



## **Division and Strife Antidote!**

By Barbara L. Klika, MSW

Undershepherd

[www.set-apart-ministries.org](http://www.set-apart-ministries.org)

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In our chiastic study of 7's throughout the Scriptures we have come to many interesting and compelling truths. Today, the topic is that of the current level of strife and division being continuously stirred up among us and what we can and must do to confound it, Yeshua willing. To that end, we will consider the chiastic connections made between some of those groups of 7's. For good or for ill, we will see that the chiasmus confirms that the heart is the origin of the choices that are made. For those who have completed "The Creation Gospel" studies, the terms will be very familiar. For those who have not yet done this or a similar chiastic/thematic study of 7's, it may not be as clear.

Briefly, Chiastic study, or chiasmus, explores the intricacies of meaning presented in Scripture's detailed observation of what and when something is present, in relationship to each other. In literary terms, it is "a figure of speech that displays inverted parallelisms." A chiasmus might be as simple as two verses that repeat the content as a mirror or as parallel statements. It may also be as complex as to cover whole chapters or even whole portions of Scripture at a time, with noted parallels pairing up and ultimately pointing to one central aspect. (ie. A, B, C, **D**, C<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>1</sub>, A<sub>1</sub>; with D the central point of the "arrow.") It may also be known as "thematic study." The comments below, relating to each of the aspects of the 7's are the result of preceding studies though all of that previous work will not be presented here.

The relationship between the moedim and the Spirits resting on Messiah Yeshua have become confirmation of [the goals](#) and [mission statement](#) of Set Apart Ministries in ways we hadn't anticipated. Our goals always seemed to be more than the generally recommended limit of 3 but we saw how that would be when we realized they paired up with a study of 7's. They are the root of our halacha.

*But a branch will emerge from the trunk of Yishai,  
a shoot will grow from his roots.  
The Spirit of ADONAI will rest on him,  
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and power,  
the Spirit of knowledge and fearing ADONAI —*

Isaiah 11:1-2

Here is a list of 7 things that YHVH hates, the antithesis or opposite of each of the 7 Spirits and all they represent.

*There are six things ADONAI hates,  
seven which he detests:  
<sup>17</sup> a haughty look, a lying tongue,  
hands that shed innocent blood,  
<sup>18</sup> a heart that plots wicked schemes,  
feet swift in running to do evil,  
<sup>19</sup> a false witness who lies with every breath,  
and him who sows strife among brothers.*

Proverbs 6:16-19

“Strife” is variously translated as “contentiousness,” “discord” or “stirring up conflict.” It is based on translation of the Hebrew word, *medan*, [*mem, dalet, nun*]; Strong’s H4090, which is used only 3 times. Although Scripture doesn’t indicate why YHVH hates these behaviors, it is generally assumed that they are individually dishonorable ways to behave, flagrantly flouting the ways of our Elohim, or missing the mark of His teachings on righteousness. I suggest that this individually unlawful behavior can also move forward to the point that it represents an entire group, organization or system of lawlessness which is completely antithetical to the ways YHVH would have us walk, His ways! **In other words, a little leaven can leaven the whole lump.**

In our SAM community, we have long emphasized our understanding that there is a mutual impact between our individual righteousness and our corporate righteousness: one affects the other for good or for ill. When in a community of believers where there is a pervasive sense of the desire to please our Abba, there will also be a pervasive sense and recognition from the heart if one’s personal attitudes or behaviors move away from Him, which should lead to a desire to remain faithful. If that pervasive sense of a desire to honor Yah falters among an increasing number of individuals, it is more likely that it can falter at the corporate level. Conversely, if an entire group begins to act in ways that do not honor Yah’s ways, it will influence individuals to move away from Him as well. Usually, it is a subtle process and can progress far downhill before it may be recognized. All too often, even then, it isn’t recognized or not addressed due to inhibitions or fears of not being socially acceptable to point it out. I have observed this phenomenon in several different settings on a close personal level, seeing how the “naughty” behavior began to be viewed as desirable by those easily drawn in; both with adolescents and with adults.

The 7 assemblies also figure into our understanding of the times in which we live. As you likely know, there are several ways to interpret these assemblies. The most literal interpretation would have each assembly represent a specific assembly in the past. A metaphorical interpretation might consider each a representative of a future assembly or mode of behavior. Some would view each as a representative of a “church age,” perhaps then each representing a thousand year era. For quick reference, I will provide the names and accepted meaning for each. For the purpose today, we will focus on the last one and consider it both as representative of a mode of behavior and as the current church age.

Ephesus: Permitted

Smyrna: Myrrh

Pergamon/Pergamos: Elevation

Thyatira: Odor of Affliction

Sardis: Red Ones

Philadelphia: Brotherly Affection

**Laodicea: Justice of the People**

Using the interpretation that compares the 7<sup>th</sup> assembly, Spirit or behavior as indicative of the 7<sup>th</sup> age and viewing this as the age in which we live, soon leading to the appearance of the anti-christ and ultimately to our real Messiah, I proceed.

This 7<sup>th</sup> assembly and age is represented as one in which there is an ending and a beginning, represented by 1)Laodicea in the assemblies, 2)Yirat Adonai, the Spirit of Reverence for YHVH in the Spirits, and 3)spreading strife among brothers as per the list of things YHVH hates.

As it was intended to be, in a Yah honoring sense, all of the foregoing traits and behaviors have come to fruition in the honoring and reverence of YHVH that is deserved. The cycle begins anew for another season in this life, and one day into eternity. As we walk in the ways of our first love, (Ephesus/Chokmah-Wisdom) and learn to wisely discern between what is life giving and what brings death, (Smyrna/Binah-Understanding-Discernment) we learn to receive and practice wise counsel in what we put our hands to do (Pergamos/Etzah-Wise Counsel), prepare ourselves to receive His strength (Sardis/G'vrah-Power) which equips us to practice brotherly love (Philadelphia/Da'at-intimate knowledge)and place it all in the Hands of our Elohim in awe and reverence (Laodicea/Yirat Adonai-Awe & Reverence of Yah) of Who He is and What He has done for us. All of these things were to have formed in us the heart of the 7 Spirits, THE Holy Spirit, the Ruach haKodesh as we walk out our lives; our *halalcha*. The behavior of the saints in this last cycle before Messiah's return should be informed by all that went before so that we are prepared and made without spot and wrinkle to see and stand with Messiah!

In the sense of the things YHVH hates, the cycle and how we walk looks quite different yet all too familiar. Instead of remembering our first love of Him Who loved us first, we fall into the snare of arrogance, believing that we have no need of Him or have outgrown our need (Ephesus/haughty eyes). We do not need to discern between life and death or lies and truth because they are irrelevant to us as we seek what we desire (Smyrna/lying tongue).When we function according to these things that YHVH hates, we see ourselves as elevated above others with no need to explain the deaths of those innocents who get in our way (Pergamos/hands that shed innocent blood). We are concerned only with our own power and care not that our deeds are not honest or wholesome (Sardis/feet that run quickly to do evil). What should have been brotherly love turns to deceit and duplicity toward others because we are given to lying, saying whatever is needed to accomplish our own goals. Truth is considered irrelevant and easily manipulated emotion is everything! (Philadelphia/false witness who lies with every breath) And of course, since we live in all of these ways, we are perfectly content to stir up contention and strife by any means possible to keep anyone from looking at us and holding us accountable, demonstrating the

blackness of our hearts. Ultimately, the Word tells us that this stirring up of strife does bring division, not only among people, but also is the preparation for the intended final separation of people from our Elohim. The intent is to create so much separation and strife amidst so much confusion that we will have forgotten Who our Elohim is and be ready to eagerly accept the (false) promises of peace by any other source, in particular a person who is given the power of the adversary! We are intended to forget our first love for Yah and accept the offered substitute which will say peace, peace, when there is no genuine peace (Laodicea/Justice of the people). All of this is carried out under the combined strength and duplicity of those whose heart has been given to evil. (Thyatira/heart that devises wicked plans).

While I believe that these attitudes and behaviors are of the flesh, I do also believe that when they are frequently tolerated and practiced, they open one's soul to greater and greater influence of the evil one, our adversary, the devil. On a societal level, as these behaviors of individual's increase, the more the society deteriorates. When leaders of a group, or nation, behave in dishonorable ways, those "beneath" them in rank and privilege will likely fall to the same lower standard. When the fall begins with the leaders, it moves quickly since their position often protects them from being accountable or those beneath them are simply too frightened of possible retribution to even try.

## **Conclusions**

The behaviors of those under the influence of the things YHVH hates has become the accepted norm for far too many people in America. It has been evidenced at the highest leadership positions. Sadly, it is as true among the institutional churches as it is elsewhere. Some of this failure to walk in ways of righteousness has been known for many years but efforts to stop it were blocked and those who reported it too often harmed, up to and including losing their lives. Others fell in line until the corruption is deep enough throughout every aspect of America to be called a swamp.

Recently, we are seeing a surge of recognition of wickedness, failure to walk in righteousness, which I believe is an answer to the prayers of those who have been asking that it be exposed. Those who seek to honor the God of the Bible, the God of Israel, have been and are threatened in many ways. Since the election, President-Elect Trump has made it plain that he agrees that many of these duplicitous behaviors and lies need to be addressed and the people held accountable. I believe this has empowered more people to step up and speak of what they know. I also know that the powers that be are not going to simply melt away as they see the house of lies they have built being brought into the light and taken down. They have built up quite a picture of their version of how peace will come upon the earth but it does not concur with Yah's desire. It does concur with what His Word says is the plan of the adversary's intent to kill, steal and destroy those on the earth, and usurping the praise of the Most High for himself.

More obviously than seen in previous decades and elections, I do not believe we are seeing "politics as usual." I think it is a physical representation of the forces of wickedness behind them, driving the people given over to the behaviors that YHVH hates, to continue to lie and scheme, still trying to bring about their wicked agendas. But we must also remember that the evil one, our adversary, is also well able to disguise himself as an "angel of light." It is not so simple as to decide who is black and who is white, but perhaps more who is black and who is blacker?

I do not doubt that Trump is a powerful person and am grateful for the reprieve but the question remains as to what power he does look to. I point out that he is a man who says he is a Christian believer, and also says that he has never had to ask for forgiveness because he doesn't believe he has done anything wrong. Does that sound more like wisdom and reverence of Yah or more like haughty

eyes and arrogance to you? He lists Norman Vincent Peale among his mentors in the faith, and counts Kenneth Copeland Ministries among his supporters. Neither of these ministries have taught an orthodox faith but have erred on many counts, too big a subject to fully explore here. I say again, more than ever, I do not believe these are political issues so much as they are spiritual ones played out more and more visibly here on earth.

How do we use the chiastic study of the 7's to provide an antidote to strife? The corresponding aspect to this 7<sup>th</sup> aspect of what YHVH hates is what He loves: those who look to Him in awe and reverence. I believe the antidote to falling is first to **recognize it for what it is: a scheme of the adversary**. It builds our anxiety and our human tendency to want to "do something" to alleviate it. The schemes of strife and division through chaos are intended to lead to an acceptance of a [false] peace, lies, to forgetting our Creator and His ways and look to our own manmade ideas, which are really undergirded by evil.

We need to honor the Spirit of Yirat Adonai, Awe and Reverence of our Elohim. As we turn our hearts back over to this focus, the empowerment of the Ruach haKodesh will renew our strength and quash our anxiety. We must choose to walk in His ways: wisdom, understanding, wise counsel, power, intimate knowledge and awe, which leads us back around to wisdom...all rooted and grounded in a humble heart, and built up in Messiah Yeshua. Every time we experience the effects of strife and divisive behavior, we must first turn our hearts and minds back to Him for His leading. Sometimes, we may be directed to take action against what is happening, but other times we may be directed to simply watch and pray. There is no "cookbook" recipe of how to walk after Him, except to.....walk after Him. Follow the precepts listed in His Word, listen for His Spirit FIRST, not as an afterthought when we have already made up our minds about our response.

Many of the schemes of the evil one that subtly stir us up in our spirits can be recognized for what they are with some awareness and practice. We have called some of them "swirlings" in our local vernacular, but Scripturally, they can be called "malignity" which is the absence of good will toward others. (Romans 1) It is when we assume the worst of another, even when we truthfully know their heart and that they have not intended harm. These thoughts are intense and powerful but they can be overcome. Another scheme is to involve one in something considered harmful, and then entrap the person to continue through fears of exposure. Contentiousness and strife within an assembly can come from sources both outside and within that assembly. We have examined such issues extensively in our ["Messy Expectations" series](#).

We are not helpless against the schemes of the evil one, unless we have given ground through the way we believe and live. Too many believers have unknowingly done so. We can overcome but we must be equipped. Please allow the study of the 7's to be a part of showing you the way. May we be found prepared and ready as His Bride, without spot or wrinkle!

*If you found encouragement in this article, please consider checking out our other materials at [www.set-apart-ministries.org](http://www.set-apart-ministries.org). You may also contact us at (920) 634-2760 or [info@set-apart-ministries.org](mailto:info@set-apart-ministries.org)*

*If you would like to participate in a telephone conference to discuss how we can use this study to better prepare ourselves, please contact us as soon as possible!*