

Foreign Wives – A Vexing Thing

This morning we were very thankful to welcome Deshe, a pillar of the Edah, into our midst. We opened our gathering with the song, “I Open my Eyes to See the Dawning of the Day”

ha-êmeq – I was thankful to see Deshe here today because of what Reah and D’ror said the other day. She imagined Yoneq and I sitting in a room similar to this thirty years ago with a similar group of people, only it was the parents of the first generation speaking out. It was quite awesome to her to see their faith expressed, which was the faith of their parents. So, you are sitting next to your son, who reminds me so much of you then. Your faith has matured and he has your zeal.

They don’t even get a ten second pause – the first generation – because they are fit, right on the edge of their seat. If the first generation is lazy and passive, then our Father’s will won’t even come about. It is like what we learned a week ago, that if we were really saved we would sing with all of our hearts.

Keturah – I am thankful for what you said. I don’t want to give the evil one ten seconds to overcome me. I don’t want to be fake and just come up with something to say, but I know our Father sees my heart. I don’t have to wait until I have some big revelation because I do want to have the same zeal my parents had. I know it is not going to come just by sitting here.

That’s wonderful.

A Vexing Thing – Intermarriage

I was reading Nehemiah last night. When we first started out in the Vine House we learned all about him, how they built the wall in 52 days, how they worked with a sword in one hand and a tool in the other, how they rallied to help one another. There are a lot of things we learned then that still come out when the Stem speaks. Obviously, our Father was telling us we were rebuilding the wall, restoring the City and nation our Father wants.

Ezra 9:2 — We used to talk about having a peg driven through our foot so that a remnant would come forth out of the riffraff that came out of Babylon. Ezra 9:2-3 speaks

about how vexed he was. Ezra was pulling his own hair out. Neh 10:30 – Please turn to that and you will see why Nehemiah was pulling everybody else’s hair out. Something was going on in Israel that was absolutely against what our Father had in mind for His holy nation. He didn’t want them blending into the nations around them.

“For they have taken some of their daughters as wives for themselves and for their sons, so that the holy race has intermingled with the peoples of the lands; indeed, the hands of the princes and the rulers have been foremost in this unfaithfulness.” When I heard about this matter, I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled some of the hair from my head and my beard, and sat down appalled. Then everyone who trembled at the words of the God of Israel on account of the unfaithfulness of the exiles gathered to me, and I sat appalled until the evening offering. (Ezra 9:2-4)

Ezra sat appalled until the evening sacrifice. What did Nehemiah do?

So I contended with them and cursed them, struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, saying, “You shall not give your daughters as wives to their sons, nor take their daughters for your sons or yourselves.” (Neh 13:25)

A Creeping Thing – Intermarriage

The very things that happened with Solomon were happening even with the priests. They hadn’t learned their lessons from the past. You can see in 1 Kng 11:4-8 that Israel should have learned a great proverbial lesson from what happened to Solomon. It was one of the very reasons the Jews were taken away from their land. How could they, with such a great proverbial lesson of the past, so clear before all the people, repeat the same sin? You see that marriage to foreign wives is a creeping thing. They let creeping things creep into Israel. They creep in through certain people. They creep in to corrupt Israel.

Our Father meant it to be a separate nation. The Law would protect Israel. It would protect it from corruption, in order that the people of the nations could come in and *be converted* and come to know the God of Israel. Otherwise, they are wolves in sheep’s clothing and they come in and corrupt Israel, turning them away to other gods.

You can see that marriage with a non-Israelite woman was totally, absolutely forbidden. It comes over into the New Testament in 2 Cor 6:14. We are to have nothing to do with that kind of relationship with people in the world. We can lead them to Messiah by preaching the word to them, but not form any kind of alliance with them.

Take heed to yourself, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land where you are going, lest it be a snare in your midst. But you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and cut down their wooden images (for you shall worship no other god, for the Sovereign, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and one of them invites you and you eat of his sacrifice. And you might take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters might play the harlot with their gods and cause your sons also to play the harlot with their gods. (Ex 34:12-16)

A Snare and a Trap to You – Intermarriage

We deal with Christianity, so we have to be very careful we don't mix with Christianity too, as in mixed marriages. Dt 7:3-4 – You can see the promise right there, that they will be a snare and a trap to you. See also Jos 23:11-13 and Jdg 3:6.

Now the rest of the people — the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the Nethinim, and all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the Law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, everyone who had knowledge and understanding — these joined with their brethren, their nobles, and entered into a curse and an oath to walk in God's Law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Sovereign our God, and His ordinances and His statutes: We would not give our daughters as wives to the peoples of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons. (Neh 10:28-30)

The parents of Israel made a covenant, an oath, and a curse would come upon them if they allowed their children to marry non-Israelites. Marriage was made or prearranged by the parents back then. They swore to obey the commandment.

Neh 13:23-24 — Nehemiah found the children of Israel in mixed marriages. They were intermingled. The children couldn't even speak Hebrew, the language of the Scriptures. They couldn't even learn the law in their own homes. It is the parents'

responsibility to teach the children the law, not the teachers, not even the rabbi's, but the parents. The Jews were raising children and giving them to forbidden marriages.

They didn't even know or worship the God of Abraham, which Neh 13:24-27 shows is one of the greatest things possible that marriage entails. Mixed marriage was the principle or main issue here. "Pagan women caused even Solomon to sin."

That was the main issue that caused the vexing Ezra and Nehemiah felt. I don't know if you can blame Nehemiah for his actions. It was almost like when our Master went into the Temple with the whip.

ha-êmeq – Solomon was beloved of his God, but pagan women caused even him to sin. That is what he was telling them in Neh 13:26-27 when he was pulling their beards out.

It was a big issue – the very one that led Israel into being taken captive. Nehemiah simply could not allow such a disaster to happen all over again. He had spent his life establishing and restoring Israel and then here it was again. Ezra was transfixed years before too and he pulled his own beard out. Nehemiah came later and pulled everyone else's beard out. He could not allow the same thing to happen again. The walls he'd built around the city were to protect them from people from the outside infiltrating and destroying them. Instead, anyone outside had to come through the gates.

1 Kng 11:4-8 – How could the people repeat the same sins again? That was the vexing thing. We will learn what *vex* means.

Thus I purified them from everything foreign and appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his task. (Neh 13:30)

You can see that the most prominent offender here was the grandson of the high priest, Eliashib. He married a daughter of Sanballat (Neh 2:10), the governor of Samaria and the archenemy of the Jews. So, Nehemiah took action and expelled him from the priesthood. He cleansed them from everything pagan. He drove them from Israel, asking God to remember him for cleansing the priesthood.

These things are written down for our instruction, so we won't fall like they did. The First Church did the same thing. These things were written for whom? For us – upon whom the ends of the ages have fallen (1 Cor 10:11). We will fall in the same way if we don't profit by what was written in the past. That is why the New Testament was written.

A Treasonous Thing – Intermarriage

The marriage in Neh 13:28-29 formed an alliance. It was treason with Israel's enemies. It defiled them and compromised the purity of the priesthood. If that happens, all of Israel's sins pile up as high as heaven because they were the ones making atonement – and they were defiled.

Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the Sovereign will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you. (Dt 7:3-4)

These verses speak about the very, very, very holy nation of Israel, set apart to be a light of salvation to the nations. You could be saved, purified, and come into Israel from them. Then such a saved one could marry. The problem is, they would creep in and act like they were sheep but keep their customs. They pretend they are saved, come in, and defile your sons and daughters.

They will come in. That is why we are to watch over those who come in. When someone is saved and has proven character, then possibly we would give our daughter to him. But very seldom would we give our virgin son or daughter to someone who had been defiled in the world, unless the parents agree on it.

We have understanding in the Scriptures about Mt 10:5, Rom 12:2, Phil 2:14-15, and 1 Pet 2:9 that we are not to have anything to do with the world and the things of the world. Even music – we have to watch music, being careful not to let anything in that would defile us. Christians don't see anything wrong with worldly music. If we love the

world and the things of the world, it means that the love of God is not in our heart, was not, *and never will be* – if we don't see it.

We are a light, a beacon light to the world (Phil 2:14). Rom 12:2 – We are not to be conformed to the world. Mt 10:5 – We are sheep in the midst of wolves. Our Master told His disciples then, “Don't go to the Gentiles; just go to the people of Israel.” They weren't ready even to evangelize at that time.

Israel is as Sheep in the Midst of Wolves

We, ourselves, are like sheep in the midst of wolves. Don't think Gentiles aren't like wolves. We can certainly be defiled if we take on their culture, customs, and what they enjoy. We are a special, holy nation. Do you think we want to spend thirty years of our lives, of the Stem's life, and watch our sons and daughters be defiled? The Male Child is the very purest, undefiled by any kind of defilement.

Rev 14:1-5 – If we are not bringing about the Male Child, we are nobody. We are wasting our time if our children aren't following after us. We are a bunch of hucksters. If the parents are sincere, I don't know why their children aren't sincere.

Ex 34:16 is God's prohibition against intermarriage. It was not a matter of just so-called prejudice. If you want to say it, God was prejudiced. Our Father could prejudge rightly. They knew the outside cultures were wicked because our Father said so. They did prejudge the wickedness of the Canaanites as a corrupt and immoral culture whose influence and practices were subtle, pervasive and unrelenting. The repercussions on Israel of intermarriage would be that it would be the quickest route to compromise with the world. This intermarriage would allow other cultures to creep into Israel, especially the Canaanites – the wicked nations around them. They, the Israelites, were not to blend in. There was to be no blending there.

It doesn't mean we move to some big hillside, but we are here for them, that the sheep could come in. I guess our Father knows His sheep in the world, but still, He

warned us, “Beware of wolves in sheep’s clothing.” We are not to take on their manners and customs, their nature. We are to be salt, but kind, gentle, and wise when we speak to the Gentiles.

The Canaanite culture of the surrounding nations was corrupt. They were immoral in their practices of religion. They had a subtle persuasiveness. Every evil spirit is persuasive. Spirits are unrelenting. They will not give up until you cast them out in the name of our Master Yahshua. A fly doesn’t give up until you kill it. It won’t take discipline – a spirit or a fly. The only way you can do it is with our Master’s name. If you don’t want to use our Master’s name, then be corrupt. Corrupt yourselves and corrupt your children.

The Repercussions of Intermarriage

The repercussions of intermarriage were awesome. Intermarriage is the quickest route to compromise with the world – marrying someone who was not truly saved but hangs onto his or her customs and love of the world.

So take diligent heed to yourselves to love the Sovereign your God. For if you ever go back and cling to the rest of these nations, these which remain among you, and intermarry with them, so that you associate with them and they with you, know with certainty that the Sovereign your God will not continue to drive these nations out from before you; but they will be a snare and a trap to you, and a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the Sovereign your God has given you. (Jos 23:11-13).

That is very descriptive, isn’t it? Our Father is uncompromising. Under no circumstances were they to marry unbelievers. Later, Solomon corrupted himself by intermarriage (1 Kng 3:1; 11:1-8).

Then Solomon formed a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh’s daughter and brought her to the city of David until he had finished building his own house and the house of the Sovereign and the wall around Jerusalem. (1 Kng 3:1)

Our Father said, “My son, build a house for your God,” and after he got finished, here comes a foreign wife. Read Kings to see what happened when they went against this word. They finished building the house, and then “Jeshurun grew fat and kicked.”

Jdg 3:5-11 – To even contemplate this evil is a gross sin against our Father and His Edah. Israel is His Edah. Israel was supposed to a great light, to show the nations that they are going against their conscience. That is what we are here for. How can we be a light if we are drawn to their culture and ways? People who do that deserve the second death. Maybe it will be the second death for the world if they are corrupting Israel – because they were never saved to begin with.

2 Cor 3:17 – Anyone who destroys will be destroyed. We’ve seen that very thing come about over the years. It is proven. It is a promise. If that doesn’t happen, God is a liar.

Intermarriage Introduces *Relentless* Temptation

Ezra 9:2-4 – Who is the holy seed? We are, according to Gal 3:29. The spiritual seed is greater than the natural seed. We can’t be any different than the command was to old Israel. The problem of intermarrying brings confusion, even in the world, but especially here because we are set apart.

If you want to see how our Father separated the people of the nations, look at Gen 10:32. Our Father set people apart in different territories with their own customs, language, and culture, etc. If you want to go to another nation, take on those customs and leave your own behind. That especially applies to Israel. Give up your rotten, stinking life. Give up whatever would corrupt. If you love the world, the love of the Father is not in your heart. You will suffer the same punishment as Satan. He is your god.

Each group of people was to have their own language, culture, and customs. The covenant with the God of Israel is violated in intermarriage. Intermarriage with foreign

women outside of the covenant made them unclean (Ezra 8:28-29; 9:11-12; Dt 7:1-3; Lev 18:25; Dt 4:5; 7:3; 18:9; 27:3; 2 Kng 21:16). Intermarriage with people outside the covenant introduced relentless temptation. Temptation will continue until you give in. It won't let up until you are destroyed – the temptation to corrupt and abandon the true God.

Christianity abandoned the true god and received another gospel, another Yahshua, another spirit. They said the same thing: "I love Yahshua." But the Holy Spirit did not empower them to say He was their Lord. It was some other spirit. The gospel they were preaching was with the same words, but it didn't have the same results. It didn't form the Body. People just tried to obey the Bible or something. They didn't form the holy nation.

Dt 7:3,4; Jdg 14:1-4; 2 Kng 11:1-4; 2 Cor 6:14 – Paul brought it right into the New Covenant. Dt 7:3-4 – Marriage is the closest of human ties — so close you have to leave your parents to form it. The world even knows that. The mother-in-law always destroys the marriage. That is why we separate the parents from the children in the sense of having no family authority in their life. There is a whole new authority structure in their lives. The new couple is under the eldership. 1 Cor 7:3-9 – There is it. Israel did not maintain their spiritual purity, but suffered for it.

(If you are a disciple, learn to wear your Bible out. The only reason we are here today is because the Stem wore their Bibles out. If the first generation doesn't wear their Bibles out, then they are not saved, are they? Elliot was saying, "Wow, we are a holy nation, a people set apart." The first generation yawned, not knowing who they are. Some don't know who they are. They don't see. Some do...)

But they mingled with the nations and learned their practices, and served their idols, which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons, and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with the

blood. Thus they became unclean in their practices, and played the harlot in their deeds. (Ps 106:35-39)

That was because of intermarriage. We see Gen 26:34-35. What does it say? It was so vexing to Esau's parents. He hurt his parents so much by marrying these foreign wives (Gen 27:46). Gen 28:9 – You can see how vexing this was to his parents. When Esau did this he was sealed off, barred from the inheritance. He started a whole new nation, a corrupt nation, which became the enemy of Israel.

You know what our Father did?

Gen 38:1-30 – This describes the broken covenant as the family began to intermarry with the cursed Canaanites. They risked the loss of their distinctiveness and their national identity. You know what our Father did? If you don't know this you don't know anything. He saw this threat of destruction and He had to work in His mysterious ways, without compromising His righteousness. He could have just sent angels down, but instead, over a period of four hundred years of slavery, He worked to deliver them. Then, how thankful were they after their deliverance? They started to complain as soon as they escaped the Red Sea. It was only a few who were thankful – most complained. History says we will fall away because the first generation doesn't get, or doesn't receive, the vision that should be passed on.

Our Father met this threat by sending Joseph ahead of them to Egypt, where they would be segregated from the Egyptians (Gen 43:32; 46:34).

As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. (Gen 50:20)

They didn't marry Egyptians. They only married within their own nation. If they had stayed in Canaan, they would have intermarried. They had a famine in the land of Canaan and Jacob sent his family to Egypt to find food. This got them away from the Canaanites. There they were segregated. People say, "How come God did that – caused them all that trouble? Why did He make them suffer? What was wrong with Him?"

He did it to preserve them until they were a great nation. Gen 15:13-16 was already a prophecy. The iniquity of the Amorites was later fulfilled. He knew what would happen. Our Father has infinite foreknowledge.

Gen 38:1-30 – Judah departed (literally “went down”) from Hebron in the hill country to the lowlands (Gen 35:27). The family further degenerates by their disloyalty (1 Chr 2:3) and on and on until our Father had to do something about it.

Ezra 9:2-3 – The holy seed was mixed. 2 Sam 13:19, Neh 13:25, 26:35, 27:46 – Ezra was vexed and tore his garments. Years later, Nehemiah would encounter the same sin, and rather than pull his own beard out, he pulled out the hair of the offenders.

To Vex your Parents

Gen 27:46 – Esau showed his disregard for the covenant of blessing by marrying outside the covenant (Gen 24:3-4; 31:50), vexing his parents and bringing himself under a curse (Gen 21:21; 25:6).

Gen 27:46; 26:34-35; Ezra 9:2-5; Neh 13:25 – What do you do when you vex your parents? You bring a curse upon yourself. Even if you slight your parents — not one time, but a continual thing — you are cursed. You are to give them the greatest respect, greater than anyone else on the earth. Old Israel brought themselves under a curse.

Vexing is trouble, distress, agitation, provocation, a restless desire for change, puzzlement, astonished at the sight of blatant disregard for parents or God, for the Law, for the word.

I just wanted to establish this. If we are going to marry, we are going to marry inside the covenant. If not, we break the covenant. If you are a parent, do not let your child marry anyone who doesn't love our Master with all of his or her heart, mind, soul, and strength. Otherwise you are an enemy of the cross. We don't fall in love with anyone in the world, but only in the Body, because whoever is led by the Spirit is a son of God. And it will be obvious – we will see it – whoever is led by the Spirit.

That is His foundation. Upon it He will build His nation. Otherwise, we are no better than anyone else. We're building our house on the foundation of the Old Covenant — every word of God. And the New Covenant is the very words of our Master Yahshua.

Jesse – When the children of Israel went through the lands, Balaam told the king, “If you want to destroy them, send your girls in there, because I can't curse them.”

We have to take it seriously that we are a set-apart nation. If we don't produce the fruit of the Kingdom, we are not that holy nation, that holy, set-apart nation. Now, we have to keep ourselves unstained by the world. Everything we heard really spoke to me. We have the opportunity to be that great nation that God chose Abraham to be. I want to do my part to bring it about.

Chanowk Yatsar – I was thinking about the reproach that our Father made them go through. Abraham went to Egypt for generations. When they came back, they were given a land that didn't belong to them. All those years, it was a reproach to belong to Israel if you didn't love God with all your heart. In the nation of Israel now, the goal is to get foreign women. That is all the young men talk about. It is like a sport, the greatest thing.

If you don't become like the nation you have chosen to live in, to be a part of, it is not right for you. You should live somewhere else. The holy nation is different, so we face reproach from the world. We could complain about it, but our Father made it that way (Heb 12:2). He wants us to go beyond any kind of compulsion and bring our flesh to the cross. He wants a nation that loves Him with their whole heart. Then one day it will no more be a reproach because Israel will be the light of the world.

Our Master felt that same thing, that reproach, but He despised it. That is how the enemy can get us.

ha-êmeq – Why is that so important? Maybe intermarriage doesn't seem so important, but you can see in that story in Nehemiah. Sanballat was the main enemy of Israel. It would be like Chets Barur marrying Bob Pardon's daughter. Pretty soon she would be saying, “My dad is not so bad, he's got some nice friends.”

That is what happened to the grandson of the high priest, who was led to compromise with Tobiah, a slime of a person, giving him a room in the Temple. They were two harassers, the worst people. How did the

compromise come in? Through the close union of marriage between Eliashib and Sanballat's daughter.

The evil one is like the flies, always coming back. Yesterday, I saw Rebecca killing the flies in the kitchen. She was so bothered by them. She devoted herself to doing that. The ultimate of passivity would be to let a fly crawl on you. The poor children of Africa let flies crawl all over them. Maybe it will become "cool" to let pet flies crawl on your face. I was amazed that Rebecca's efforts showed progress. But you can become so dull to your sin that the enemy can set up house in the Temple. It just creeps in. It is definitely a warning for us. We don't have to be tricked. We don't have to fall.