



PASSIONFORTRUTH

WHERE NEW LIFE BEGINS

When You Go Forth: The Corporate Call of Covenant

Torah Portion: Ki Teitzei (Deuteronomy 21:10 – 25:19)
"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8)

Growth never happens in comfort. It happens when we are stretched, when we are tested, when we are forced to make decisions that reveal who we truly are. We are living in a time of uncomfortable change and that is exactly where the Father wants us.

This week's Torah portion is called *Ki Teitzei* "**When You Go Forth.**" It is a fitting title, because we are being called to go forth from our comfort zones, from our traditions, from the ways we have always done things. We are being called to go forth into covenant not just a personal relationship with the Messiah, but a corporate identity as the people of God.

The Missing Piece: Corporate Israel

In modern Christianity, we have emphasized the "personal relationship" with Jesus to such an extreme that we have lost something essential: the corporate nature of our faith. We have become individualistic, focused on "my walk" and "my convictions" and "my relationship." But this is not the pattern of Scripture.

From Genesis to Revelation, God deals with His people *corporately*. He blesses or punishes Israel based on the actions of a few. One man's sin Achan taking the accursed thing brought defeat upon the entire nation (Joshua 7). One person's rebellion affected the whole body. Why? Because God has one bride, not millions of isolated individuals.

The Hebrew word for "assembly" is *kahal*. It is not a collection of individuals doing their own thing. It is a body, connected and interdependent. When one member suffers, all suffer. When one rejoices, all rejoice. This is why the New Testament emphasizes church discipline, elders, and accountability. Sin in the body affects the whole body.

Consider this: *every decision you make affects your family*. A rebellious son or daughter can bring destruction on the whole household. In the same way, every decision you make affects corporate Israel. We are connected to one another in ways we often fail to recognize.

The Strange Law of the Beautiful Captive

Deuteronomy 21 contains a law that seems strange to modern readers: if a soldier sees a beautiful captive woman and desires her, he may marry her. But first, he must bring her home, shave her head, cut her nails, and let her mourn for 30 days. Only after that, if he still desires her, may he marry her. And if he does not, he must let her go and never mistreat her.

What is the message here? It is about grace, wisdom, and the importance of time. The soldier is not allowed to act on impulse. He must wait. He must let his emotions calm down. He must see the woman as she truly is not in the heat of battle, but in the quiet of mourning. And even if he decides not to marry her, he must bless her as she leaves.

This is a beautiful picture of how God's instructions are not burdensome. They are protective. They are wise. They are designed to prevent harm and bring blessing. In a world that encourages instant gratification, the Torah teaches us to wait, to think, and to act with integrity.

The Rod That Is Shabbat

One of the most profound connections in this week's portion is between the word *Shabbat* (Sabbath) and the word *shevet* (rod, staff). In Hebrew, these words share the same consonants: Sheen-Bet-Tav. They are connected at the root level.

Proverbs 13:24 says: "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him promptly." In Hebrew, the word for "rod" is *shevet*. The word for Sabbath is *Shabbat*. The connection is not accidental.



The rod of discipline is **His Shabbat**. When we neglect the Sabbath, when we treat it as irrelevant or optional, we are neglecting the very discipline that keeps our families together. The Sabbath is not a burden it is a gift. It is the time when fathers spend time with their children, when families rest and reconnect, when the household is brought into covenant alignment.

Those who keep the Sabbath find that their children do not depart from the way. Why? Because the Sabbath is the rod of discipline. It is the regular, weekly training ground for faith. It is the anchor that holds the family together in a chaotic world.

The Hebrew word for Sabbath reveals its depth: *Shabbat* the all-consuming fire of the house of covenant. When we are in covenant, our house is filled with the fire of God's presence. And that fire is not just for us it is for our children, our families, our communities.

The Fear of God

We have lost the fear of God. In modern religious circles, we have made God our friend, our buddy, our homeboy. But He is also the Creator of the universe. He is holy. He is to be feared and revered.

The high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year with a rope tied to his ankle. If he had any sin in his life, he would die instantly, and they would drag him out. This is the seriousness of approaching a holy God. We do not come casually. We come with awe, with reverence, with trembling.

This is not to say God is not loving. He is. But His love does not erase His holiness. His grace does not negate His justice. We must walk in the fear of the Lord, doing what He says, regardless of what we think or feel.

The Rebellion of the Stubborn Son

Deuteronomy 21 also describes the stubborn and rebellious son one who will not obey his father or mother, even after discipline. The parents bring him before the elders, and the community stones him to death. This seems harsh, but it reveals something important.

The word for "rebellion" in Hebrew is connected to chaos and witchcraft. Rebellion is not just disobedience; it is a rejection of God's order. It is putting oneself above authority. It is the same spirit that led Lucifer to fall.

This is not about a five-year-old who misbehaves. This is about an adult child who has fully rejected the covenant, who has become a glutton and a drunkard, who is a danger to the community. The Torah's instruction is about protecting the corporate body from the infection of rebellion.

This is why Paul warns that a little leaven leavens the whole lump. Sin in the body must be dealt with, not ignored. The goal is not punishment it is restoration and protection.

The Discipline of Love

Discipline is not punishment. Discipline is training. It is the loving act of shaping a child's character so they can walk in the ways of God.

David was a passive father. He did not discipline his sons, and the results were catastrophic. Amnon raped his sister. Absalom killed Amnon and later led a rebellion against David. Adonijah tried to usurp the throne. David's sons were all destroyed because a father refused to use the rod.

The rod the discipline of love is essential. It teaches children that there are consequences for their actions. It teaches them that authority is not tyranny but protection. And it teaches them that their Heavenly Father disciplines those He loves.

Ephesians 6:1-4 captures this balance:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth. And fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

We are to discipline with love, not with anger. We are to correct with grace, not with harshness. And we are to model the covenant in our homes, so our children see what it means to walk in the ways of God.

A Call to Return

We have come to a place in history where the fathers need to return to their children, and the children need to return to their fathers. The family is under attack, and the covenant is being forgotten.

But there is hope. The same God who gave the Torah at Sinai is calling His people back to the ancient paths. He is restoring the family, the Sabbath, the feasts, and the covenant. He is preparing a bride who will be ready when the Bridegroom returns.

This is not about legalism. It is about love. It is about doing what our Heavenly Father has asked us to do not to earn our salvation, but because we love Him and trust His wisdom.

The Sabbath is waiting. The rod of discipline is waiting. The fear of God is waiting. And the Father is calling us to go forth into all of it not alone, but together, as one bride, one body, one Israel.

Conclusion: Go Forth

Ki Teitzei "When You Go Forth." We are being called to go forth from our comfort zones, from our individualism, from our traditions. We are being called to go forth into covenant not just a personal relationship, but a corporate identity as the people of God.

The world is watching. The next generation is watching. Will we be the fathers and mothers they need? Will we be the community of covenant that demonstrates the love of God?

The decision is ours. The time is now.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." (Ephesians 6:1-3)

May you go forth into covenant, not alone, but as part of His people.

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