves those who are lowly and humble. This is the Hebrew meaning of the

phrase 'condescending to men of low estate'. The word translated as condescend here in the Hebrew is *laqach*. This is the common Hebrew word for taking a bride or taking of the tree of life. The Greek uses a word that means to 'humble yourself to be like' as the closest representation of 'taking someone unto yourself'. The idea is to bring them in to be part of who you are and what you are doing. It means to share with them in the blessings you have received and make them a people of your own. In modern lingo, we might say that God is exhorting those whom He has gifted in the assembly to hang out with the crowd as well as the big wheels, or those who can benefit you the most. Sha'ul follows this by impressing on us not to be wise in our own conceit. The word 'conceit' here is from the Greek word *heautou*, which is a pronoun meaning 'yourself'. Sha'ul exhorts us to fight the natural tendency to be full of ourself rather than concern for others. The next time you have a chance to attend a conference or seminar teaching, ask yourself if the one you are listening to is there because of concern for you, or to benefit their own ministry and reputation.

The Messianic 'movement' of late is experiencing many controversies and doctrinal disputes. All who teach know that there is to be unity maintained in the body of Messiah. It does not help the plight of this move of God, when well known teachers and Rabbi's drive wedges between the brethren by manufacturing their own litmus tests for 'true' Messianics. This, along with the baggage that flocks of sheep bring in, combines for an unhealthy body. Sha'ul, knowing full well the future condition of the saints, and particularly those gifted among them, warns us about what our attitudes should be toward one another. The Torah of our Messiah is indeed what we are to take to the nations. But personal Torah litmus tests that are not mixed with a common love for the brethren, places us right back to the religious atmosphere that Y'shua faced every day of His ministry. The writers of the Brit Chadashah are not teaching new things, but rather true things. They taught knowing full well they were ministering to the members of the New Covenant.

Shalom Alecheim!

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