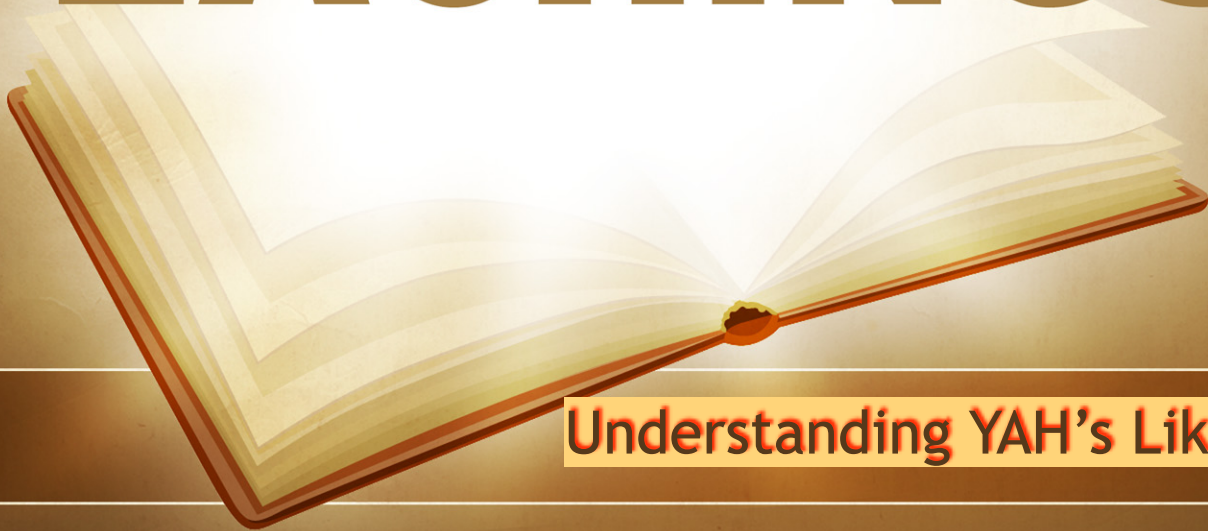


# TORAH TEACHINGS



Understanding YAH's Likes and dislikes

# #42 Matot (מַטּוֹת)— Hebrew for “tribes”



Torah: Numbers 30:2 - 32:42  
Haftarah: Jeremiah 2:4-28; 4:1-2

# TOPICS IN THE PARSHA

## THIS WEEKS TORAH PARASHAT

#42 Matot (מַטּוֹת)— Hebrew for “tribes”  
Mas’ei (מַסְעֵי) — Hebrew for “journeys,”  
Chapter 30) Vows- Covenants Vs Contracts



# TOPICS IN THE PARSHA

## THIS WEEKS TORAH PARASHAT

#42 Matot (מַטּוֹת)— Hebrew for “tribes”

Mas’ei (מַסְעֵי) — Hebrew for “journeys,”

Chapter 31) Vengeance- Ours or leaving things to  
Elohim

# TOPICS IN THE PARSHA


## THIS WEEKS TORAH PARASHAT

#42 Matot (מַטּוֹת)— Hebrew for “tribes”

Mas’ei (מַסְעֵי) — Hebrew for “journeys,”

Chapter 32) Vulnerability- Due to Division and  
Discouragement

In this Torah portion, we see a clear picture of how we are to relate to one another and 'love' our neighbour, as this portion speaks to all the Tribes and renders a clear guidance, on the very words we speak, both to יהוה and to each other, as well as the clear responsibilities of sharing with each other and being able to stand and fight for one another.



This week's Torah portion is called "Tribes" or "the tribes" which is written in the Hebrew text as **הַמַּטּוֹת** ha-mattoth, which is the plural of the root word **מָטָה** mattah (mat-teh')- Strong's H4294 which means, 'a staff, rod, branch, a tribe, a branch of a vine' which comes from the primitive root verb **נָטָה** natah (naw-taw')- Strong's H5186 which means, 'to stretch out, spread out, extend, incline'.

This word is for all the 'tribes' (branches) of Yisra'el - all who have 'spread out', and when we see the meaning of these words, we can quickly be reminded of the words of our Master **יהושע** in:

Yohanan/John 15: 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who stays in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit. Because without Me you are able to do naught!"

These instructions of **יהוה** as given through Mosheh are for us, the branches of The Vine (**יהושע** Messiah), who have been grafted in by the blood of Messiah!

# Men and Vows

Num 30:1 And Mosheh spoke to the heads of the tribes concerning the children of Yisra'ĕl, saying, “This is the word which יהוה has commanded:

Num 30:2 “When a man vows a vow to יהוה, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he does not break his word, he does according to all that comes out of his mouth.

# Women and Vows

Num 30:3 “Or if a woman vows a vow to יהוה, and binds herself by some agreement while in her father’s house in her youth,

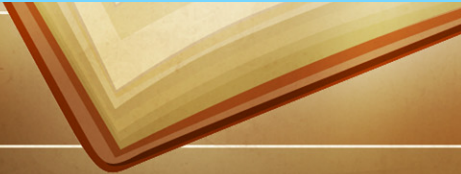
Num 30:4 and her father hears her vow and the agreement by which she has bound herself, and her father has kept silent towards her, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement with which she has bound herself stands.

Num 30:5 “But if her father forbids her on the day that he hears, then none of her vows nor her agreements by which she has bound herself stand. And **יהוה** pardons her, because her father has forbidden her.

Num 30:6 “But if she at all belongs to a husband, while bound by her vows or by a rash utterance from her lips by which she bound herself,

Num 30:7 and her husband hears it, and he has kept silent towards her on the day that he hears, then her vows shall stand, and her agreements by which she bound herself do stand.

Num 30:8 “But if her husband forbids her on the day that he hears it, then he has nullified her vow which she vowed, and the rash utterance of her lips by which she bound herself, and יהוה pardons her.



Num 30:9 “But any vow of a widow or a divorced woman, by which she has bound herself, stands against her.

Num 30:10 “And if she vowed in her husband’s house, or bound herself by an agreement with an oath,

Num 30:11 and her husband heard it, and has kept silent towards her and did not forbid her, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement by which she bound herself stands.

Num 30:12 “But if her husband clearly nullified them on the day he heard them, then whatever came from her lips concerning her vows or concerning the agreement binding her, it does not stand - her husband has nullified them, and יהוה pardons her.

Num 30:13 “Every vow and every binding oath to afflict her being, let her husband confirm it, or let her husband nullify it.

Num 30:14 “But if her husband is altogether silent at her from day to day, then he confirms all her vows or all the agreements that bind her - he confirms them, because he kept silent towards her on the day that he heard.

Num 30:15 “But if he nullifies them after he has heard, then he shall bear her crookedness.”

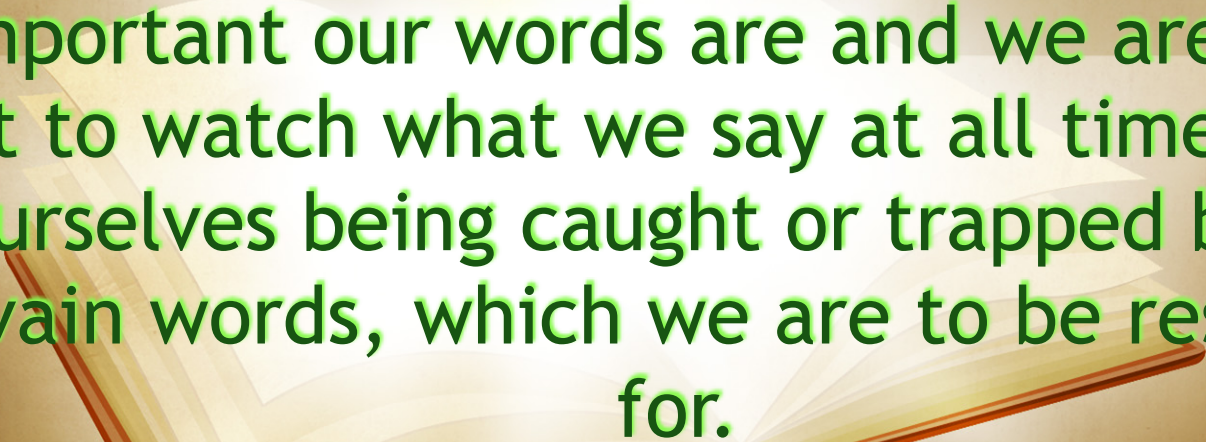


Num 30:16 These are the laws which **יהוה** commanded Mosheh, between a man and his wife, and between a father and his daughter in her youth in her father's house.



## Vows and oaths:

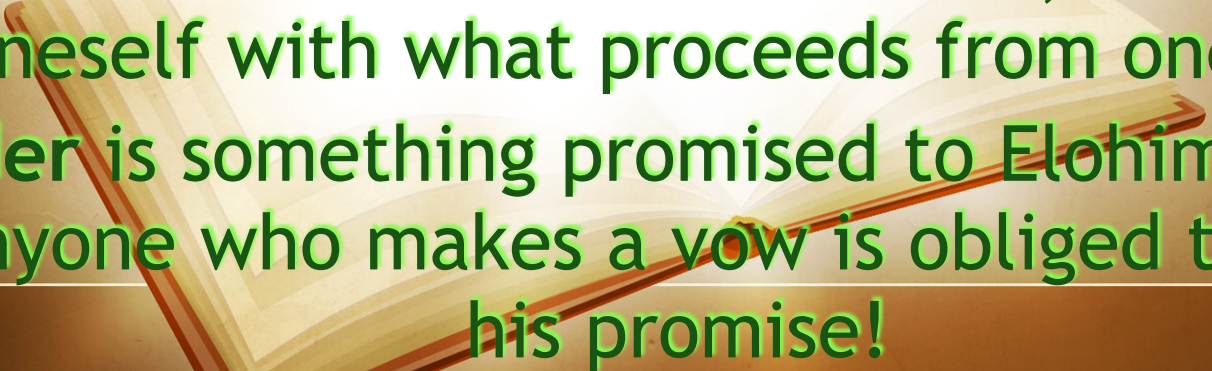
As we look at this chapter, we can certainly learn how important our words are and we are therefore taught to watch what we say at all times, lest we find ourselves being caught or trapped by our idle and vain words, which we are to be responsible for.



**Verse 2** - In this verse, we see some very critical words that we must understand, from a Hebraic perspective, in order to fully grasp the importance of the words we speak.

It starts off by telling us that when a man makes a vow or swears and oath - he must not break it! The two Hebrew words for vow and oath are as follows:

**1 - Vow** - In Hebrew, the word that is translated as ‘vow’ is נָדָר neder (neh’-der)- Strong’s H5088 which means, ‘**vow**’ and the phrase, ‘to make a vow’, in Hebrew, is the word נָדָר nadar (naw-dar’)- Strong’s H5087; and therefore, to “nadar a neder” is to swear to Elohim with an ‘oath’, and therefore bind oneself with what proceeds from one’s mouth. A neder is something promised to Elohim verbally, and anyone who makes a vow is obliged to fulfil/do his promise!



In Scripture, a vow is always to Elohim and not to man.

And the understanding behind a ‘vow’ carries the meaning, ‘to bind or imprison, or to dedicate a specific object or creature to יהוה’.

Tehillah/Psalm 61:8 “So I sing praise to Your Name forever, when I pay my vows day by day.”

Tehillah/Psalm 116:14 “I pay my vows to יהוה now in the presence of all His people.”

Yonah/Jonah 2:9 “But I offer to You with the voice of thanksgiving, I pay what I have vowed. Deliverance is of יהוה.”

Mattithyahu/Matthew 5:33 “Again, you heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to יהוה.’”

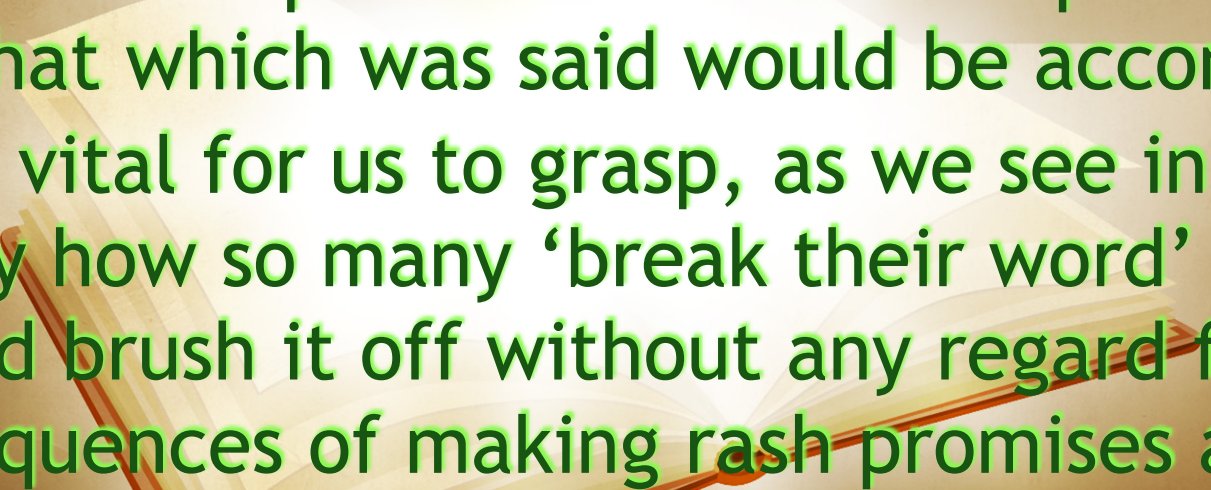
This can also cause us to recognize that we must be true to the words of our mouth as we do what we say we will, in offering up the commitment to follow Messiah and walk in Him daily!

**2 - Oath** - In Hebrew, the word that is translated as 'oath' is שְׁבָעָה shebuaḥ (sheb-oo-aw')- Strong's H7621 which means, '***oath, curse, swear, sworn***' and comes from the root שָׁבַע sheba (sheh'-bah)- Strong's H7651 meaning, '***seven***', and from this word we get the denominative verb - שָׁבַע shaba (shaw-bah')- Strong's H7650 which means, '***to swear, exchange oaths, take an oath, vow***'. An 'oath' is typically an obligation taken upon yourself rather than that which is imposed upon you.

To “swear”, in Scripture (which is also the root word שָׁבַע *shaba*), was to give one’s sure and promised unbreakable word in testimony, that the one swearing would faithfully perform some promised deed, or that he would faithfully refrain from some evil act.

Occasionally, we see in Scripture that one ‘swore’ that they freely acknowledged a truth and would continue to acknowledge it in the future by sticking to what they had heard.

In Hebrew, when one promises to complete something, it is considered as 'done' and the word that one had promised could be depended upon, and that which was said would be accomplished. This is vital for us to grasp, as we see in the world today how so many 'break their word' so easily and brush it off without any regard for the consequences of making rash promises and vows.

An open book with a red bookmark is positioned diagonally across the lower half of the image. The book's pages are a light cream color, and the red bookmark is visible on the right page. The background is a textured, light brown surface.

What we are to recognize is that the one we make a promise to is, in a sense, 'incomplete' until we fulfill the vow - and so too are we, as we have, 'by our words', bound ourselves to another and therefore are required to follow through or else we are rendered as not having completed our work and are 'incomplete'.

When we 'swear by His Name', we are identifying ourselves with His character and His clear standards, as prescribed in the Torah and therefore **יהושע** warns us that we are not to 'swear FALSELY'!

Wayyiqra/Leviticus 19:12 "And do not swear falsely by My Name and so profane the Name of your Elohim. I am **יהוה**."

To not swear falsely in יהוה's Name is a very serious instruction as many do this as they pass off their own agendas and ideas as that of יהוה. It also speaks of not fulfilling something that we have declared to complete; and now we have all said we will follow His commands and obey them as we have dedicated our lives to following Messiah and therefore we must be careful not to be found faltering in our commitment, for this would be an example of 'swearing falsely' in His Name when we fail to do that which we have committed to doing and being marked and sealed as a set-apart nation unto Him!

Messiah reiterates this command, by saying we should not swear falsely by anything, but rather let our yes be yes and our no be no as anything beyond this is from the evil one!!!

He was not saying that we cannot swear or make an oath - He was saying that we should not do it falsely!!! Do not give your word and then break it!

If we are to be a light to the nations and 'living letters' of Messiah, then we had better be careful to ensure that we speak the Truth and follow through on our commitments, which ought to always be for His purposes!

Mat 5:33 “Again, you heard that it was said to those of old,  
‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to  
יהוה.’ Lev 19:12, Num 30:2, Deu 23:21.

Mat 5:34 “But I say to you, do not swear [vainly] at all,  
neither by the heaven, because it is Elohim’s throne;.

Mat 5:35 nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; Isa 66:1  
nor by Yerushalayim, for it is the city of the great Sovereign;  
Psa 48:2.

Mat 5:36 nor swear by your head, because you are not able  
to make one hair white or black.

Mat 5:37 “But let your word ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No’ be  
‘No.’ And what goes beyond these is from the wicked one.

The word used for 'bind' in Bemidbar/Numbers 30:2 is אָסַר asar (aw-sar')- Strong's H631 meaning, '*to tie, bind, imprison, yoke, hitch*', and in fact it also carries the meaning of being '*joined in battle*', hence the understanding of a vow or oath that we make is a '*binding/imprisoning*' us to another.

The word 'himself' is the Hebrew root word נֶפֶשׁ nephesh (neh'-fesh)- Strong's H5315 meaning, '*soul, living being, life, person, desire, appetite, passion, emotion*'. And here we see that the vow or oath is binding on our soul - binding on our life, and to not carry it out can have serious ramifications for our 'life'.

What we must be willing to understand here, is that we are to show great integrity in our words for whatever comes from our mouths is a 'vow' - meaning, that if I say that I am going to do something and do not do it, reveals not only a lack of integrity, but when understanding the concept of 'being joined in battle', and when looking at the meaning of being 'bound', then it is clear that when we do not keep our word we show that we are in fact not battle ready and stand the real possibility of losing some battles that we face along the way, as a result of not sticking to, and accomplishing, our words that we speak!

One of the meanings of the word for 'bind' - אָסַר *asar* - is 'yoke' (as mentioned above), and it further emphasizes how our words yoke us to another through the promises we make; therefore, we must learn not to make promises or agreements with those who do not keep the Torah. Having said that, we do understand that while we are in this world and not of the world, we certainly have to make promises to those who are not in Torah - be it our employers or clients or work colleagues.

Yet, what I am stressing here is that we must make sure that we do our utmost to not make promises or agreements with those outside of the Torah if it will in anyway require us to break the Torah!

For example, if one goes for a job interview and they receive new employment, they must make sure upfront that they clearly state that they cannot work on the Shabbat or Feast Days of **יהוה**, for to enter into an employment contract without making this clear can and will cause great conflict down the road.

That is why we are warned in Scripture to be careful with our words and we must be careful to whom we say “yes” to, for oaths involve more than the mere words we speak - they bind us to that person or persons!

Shemoth/Exodus 23:32 “Do not make a covenant with them nor with their mighty ones.”

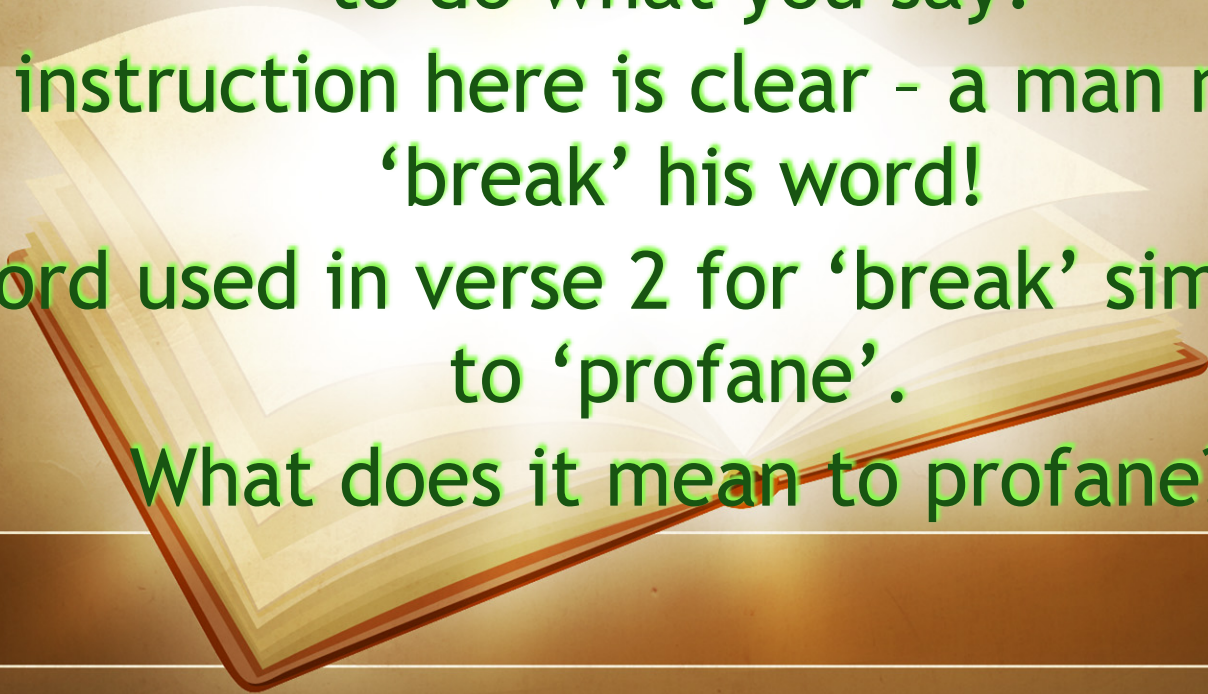
Qorintiyim Bet/2 Corinthians 6:15 “And what agreement has Messiah with Beliya’al? Or what part does a believer have with an unbeliever?”

We must remember that we are what we speak  
and our words will come toward us, so be careful  
to do what you say!

The instruction here is clear - a man must not  
'break' his word!

The word used in verse 2 for 'break' simply means  
to 'profane'.

What does it mean to profane?



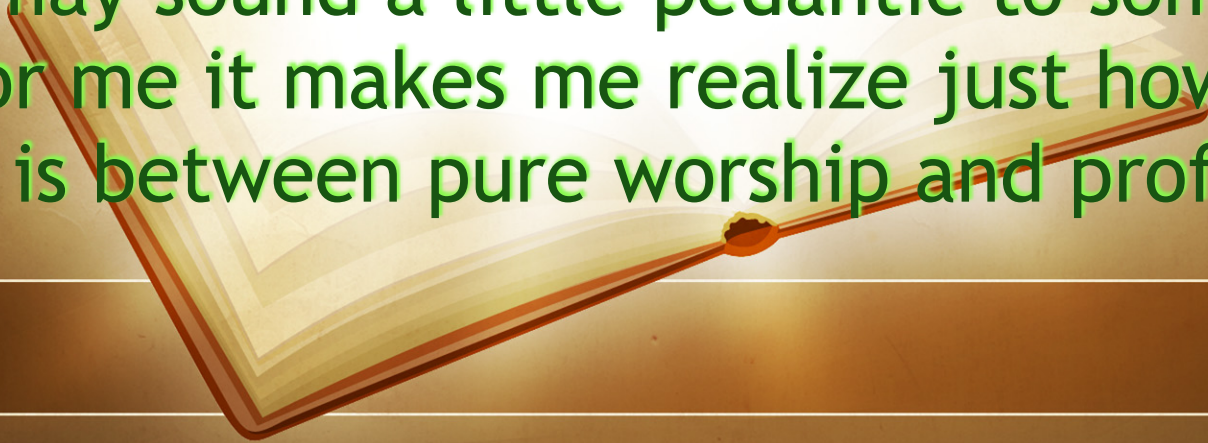
The word profane means to treat something set-apart with abuse, irreverence or contempt.

The Hebrew word for 'profane' is חָלַל ḥalal (chalal - with a ch.. sound as in loch) (khaw-lal')- Strong's H2490 which means, 'profane, bore to pieces, kill, wound, defile, pollute, violate'.

What is very interesting to me, is that the word for praise in Hebrew is חָלַל ḥalal (with a soft sound as in ha)(haw-lal')- Strong's H1984, which means, 'to shine, be boastful, praise, sing praise'

These two words differ with a slight difference is the stroke of the pen by means of a little tiny gap! In Praise the letter ה (hey) is used and in profane the letter ה (het) is used.

This may sound a little pedantic to some of you, but for me it makes me realize just how fine line it is between pure worship and profanity!



Remember Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aharon who offered profane fire unto יהוה - they offered a false worship and got zapped!

Let me tell you why I find this very interesting, in the closeness of these words - we see in the world today that there are many who claim to be born again believers of the Almighty yet in their worship they are offering profane worship and they cannot distinguish between the set-apart and the profane!

The 'church' today, is profaning the Name of יהוה and have not only brought His Name to nought but have profaned it by treating it with abuse, irreverence and contempt!

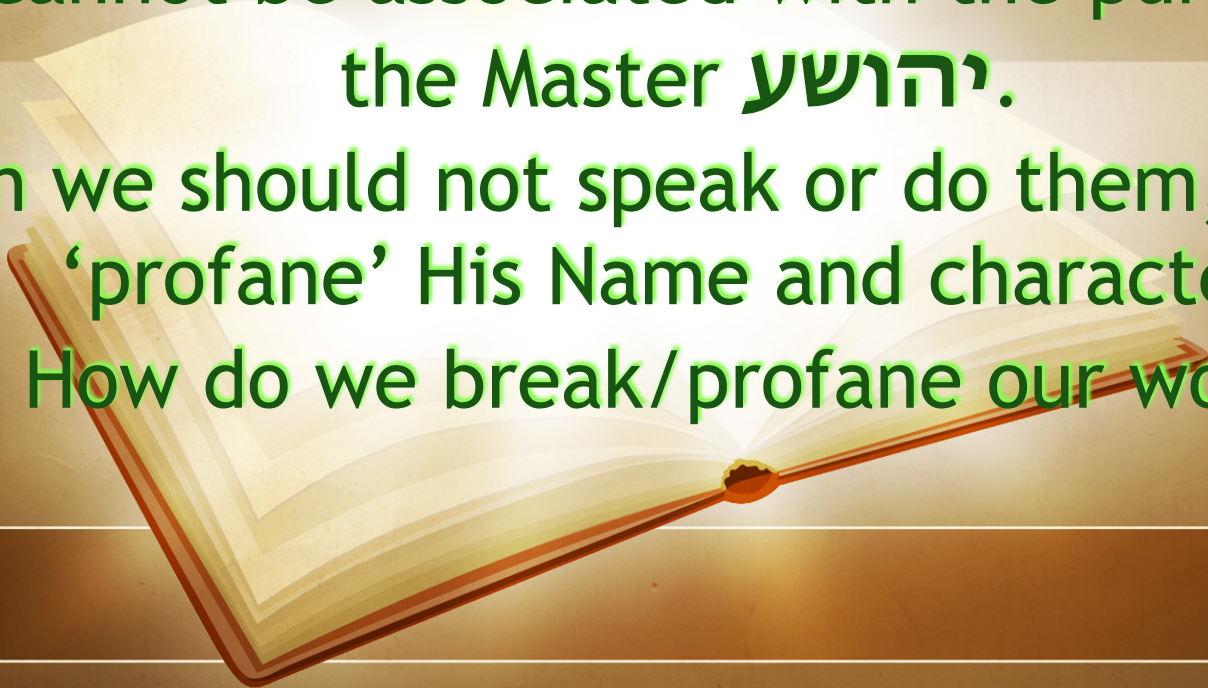
Now, while we understand this clear difference between profane and praise, we must see that when we 'break' our word, we are in fact rendering 'profane' worship unto יהוה, as we are clearly told in:


Qolasim/Colossians 3:17 "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Master יהושע, giving thanks to Elohim the Father through Him."

Our words carry great power and if any word or deed cannot be associated with the pure Name of the Master **יהושע**.

Then we should not speak or do them, lest we 'profane' His Name and character!

How do we break/profane our word?



An open book with a red bookmark is positioned diagonally across the lower half of the image. The pages are a light cream color, and the binding is visible in the center. The background is a textured, light brown surface.

By simply not doing what we said we would do;  
and when we break our word, we risk killing any  
trust being built between ourselves and others, we  
risk breaking relationships and we can, by  
breaking our word, destroy any progress we may  
have achieved in any project and or relationship.  
When this happens our weapons of warfare get  
broken down and we end up losing many battles.

This is the simple truth that ought to wake us up drastically:

יהוה's Word says - KEEP YOUR WORD AND DON'T BREAK IT - so when we do break our word - guess what - WE BREAK HIS WORD!!


Let us look at a few Scriptures in regards to our words and commitments:

Ėkah/Ecclesiastes 5:4 "When you make a vow to Elohim, do not delay to pay it, for He takes no pleasure in fools. Pay that which you have vowed."

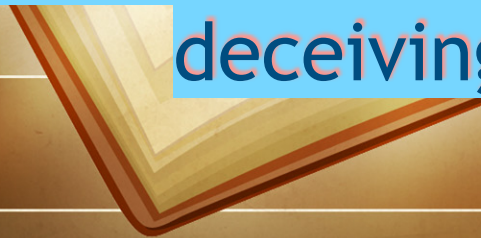
Ya'aqob/James 3:1-6 "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, knowing that we shall receive greater judgment. 2 For we all stumble in many matters. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the entire body. 3 Look, we put bits in the mouths of horses, for them to obey us, and we turn their body. 4 Look at the ships too: although they are so big and are driven by strong winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot intends.

5 So too the tongue is a little member, yet boasts greatly. See how a little fire kindles a great forest!

6 And the tongue is a fire, the world of unrighteousness. Among our members the tongue is set, the one defiling the entire body, and setting on fire the wheel of life, and it is set on fire by Gehenna.”



Ya'aqob/James 1:19-22 "So then, my beloved brothers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, 20 for the wrath of man does not work the righteousness of Elohim. 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and overflow of evil, and receive with meekness the implanted Word, which is able to save your lives. 22 And become doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."



## PRAISE vs. PROFANE

### PRAISE: 'HALAL'

STRONG'S H 1984: to shine, to be boastful, to praise,  
to give praise, to offer praise, sing praise

הלל

ה = HEY

ל = LAMED

ל = LAMED

הל

SMALL GAP

### PROFANE: ḤALAL (CHALAL)

STRONG'S H 2490: to bore, pierce: to pollute, defile, profane:  
to desecrate, violate, to kill,

חלל

ח = ḤET

ל = LAMED

ל = LAMED

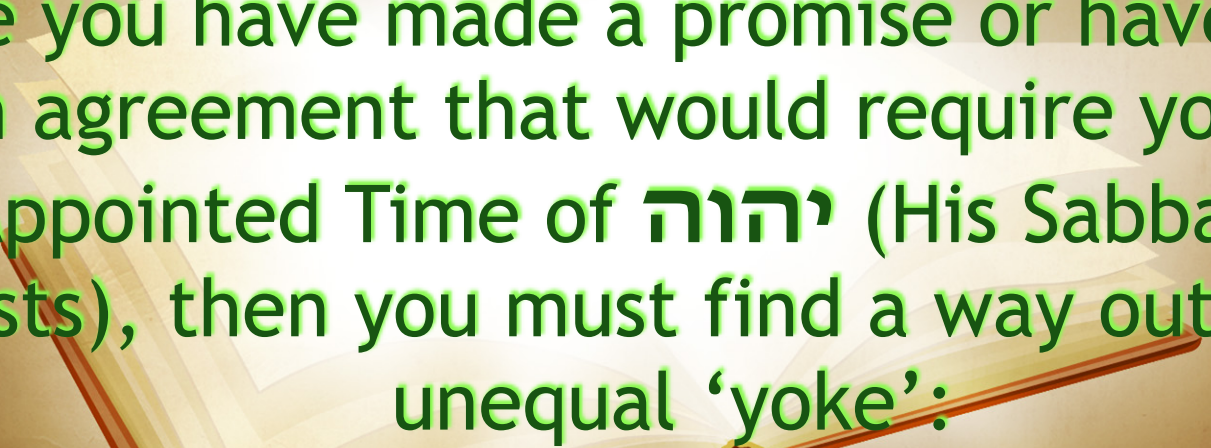
חל

NO GAP

FINE LINE BETWEEN PRAISE AND PROFANE!!!!

There is a very fine line, as I have said, between 'praise' and 'profane'; as outlined in this chart:

In the event that you find yourself in a position where you have made a promise or have entered into an agreement that would require you to break an Appointed Time of יהוה (His Sabbaths and Feasts), then you must find a way out of that unequal 'yoke':



Mishlě/Proverbs 6:1-5 “My son, if you: Have become guarantor for your friend, have shaken hands in pledge for a stranger, 2 have been snared by the words of your own mouth, have been caught by the words of your mouth - 3 do this at once, my son, and deliver yourself, for you have come into the hand of your friend: go, humble yourself, and urge your friend. 4 Give no sleep to your eyes, nor slumber to your eyelids. 5 Deliver yourself like a gazelle from the hunter’s hand, and like a bird from the hand of the trapper.”

This passage is very clear - when you realize that you have given your agreement in doing something only to find out that you would be breaking the Torah, then you must act quickly and 'give no sleep to your eyes' - in other words do not delay in going and setting straight what was agreed in error - this also applies to 'working' agreements that may cause you to break the Sabbath - deliver yourself from the trap that your binding agreement put you under, which means you will have to humble yourself and confront the one with whom you have made or signed the agreement or contract with and get released from any requirements that would cause you to break the Torah - even if it may cost you your job!!

A great example for us, in Scripture, of a man who kept his word, by not breaking his vow to **יהוה**, is Yiphtah the Gil'adite as recorded in Shophetim/ Judges 11.

He made a vow to **יהוה**, that if **יהוה** gave the children of Ammon into his hands that he would offer up to **יהוה** whatever or whoever would meet him when he returned in peace. His only daughter came out first and so he offered her up to serve continually in the Temple and kept his word!

We cannot be rash with our words in promises to call something set-apart to only later use it for profane use:

Mishlě/Proverbs 20:25 “It is a snare for a man to say rashly, “It is set-apart,” and only later to reconsider his vows.”

We must think before we speak.

Yiphtah realized and knew that he cannot go back on his word - he tells his daughter, “I have given my word to יהוה and I am unable to turn back!”

When we say something, we need to be ready to do it and follow through regardless of the circumstances!!!

Yes, I suppose Yiphtaḥ could have turned back like so many today would quickly do, however disobedience to יהוה was not an option to him, and that is a great lesson for us today!!!

This is a clear warning, being given to us here in **Mishlě/Proverbs 20:25!**

The warning is against making vows or commitments that are later discarded and not kept.

The Hebrew word translated as 'snare' is מִקְשׁ moqesh (mo-kashe')- Strong's H4170 which means, 'a bait, lure, trap, snare, ensnared', and comes from the root verb יָקַשׁ yaqosh (yaw-koshe')- Strong's H3369 which means, 'to lay a bait or lure, ensnared, set a trap'.

The term 'set-apart', in Hebrew, comes from the root word קָדַשׁ qodesh (ko'-desh)- Strong's H6944 - and it means 'apartness, consecrated, dedicated, that which is dedicated and separated unto יְהוָה'.

The word is self-explanatory and carries with it great weight in its identification of truly setting something or someone apart from another with a clear distinction of being marked as separate and apart from the rest.

Many people are very quick to 'commit' to something and dedicate themselves to being set-apart yet when the battles come, they quickly reconsider their vow of commitment to apartness.



The Hebrew word that is used here for  
‘reconsider’ comes from the primitive root בָּקַר  
baqar (baw-kar)- Strong’s H1239 which means,  
‘to seek, inquire, make inquiry, meditate’.

We need to consider our words before we speak  
them and not be rash in speaking and then later  
reconsider what we said, for then we may have  
already been caught by the words of our mouth  
and therefore have to fulfill what we have said.

Another thing we need to realize is that vows do not need to be vocalized in order to be in effect!!! As soon as we say it in our hearts, יהוה knows and expects us to keep it!!!!

Ma'asei/Acts 5 is a great example for us in the account of H̄ananyah and his wife, Shappirah - they made a vow when laying down the money as if it were all they had received for the land they sold, but it wasn't and יהוה saw it in their hearts!

The interesting thing to note here too, is that nobody forced them to sell the land - they made this vow voluntarily yet still did not follow through with total obedience and we know what happened as a result!!!


**Shemu'el Aleph/1 Samuel 16:7** tells us that man looks at the eyes, but **יהוה** looks at the heart!

Hananyah was a fool, who not only wanted the praise of men, but also wanted the money that by his own vow was no longer his - he lied to **יהוה** and paid the price for it.

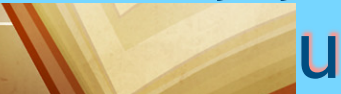
1Sa 16:6 And it came to be, when they came, that he saw Eliyab and thought, “The anointed of יהוה is indeed before Him.”

1Sa 16:7 But יהוה said to Shemu'ěl, “Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him, for not as man sees, for man looks at the eyes, but יהוה looks at the heart.”

Debarim/Deuteronomy 23:21-23 “When you make a vow to יהוה your Elohim, do not delay to pay it, for יהוה your Elohim is certainly requiring it of you, and it shall be sin in you. 22 “But when you abstain from vowing, it is not sin in you. 23 “That which has gone from your lips you shall guard and do, for you voluntarily vowed to יהוה your Elohim what you have promised with your mouth.”



Mattithyahu/Matthew 12:35-37 “The good man brings forth what is good from the good treasures of his heart, and the wicked man brings forth what is wicked from the wicked treasure. 36 “And I say to you that for every idle word men speak, they shall give an account of it in the day of judgment. 37 “For by your words you shall be declared righteous, and by your words you shall be declared unrighteous.”



**יהושע** teaches us that we must keep our word by letting our yes be yes and no be no!

Mattithyahu/Matthew 5:33-37 “Again, you heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to **יהוה**. 34 But I say to you, do not swear [vainly] at all, neither by the heaven, because it is Elohim’s throne; 35 nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Yerushalayim, for it is the city of the great Sovereign; 36 nor swear by your head, because you are not able to make one hair white or black. 37 “But let your word ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No’ be ‘No.’ And what goes beyond these is from the wicked one.”

What יהושע was saying hear is not that you cannot make a vow, for He didn't nullify Torah, but rather that when you make any form of vow do not do it "falsely" or 'vainly' as the Torah tells us!

Don't say yes when you really mean no and vice versa. One thing we see today is that people keep their options open by saying "maybe" - we need to learn to commit to yes and no being yes and no, anything other than that is falsehood and falsehood is from the evil one!

To swear falsely, is to profane the name of יהוה!  
When we take a look again at Yiphtah's 'vow', we  
see that it was twofold - 'whatever' would meet  
him when he returned home would be dedicated to  
יהוה, if it was a person; and if it was an animal it  
would be sacrificed!

Why do I say that?

Well, when you look at Scripture and understand  
that Yiphtah knew the Torah then this passage  
makes great sense.

He was met by his only daughter, and he gave her  
or dedicated her to יהוה - to serve יהוה at the  
tabernacle.

We do know from Scripture that women did serve  
at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting (Shemoth/  
**Exodus 38:8 & Shemu'ěl Aleph/ 1 Samuel 2:22**).

His daughter having been the first to greet him was  
now to remain a virgin, never marry, never have  
kids - never know the joy of motherhood and  
continue her father's line of inheritance in Yisra'ěl.

This was enough to cause her and her friends to spend 2 months grieving. What did she mourn? Her virginity! Nowhere in Scripture do we see that Yiphtah actually killed his daughter, nor do we see anyone mourning her death.

The emphasis is placed on the fact that she would remain a virgin.

It is hard to believe that they would establish a custom to commemorate a sacrifice of a human being; but it is very clear that they would commemorate and celebrate the devotion and obedience of Yiphtah's daughter in helping her father fulfil his vow.

She certainly deserves to stand with Yitshaq as an example of a faithful child, willing to obey her father and **יהוה**, no matter the cost.

In Shophetim/Judges 11:31 the word translated “and” is the Hebrew letter ‘ו’ (waw, pronounced - ‘vav’) which can be translated as ‘and’ but also as ‘or’.

So, what we can see from this account is that Yiphtah is saying that whatever comes out - if it is a person then that person would be dedicated to service unto **יהוה** ‘or’ if it is an animal it will be offered up as a sacrifice to **יהוה** presuming that it is a clean animal that is!!

His daughter comes out and she is then dedicated to lifetime service unto **יהוה** and she willingly obeys - she understood what Sha'ul writes about in Romiyim/ Romans 12 - that we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, set-apart and well-pleasing to Elohim - for this is our reasonable act of worship!

When we have accepted **יהושע** as Saviour and Master, we must realize the cost of that commitment that has been brought forth out of our hearts and spoken from our lips - our word to Him must be kept!!!

As we can learn from Yiphtaḥ - it doesn't matter the circumstances of our upbringing or where we come from  
- we can know יהוה and be used by Him!

What we have to understand in this account is that Yiphtaḥ knew Torah and child sacrifices were against the Torah:

Debarim/Deuteronomy 12:31 “Do not do so to יהוה your Elohim, for every abomination which יהוה hates they have done to their mighty ones, for they even burn their sons and daughters in the fire to their mighty ones.”

Debarim/Deuteronomy 18:10 “Let no one be found among you who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices divination, or a user of magic, or one who interprets omens or a sorcerer, ...”

Human sacrifices were an abomination to יהוה and Yiphtah knew this - he would not willingly make a vow with יהוה that was an abomination to יהוה!

The law of vows permitted monetary redemption of persons vowed to יהוה, but a person devoted to יהוה could not be redeemed.

Yiphtah committed his daughter to lifelong service to יהוה at the tabernacle, and only priests would have been allowed to offer sacrifices, and Yiphtah was not a priest and the priests would not have sacrificed a human! In Shophetim/Judges 11: 40 we see that every year the women would '*lament*' for four days - possibly during one of the feasts.

The word we have translated as lament is the Hebrew word תָּנָה tanah (taw-naw')- Strong's H8567 meaning, '*recount, rehearse*', which is only used twice in Scripture and should be correctly translated as *celebrated* or *commemorate* or *praised* and *rejoiced*.

This leads us to correctly assume that the women would go every year to rejoice and celebrate with Yiphtah's daughter who was serving at the tabernacle.

○ I have mentioned these critical points in order for us to understand that Yiphtah was not rash or foolish in his vows and then kills his daughter, no he was a man who knew the Torah, lived by it and followed it wholeheartedly by faith and that is what got him listed in the faith hall of fame in Ib'rim/Hebrews 11.

Why I share the accounts of Yiphtah, in relation to this Torah portion, is simply because he is a great example for us to learn from in terms of keeping our word and our vows to יהוה, and not breaking our commitment to Him for any reason whatsoever!

It is not evil to make vows with **יהוה**, especially when in pursuit or expectation of His mercy.

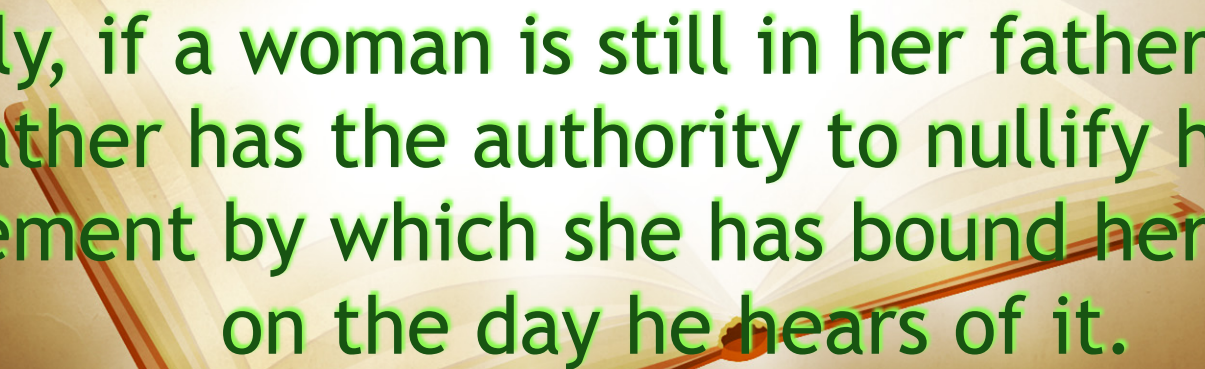
To make vows to **יהוה** in terms of acceptable service to him, not as a purchase for favour we desire, but as an expression of gratitude to Him and the deep sense we have of our obligation to render unto Him our complete worship according to what he has done for us, is good and pleasing - we must keep our word!



## Verse 3-15 - vows and agreements of a woman

In the rest of the chapter we see the clear instructions regarding the words that are expressed as vows or agreements by a woman.

Firstly, if a woman is still in her father's house, her father has the authority to nullify her vow or agreement by which she has bound herself, only on the day he hears of it.



If he keeps silent after hearing her vow or agreement, she has bound herself by, then her vow or agreement stands. Silence implies acceptance and consent!!!

If her father, however, forbids her on the day he hears of it, then none of her vows stand and she is pardoned from her vow or agreement by **יהוה**, because her father nullified it - on the day he heard it!

A father does not have the option of being 'lazy' by not making a decision right away, but rather has a responsibility as head of the home to ensure that what is said by his daughter will in no way cause disruption or break the unity within the home.

This is a vital lesson in the life of any home - firstly the man of the house must step up and be the head of the home that he is called to be and ensure that any words, vows or agreements that are made from any of his family does not go against the Torah or else he must nullify it immediately; and secondly we see here that children must obey their parents!

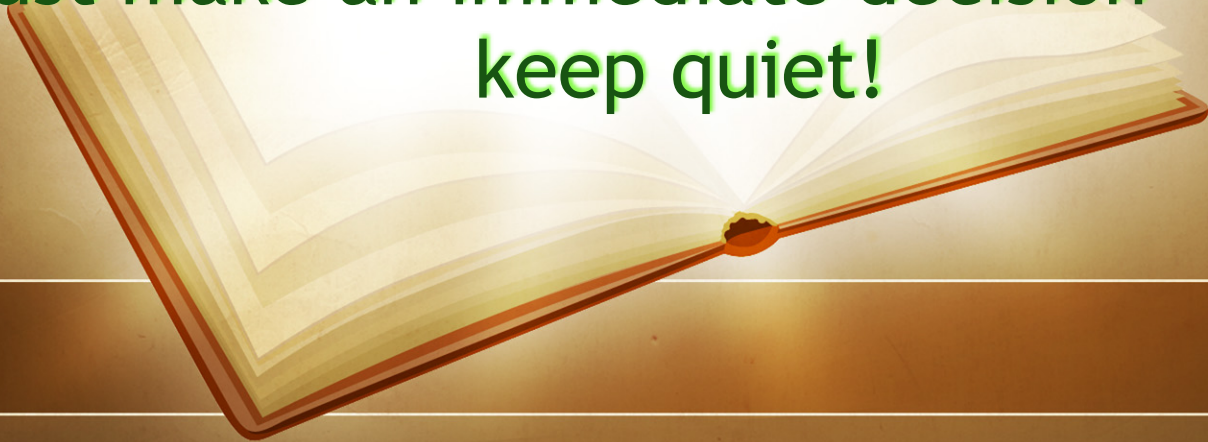
Eph'siyim/Ephesians 6:1 "Children, obey your parents in the Master, for this is right."

Qolasim/Colossians 3:20 "Children, obey your parents in all, for this is well-pleasing to the Master."

What is interesting to note here, is that these verses deal specifically with a woman who is still under her father's covering.

In Scripture a man is not expected to act on his own until he is of fighting age, which is 20 years old, however if he marries before that he becomes the head of a new home, however a woman remains under authority as long as she is still in her father's house (that is, that she has not married) and here we see the responsibility of the man of a house and how he must manage his household well, and nullify any rash words of his daughter on the day he hears it.

It does not necessarily mean that he may hear of it on the day that she makes the vow, but rather when he hears of it (which may only be days later) he must make an immediate decision - nullify or keep quiet!

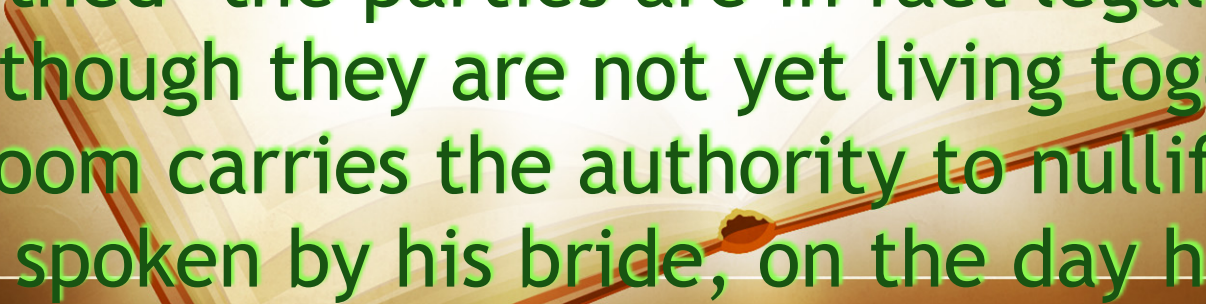


**Verse 6-7** speaks of a woman who is married and belongs to her husband and may also refer to one who is betrothed, and may not yet be living with her husband as they are in their betrothal period.

She is under his authority from the point of betrothal, and he also has the responsibility to either nullify any rash vow or agreement or show consent by remaining silent.

This is very interesting as we do not see this being carried out in the world today.

The world may call this period 'engagement' and for many they do not see this phase or period of engagement as binding, yet in Scriptural terms and in the eyes of Torah, when one becomes 'betrothed' the parties are in fact legally married even though they are not yet living together and the groom carries the authority to nullify any rash words spoken by his bride, on the day he hears it!




At the point of agreement to marry, which her father did not nullify, the authority over her is transferred from her father to her husband!

This authority is a great picture of **יהושע** as Husband over us His Bride, as He has the capacity to nullify any rash words or agreements we make, on the day he hears it! By the husband nullifying the vow or agreement made by his bride, she is pardoned by **יהוה**. We are the Bride of Messiah under His authority!

We see that when Yisra'ĕl said the 'I do' at Mount Sinai - that day she made the vow to marriage which was announced with the first shofar:

Shemoth/Exodus 19:8 “And all the people answered together and said, “All that יהוה has spoken we shall do.” So Mosheh brought back the words of the people to יהוה.”



On that day, we must clearly recognize that **יהוה**, The Husband, never nullified the vow of His Bride and so it stands!!!

When Yisra'el 'joined' herself to Ba'al Pe'or we see how **יהוה** nullified it that day by putting to death the leaders:

Bemidbar/Numbers 25:3-4 "Thus Yisra'el was joined to Ba'al Pe'or, and the displeasure of **יהוה** burned against Yisra'el. 4 And **יהוה** said to Mosheh, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang them up before **יהוה**, before the sun, so that the burning displeasure of **יהוה** turns away from Yisra'el."

**יהושע** tells us that He has given us authority to bind and loose, yet what we must recognize is that if a person vows to ‘never’ eat meat (becoming a vegetarian) then they are in fact, by their vow, ‘nullifying Torah’ which commands us to eat Lamb at Pěsaḥ (Passover)!



Verse 9 tells us that a widow or divorced woman has no direct authority over her and is in a sense expected to be mature enough to watch her words and whatever she binds herself to stands.

Verse 13 - Every vow and every binding oath to 'afflict' her being her husband must confirm or nullify!

The word used here for 'afflict' is עָנָה anah (aw-naw')- Strong's H6031 meaning, 'to be bowed down or afflicted, humbled'.

We are commanded to ‘afflict our beings’ on Yom Kippur and this word עָנָה anah can also carry the meaning ‘*to be occupied or busy with*’.

Busy or occupied with what?

Well the next word tells us - our beings!

And that is the word נֶפֶשׁ ‘nephesh’ (neh'-fesh)-H5315 which is ‘*a soul, a living being, the inner being of a man*’.


An illustration of an open book with yellowed pages, lying flat. A small, dark, textured object, possibly a pen or a piece of wood, rests on the right page. The background is a warm, golden-brown gradient.

This phrase 'to afflict our being' we see in Scripture is a clear link to fasting, as seen in the command to do so on Yom Kippur, yet also we see in:

Tehillah/Psalm 35:13 "But I, when they were sick, I put on sackcloth; I humbled my being with fastings; And my prayer would return to my own bosom."

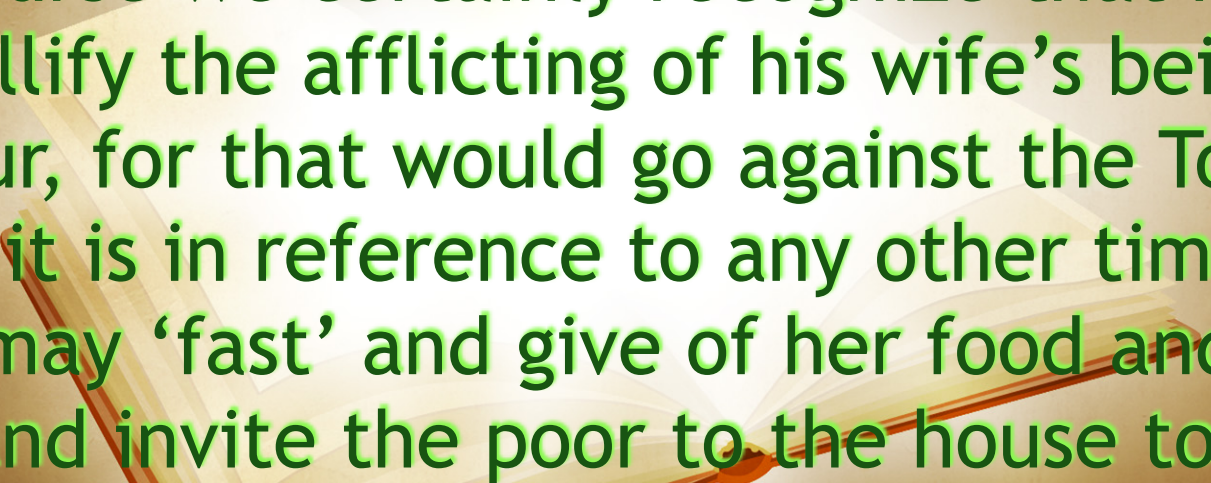
We are told in Yeshayahu/Isaiah 58 that the purpose for fasting is to break yokes as well as to feed the hungry and clothe the naked - in other words, fasting is a means of breaking any yokes to the security of 'self' and 'fleshly securities' that keep us from being faithfully yoked to Messiah!

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 58:6-7 “Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loosen the tight cords of wrongness, to undo the bands of the yoke, to exempt the oppressed, and to break off every yoke? 7 “Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, and cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?”



A husband has the authority to confirm or nullify his wife's vow or oath to afflict her being for the poor and needy!

Of course we certainly recognize that he should not nullify the afflicting of his wife's being on Yom Kippur, for that would go against the Torah, but here it is in reference to any other times that a wife may 'fast' and give of her food and clothing and invite the poor to the house to eat.



He has the right to nullify her vow or oath, especially if he sees that her oath or vow may endanger the home in any way, and so once again clearly pictures for us the great responsibility that a man has over his household in protecting and guarding his wife and children in every way.

If he confirms her choice to 'afflict her being' by 'being silent' on the day that he hears it, then he acknowledges her choice as being within the clear lines of Torah and accepts her vow or oath by which she binds herself.

**Verse 15** - if the husband nullifies the vow or oath after he has heard, he shall bear her crookedness!

The word used for 'after', in the Hebrew, is אַחֲרָאḥar (akh-ar')- **Strong's H310** meaning, 'the hind part, following part, after, afterwards, behind, following', and in its primitive form means, 'to remain behind, tarry, delay, linger'.

What we see here is that this verse is speaking of when a husband nullifies the oath or vow only after - having delayed making a decision - then he bears her crookedness.

In other words when he kept quiet when he heard and then afterwards (perhaps a day or so later) says 'No, you are not allowed to do...', then he must bear her crookedness.

This is the price a husband pays for not doing anything immediately after hearing a foolish or rash vow or agreement that his wife has made!

This is a powerful picture for us, of our Husband and Saviour, **יהושע** Messiah, who bore our crookednesses - for He kept silent!

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 53:7 “He was oppressed and He was afflicted, but He did not open His mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, but He did not open His mouth.”

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 53:11 “He would see the result of the suffering of His life and be satisfied. Through His knowledge My righteous Servant makes many righteous, and He bears their crookednesses.”

**יהושע** Messiah certainly nullified the oaths that our forefathers made to all the pagan mighty ones which they worshipped, yet since the day had already passed, he had to bear the crookednesses of the Bride He loves!!!

Marqos/Mark 15:15 “But **יהושע** still gave no answer, so that Pilate marveled.”

Kěpha Aleph/1 Peter 2:24 “who Himself bore our sins in His body on the timber, so that we, having died to sins, might live unto righteousness - by whose stripes you were healed.”

**יהושע** our Husband had the authority to nullify our rash vows and oaths!!!

Our Husband, **יהושע** Messiah, had to and does bear our crookednesses that we may be pardoned and restored to right standing in Him, and we ought to therefore take very careful care of the words we speak, lest we nullify His work over us by making rash vows and oaths and sinning after having received a knowledge of the Truth - for then by our adulterous acts we may just be 'put away', where there is no more a sacrifice left for us; and as we have seen - a divorced woman's words by which she binds herself stand against her!!!

lb'rim/Hebrews 10:26-27 "For if we sin purposely after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a slaughter offering for sins, 27 but some fearsome anticipation of judgment, and a fierce fire which is about to consume the opponents."

