

Keeping Our Traditions

I want to share something that is very important to the establishment of the nation, which is, as our Master said, the restoration of all things. It has to be a nation that produces the fruit of the Kingdom, and it can't be any other way. Therefore there is order in a nation, and there is a culture in a nation. There are manners and customs in a nation. So we want to establish this order.

That is what Paul was trying to get across to the Thessalonians — those who lived in Thessalonica. 2 Ths 2:15 — He is not talking about obeying the commandments here. It says, “Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the *traditions* that you were taught, either by our spoken word or by our letter.” Paul was an apostle, the one who established the church there in Thessalonica, and because he knew he was establishing a nation, he had passed on certain traditions to them. Maybe some of the people were not keeping those traditions.

That word *tradition* means an ordinance, an authoritative direction set forth by apostolic authority. It is something that is ordained. You are already leaning that way if you have the Holy Spirit, if His anointing is teaching you (1 Jn 2:27), so therefore the Holy Spirit says, “Okay, let's establish this and call it a tradition that we need to keep in order to form a culture, so our nation can be set apart from all other nations.” Then people can see by the way we dress and what we do that we are the people of God, the sons of God on the face of the earth. That is part of how we will bear the fruit of the Kingdom. The nation has a government in every locality. They keep the order. Our Father wants a people who will stand fast in the traditions which they were taught.

There are all kinds of traditions that have been established in every tribe. If you go to any tribe you will see the same people, the same life. They act the same, speak the same, dress the same, for they have the same culture. That culture is developing and being passed on from generation to generation. It is a brand new culture that is set apart

from the world. If we had the same culture as the world, then we would not be the people of God. But we are a different culture, and people see and observe our different culture. They see the difference between us and them.

1 Pet 2:12 — They observe our behavior over a period of time. They observe how we dress, as the royal priesthood (verse 9). That means that all of us are priests, and we all wear priestly clothing. Especially when we come to the minchah, we all wear priestly clothing in modesty. We are learning what is modest. We do not pattern ourselves after the world. We do not love the world's patterns, styles, manners, traditions, and fashions, but we are establishing a brand new culture and brand new traditions that will set us apart from the nations. They will become jealous and envy us in a good way. They see how our girls dress (the people that are worthy of the nations, anyway), and they say, "Wow, that is such a beautiful dress, such beautiful pants. Where did you get those?"

We could take after the world in our dress. We could wear short little shirts that show our belly button and things of that nature. In the world all the girls do that now. That's their tradition. Pretty soon, if we take after their traditions, we will be doing the same thing. It would gradually creep in, little by little. The shirts would creep up, and pretty soon they would be all the way up to the belly button, and our conscience would become more and more calloused if we allowed ourselves to go in that direction.

But I see Netsak coming to the minchah with his pants rolled up, and that is wonderful. Otherwise, his pants would be bunching down at the bottom like those of the world. You have seen people like that in the world. Their pants go all the way down to their heel and drag on the ground. When I go shopping at the thrift store, I see the pants that are ragged at the bottom. That is becoming their custom in the world. They love to just wear their pants out at the bottom. That is how the world is. You can see people walking along with their pants dragging on the ground and bunching like an accordion, and their shoestrings are untied. They love to leave their shoestrings untied and let them flop around. That is the world. And some in the Community say, "Wow, I like that!" They

are keenly aware of those marvelous traditions of the world, and they love them and think we ought to take them on ourselves.

Who would say that? Who would it be? It would be a person that you are not even supposed to talk to. 2 Ths 3:6 — “But we command you brethren, in the name of our Master Yahshua...” (There is no greater authority than Him; all authority has been given to Him on heaven and earth and all the universe) “... we command you to withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly, not in the order of the tradition, not according to the tradition which he received from us.”

Therefore, if someone allows his pants to be so far down that they drag on the ground, that is disorderly. That is a pretty good standard, just as the standard of modesty is from your elbows to your knees; that is the standard of the priesthood. The standard for the length of men’s pants is the top of your shoes, so they don’t bunch up and drag on the floor. We just don’t wear pants that bunch up — we just don’t do it! And we don’t wear shoes without tying them, making sure they are tight. And we don’t go without a belt. We keep our pants tight at our waist; we don’t let them hang down. A lot of people have that tradition in the world, and then they come into the Community having a 32-inch waist and wearing 38-inch pants. I ask them what size pants they wear, and they say, “38,” and I say, “Oh, really? Let me measure you. You are a 32.” They just wore their pants hanging down. You even see older people now doing the same thing, walking around with their pants hanging down and bunched up at the bottom. It is horrible. That is not going to be our tradition, that is for sure.

Another tradition we have is to wear clothing made of natural fibers, not polyester or polyester blends. Some of our people are buying winter clothing made of polyester, or with a polyester lining, thinking that because we sell it in some of our own stores, then it is fine for us to wear. But that is not our way. We don’t wear polyester, and we don’t shop in stores for new clothing — not necessarily even our own stores. We buy our

clothes in thrift stores, where they are much less expensive. There are normally lots of nice woolen winter clothes in the thrift stores.

We are setting in order the culture of the twelve tribes of Israel, as a nation. Our Master could have said it this way: “I am going to take the kingdom away from you, Israel, because you didn’t keep the traditions, and you didn’t keep the commandments.” They were getting worldly, serving and worshipping idols. They weren’t keeping the traditions. So therefore our Master said, “I am not going to talk to you anymore. The only people I am going to talk to are those that I am preaching to.” So during Pentecost, the apostles were preaching to Israel to repent from the wicked and perverse generation that they were part of, and 3000 were saved.

So a tradition is an ordinance, an authoritative direction that is set forth by the authority of the apostles. Otherwise we are apostate, having departed from the teachings of the apostles. The apostles are the ones who can order, in the name of our Sovereign Yahshua ha-Mashiyach, that we withdraw from every person who walks disorderly — disregarding the ordinances, the traditions. Don’t even speak to them. Just withdraw from them. Act as if they didn’t even exist, unless you rebuke them and talk to them about their sin. But if not, don’t even speak to them if they are not living according to the traditions that we have been given.

You know that every year, they establish another fashion, so everyone can throw their clothes away and conform to the latest design or style. They want people to keep on buying clothes, like real tight jeans that you have to pull and pull and squeeze into. That is a tradition of the world that we don’t have anything to do with. We wear loose-fitting pants that are just the right length. So if you see someone with his pants bunched up at the bottom, just talk to him about it and roll them up for him. If he receives you, then he is the kind of person that is teachable and has a submissive heart and is humble. You can just say a word and he does it.

Just remember that we are establishing a nation. We are the royal priesthood. We wear our shirts long, especially in the minchah. They should come down to our fingertips. And when you wear shorts, they always go over your knees and they gather in a little bit. That is just common sense. So what do you think about it?

Sarah — I am thankful. It is good that we would be set apart. I know people notice us, that we are different. I get comments about our pants all the time. It has been a conversation starter for me with lots of different women. “Where did you get those pants? Who are you people? What are you part of?” — just because of the way we dress.

We do not want to be odious. The really religious Jews are just ridiculous. You’ve seen people in different religions wearing robes. That would bring reproach to us. We don’t wear robes. We want people to have a good envy of how we dress. All we have to do is be modest.

Obadiah — It is obvious when a person is in a religious group, and he has a certain way that he dresses because of it. But what distinguishes us is that our God is also the Creator, and so it is natural the way we dress. It agrees with natural law, with what is in man’s conscience. From the elbow to the knee for men, or to the ankle for women, is natural. I love that about our Father. If it is not natural it is just religious. But anyone who is in the covenant for the natural people would say that what we wear is nice.

An Israelite wore his hair in such a way that when he worked, his hair wouldn’t blow all over the place. They would never be found without a headband on, if they didn’t have a hat. I don’t know what kind of hats they would have. But it is becoming to an Israelite to have his head banded to keep his hair from blowing, to keep it from looking shameful, just as it is shameful for a man to have long hair. We don’t have long hair. The women have long hair, and we have short hair.

Hannah — I was thankful to hear the definition for ordinance, something established by the apostolic leaders, the practical, common-sense things that our Father wants to teach us through them. So those that go beyond them go through so many problems. But if we don’t go beyond what is spoken then we will be protected. It made me want to really want to hold fast to the traditions that we have heard from the beginning, the things

that have made the stem who they are. If we don't uphold those things then we will be lost. If we are not sure what those passed-on ordinances are, we can ask and observe, and then we won't go the way of the world.

Paul said the Law was good. Our Father tells us what to eat because He loves us. He said to keep the Sabbath because He loves us. The Sabbath was made for man. Do you want to cook on the Sabbath? Our Father doesn't want you to cook on the Sabbath, because He loves you. And so we cook on Preparation Day. The Law is good, showing how our Father loves us. He loves man. "Oh, you can't eat pig?" Well, you can't eat buzzards either, but if you really want to, go ahead, go "hog wild" — eat snakes and worms and everything else that is unclean. Christians single out pig to eat since it is part of their culture, but maybe they should have started eating snakes and buzzards and things of that nature, too. But it is just what they got used to, and was passed on to them.

We are not under the Law. We see the Law as instruction; that is what *Torah* means — instruction. Our Father instructs us in what is healthy and pleasing to Him, because He loves us so much. It is not because He just wants to deprive us of something that tastes so good, like pig. It is just that pigs are not good for us. Everyone knows that today, even the doctors. There was a study done in Germany that shows that the more you eat pig the more you look like one.

We have a wonderful Father who loves us. He even wants us to rest on the Sabbath. Our Father gave us a rest day. Everything He gives us is good.

ha-êmeq — It is humility that has to come to us to roll our pants up when someone tells us they're too long. We are just good soldiers. The commanding officer says, "Pants up!" and there it is... You're a man under authority, and you roll them up. And you don't turn around later and start saying, "Oh, man, that commanding officer!" You don't do that, because you are a man under authority, and you are happy. That is what you want to do. You didn't roll your eyes and sigh, because you really understand authority.

He is training rulers for the universe, you know, and we are in boot camp.

Yadel — I am thankful that our Father saw our hearts, that we were willing to do His will, and I thought how if we are really willing to do His will, then all we want to do is what pleases Him. There is not going to be anything in us to want to push as close as we can to the boundary, or to live by law and ritual, but we just want to do what pleases our Father. The religious Jews, with their curls and kosher laws, take everything too far. They are just under the Law, because they are far from our Father's heart.

We can either do that, or we can push ourselves as far as we can before we have to be sent away. But really, the outward acts are signs of what is in our heart, and if you see someone who is not really outwardly living by our traditions, then you know that something is going on inside him that is not right. You can tell that there is something in his heart that is not really willing to do what is pleasing to our Father. I want to be pleasing to our Father and have His heart and His mind.

There was a Christian who wanted to prove that I was under the Law, so he invited me to have dinner, and I knew he was going to have pork. So I got a buzzard and fixed it up really nice, and I brought my buzzard and set it on the table. I told him it was a buzzard, and he said he didn't eat buzzard. "Well, it's the same law that says that you are not supposed to eat pigs, so how come you can't eat buzzard?" (I didn't really do that, but I *was* invited to a Christian's house, and he *did* serve pig on purpose, and I said that I *should* have brought a buzzard and set it on the table.)

David Shemuel [*our newest disciple*] — I am thankful for the gospel, because when I was in the world, I didn't know how not to be proud, I didn't know how not to be selfish. That is all I knew — to be proud and selfish. And I didn't know not to eat pork. But I came here, and now I know not to eat pork and I know not to be proud and I know not to be selfish. I am just thankful for the gospel.

Derush [*our second newest disciple*] — What we are hearing is so important. There are a lot of big things that pertain to our culture, like our worship and our praise, but it is the little things also that matter. It is everything from the anointing, everything our Father teaches us — everything. That is really what sets us apart. If you look at Christianity, they pick and choose from the Bible, whether it be big parts or little parts, they only take some of it. But we take it all, all that our Father teaches us. We take it all to heart. That is really what sets us apart. I love the truth.