

~EXPELLING (544)

.. Yehowah's Action

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.. Christian Congregation

- The judicial excommunication, or disfellowshipping, of delinquents from membership and association in a community or organization. With religious societies it is a principle and a right inherent in them and is analogous to the powers of capital punishment, banishment, and exclusion from membership that are exercised by political and municipal bodies.

- In the congregation of God it is exercised to maintain the purity of the organization doctrinally and morally. The exercise of this power is necessary to the continued existence of the organization and particularly so the Christian congregation.

- The congregation must remain clean and maintain God's favor in order to be used by him and to represent him. Otherwise, God would expel or cut off the entire congregation.

- Therefore remember from what you have fallen, and repent and do the former deeds. If you do not, I am coming to you, and I will remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. (**Revelation 2:5**)

- You hand such a man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. (**1 Corinthians 5:5**)

- Your cause for boasting is not fine. Do you not know that a little leaven ferments the whole lump? (**1 Corinthians 5:6**)

.. Yehowah's Action

- Yehowah God took **expelling**, or disfellowshipping, action in numerous instances. He sentenced Adam to death and drove him and his wife Eve out of the garden of Eden.

- In the sweat of your face you will eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken. For dust you are and to

dust you will return. ([Genesis 3:19](#))

- With that Yehowah God put him out of the garden of Eden to cultivate the ground from which he had been taken. ([Genesis 3:23](#))
- And so he drove the man out and posted at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubs and the flaming blade of a sword that was turning itself continually to guard the way to the tree of life. ([Genesis 3:24](#))
- Cain was banished and became a wanderer and a fugitive in the earth.
- And now you are cursed in banishment from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brothers blood at your hand. ([Genesis 4:11](#))
- Here you are actually driving me this day from off the surface of the ground, and from your face I shall be concealed, and I must become a wanderer and fugitive on the earth, and it is certain that anyone finding me will kill me. ([Genesis 4:14](#))
- With that Cain went away from the face of Yehowah and took up residence in the land of Fugitiveness to the east of Eden. ([Genesis 4:16](#))
- The angels that sinned were thrown into Tartarus, a condition of dense darkness in which they are reserved for judgment.
- Certainly if God did not hold back from punishing the angels that sinned, but, by throwing them into Tartarus, delivered them to pits of dense darkness to be reserved for judgment. ([2 Peter 2:4](#))
- Twenty-three thousand fornicators were cut off from Israel in one day.
- Neither let us practice fornication, as some of them committed fornication, only to fall, twenty-three thousand of them in one day. ([1 Corinthians 10:8](#))
- Achan was put to death at Yehowah's command for stealing that which was devoted to Yehowah.

- **And it must occur that the one picked with the thing devoted to destruction will be burned with fire, he and all that belongs to him, because he has overstepped the covenant of Yehowah and because he has committed a disgraceful folly in Israel. (Joshua 7:15)**
- **At this Achan answered Joshua and said; For a fact I, I have sinned against Yehowah the God of Israel, and this way and that way I have done. (Joshua 7:20)**
- **When I got to see among the spoil an official garment from Shinar, a good-looking one, and two hundred shekels of silver and one gold bar, fifty shekels being its weight, then I wanted them, and I took them, and, look! They are hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent with the money underneath it. (Joshua 7:21)**
- **Then Joshua said; Why have you brought ostracism upon us? Yehowah will bring ostracism upon you on this day. With that all Israel went pelting him with stones, after which they burned them with fire. Thus they stoned them with stones. (Joshua 7:25)**
- **Korah the Levite along with Dathan and Abiram of the tribe of Reuben were cut off for rebellion, and Miriam was stricken with leprosy and eventually might have died in that condition if Moses had not pleaded for her. As it was, she was expelled from the camp of Israel under quarantine seven days.**
- **Immediately they got away from before the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, from every side, and Dathan and Abiram came out, taking their stand at the entrance of their tents, together with their wives, and their sons and their little ones. (Numbers 16:27)**
- **And the earth proceeded to open its mouth and to swallow up them and their households and all humankind that belonged to Korah and all the goods. (Numbers 16:32)**
- **So down they went, and all who belonged to them, alive into Sheol, and the earth went covering them over, so that they perished from the midst of the congregation. (Numbers 16:33)**
- **And a fire came out from Yehowah and proceeded to consume**

the two hundred and fifty men offering the incense. (**Numbers 16:35**)

- And the cloud turned away from over the tent, and, look! Miriam was struck with leprosy as white as snow. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and, look! She was struck with leprosy. (**Numbers 12:10**)
- And Moses began to cry out to Yehowah, saying; O God, please! Heal her, please! (**Numbers 12:13**)
- Then Yehowah said to Moses; Were her father to spit directly in her face, would she not be humiliated seven days? Let her be quarantined seven days outside the camp, and afterward let her be received in. (**Numbers 12:14**)
- Accordingly Miriam was quarantined outside the camp seven days, and the people did not pull away until Miriam was received in. (**Numbers 12:15**)

•• Under The Mosaic Law

- For serious or deliberate violations of God's Law given through Moses a person could be cut off, that is, put to death.
- Any soul who eats any blood, that soul must be cut off from his people. (**Leviticus 7:27**)
- But the soul that does something deliberately, whether he is a native or an alien resident, he speaking abusively of Yehowah, in that case that soul must be cut off from among his people. (**Numbers 15:30**)
- Because it is Yehowah's word that he has despised and his commandment that he has broken, that soul should be cut off without fail. His own error is upon him. (**Numbers 15:31**)
- Apostasy, idolatry, adultery, eating blood, and murder were among the offenses carrying this penalty.
- In case you hear it said in one of your cities, which Yehowah your God is giving you to dwell there. (**Deuteronomy 13:12**)
- Good-for-nothing men have gone out from your midst that they

may try to turn away the inhabitants of their city, saying; Let us go and serve other gods, whom you have not known.
(Deuteronomy 13:13)

- You must also search and investigate and inquire thoroughly, and if the thing is established as the truth, this detestable thing has been done in your midst. (Deuteronomy 13:14)
- You should without fail strike the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword. Devote it and everything that is in it, and its domestic animals, to destruction at the edge of the sword.
(Deuteronomy 13:15)
- And all its spoil you should collect into the middle of its public square, and you must burn in the fire the city and all its spoil as a whole offering to Yehowah your God, and it must become a heap of ruins to time indefinite. It should never be rebuilt.
(Deuteronomy 13:16)
- And nothing at all should stick to your hand of the thing made sacred by ban, in order, that Yehowah may turn from his burning anger and may indeed give you mercy and he may certainly show you mercy and multiply you, just as he has sworn to your forefathers. (Deuteronomy 13:17)
- For you should listen to the voice of Yehowah your God by keeping all his commandments that I am commanding you today, so as to do what is right in the eyes of Yehowah your God.
(Deuteronomy 13:18)
- Now a man who commits adultery with another man's wife is one who commits adultery with the wife of his fellowman. He should be put to death without fail, the adulterer and the adulteress as well. (Leviticus 20:10)
- For the soul of every sort of flesh is its blood by the soul in it. Consequently I said to the sons of Israel; You must not eat the blood of any sort of flesh, because the soul of every sort of flesh is its blood. Anyone eating it will be cut off. (Leviticus 17:14)
- And you must take no ransom for the soul of a murderer who is deserving to die, for without fail he should be put to death.
(Numbers 35:31)

- Under the Law, for the penalty of cutting off to be carried out, evidence had to be established at the mouth of at least two witnesses.
- No single witness should rise up against a man respecting any error or any sin, in the case of any sin that he may commit. At the mouth of two witnesses or at the mouth of three witnesses the matter should stand good. ([Deuteronomy 19:15](#))
- These witnesses were required to be the first to stone the guilty one.
- The hand of the witnesses first of all should come upon him to put him to death, and the hand of all the people afterward, and you must clear out what is bad from your midst. ([Deuteronomy 17:7](#))
- This would demonstrate their zeal for God's Law and the purity of the congregation of Israel and would also be a deterrent to false, careless, or hasty testimony.

· The Sanhedrin And Synagogues

- During Jesus earthly ministry the synagogues served as courts for trying violators of Jewish law. The Sanhedrin was the highest court. Under Roman rule the Jews did not have the latitude of authority that they had enjoyed under theocratic government.
- Even when the Sanhedrin judged someone deserving of death, they could not always administer the death penalty, because of restrictions by the Romans.
- The Jewish synagogues had a system of excommunication, or disfellowshipping, that had three steps or three names. The first step was the penalty of *nid-duy'*, which was for a relatively short time, initially only 30 days.
- A person under this penalty was prohibited from enjoying certain privileges. He could go to the temple, but there he was restricted in certain ways, and all besides his own family were commanded to stay at a distance of 4 cubits (2 meters)(6 feet) from him.
- The second step was *che'rem*, meaning something devoted to God or banned. This was a more severe judgment. The offender could not

teach or be taught in the company of others, nor could he perform any commercial transactions beyond purchasing the necessities of life.

- However, he was not altogether cast out of the Jewish organization, and there was a chance for him to come back. Finally, there was *sham-mat-ta* ', an entire cutting off from the congregation. Some believe the last two forms of excommunication were undistinguishable from each other.
- One who was cast out as wicked, cut off entirely, would be considered worthy of death, though the Jews might not have the authority to execute such a one. Nevertheless, the form of cutting off they did employ was a very powerful weapon in the Jewish community. Jesus foretold that his followers would be expelled from the synagogues.
- Men will expel you from the synagogue. In fact, the hour is coming when everyone that kills you will imagine he has rendered a sacred service to God. (John 16:2)
- Fear of being expelled, or un-churched, kept some of the Jews, even the rulers, from confessing Jesus.
- His parents said these things because they were in fear of the Jews, for the Jews had already come to an agreement that, if anyone confessed him as Christ, he should get expelled from the synagogue. (John 9:22) Footnote
- All the same, many even of the rulers actually put faith in him, but because of the Pharisees they would not confess him, in order not to be expelled from the synagogue. (John 12:42)
- An example of such action by the synagogue was the case of the healed blind man who spoke favorably of Jesus.
- In answer they said to him; You were altogether born in sins, and yet are you teaching us? And they threw him out! (John 9:34)
- During the time of his earthly ministry, Jesus gave instructions as to the procedure to follow if a serious sin was committed against a person and yet the sin was of such a nature that, if properly settled, it did not need to involve the Jewish congregation.

- **Moreover, if your brother commits a sin, go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. (Matthew 18:15)**
- **But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two more, in order, that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter may be established. (Matthew 18:16)**
- **If he does not listen to them, speak to the congregation. If he does not listen even to the congregation, let him be to you just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector. (Matthew 18:17)**
- **He encouraged earnest effort to help the wrongdoer, while also safeguarding that congregation against persistent sinners. The only congregation of God in existence then was the congregation of Israel.**
- **Speaking to the congregation, did not mean that the entire nation or even all the Jews in a given community sat in judgment on the offender. There were older men of the Jews that were charged with this responsibility.**
- **However, I say to you that everyone who continues wrathful with his brother will be accountable to the court of justice, but whoever addresses his brother with an unspeakable word of contempt will be accountable to the Supreme Court, whereas whoever says; You despicable fool! will be liable to the fiery Gehenna. (Matthew 5:22)**
- **Offenders who refused to listen even to these responsible ones were to be viewed just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector; association with whom was shunned by the Jews.**
- **And he said to them; You well know how unlawful it is for a Jew to join himself to or approach a man of another race, and yet God has shown me I should call no man defiled or unclean. (Acts of Apostles 10:28)**

.. Christian Congregation

- **Based on the principles of the Hebrew Scriptures, the Christian Greek Scriptures by command and precedent authorize expulsion, or disfellowshipping, from the Christian congregation.**

- **By exercising this God-given authority, the congregation keeps itself clean and in good standing before God. The apostle Paul, with the authority vested in him, ordered the expulsion of an incestuous fornicator who had taken his father's wife.**
- **You hand such a man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 5:5)**
- **But now I am writing you to quit mixing in company with anyone called a brother that is a fornicator or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner, not even eating with such a man. (1 Corinthians 5:11)**
- **While God judges those outside? Remove the wicked man from among yourselves. (1 Corinthians 5:13)**
- **He also exercised disfellowshipping authority against Hymenaeus and Alexander.**
- **Holding faith and a good conscience, which some have thrust aside and have experienced shipwreck concerning their faith. (1 Timothy 1:19)**
- **Hymenaeus and Alexander belong to these, and I have handed them over to Satan that they may be taught by discipline not to blaspheme. (1 Timothy 1:20)**
- **Diotrephes, however, was apparently trying to exercise disfellowshipping action wrongly.**
- **I wrote something to the congregation, but Diotrephes, who likes to have the first place among them, does not receive anything from us with respect. (3 John 1:9)**
- **That is why, if I come, I will call to remembrance his works which he goes on doing, chattering about us with wicked words. Also, not being content with these things, neither does he himself receive the brothers with respect, and those who are wanting to receive them he tries to hinder and to throw out of the congregation. (3 John 1:10)**
- **Some of the offenses that could merit disfellowshipping from the Christian congregation are fornication, adultery, homosexuality, greed,**

extortion, thievery, lying, drunkenness, reviling, spiritism, murder, idolatry, apostasy, and the causing of divisions in the congregation.

- **In my letter I wrote you to quit mixing in company with fornicators. (1 Corinthians 5:9)**
- **Not meaning entirely with the fornicators of this world or the greedy persons and extortioners or idolaters. Otherwise, you would actually have to get out of the world. (1 Corinthians 5:10)**
- **But now I am writing you to quit mixing in company with anyone called a brother that is a fornicator or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner, not even eating with such a man. (1 Corinthians 5:11)**
- **For what do I have to do with judging those outside? Do you not judge those inside. (1 Corinthians 5:12)**
- **While God judges those outside? Remove the wicked man from among yourselves. (1 Corinthians 5:13)**
- **What! Do you not know that unrighteous persons will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be misled! Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men. (1 Corinthians 6:9)**
- **Nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit God's kingdom. (1 Corinthians 6:10)**
- **As for a man that promotes a sect, reject him after a first and a second admonition. (Titus 3:10)**
- **Knowing that such a man has been turned out of the way and is sinning, he being self-condemned. (Titus 3:11)**
- **But as for the cowards and those without faith and those who are disgusting in their filth and murderers and fornicators and those practicing spiritism and idolaters and all the liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur. This means the second death. (Revelation 21:8)**
- **Mercifully, one promoting a sect is warned a first and a second time before such disfellowshipping action is taken against him. In the Christian congregation, the principle enunciated in the Law applies,**

namely, that two or three witnesses must establish evidence against the accused one.

- **Do not admit an accusation against an older man, except only on the evidence of two or three witnesses. (1 Timothy 5:19)**
- **Those who have been convicted of a practice of sin are reproved Scripturally before the onlookers, for example, those who testified concerning the sinful conduct, so that they too may all have a healthy fear of such sin.**
- **Reprove before all onlookers persons who practice sin, that the rest also may have fear. (1 Timothy 5:20)**

See Also REPROOF

- **The Christian congregation is also admonished by Scripture to stop socializing with those who are disorderly and not walking correctly but who are not deemed deserving of complete expulsion. Paul wrote the Thessalonian congregation concerning such.**
- **Now we are giving you orders, brothers, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to withdraw from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the tradition you received from us. (2 Thessalonians 3:6)**
- **For we hear certain ones are walking disorderly among you, not working at all but meddling with what does not concern them. (2 Thessalonians 3:11)**
- **For your part, brothers, do not give up in doing right. (2 Thessalonians 3:13)**
- **But if anyone is not obedient to our word through this letter, keep this one marked, stop associating with him, that he may become ashamed. (2 Thessalonians 3:14)**
- **And yet do not be considering him as an enemy, but continue admonishing him as a brother. (2 Thessalonians 3:15)**
- **However, regarding any who were Christians, but later repudiated the Christian congregation or were expelled from it, the apostle Paul commanded; Quit mixing in company with such a one,**

and the apostle John wrote; Never receive him into your homes or say a greeting to him.

- **But now I am writing you to quit mixing in company with anyone called a brother that is a fornicator or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner, not even eating with such a man. (1 Corinthians 5:11)**
- **Everyone that pushes ahead and does not remain in the teaching of the Christ does not have God. He that does remain in this teaching is the one that has both the Father and the Son. (2 John 1:9)**
- **If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, never receive him into your homes or say a greeting to him. (2 John 1:10)**
- **Those who have been expelled may be received back into the congregation if they manifest sincere repentance.**
- **Now if anyone has caused sadness, he has saddened, not me, but all of you to an extent, not to be too harsh in what I say. (2 Corinthians 2:5)**
- **This rebuke given by the majority is sufficient for such a man. (2 Corinthians 2:6)**
- **So that, on the contrary now, you should kindly forgive and comfort him, that somehow such a man may not be swallowed up by his being overly sad. (2 Corinthians 2:7)**
- **Therefore I exhort you to confirm your love for him. (2 Corinthians 2:8)**
- **This also is a protection to the congregation, preventing it from being overreached by Satan in swinging from condoning wrongdoing to the other extreme, becoming harsh and unforgiving.**
- **Anything you kindly forgive anyone, I do too. In fact, as for me, whatever I have kindly forgiven, if I have kindly forgiven anything, it has been for your sakes in Christ's sight. (2 Corinthians 2:10)**
- **That we may not be overreached by Satan, for we are not**

ignorant of his designs. (**2 Corinthians 2:11**)

See Also DEMON POSSESSION

See Also SPIRITISM