

06/30/12 VOWS

Bemidbar 30:2

“When a man vows a vow to Yahweh, or swears an oath to bind himself by some agreement, he does not break his word, he does according to all that comes out of his mouth.”

When a man vows (makes, speaks) ... יָדַר

made, make, make vows, makes, takes, vow, vowed, vowing, vows, you will vow.

This is an active verb. The vow-er speaks the vow.

... a vow ... נָדָר

votive, votive offering, votive offerings, vow, vows.

Votive = “offered in fulfillment of an oath or vow” or “showing or symbolizing a wish or desire”

Vow = “a solemn promise to perform an act, carry out an activity, or behave in a given way”

... to Yahweh ... לַיהוָה

The vow or oath is taken or made specifically to Yahweh and not some other person. The vow is a religious promise.

... or swears (takes) ... שָׁבַע

adjure, curse, exchanged oaths, made a covenant, made an oath, promised on oath, promised them by oath, put the under oath, put them under oath, solemn, solemnly swear, strictly put, swear, swearer, swearing, swears, swore, sworn, take an oath, take the oath, take oath, takes, took an oath, took the oath, under oath, used, vow, vowed.

... an oath ... שְׁבָעָה, שְׁבוּעָה

curse, oath, oaths, perjury, swear, sworn.

Oath = “a formal or legally binding pledge to do something such as tell the truth in a court of law, made formally and often naming Yahweh or a loved one as a witness”

... to bind ... אָסַר

began, begin, bind, bind me tightly, bind you fast, binds, bound, captivated, captured, confined, get ready, girded, harness, hitch, hitched, imprison, imprisoned, made his ready, prepare, prepared, prison, prisoners, taken captive, tied, ties.

“Bind” is an active word and in this case it means to commit to the vow.

... he does not break his word ... לֹא יַחַל דְּבָרוֹ

... break ... חָלַל

Break, violate, pierce, wounding

The word “break” or “violate” his word implies not only not doing it but that he would “pierce” or “wound” his word and himself.

... his word ... דְּבַר

account, account, act, acts, advice, affair, affairs, agreement, amount, annals, answer, answer, anything, asked, cause, charge, claims, command, commandment, commandments, conclusion, conversation, counsel, custom, dealings, decree, deed, desires, dispute, doings, duty, edict, idea, instructions, matter, matters, message, oath, obligations, one of the promises, order, parts, pertains, plan, plot, portion, promise, proposal, purpose, question, reason records, regard, reply, report, request, required, requires, rule, said, saying, says, something, speak, speech, talk, talking, task, thing, things, things at your word, things the word, thoughts, way, what, what, whatever, word, words.

... he does according ... יַעֲשֶׂה

Literally – he-must-do

... all that comes out of his mouth ... כְּכֹל-הַיֵּצֵא מִפִּי

Literally – as-every-of the-thing-coming from-mouth-of-him

Our words are taken seriously especially if they are spoken as an oath or vow to Yahweh or in Yahweh’s Name.

CRITERIA FOR VOWS OR OATHS

The vow must be a thing that is lawful to be done, must not be contrary to Torah, and which may tend to the glorify Yahweh.

The vow may also be for the good of a man's self or of his neighbor such as he will not eat such a thing for such a time, or he will do this or the other thing.

Fasting for a certain time can be a vow.

Not eating chocolate can be a vow.

He may forbid himself what is forbidden, and forbid what is free and lawful; but he may not make free or lawful what is forbidden, that is, he may not vow to do a thing which is contrary to Torah.

A person making a vow shall not break his word; or profane it but punctually perform it.

KEEPING YOUR VOWS

A person should be careful how they vow, and not rashly do it; but when they have vowed, they ought to perform their vow.

Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 5:4

“When you make a vow to Elohim, do not delay to pay it, for He takes no pleasure in fools. Pay that which you have vowed.”

Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) 5:5

It is better not to vow than to vow and not pay.

OUR WORDS ARE RECORDED

Mal’aki (Malachi) 3:16

“Then shall those who fear Yahweh speak to one another, and Yahweh listen and hear, and a book of remembrance be written before Him, of those who fear Yahweh, and those who think upon His Name.”

OUR WORDS ARE IMPORTANT AND CAN BE HELD AGAINST US

Mattithyahu (Matthew) 5:37

“But let your word ‘Yea’ be ‘Yea,’ and your ‘No’ be ‘No.’ And what goes beyond these is from the wicked one.

Yaakov (James) 5:12

“But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by the heaven or by the earth or with any other oath. But let your Yes be Yes, and your No, No, lest you fall into judgment”

BINDING AND LOOSING

Mattithyahu (Matthew) 16:19

“And I shall give you the keys of the reign of the heavens, and whatever you bind on earth shall be having been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loosen on earth shall be having been loosened in the heavens.”

Mattithyahu (Matthew) 18:18

“Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be having been bound in heaven, and whatever you loosen on earth shall be having been loosened in heaven.

Binding and loosening is Hebrew idiom for exercising authority (to prohibit and permit).