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*In His Dust* is a series based on my notes from Dwight Pryor's teaching. (For details about him, please see *In His Dust – An Overview* at [ShaleFragments.com](http://ShaleFragments.com).) Yeshua and His disciples were thoroughly Jewish and immersed in the study of the Tenakh (the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings). They spoke and studied in Hebrew. Since the New Testament was originally recorded in Hebrew before being translated into Greek, it is most valuable to learn the Hebraic context, meanings, and idioms that are not always apparent in the Greek. My ongoing study for this series pursues this goal.

## In His Dust – Binding and Loosing

December 14, 2022

Yeshua (Jesus) said to Peter, “I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 16:19)

The Hebrew *'āsar* (bind) and *hitir* (loose) have many meanings in the Bible. In the first century, they meant *prohibit* and *permit* and pertained to what was *prohibited* or *permitted* according to the Torah (or *Law*, *teachings* of Yahweh). David M. Bivin of the *Jerusalem Perspective* (with whom Dwight studied) writes:

Jewish sages were called upon constantly by their community to interpret scriptural commands. The Torah forbids working on the Sabbath, for instance, but it does not define what constitutes work. As a result, the sages were required to rule on which activities were permitted on the Sabbath. They “bound” or *prohibited* certain activities, and they “loosed” or *allowed* others.

The Mishnah is a compilation of the rabbis' discussions about the Torah that included different schools of thought about its interpretation and application. Although the Mishnah is not an inspired, infallible text, Yeshua addressed these interpretations in the Gospel accounts. He did not do away with the Torah but rather *filled it full* by declaring its pure, true interpretation and intent. (Matthew 5:17-19)

This same concept of *prohibiting* and *permitting* appears in Matthew 18:15-18 in a different context (please read). Verse 18:19 is added – Yeshua says, “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.”

This verse refers to these discussions about Torah. When two or more earnest students gathered to discuss the application of Scripture, the glory of the Lord was in their midst guiding them. Yeshua is giving His disciples *His* authority as a rabbi (*teacher* or *sage*) to *prohibit* or *permit*. They would be given discernment to interpret the Torah as God intended.

### **Two or Three – the name of our gathering to discuss the application of this study!**

As you can see, Matthew 16:19 does not pertain to “binding the strong man” (from Mark 3:27) or loosing chains (from Acts 16:26). Before you continue reading, please stop and spend a few minutes thinking about how you might apply this study to your life. Then, continue reading the few applications I am pondering.

Yeshua gave His disciples the authority of the rabbis. Psalm 119:99 says, “I have more insight than all my teachers for Your testimonies are my meditation.” By the Holy Spirit and with an earnest desire to do the Father's will, they would discern His will, i.e., what He would *prohibit* and *permit* for their good and the good of others. (See Luke 6:1-5 as an example and please share other examples you find.)

In my personal life, I see many applications. If my heart seeks to love God first and to do what He thinks is best, I can make that decision, while at the same time guarding my heart and checking my motives according to Psalm 139:23-24. Should I garden on His day of rest? Perhaps it is work for some and rest for others. Would Yeshua watch this movie? Should take this trip? Isaiah 58:6-14 gives more food for thought.

What do you think? Shalom! Beth Ann