

Burning the Bridge Behind You – a Parable about Mercy and the Pursuit of Truth

I wrote this in February of 2013, but last week I heard a teaching that really brought this up in my mind again, so I am moving it over to the blog. Be sure to catch those teachings that I referenced at the end, they are life changing.

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A man in a land of great darkness saw a bridge leading off over a chasm into an unseen land. The slats of the bridge were the right size for a man's foot and even though the first step was very dark indeed, it contained a bit of light so he placed his foot upon it. The next step was perceptibly lighter, and in fact he realized that he could look ahead and see more and more light and less darkness. It was hard leaving the comfortable familiarity of the darkness he knew, especially since his family remained back in the darkness, but the light was drawing him and so he continued, one step at a time, each time making the choice to leave some of the darkness behind and step into new light. After some time, he became very impressed and puffed up with the amount of light he was walking in, and the amount of darkness he had trodden under his feet. He stopped and turned around and much to his horror all he could see was a path of increasing darkness.

Facing backwards, he became contemptuous of that darkness and decided to focus his efforts on destroying it, ignoring the faint cries from those further on to turn around and keep going. So he removed a lighter from his pocket and kindled a fire on the slats that had previously been behind him, thinking to exterminate the darkness he saw. The fire quickly began consuming that ancient path that had led into the light, even destroying the guard rails. The man delighted in the

destruction of the darkness, never giving a thought to the people on the dark end of the chasm, or those further back on the path – or, to the fact that he was not yet safely to the other side of the chasm. In his arrogance and contempt, he fell to destruction, never having reached his destination, and destroyed the path for many.

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This is the tragedy of the Protestant Reformation, the Charismatic movement, the Hebrew Roots Movement, etc...

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The darkness was the darkness the man was born into spiritually. The bridge is the calling of YHVH out of that darkness through restoration in Yeshua Messiah, but he did not know them by those names at first, he knew God and Jesus. The slats represent truth to walk in and lies to trample underfoot. Step by step he went forward, coming more and more out of the darkness and into more and more light until the splendid awareness of his knowledge got the better of him and he turned his back on Elohim without even realizing it, in order to gaze upon darkness instead of upon the light. Facing the wrong direction, he no longer had the perspective to see the mercy of a path growing ever more illuminated, but instead all he could see was a path getting darker. Contempt filled his heart and he cared nothing for the people on what he perceived as a path of darkness, – he had no love for them, no compassion, but instead only impatience. From his vantage point, he did not see the truth, that they were now on the path of light, and that he had turned away from that light and was now on the path of darkness. He deceived himself into thinking he was destroying the path to sin, but in actuality he was destroying mercy – the message of the Torah and the Prophets, the slats and the guard rails of the bridge that is Messiah. Having no mercy to stand on, he fell and took others with him, ignoring the cries of those further along down the

road to repent and turn back to God.

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It is human nature to believe we have arrived, to take our eyes off the prize and become more focused on the deception than on the truth. We start out in such deception, "our fathers have inherited lies" (Jer 16:19) and we get a bit of truth and it is a great temptation to turn around and view those lies with contempt. If that contempt is greater than our desire for truth, we will not turn back around. There is a difference between glancing back over your shoulder to offer encouragement to those behind you and turning around and facing the opposite direction. I see people completely derailed by the idea that it is their personal ministry to expose lies – in fact it's all I ever see them do and they are out in droves on facebook. They are so intent on burning the bridge (interesting that I wrote bride first) behind them that they forget that the point of the bridge is to lead someone out of falsehood – it is a step by step process, there are no shortcuts. Lies must be personally confronted one by one – as King Josiah showed us, the idols had to be destroyed from the land one at a time. As Joshua and Caleb showed us, the enemies must be killed or driven out one by one, town by town, and we don't dare turn around like Lot's wife because when we focus on the deception, on the sin, on what is behind us, forgetting to press on in endurance, it is then that we are overcome.

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So you know the Name of Yeshua and YHVH, you know some Torah, you're Spirit baptized, you know the Gospel that Messiah preached, you know the book of Revelation – do not become so impressed with these things that you stop striving forward. Going forward takes far more humility and love than turning around with a sneer on your face. As you go forward, call an encouraging word over your shoulder so that people in darkness

can hear and find the path, but don't think you can stand your ground, facing in the wrong direction, and do anything other than hold people up. Do not dare to trample upon the mercy given you (and that path IS the mercy of Elohim), do not dare destroy the path for others, do not dare despise the path!

You did not create the path, it is not yours to destroy. No one gets to the other side of the chasm in this lifetime, and so we need to keep going forward.



Addendum: This teaching came out last week, and I wish I had heard it years ago because I learned all this the hard way.

This teaching goes far beyond what I wrote myself – <http://www.houseofdauidfellowship.com/archives.htm> September 6, 2014 – The Weightier Matters of Torah. I would also recommend Rico Cortes', Ryan White's, and Daniel McGirr's teachings on Righteousness and Justice at www.wisdomintorah.com.