

Foundation of Authority 2

(Letter from Shua)

In our last social meeting we heard a letter from Berachah (in Germany) in which a question was raised concerning the "**foundation of authority**" in Sus. She referred back to a meeting in Sus with some responsible brothers and sisters in which a lot of critical comments had been voiced about the way a certain elder had handled different things in Sus. A brother had even judged that "the whole foundation of authority in the tribe of Reuben was off."

Since Ephraim and Berachah had never heard any further judgment on this, they were wondering and questioning how much their own understanding of how authority should be was on a wrong foundation and needed to be corrected, since they were leaders raised up in Sus.

What they considered to be foundational for leaders was that they had to be examples to the flock as the first ones to repent, able to hear from the least, servants of all, etc.

As we started talking about some of the charges that had been made, Yoneq made us see that the problem was not so much the faults or shortcomings some leader might have had, but the way we look at it and respond to it.

As far as this certain elder was concerned, Yoneq could only see that he was trying to uphold the standard, and that only a carnal person could have something to say about this.

We need to know that we are all apt to err, but it is only a carnal people who stumble over it and cause division. Spiritual people always side with authority. They never just complain against an elder, pointing out all his wrongs, but they remember that our leaders carry a high responsibility: they are the ones who keep watch over our soul, being day and night concerned about the well-being of the sheep, loosing their sleep in order to help them and bring healing, praying for those under them, pouring out their lives for them, devoted to the purpose of raising up the flock — and this not under compulsion, but from true care and love for the brothers.

It is for this that we have all reason to appreciate our shepherds being so thankful for them, praying for them with all our heart.

We are not like the world, who only knows how to slander the one who was president who just left office and remember all the wrong decisions he made.

We are not commanded to criticize authority, but to "obey our leaders." We are to treat even our crew heads just like Messiah, knowing that our Father will take care of them and that we do not have to attack them in any way (1 Pet 2:13,18-21; Eph 6:5-8).

If we would find ourselves sometimes in their shoes, we might find it easier to remember that our battle is not against flesh and blood elders, but against all the spiritual powers and principalities that try to destroy the brotherhood that Messiah wants to establish in this people on earth. We are not each other's enemies, but all those spirits of Satan who want to cause us to divide and complain against each other.

Only a dumb sheep does not pray for his shepherds. And only a carnal person points the finger, talking behind a person's back about all the faults he sees in him, sowing negativity and discord in other people by pulling them down to their level without ever going down on his knees and diligently praying for that brother. Such carnal people do not discern the between the true spiritual battle and mere social problems. They are used by Satan to destroy and divide the Body.

Spiritual people always support, defend and uplift authority. They are able to judge themselves and not divide over any thing. We are brothers, we are family, Jer 31:1. They are able to forbear, sympathize and work out their problems in peace.

They are engaged in the individual and corporate warfare which we fight against the schemes of the Evil One — not against the authority of our Father, but for them.

If we are separated in our hearts from our leaders, we are separated from our Father. For they represent Him to us. He is on their side. We need to be on their side also.

In this we can discern our own spirituality: how we pray. That is how we have communion with our Father.

We have to put on the full armor of God (Eph 6) and recognize that we are God's people, involved in spiritual warfare in order to bring about the koinonia, the fellowship of the life that

our Master established through the apostles. Our life is devoted to the anointing that brings about this brotherhood of man: the life of sharing in all spiritual and physical aspects with all the saints.

Our Father wants us to be devoted to one another in perfect unity. Only like this can we fulfill Mal 4:6 and bring about the Male Child that will finally fulfill Gen 3:15 and crush Satan's head.

1 Tim 2:8 is essential for us in order to bring this about and can only happen if we are obedient to our Master's commands to forbear and love and speak to one another. Eph 4 :1-4

Living in the Body of Messiah we are all friends. We are a family and should be familiar having an intimate relationship — especially with our shepherds. A familiarity that would let us know that we are for one another and that we are always free to go and talk personally to anyone, if we notice something in their life.

Without this kind of familiarity and unity, the corporate warfare we are involved in at our minchahs is hindered and it has happened that minchahs have been turned into judgment meetings, because someone had a bad conscience because he did not get things cleared up before and then the charges were brought out before the whole Body. Our minchahs are where we lift up our hearts and bodies in adoration and praise to our Master, bringing our petitions to Him. We need to guard them into turning into something else from an evil spirit destroying, exasperating our children and youth.

Concerning charges against elders, Paul gave us clear instructions in his personal letters to Timothy, who was one of the apostolic workers himself. He told him never to receive any accusations against an elder, except on the basis of 2 or 3 witnesses. That is, 2 or 3 "spiritual people" coming independently from one another to him with the same concern. Those people do not just act quickly, they judged themselves first, prayed about what they saw and finally submitted their concern to another shepherd who had greater discernment and wisdom.

Sometimes we are not sure if what we see is really right. But instead of praying about it, or talking to that person himself, we talk behind his back to another carnal person to gain greater assurance in our (negative) judgment. Gal 5:20 We do not judge that fallen tendency in us to just

point the finger and plot together, getting a following of our own against someone who might not have ever noticed his fault. This is the dividing work of Satan who especially comes against authority in the Edah. We must be aware of that and always side with authority and defend it.

Only on the basis of 1 Tim 5:19 the accusations against the elder need to be judged. If it is found out to be true, he must be reprovved in front of the whole Body, so that the others would fear and learn from it. It has to be judged which accusations must be exposed to the whole Body and which do not justify the seriousness of such a rebuke.

Our Father wants us to be one: a spiritual people who are totally devoted to koinonia that is the light of the life of Messiah in the world. A people that is together, that cannot be divided, a true family, sons of God. He is causing us to grow in love. This is what Yoneq share with us, and how we want to be the "us" (1 Jn 2:19) and not the "they" who were the factions.