
1ST PETER PERICOPE #73b

Commentary by Dr. Eliyahu Ben Avraham (Dr. Walter Oakley)

Greek Text

1Pet 2:13 υποταγητε παση ανθρωπινη κτισει
δια τον κυριον ειτε βασιλει ως υπερεχοντι

1Pet 2:14 ειτε ηγεμοσιν ως δι αυτου
πεμπομενοις εις εκδικησιν κακοποιων επαινον
δε αγαθοποιων

1Pet 2:15 οτι ουτως εστιν το θελημα του θεου
αγαθοποιουντας φιμουν την των αφρονων
ανθρωπων αγνωσιαν

1Pet 2:16 ως ελευθεροι και μη ως επικαλυμμα
εχοντες της κακιας την ελευθεριαν αλλ ως
θεου δουλοι

1Pet 2:17 παντας τιμησατε την αδελφοτητα
αγαπατε τον θεον φοβεισθε τον βασιλευα
τιματε

My Translation

¹³ Make yourselves subject to all the sons of
men, established for the L-RD's sake; to kings,
on account of their authority;

¹⁴ and to judges, because they are sent by Him
for the recompense of evil workers and for the
honor of them behave appropriately
(uprightly).

¹⁵ Because this is the will¹ of G-d (pleasing to G-
d) that your acts of righteousness² silence
(muzzle and cause speechlessness)³ the
foolishness⁴ of ignorant men:

¹⁶ as free men and not as those who conceal
their depravity (thievery - lawlessness) as if
free (who conduct themselves as if free from
the Torah) but (act) as G-d's slaves.⁵

¹⁷ Honor all, (deserving honor) loving the
brotherhood, fear G-d, honor the king.

DELITZSCH HEBREW TRANSLATION

וְהִכְנַעְנוּ לְכָל־פְּקוּדֵי אָדָם לְמַעַן הָאָדוֹן אִם־לְמִלְךָ כְּרֵאוֹי לְרֵאשׁ׃¹³
אִם־לְמַשְׁלִים כְּרֵאוֹי לְשְׁלוּחִים מֵאֵתוֹ לְנִקְמַת פְּעִלֵי אֶזְרָא וְלִתְהִלַּת עֲשֵׂי טוֹב׃¹⁴
כִּי כֵן רְצוֹן אֱלֹהִים שְׁתַּעֲשׂוּ הַטּוֹב וְתִסְכְּרוּ אֶת־פִּי אֲוֹלֵת הָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר אֵין־בָּם דַּעַת׃¹⁵
כְּחֻפְשִׁים וְלֹא־כְאֵלוֹ הֵיטָה לָכֵם הַחֻפְשָׁה לְמַכְסָה הָרָעָה כִּי אִם־כְּעַבְדֵי אֱלֹהִים׃¹⁶
נְהַגוּ כְבוֹד בְּכָל־אִישׁ אֲהָבוּ אֶת הָאֲחִים יִרְאוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים כְּבָדוֹ אֶת הַמֶּלֶךְ׃¹⁷

¹ rāṣōn. Pleasure, delight, favor. This masculine noun occurs over fifty times in the OT. It carries three major shades of meaning. The primary one is the "favor" or "good will" of God (Deut 33:16; Isa 60:10; Psa 5:12 [H 13]; Psa 30:6, 8 et al).The root also refers to the "pleasure" or "favor" of kings (Prov 14:35; Prov 16:13, 15 only) and all men (Prov 10:32; Prov 11:27 et al).

² G15 ἀγαθοποιέω (agathopoieō)

1.) to do good, do something which profits others

1.a.) to be a good help to someone

1.b.) to do someone a favor

1.c.) to benefit

2.) to do well, do right

see TDNT 1:10 – "spiritual and moral magnitude"

G18 ἀγαθός (agathos) The act of conduct determined by the knowledge of G-d (Elohim-the Judge)

³ דַּחַף; (universally, to fasten, compress, τῶ ξύλω τὸν αὐχένα τίνος, Aristophanes nub. 592) (See Deut 25.4)

⁴ Those who act without reason

⁵ Arachin 8:4, Bava Metzia 1.5, Eruvin 7.6, Ma'aser Sheni 4.4

MAKE YOURSELVES SUBJECT TO ALL THE SONS OF MEN,

ESTABLISHED FOR THE L-RD'S SAKE;

This week the Greek word κτίσις (ktisis) has plagued me while trying to translate Hakham Tsefet this week. I struggled with this word because many translations suggest that we are to be subject to the rule of human authorities and their institutions. However, the Greek word κτίσις (ktisis) can never be an institution that was “created” or “established” by men.” Consequently, the word seemed out of place. When the word κτίσις (ktisis) is placed in its proper context it all makes sense. κτίσις (ktisis) can NEVER be used in relation to the institutions of men. It is ALWAYS used in relation to the institutions of G-d (Elohim –the Judge) regulating the social life and conduct of men.⁶ The problem is solved by Hakham Shaul in his letter to the Romans where he tells us that the powers (authorities) that exist are established by G-d.⁷ This directly relates to the idea that Hakham Tsefet is trying to promote. True G-dliness supersedes natural order. If we will conduct ourselves in the manners of the kingdom, we will demonstrate superior conduct and behavior, which supersedes the conduct of ignorant evildoers.

I intentionally use the word “kingdom” here reflecting on the translation of His Eminence Dr. Rabbi Yoseph Ben Haggai on Mordechai (Mark) 1:14-15

14. Now after John was arrested and put in prison, Yeshuah came into Galilee, proclaiming the good news (the Masorot – the Traditions) of the kingdom (governance) of G-d [through the Hakhamim and Bate Din as opposed to human kings],¹⁵. And saying, The [appointed period of] time is fulfilled (completed), and the kingdom (governance) of G-d [through Hakhamim and Bate Din] is at hand; repent (have a change of mind and return to Torah wisdom) and faithfully obey the Masorah (Traditions/Oral Law).

Whereas until that time Israel had been under kings appointed by G-d, a new dispensation, for lack of a better word, of the governance of G-d was about to be inaugurated after the fall of the Temple and the discontinuance of the Sanhedrin whereby G-d's people would be ruled by judges and Rabbinic tribunals as it was after Joshua. This system of Judges and Rabbinic Tribunals (Bate Din) required a legal tradition (body of oral Law) which is the “good news” that Yeshuah was proclaiming.

I cannot help but think that the context related here is that of demonstrating genuine G-dliness in the midst of men who are ignorant of the Laws and Institutions of G-d. As men of superior conduct stopping (closing) the mouths of those who are immoral in their conduct.

My attention to the “kingdom” is not to draw us away from the idea of being appropriately subordinate to the human societal authorities. It appears that the people of the “kingdom” demonstrate a higher standard of ethic than those who simply “submit” to human authorities. There are those who violate these mandates of authority when no one is watching.

The words of Hakham Tsefet and Shaul demonstrate the genuine sovereignty of G-d. No authority, human or otherwise, can function without G-d's permission. Every power that exists does so because it serves the agenda of G-d. If we will rest in this, we will find the peace of G-d. However, I would like to interject a simple thought. Men are men. If they are not G-dfearing men, we must scrutinize their laws and rules carefully. We are NOT permitted to follow our leaders blindly.

⁶ Joh. Ed. Huther, Th.D, Commentary on the New Testament, Funk & Wagnall's, Publishers, 1887, pg 259

⁷ Romans 13:1

THE JUDGE AND VENGEANCE

Devarim 1:16 "Then I charged your judges at that time, saying, 'Hear the cases between your fellow countrymen, and judge righteously between a man and his fellow countryman, or the alien who is with him. ¹⁷ 'You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small and the great alike. You shall not fear man, for the judgment is G-d's. The case that is too hard for you, you shall bring to me, and I will hear it.'

The Mishnah is permeated with "judgments." The Hebrew word *Din* (Judge) is found over five-hundred times in the Mishnah. Hakham Tsefet tells us that the "Judge" is a **sent one** who meets out the vengeance against evil workers. The Greek word *κακοποιός* (*kakopoios*) is associated with criminal activity. The word *κακοποιός* (*kakopoios*) seems to be a compound word indicating those who "make worthlessness."⁸

The idea of vengeance is of special interest. We seldom think in Biblical terms when we use this word. The following is a trace from the Theological Word Book of the Old Testament. (TWOT)

נָקָמָה (*n^cqāmā*) **vengeance.**

Although this root, including its derivatives, is only used about seventy times in the OT, it expresses a truth that is theologically important, but greatly misunderstood. Vengeance and revenge are ideas that would appear to have no good ethical validity whether coming from God or man. But such is not the case when the use of this root is properly understood in its OT setting and NT application.

The concept of divine vengeance must be understood in the light of OT teaching about the holiness and justice of God and its effect on man as a sinner. In terms of the presuppositions of some modern "Christian" theologies, such a God of vengeance will be labeled unchristian and unethical. Understood in the full orb of biblical revelation, balanced as it is by the mercy of God, divine vengeance is seen to be a necessary aspect of the history of redemption.

*Study of the use of this root reveals that there are comparatively few cases where man is considered a proper source of vengeance. Often man is a secondary cause while God is the source (Ezek 25:14). This is normally the case where the Israelites avenge themselves on their enemies (Josh 10:13). In Num 31:2-3, the Israelites' wreaking vengeance on the Midianites (v. 2) is equivalent to the Lord's doing so (v. 3). In some instances God instructs his people when such vengeance is called for in his behalf (e.g. Num 31). Other passages warn men not to take vengeance in their own hands (Lev 19:18; Deut 32:35). Even though *nāqam* is not used in Gen 9:6, capital punishment is required for murder because man is made in the image of God, and to take his life without divine permission is considered to be an offense against God as well as man.*

*Most of the uses of *nāqam* involve God as the source of vengeance. The classical passage is Deut 32:35, 41, "Vengeance is mine... I will recompense them who hate me." God cannot be true to his character of*

⁸ G2555 *κακοποιός* (*kakopoios*)

- a bad-doer;

- (specially), a **criminal**;

Etymology: from G2556 and G4160;

G2556 *κακός* (*kakos*)

- apparently a primary word;

- **worthless** (intrinsically, such; whereas G4190 properly refers to effects), i.e. (subjectively) depraved, or (objectively) injurious;

G4160 *ποιέω* (*poieō*)

- apparently a prolonged form of an obsolete primary;

- **to make or do** (in a very wide application, more or less direct);

holiness and justice if he allows sin and rebellion to go unpunished. The prophets stressed "the day of the Lord's vengeance" (Isa 38:8; Isa 61:2; Isa 63:4) as times in history when the Lord sets the record straight. This was Jeremiah's view of the fall of Jerusalem. Since in the course of history the record can never be totally straight the prophetic eschaton or final day of the Lord's vengeance is called for, Such a day is in mind in Isa 63:1-6. Here God treads out the winepress alone and tramples his enemies in his wrath (Rev 19:15). Likewise in the NT retribution, a notion essential to its message, belongs essentially to the future world rather than the present.

The Bible balances the fury of God's vengeance against the sinner with greatness of his mercy on those whom he redeems from sin. God's vengeance must never be viewed apart from his purpose to show mercy. He is not only, the God of wrath, but must be the God of wrath in order for his mercy to have meaning. Apart from God himself the focus of the OT is not on the objects of his vengeance but on the objects of his mercy, his special possession (*s^egûlâ*), his very own people with whom he has an eternal covenant.

There are two ways in which God takes vengeance with regard to his people. First, he avenges his people in the sense that he becomes their champion against the common enemy (Psa 94). Secondly, as the covenant God, he punishes those who break covenant with him. "I will smite you seven times, even I for your sins. And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall execute the vengeance of the covenant" (Lev 26:24-25).

Other words that are associated with this concept are ...

שָׁפַט, מְשַׁפֵּט, פָּקַדָה, נָקָם

Consequently, "vengeance" is meted out by G-d, not man. The judge is only an agent (sent one) of G-d. This passage of Hakham Tsefet should cause us to reflect on the entire tractate of Sanhedrin and the Order of Nezikin.

The Judge is also to reward or honor the upright. This is demonstrated in the above citation. G-d sees to it that His "*segulah*" (prized possession) is avenged. We need not fear that we will not be avenged.

BECAUSE THIS IS THE WILL OF G-D (PLEASING TO G-D)

The Hebrew word רָצוֹן (*rāṣôn*) indicated that which is pleasing to G-d. This word is used six times in the book of Leviticus indicating "that which is favorably received."⁹

Lev 1:4 And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be **accepted** for him to make atonement for him.¹⁰

I find this very interesting. *Rāṣôn* is used in here by Hakham Tsefet knowing that this pericope must be read with the book of Leviticus. While this word is used in place that are not connected with the current Torah Seder and pericope we must realize that Hakham Tsefet is thinking in Levitical terms. Therefore, the terminology of Leviticus will be relevant to the current sections of Hakham Tsefet.

⁹ It is used in Lev in the Niphal stem (Lev 1:4ff) in the special sense "to be favorably received" as to the ritual cleanliness of offerings.

¹⁰ See also Lev 19.5, 22.19, 22.20, 22.21, 22.29 and 23.11

THAT YOUR ACTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

I have translated the Greek word ἀγαθοποιέω (agathopoieō) as an act of righteousness (tzedekah). This is based on the idea that the acts of ἀγαθοποιέω (agathopoieō) are selfless acts done to benefit others. ἀγαθοποιέω (agathopoieō) is used in contrast to the κακία (kakia) – wicked or depraved. The act of concealing seems to be associated with thievery.¹¹ Because the two characters are set in contrast I have selected the “generous” (acts of generosity) and thievery.

SILENCE (MUZZLE AND CAUSE SPEECHLESSNESS) THE FOOLISHNESS OF IGNORANT MEN:

How can men of thievery speak against the generous, righteous and morally upright? The plain truth is that they cannot. They are like muzzled dogs. They are not able to speak.¹² It is also noteworthy to mention that the word מִוֶּחָה; (universally, *to fasten, compress,*) is used in Devarim 25:4 where we are told “You shall not muzzle (fasten or compress the mouth) the ox while he is threshing.”

AS IF FREE (WHO CONDUCT THEMSELVES AS IF FREE FROM THE TORAH) BUT (ACT) AS G-D’S SLAVES

The underlying thought of the evil doers who would walk in “freedom” sounds much like the replacement theology of our present day. Many suggest that they walk in freedom. However, they are wholly ignorant of the true concept of freedom. Many suggest that they are free from the “Law” (Torah) as if at some point its value ceased. The truth is that ONLY the Torah and its mandates bring freedom. Freedom? Freedom from what? The answer to this question is freedom from sin. Torah faithfulness produces a life free from sin.

I have heard the teaching concerning the tress of the garden. On tree is the tree of Life. (The Torah) The other tree is the tree of good married (*da’at*) with evil. This brings about a great dilemma. Adam ate from the tree of good married to evil. How then is a man to know the difference? The simple answer to the question is through *da’at* of the Torah. This of course is a play on words. True liberty is found in faithfulness to the words of the Torah.

BUT (ACT) AS G-D’S SLAVES

While we are free (from sin through Torah faithfulness), we are to conduct ourselves as slave of G-d. Here the word seems to contain the idea of being faithful in service to G-d.

The δούλοι τοῦ Θεοῦ, עֲבָדֵי יְהוָה, (*slaves –servants, workers of HaShem*) are those whose agency G-d employs in executing His purposes: used of apostles, Acts 4:29; 16:17; of Moses (Josh. 1:1), Rev. 15:3; of prophets (Jer. 7:25; 25:4), Rev. 1:1; 10:7; 11:18; of all who obey God's commands,

¹¹ TDNT 3:958

¹² G5392 φημίω (phimoō)

- 1.) to close the mouth with a muzzle, to muzzle
- 2.) metaph.
 - 2.a.) to stop the mouth, make speechless, reduce to silence
 - 2.b.) to become speechless
- 3.) to be kept in check

his true worshippers, Luke 2:29; Rev. 2:20; 7:3; 19:2,5; 22:3,6; (Ps. 33:23 (Ps. 34:23); Ps. 68:37 (Ps. 69:37); Ps. 88:4,21 (Ps. 89:4,21)). γ. δοῦλος τίνος, devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests: Matt. 20:27; Mark 10:44; strenuously laboring for another's redemption, 2 Cor. 4:5

FREEDOM AND SUBMISSION

This concept is very difficult for westerners to understand. The concept of “freedom” to most western minds is one of doing as they please without any real accountability. However, there is no such state. Life in general demands subjection to varied rules and laws. Even in the “free world”, we are subject to law and ordinance. We might illustrate by saying that we are free to drive on the freeway as long as we observe the rules of the road. When we violate the “rules of the road”, our freedom to drive is revoked. Therefore, freedom is always subject to rules and laws. No society can exist without rules and laws. This is true in the natural world and the world of G-dliness. However, in the case of G-dliness we are given a freedom to choose. This freedom of choice is submission or rebellion. We are free from sin when we are subservient to G-d. Sin, on the other hand, offers no such choice. I have stated in the past that sin has continuity. In other words, when we sin we are bound to sin again. Likewise, I believe that sin is contrary to the nature of the soul. This week's Torah Seder connects the soul to the freewill offering.¹³ The soul is not forced to offer this offering. This offering is given of freewill. I am also reminded that the Hebrew word “korban” means to “draw near.”

Western “freedom” is another word for rebellion and selfishness. This is very contrary to the nature of the G-dly. The true Tzedek is generous and giving. He gives himself as if he were a slave to G-d's desires (that which pleases G-d) and pleasures.

CONNECTION TO THE SPECIAL ASHLAMATAH OF JEREMIAH

His Eminence has pointed out that Hakham Tsefet is right on target with the Torah Seder. His Eminence has also demonstrated that Hakham Tsefet has established a verbal connection through the Greek/Hebrew paralleled synonym of the “sent one.” The special Ashlamatah also speaks of judgments in the gates of the cities and G-d's judgments. This thematic connection also demonstrates that Hakham Tsefet was familiar with the Triennial schedule and wrote his works to correspond with that reading schedule.

MITZVOT AND MISHNAOT

P62 To salt every sacrifice, as it is written "with all thy offerings thou shalt offer salt" (Leviticus 2:13).

P63 The procedure for the burnt offering, as it is written "if his offering be a burnt-offering" (Leviticus 1,3).

P67 The procedure for the meal offering, as it is written "and when any one bringeth a meal-offering" (Leviticus 2,1).

¹³ See pg6 of lesson by His Eminence Dr. Rabbi Yoseph Ben Haggai. (should offer) under the comments of Abraham Ibn Ezra

N98 Not to offer leaven or honey, as it is written "for ye shall make no leaven, nor any honey, smoke as an offering" (Leviticus 2,11).

N99 Not to bring any offering unsalted, as it is written "neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking" (Leviticus 2,13).

N184 Not to eat blood, as it is written "and ye shall eat no manner of blood" (Leviticus 3,17; Leviticus 7,26).

P176 To appoint judges and officers in every community of Israel, as it is written "judges and officers shalt thou make thee" (Deuteronomy 16:18).

P177 To treat parties in a judgment impartially, as it is written "in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour" (Leviticus 19,15).

P3 To love Him, as it is written "and thou shalt love the LORD thy God" (Deuteronomy 6,5; Deuteronomy 11,1).

P206 To love all persons of the covenant, as it is written "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Leviticus 19,18).

P207 To love the convert, as it is written "love ye the stranger" (Deuteronomy 10,19).

Eduyoth 5:6 Aqabia b. Mahalalel gave testimony in four matters. They said to him, "Aqabia, retract the four rulings which you laid down, and we shall make you patriarch of the court of Israel." He said to them, "**It is better for me to be called a fool my whole life but not be deemed a wicked person before the Omnipresent for even one minute**, "so that people should not say, 'Because he craved after high office, he retracted.' "He would declare unclean residual hair [in a leprosy sign] and green blood [of a vaginal discharge]. And sages declare clean. He would permit use of the wool which fell out in the case of a firstling which was blemished, and which one put away in a niche, and [which firstling] one afterward slaughtered. And sages prohibit. He would say, "They do not administer bitter water [to test the woman accused of adultery] in the case of a proselyte woman or in the case of a freed slave girl." And sages say, "They do administer the test." They said to him, M'SH B: "Karkemit, a freed slave girl, was in Jerusalem, and Shemaiah and Abtalion administered the bitter water to her." He said to them, "They administered it to her to make her into an example." They excommunicated him, and he died while he was subject to the excommunication, so the court stoned his bier. Said R. Judah, "God forbid that Aqabia was excommunicated! "For the courtyard is never locked before any Israelite of the wisdom and fear of sin of a man like Aqabia b. Mahalalel. "But whom did they excommunicate? It was Eliezer b. Hanokh, who cast doubt on [the sages' ruling about] the cleanness of hands. "And when he died, the court sent and put a stone on his bier." This teaches that whoever is excommunicated and dies while he is subject to the excommunication—they stone his bier.

See also

Arachin 8:4, Bava Metzia 1.5, Eruvin 7.6, Ma'aser Sheni 4.4

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