

This Blood is the New Covenant, I'm Making with You

When our people in *Parashah Mishpatim* heard the all the words of יהוה and all the judgments (*mishpatim*) the response by all of Israel (Ex. 24:3) was “All the words יהוה has said we will do.” This is practically the same response given earlier in Ex. 19:8. But the *Torah* records for us that now *Moshe* writes all of the words spoken by יהוה and then he read them in the audience of all of the people. What would their response be now that they know all the requirements: “*Na’ase V’Nishma*,” (Ex. 24:7) which the Artscroll TNK translates as “*We will do and we will obey*.” The first part of the response is identical to the previous two references (Ex. 19:8 and 24:3) and comes from the Hebrew verb *Oseh* (עשה), meaning to do. But now, having heard the words written down, having heard orally and heard the written *b’rit* or *ketubah*, they also add the future tense first person plural of the Hebrew verb *sh’ma* (שמע), to prove that one has heard by one’s actions (i.e., intrinsic obedience). Our Jewish people said, we will do and we will *sh’ma* (obey)! This was the complete ratification of the covenant (*b’rit*) and the text shows that *Moshe* went on to perform the ancient ritual ratification of a covenant in his time. Like Yisrael, we also have His written Word before us. We in Kol Simcha have agreed that our response to His written instructions are to be nothing less than ‘*Na’ase V’Nishma*.’

A Messianic level of interpretation for these written instructions is given by *Yeshua* the *Messiah* Himself in Luke 24:44-45. Here *Yeshua* teaches that the *Torah*, *Nevi'im*, and *Ketuvim* (the *Torah*, Prophets (*Nevi'im*), and the Writings (*Ketuvim*), that is the *TNK* or the Hebrew Scriptures) – the whole of the *Tanakh* – speak of Him! Note particularly verse 45: “*Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures*.” In this passage, *Yeshua* was giving a very important hermeneutic principle. Without negating the *halachic* value or application (in fact, it presumes that it is being carried out) *Yeshua* was saying that we could look at the *Torah* to see what it teaches concerning His person/work. If we are able to see what the specific statutes teach concerning the *Messiah*, that in itself, will provide much of the basis for the doing of them. In other words, we live out these laws because of what they can picture in our everyday life concerning *Messiah*, what He did for us, and who He has made us to be. Practicing these precepts, therefore, becomes a way of being a walking testimony of what *Messiah* did and who He is. Moreover, obeying these instructions in this fashion will preclude all tendencies to legalism, where one receives merit for the doing of them. This system is not what the G-d of grace intended *Torah* should be.

The words that were shared in Exodus 20-23 deal with things like human slavery (voluntary servitude), people physically **fighting** with each other, people **living in the rural areas** who might have oxen or other animals, **making restitution**, and to avoid doing what the **pagan idolaters** do.

The Covenant is Ratified

Moshe wrote all of the things that God spoke. The text is careful to say that all of the *words* that God spoke were written, rather than specifying which kind of words such as only the *mishpatim* (judgments), or the *mitzvot* (commandments). By stating it as the text does, we can safely assume that all that God spoke to *Moshe*, he wrote down. There does not appear to be any room here for the presence of extra verbal revelation that was designated to be passed down to future generations that could be labeled as *Oral Torah*. What he did not write, the L-rd Himself did! “*Ascend to Me to the mountain and remain there, and I shall give you the stone tablets and the teaching and the commandments that I have written to teach them*.” (Ex. 24:12)

Finally, consistent with the custom of ratification of ancient treaties, the appropriate sacrifices are offered finishing with a national covenant meal. The two sacrifices which were offered are the whole *burnt* offering and the *peace* or *well-being* offering. Then *Moshe* sprinkled sacrificial blood on the people and said: “*This is the blood of the covenant that the L-rd now makes with you concerning all of these commands*.” It is not an accident that *Yeshua*, the *Deliverer* and *Redeemer* in like manner but greater than *Moshe* also repeats the phrase, “*This blood is the new covenant*” (Matt. 26:28, Mk. 14:24). *Shabbat Shalom!*