

Why Those Who Misapply This Verse Only Destroy Those Around Them

Yeshua told his disciples not to judge others. Does this mean that judges on a court of law should not offer verdicts? Obviously, Yeshua was not prohibiting judiciary functions, nor did he intend to grant license for sin and subjective morality. Neither was he erasing the line between wrong and right or encouraging his disciples to wink at sin. His prohibition on passing judgment assumed that the moral strictures of Torah-keeping Judaism were already in place.

Instead, Yeshua warned his disciples against taking on the role of God in judging others. That is to say, disciples of Yeshua should not declare God's condemnation against others or presume to know God's verdict regarding a human being. For example, a disciple should not call upon God to punish his fellow's sin, nor should he point to his fellow's misfortune and declare him justly repaid for wrongdoing. The disciple of Yeshua should be the most reluctant of all to declare a man's final judgment and eternal destiny. James, the brother of the Master, explained, "There is one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?" (James 4:12, NASB).

Yeshua warned His disciples away from deciding who is saved and who is not, who will be exalted and who will be humbled, who will be damned and who will be raised. According to Yeshua, a man makes such assumptions (the type that are too often tossed about matter-of-factly in theology and practice) at risk to his own soul: "For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you" (Matt. 7:2).

The “standard of measure” refers to a container used for measuring out dry goods such as grain. A dishonest merchant might use two different standards of measure, a slightly larger capacity measure for his purchases and a slightly smaller capacity container for resale. An honest merchant uses the same standard of measure whether he is buying or selling.

Yeshua promises that a person offers the benefit of the doubt and judges others favorably will receive the full measure of favor in return:

“Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you: Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will men give unto you. For with the measure you use, it will be measured unto you” (Luke 6:37-38, MEV).

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