

New Morning Magical – for 7-21-20

Correctly Cut the Word of Truth

When we ended yesterday, I said that there's one more big lesson from this first chapter of Acts that I want to get to.

We find it in Acts 1, after Yeshua has ascended and the disciples are back to Jerusalem, which was what Yeshua told them to do in verse 4, *"to be remaining about for the promise of the Father, 'which you hear of Me.'"*

Let's pick up the story in verse 12:

12 Then they return into Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem a sabbath's journey.

13 And when they entered it, they went up into the upper chamber where they were residing -- both Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James of Alpheus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas of James.

14 These all were persevering with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Miriam, the mother of Jesus, and His brothers.

15 And in these days Peter, rising in the midst of the brethren, (besides there was a throng in the same place of about a hundred and twenty names)

16 said, "Men! Brethren! Fulfilled must be the scripture in which the holy spirit said before through the mouth of David, concerning Judas, who becomes the guide of those apprehending Jesus,

17 seeing that he was numbered among us, and **chanced** upon the allotment of this dispensation."

Chanced? Judas Iscariot was neither a beneficiary nor a victim of chance. Yeshua chose him to become one of the twelve and even entrusted him with the money bag. The Father had chosen Judas to be the one who betrayed Yeshua, and Yeshua knew perfectly well what Judas' job would be when the time came. None of this was by chance, Peter! What are you thinking? Well, Peter is NOT being led by the Spirit. He has not been directed to go where he is about to go. Let's pick Peter up in verse 20:

20 "For it is written in the scroll of the Psalms, Let his domicile become desolate, And let no one be dwelling in it, and 'Let his supervision be taken by another.'"

Remember that last quotation from the Psalms: *“Let his supervision be taken by another.”* Peter is about to make a leap of authority which neither Yeshua nor the Father gave him. Let’s continue with verse 21:

21 “Then, of the men coming together with us in all the time in which the Lord Jesus came in and out to us,
22 beginning from the baptism of John until the day on which He was taken up from us -- of these one is to become a witness of His resurrection together with us.”

This is my opinion now, but it looks to me like the fact that the number of Yeshua’s closest disciples was 11 just bugged Peter no end, so he took it upon himself to replace Judas with someone else, using the Psalms as his backup. As we’ll see soon, Yeshua, Who DID have the authority, had someone different in mind to become the genuine 12th Apostle. Again, this is how it looks to me; it’s my opinion, so take it for what it’s worth. Meanwhile, let’s go to verse 23:

23 And they nominate two, Joseph, called Bar-Sabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.
24 And praying – ***NOW they’re praying? What happened to praying before you even started down this road?***

And praying, they say, "Thou, Lord, Knower of all hearts, indicate one whom Thou choosest,
25 out of these two to take the place of this dispensation and apostleship, from which Judas transgressed, to be gone into his own place."
26 And they give lots for them, and the lot falls on Matthias, and he is enumerated with the eleven apostles.

Doesn’t this strike you as a foolish and futile thing to do? THEY chose two guys, and then asked the Lord to choose between them. The presumption is a bit hard to stomach: “Here, Lord, these are the two guys ***we’ve*** picked ***FOR*** You. So which one is the one You would choose between ***OUR*** two choices?” Man! Talk about chutzpah! And then they cast lots to find the Lord’s supposed choice! Where is the precedence for a gambling tradition in the midst of the Lord’s only instruction, which was *“to be remaining about for the promise of the Father, ‘which you hear of Me.’”*

I don’t mean to belabor the point here, but I will just a little more. Can you get a sense of the temerity that Peter showed here? No direction, no guidance from above; not even prayer

before running headlong after his own idea about how things should be. And we know that none of this was authored by Yeshua, because we never hear anything from or about the man to whom the lot fell. He disappears into obscurity, and well he should, because, as I said earlier, Yeshua already had someone else in mind, whom the original disciples would never have believed possible. In fact, the Apostle-to-be whom none of them knew about may have already been in Jerusalem, one of the hierarchy who wanted the disciples either taken away, or at least to shut up about this renegade Yeshua, whose blood was on their hands.

You'll remember the day that Yeshua was brought before Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea, who got nowhere with the Jews who were determined to have Yeshua crucified. Here's just a bit of that from Matthew 27:

22 Pilate is saying to them, "What, then, shall I be doing with Jesus, who is termed Christ?" They are all saying, "Let him be crucified!"

23 Yet the governor averred, "What evil does he?" Yet they cried exceedingly, saying, "Let him be crucified!"

24 Now Pilate, perceiving that it is benefiting nothing, but rather a tumult is occurring, getting water, washes off his hands in front of the throng, saying, "Innocent am I of the blood of this just man. You will be seeing to it!"

25 And, answering, the entire people said, "His blood be on us and on our children!"

Listen to the stupidity of this: "*His blood be on us and on our children!*" And so it is to this day.

To me, Peter was acting just as foolishly in taking it upon himself, on the authority of David's supposedly prophetic word in the Psalms.

I went looking for where in Psalms Peter was quoting; you should see the lengths that theologians go to justify Peter's actions on the authority of an Old Testament text, which they have also decided is a prophetic word concerning Judas.

I don't want to bore you here, or sound like I have some axe to grind, but I'm going to read part of Psalm 69 and Psalm 109, in which you'll recognize Peter's quotations. This is how you gain the entire context of a Scripture: Read above and below it to discover its value for today, if there be any.

First, the Scripture that Peter quoted from Psalm 69: 25 – *Let their domicile become desolate.*

Now look at the same Scripture in context:

Psalm 69, beginning in Verse 19

19 You Yourself know my reproach and my shame and my mortification;
In front of You are all my foes.

David's theme here is, "all my foes." This one of his, "Help God, they're going to kill me" Psalms, so keep that in mind as we finish reading Psalm 69. And, bear with me here, because I promise there's a hugely important principle in all of this.

20 Reproach, it has broken my heart, and I do feel my mortality:

I expect one to sympathize, and there is no one.

And look for comforters, yet I find not one.

21 They give me poison in my repast,

And for my thirst they cause me
to drink vinegar.

22 Let their table become a trap before them,

And a repayment and a snare.

23 Let their eyes be darkened, kept from seeing,

And let their waist totter continually. **GREAT PHRASE!**

24 Pour out Your indignation upon them,

And let Your hot anger overtake them.

25 Let their domicile become desolate;

Let no one be dwelling in their tents.

26 For You – they persecute those whom You have smitten,

And they are recounting the pain of those wounded by You.

27 Do bestow depravity on their depravity,

And let them not come in to Your righteousness.

28 Let them be wiped out from the scroll of life,

And let them not be written with the righteous.

Now let's look at Psalm 109:8 – *May his supervision be taken by another*, but let's put it in context too:

O Elohim of my praise, do not be silent,

2 For a mouth of wickedness and a mouth of deceit they have opened against me;

They have spoken against me with a tongue of falsehood;

3 With words of hatred, they have surrounded me,

And they fight against me gratuitously.

4 In return for my love they are my adversaries,

Even while I was in prayer.

5 They bring evil up on me in return for good,
And hatred in return for my love.

6 Post a wicked person over him, And let an adversary stand
on at his right hand.

7 When he is judged, let him go forth condemned,
And let his prayer be seen as sin.

8 May his days come to be few;

May his supervision be taken by another.

9 May his sons become orphans,
And his wife a widow.

10 May his sons rove, yea rove so that they must beg,
And may they be driven out from their deserted homes.

11 May the creditor confiscate all that he has,
And may aliens plunder the fruit of his labor.

12 There must not be anyone being indulgent with kindness to him,
And there must not be anyone showing grace to his orphans.

13 May his posterity be cut off.

In the generation following, may his name be wiped out.

So Peter, well-intentioned I'm sure, grabs two verses from the Psalms and offers them as justification for replacing Judas the betrayer with someone else.

What's wrong with that, you may well ask? One, Peter had no direction for his actions – He only assumed authority. Do you think the Lord would not have told Peter or the others that this was His wish? Two, maybe the quotations from Psalms are prophetic and maybe they aren't. They look to me like so many of David's cries to God for help for whatever trouble he was in, and then his pleas for their utter destruction.

Here's the big principle to remember from what Paul wrote to his protégé Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15.

15 Endeavor to present yourself to God qualified, an unashamed worker, correctly cutting the word of truth. (Some versions say "rightly dividing" or "accurately handling.")

What the Scripture DOESN'T say is that the opposite is equally true: you can present yourself to God unqualified, an ashamed worker, incorrectly cutting the word of truth, and I'm using Peter's example to demonstrate that failing to correctly cut the word of truth may end, at best – as Peter's attempt did – in futility! I love Peter, don't misunderstand; but He was always

putting His foot in his mouth and getting busted for saying something he shouldn't have or something that didn't need said.

If you study the Scriptures, take care, don't over-reach in a vain attempt to support an idea you have or a position you've taken. That's exactly what I found in the opinions I read while searching for Peter's references in Psalms. Authors were bending over backwards to justify Peter, but at least one example they used from Paul's writings had nothing to do with prophecy. Just remember Paul's admonition to Timothy:

15 Endeavor to present yourself to God qualified, an unashamed worker, correctly cutting the word of truth.

Stick to that; learn **HOW** to "*correctly cut the word of truth,*" and you'll stay out of trouble.

Until next time:

May Yahweh bless you and keep you;
May Yahweh light up His face toward you
and be gracious to you;
May Yahweh lift His face to you
and appoint peace for you.

AMEN