

We Need Strong Men

What is the strongest motivation of a man? It is his protective instinct. Men are wired to be protectors, or in Hebrew *shomrim*. God revealed to the Prophet *Malachi* through prophetic foresight one of the greatest and most urgent problem of our day: delinquent fathers and un-parented children. Economists and social legislators give many diagnoses and solutions. But the root of the problem is in the family unit: parents have reneged on their responsibilities to their children. Walls that were protecting our wives and our sons and our daughters are being broken down in ways that fathers did not foresee. The result is that families and children are being plundered at will. There is no question that attacks against bright, wholesome, committed young people are increasing, and Believer families are not exempt. Satan knows that young people have the potential to do great damage to his evil kingdom and they have unprecedented opportunities to advance God's kingdom. Guilt lies often with both parents, yet the primary responsibility rests on men. We need strong and committed men to right the ship. Abraham was a strong spiritual leader.

In today's *Torah* portion (*Vayera*) we see that Lot's failure to fulfill his duties as a husband, a father, and a guard (*shomer*) brought disaster on his whole family. In we are told that *Adonai* chooses to reveal to Abraham (*Gen. 18:1a, 17-19*) because He knows him intimately (*yodea*) and can rely on him to be faithful in his manly duties. This is a basis upon which God promised Father Abraham that he would become the head of a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him. If Abraham's faithfulness results in a blessed and prosperous nation, what will then happen to a nation whose fathers fail in their primary obligations? Scripture states: "*You will father sons and daughters, but they won't belong to you, because they will go into captivity*" (*Deut. 28:41*). The Hebrew indicates that Moses is speaking to men. The word father refers primarily to the father's part in procreating children. So, this verse is addressing primarily (but not exclusively) men (fathers). What a shock when one realizes that not enjoying our children is a curse. *How many parents today really enjoy their children?* Not many. What is the reason? I believe this is a curse for disobedience. *Adonai* made children the greatest blessing (*Ps. 127*) He could give to mankind. When fathers (and mothers) – but especially fathers – do not walk in *The Way of the Lord* (*Haderech Adonai, i.e., Yeshua*), then their sons and daughters are no longer a blessing and become a curse. The CJB translates *Deut. 28:41* more literally when it states: "...*but they will not belong to you...*" This, too, is being fulfilled today. In countless broken families the children no longer belong to their parents but to the state. Parents and children are estranged from one another. The failure of strong male leadership opens the way for many evils that follow.

Adonai's Word confronts our modern civilization with two alternatives: Become a strong spiritual leader and restore family relationships and survive or allow family relationships go the way they have been going in the last decades and continue to deteriorate. If we do, we will perish under God's curse. However, the final outcome of this crisis will be decided by the response of *men and fathers*. They are the ones whom God holds primarily responsible. In God's message through Malachi, He requires first that the hearts of the fathers turn to children. Only after that will the hearts of the children be turned toward their own fathers. In our day God is judging us through our children.

There are many voices stating that Believers need to become socially relevant. In no area in society does a Congregation have a greater opportunity to become socially relevant than in the area of family life. If we do, we shall be responding to the most urgent crisis of our time. There cannot be any compromise with the humanistic forces that have infiltrated the Body of Messiah in these last three or four generations. Let us do our part in becoming spiritual *watchmen* over our families first, and over our community. As men (and women), let us embrace our first responsibility and command and guard *The Way of Adonai* in our community so that *Adonai* will be compelled to reveal His plans to us, resulting in the saving of our family. *Shabbat Shalom!*