

ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah
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Understanding Torah Society part 20

Every man under his own tree

Micah 4:4

But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of YHWH Tzava'ot has spoken it.

The most obvious meaning of this passage from the context is there is no one to make Israel afraid any longer. He is dwelling in safety and security. Each man is dwelling under his own tree and under his own vine. However, while this is readily apparent from the context, it is far from being the end of what dwelling under one's own tree and vine means. This passage speaks on many levels as to how a Torah society is supposed to function.

Both the vine and the fig tree bear fruit which is good for food. Thus, one of the meanings here is that each man is producing his own food. This is one of the things that gives him reason to be secure; he does not need to depend upon others in order to be able to feed and clothe his family. We include the ability to clothe himself as well as feeding himself because of what man originally did in the garden.

Likewise, each man sitting under his own tree, specifically, his own fig tree, suggests the sin of Adam and Chavah in Gan Eden.

B'reshit (Genesis) 3:7

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

As a result of rebelling against the Voice of YHWH, man hid his nakedness by putting on fig leaves. We are not suggesting man is going to return to that state. However, what it does seem to suggest concerning man's future state by one sitting under his own fig tree, indicates each person will be fully aware of his own shortcomings and sin. He will not be looking at the

other man's sin and pointing his finger at his neighbor any longer. He finally fully realizes he is not worthy of being in the presence of YHWH.

Yonah (Jonah) 4:6-7

6 And YHWH Elohim prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Yonah, that it might be a shade over his head, to deliver him from his evil case. So Yonah was exceeding glad because of the gourd.

7 But Elohim prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd, that it withered.

Both the vine and tree suggest other passages of Scripture. Each man sitting under his own vine suggests the account of Yonah. The vine of Yonah suggests both repentance and mercy. Not only is each man to repent and return to YHWH, but each man is also to show his neighbor the mercy he received from YHWH. If he does not, then his vine shall wilt.

Furthermore, each person sitting under his own vine and tree also suggests each person is minding his own business. He is not being a busybody nor attempting to dictate to his neighbor how his neighbor should live his life. Rather, each person is sitting under his own tree at peace with himself as well as at peace with his neighbors and with his brothers. This is what a true Torah society should look like.

Each person is allowing every other person to live his own life in full obedience to the Voice of YHWH in the manner which is pleasing to YHWH. In this picture there is no idea present of "Torah police" forcing upon others the dictates of man, nor even the commandments of YHWH. Each man knows what he is supposed to do and he does it.

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 31:33-34

33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days," says YHWH, "I will put my Torah in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their Elohim, and they shall be my people;

34 and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know YHWH;' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them," says YHWH, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more."

When each person truly understands the requirement of YHWH to hear and obey His Voice, then each and every man within Israel can, and will, dwell under his own tree and vine, living securely and safely without anyone to make him afraid.

Tzephanyah (Zephaniah) 3:13

The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

The making afraid is not only from those outside of Israel, but also one's own neighbors and brothers. Each man is no longer afraid of being wrongly or harshly judged by his neighbor.

Each person can, and will, be open and honest how he is living without fear of reprisal or condemnation from others who also shema the Voice of YHWH. Each man is walking his own path without being judged by others for not walking the exact same path in the exact same way.

One passage which is discussed a lot in these times is the following passage.

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 11:13

The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and they that vex Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.

It is supposed by many who point to this passage, that the envy spoken of in this passage is the envy of Ephrayim as he envies Yehudah. Also, the vexation spoke of in this passage is the vexation of Ephrayim by Yehudah. While this is directly spoken of in the latter half of this passage, it is not the only aspect of envy and vexation being spoken of here. Such a view is woefully incomplete.

Please consider the first part of this passage again in which it states, "***The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and they that vex Judah shall be cut off;***" We can know for certain that those who vex Yehudah are not part of Israel for this passage teaches us they shall be cut off, that is, they shall no longer be a part of Yehudah even though at one time they would have been considered a part of Yehudah. Notice, this is not discussing Yehudah vexing Ephrayim as in the latter half of the verse, rather it is someone vexing Yehudah and from the wording of the passage that vexation is coming from within the house of Yehudah.

Likewise, the envy of Ephrayim is from within Ephrayim. In the latter half of this passage, it says Ephrayim will no longer envy Yehudah. However, in the first portion of this passage, the envy spoken of seems to be pointing at something different, namely, the envy of one man within Ephrayim towards another man of Ephrayim. Not only will Ephrayim no longer envy those of Yehudah, but he will also no longer envy others within Ephrayim, as well.

This is one of the things that our opening passage means in stating every man shall sit under his own tree and his own vine. He is no longer judging himself by comparing himself to others. Rather he understands his own sin and shortcomings because he rightly hears the Voice of YHWH and needs no man to teach him.

Yochanan (John) 6:45

"It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught of Elohim. Every one that has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes unto Me.'"

Additionally, every man sitting under his own fig tree and every man under his own vine also suggests this is his own property. Every man has his own piece of land given to him by YHWH for that man to properly steward His land according to the Voice of YHWH. No man is telling

another man what he may or may not do on, or with, his own property, but rather, each man is obeying the Voice of YHWH.

Another aspect of every man sitting under his own vine and under his own tree concerns warfare. Please consider the following. When a nation invades another nation, one of the things at which they strike is the infrastructure of the nation which they are invading. However, if there was no infrastructure to sabotage, then it would make it much more difficult to conquer. Each family, each farm, would be self-contained producing its own food, power, water, whatever each family needed to live. Such a reality in Torah society would make it very difficult, even nigh unto impossible, for an invading army to conquer such a society.

Amos 9:14

“And I will bring back the captivity of My people Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them.”

Furthermore, each man sitting under his own vine and under his own fig tree strongly suggests the return of the captives. Those who have lived in captivity among the nations have now returned and have been given an inheritance in the land. We see in the above passage that the return of the captives causes them to plant vineyards and gardens – each man sitting under his own tree and vine producing his own food.

When a person reads Micah 4:4 in context, the verse following our verse of study may seem puzzling.

Micah 4:5

For all the peoples walk everyone in the name of his god; and we will walk in the name of YHWH our Elohim for ever and ever.”

This verse suggests at least two items as it relates to Torah society. First, YHWH never forces anyone to follow Him. Therefore, neither should we. If a person desires to go do his own thing, then we should let him. Of course, this is after loving correction has been given. If a person truly wants to live according to his own standard, rather than living according to the standard as set forth by YHWH in His Torah, then he must be allowed to do so.

Second, this passage also suggests this is before Mashiach returns, as each nation is following after its own gods; whereas, Yisrael is following YHWH Elohim and she shall do so forever.

Every man under his own tree and under his own vine is a beautiful prophetic picture of future Israel living in safety and security. He is no longer living in fear from the nations who live around him, nor is he living in such a way as to look over his shoulder at his neighbors, concerned his neighbor will condemn him for what YHWH has led him to do. This is a picture of Torah society in the here and now, but still some time in the future. However, we might rightly

conclude that it is also sometime before Mashiach returns, because of what it states in verse five above.

May YHWH make this a reality soon and in our day!

Remember, you can make this begin to happen now by allowing your neighbor to live under his own tree and under his own vine by the way in which you treat him. Let each man deal with his neighbor with loving compassion in the same measure he would like to receive.

Matithyah (Matthew) 7:12

“All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, even so do you also unto them: for this is the Torah and the prophets.”

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