

Lecture 12

John the Immerser

יוחנן המטביל

10 The question of the education of Yochanan, as the son of the priest,
is important one. It gives us insight into Yeshua's education as well. So
15 what then would Yochanan have learned? Luke gives us some ideas;

15 *Luk 1:6 And they were both righteous before God, walking
blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord.*

What does this teach us? This refers to Zechariah and Elizabeth: in
regards to Yochanan, it would refer to the this verse;

20 *Deu 6:7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and
shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk
by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*

25 This means what it says: John would have learned Torah from a
very early age. Remember our discussion on paper and the
expense of it. Yochanan would have memorized it. We all say how?
First of all memorization was approached in a different way than
we do it. We are saddled with chapters and verses: this is a very
30 poor system to memorize – it's great for referral and citation, but
not memory. Most of us when we read the Torah, we read it based
upon the chapters and verses. We just accept the parshah names
as a Jewish oddity: something that is Jewish and so it is something
that we do and say without understanding. What they are is the
chapter titles of a book. The sections if you look at them are
35 broken down as to different subjects in that parshah. This is again
a memory device, these memory device permeate all of Jewish
learning. This is something that most do not understand, how to
memorize. I am just now beginning to understand how. It is clear
40 from the various books that I have read¹. It is clear that from early
age both Yeshua and Yochanan would have known the Torah
totally by memory as well as much of the Tanach if not all of it.
The first book to be memorized was Leviticus, then the rest of the
Torah. The Psalms would have been memorized from as well from
45 an early age for these songs that were sung at the time of the
festivals.

*Mat 3:1-3 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the
wilderness of Judea, (2) "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is
at hand." (3) For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet*

¹ Life Times of Jesus the Messiah by Alfred Edersheim book 2 chapters 9 and 10

5 *Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'"*

 In Lecture 10 we just briefly look at this with greater focus on Yeshua
 but now let us look at it from the perspective of John's activity. The
10 word for preach here is κηρυσσω meaning to be a herald; this was an
 official office in a community. So with this word Matthew tells us that
 John is filling officially an office appointed by Hashem, not that his
 message is different then that of Yeshua.

15 *Mar 1:14-15 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into
 Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, (15) and saying, "The
 time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and
 believe in the gospel."*

20 John tells it is at hand; Yeshua tell us is it fulfilled: the key point that
 both agree on is "Repent". There is a clear call for a change of life. The
 message to accept Yeshua as Messiah came in Acts 2 with acceptance of
 Yeshua as Messiah the people cry out and say;

25 *Act 2:37-39 Now when they heard this they were cut to the
 heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers,
 what shall we do?" (38) And Peter said to them, "Repent and be
 baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the
 forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy
30 Spirit. (39) For the promise is for you and for your children
 and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God
 calls to himself."*

 Notice in verse 38 Peter leads his response to the question of the "What
35 shall we do?" with repent. The message is consistent throughout, that
 repentance is the key step after acceptance of the Kingdom of God. To
 deny repentance is to deny the purpose of Yeshua's death and
 resurrection. To deny the part of repentance is to deny the justice of God
 and his Judgments of God.

40 The next question is what is *The Kingdom of Heaven* or *The Kingdom
 of God*? First let us be clear that these terms mean the same thing and
 should not be seen as something different. What then is it that's so many
 scholars have written whole books about it.

45 *The Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God is a dominant
 theme throughout the Gospels. As noted above, Matthew alone
 uses both the designation "Kingdom of Heaven," where
 ουρανων~ (ouranos, "heaven") represents the common Hebrew
50 circumlocution שָׁמַיִם (shamaim) for the divine name, and the
 phrase "kingdom of God." That the kingdom theme is dominant
 in the Synoptics is evident from the repeated use of the term itself
 (basileia, basileia): Matthew, 55x; Mark, 20x; Luke, 45x. John
 only uses the term 5x in his gospel. The "Kingdom of God"
55 continues as a dominant theme in Luke's second volume (Acts),*

5 where the opening verses refer to it, and the book concludes with
the notice regarding Paul that he continued “preaching the
kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Yeshua
Messiah with all openness, unhindered.” In the Pauline epistles,
10 the kingdom theme continues (14x), while the remainder of the
epistles use the term “kingdom” in reference to God’s rule 10x.
Beyond the explicit use of the term “kingdom” with its various
added descriptive terms, the concept of the reign of God is also
implicit in many other contexts and in the overall message of the
Apostles.²

15 The core elements of this are that Yeshua dies for our sins, he rose
from the dead, and the wages of sin is death so repent. The name
Kingdom of Heaven/God implies by its very nature the rulership of God
and adherence to his commands. The denial of the Law of God is the
20 Denial of God’s Kingdom in the world and in our lives. To accept his
rulership is to accept his Laws and His commands. The Church’s Denial
of this obligation is a clear denial of the Kingdom of God. Any
organization that teaches against the commands of Hashem is not of the
Kingdom of God.

25 *Dan 7:25 He shall speak words against the Most High, and
shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to
change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his
hand for a time, times, and half a time.*

30 The word for Law here is in Aramaic and is ܢܪ which refers to religious
law in particular³ Here we see Daniel saying that there will be a time
when a power will think to change laws of God and the Times of God
refer to here in the text, meaning “a holy time, feast”⁴. The cry of our
35 community must be as the cry of the community apostles;

- “Repent from what was their hypocrisy”⁵: our message “Repent
from your own hypocrisy”
- Their Message “Repent from Disobedience.” This is also our
40 Message
- Their Message “Repent from being unwilling to follow God as
you know you should”. This also our message.

45 Those communities that speak of the grace of God as doing away with
Torah hide the truth of God’s wrath. They portray God as a Teddy Bear,
instead of a God who would take his own Son to the execution stake;
instead of a God of Judgment as well as a God of Mercy. Today as
Yochanan stood, so we also must stand. We also are among a generation

² Hegg pg 84

³ A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament by Holladay pg
403

⁴ Ibid 404

⁵ Hegg Lecture Notes on the Kingdom of God

5 that has absolved itself of obedience to God. Today we again begin the call back to obedience -- to return to fullness of the Kingdom of God. Each of us in our communities -- in our words and deeds -- have Joined with Yochanan in His cry;

'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'"

10 Here we as Yochanan cried for preparation we must also cry for preparation, for the day of the wrath of God is near. We ask people everywhere to prepare themselves for that Day of Judgment.

15 *Dan 12:1-2 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince who standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. (2) And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to reproaches and everlasting abhorrence.*⁶

Here is the Judgments of God the *everlasting life, reproaches and everlasting abhorrence*. How we make the path straight is by making the judgment clear by giving people a clear choice between obedience and disobedience. Churches are uncomfortable with us because we bring home the fact they also must be obedient to stand in the Kingdom of Life. We make the synagogue uncomfortable because we remind them that Messiah has come and that they too must answer the call. We make the world uncomfortable because good is not enough; we remind them that God also requires allegiance **clearly stated** and **lived**. We stand against those that say let us agree to disagree because truth is relative and individual. We cry out and say our God is a not a God of relatives but of absolutes that are clearly defined in his revelation of the Word of God. We reject men's attempt to impose upon us their dogma, their understanding and their denial of the absolutes of our God and/or his Son Messiah our King Yeshua. We reject all dismissals; we reject the belittling of the Word of God and its commands and we reject those that reject the Messiah for we proclaim the fully sufficient revelation of our God. This call to people to make the path straight by preparing their lives -- so too is it our calling.

45 *Mat 3:4-5 Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. (5) Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him,*

We do not need to wear camel's hair to be different: we need to keep Torah and we will be seen as different because we eat Kosher, we dress modestly and have different holy days. People came to see Yochanan as a curiosity: it is the same today. People come and talk to those who know the Hebrew roots of faith. They love the Jewish people. They like things that are Jewish, so long as they can still go to church on Sunday and keep

⁶ OLD JPS

5 Christmas and Easter because they are saved by the blood of Jesus. How
can they make the blood of Yeshua as some cover up for their sin and
unwillingness to repent? Is the blood of Jesus for covering or for
cleaning? Is the blood of our Yeshua for covering or for cleaning? We
10 know the answer "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" We
know that the time is now, that the kingdom is near and fulfillment of
prophecy are at hand. There are Jewish people who keep the Torah and
accept Yeshua and feel the call to teach and instruct. These Jews and
these Gentiles will tell you that the blood of Jesus cleans not, that it just
15 covers. This is demonstrated by a life of obedience. The most important
about the time John is that they were looking for the Messiah. Just as
today people are looking.

*Mat 3:6-8 and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan,
confessing their sins.*

20 We have discussed baptism and what it means. Yet what did it mean to
confess your sins at that time?

25 *Lev 26:40-42 "But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity
of their fathers in their treachery that they committed against
me, and also in walking contrary to me, (41) so that I walked
contrary to them and brought them into the land of their
enemies--if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled and they
30 make amends for their iniquity, (42) then I will remember my
covenant with Jacob, and I will remember my covenant with
Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the
land.*

35 *Num 5:7 he shall confess his sin that he has committed. And he
shall make full restitution for his wrong, adding a fifth to it and
giving it to him to whom he did the wrong.*

*Pro 28:13 Whoever conceals his transgressions will not
prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain
40 mercy.*

Confession of sin is something that we all must do, especially in
leadership; it means a public sin requires public ownership of sin or
confession. A sin against someone else means private confession to the
person. Confession of sin against Hashem means a confession to Hashem
45 if publically done or if privately done. If we look in the scriptures we see
that David owned his public sin in I Sam 12. Throughout the Torah this
is always the case. The purpose of the confession was that Yochanan and
his two disciples would witness and hold you accountable to the behavior
you are attesting to. The final personal question is who has the sin
50 offended and that individual or community must receive the confession.
Confession is fundamental to repentance.