

הָאֲזִינוּ

Ha'azinu

(give ear)

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 32:1-52

הַבְּרִית הַחֲדָשָׁה

HaB'rit HaChadashah

(the new covenant)

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:2-15

We have chosen this passage from the Brit because it reminds us of the song of Moshe which is a warning to His people; likewise, Yochanan (Yochanan (John)) came as forerunner of Mashiach to warn His people.

Yochanan In Prison

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:2

Now when Yochanan heard in the prison the works of the Mashiach, he sent by his disciples

Yochanan (John) had been arrested by Herod and thrown in prison for speaking out against the marriage relationship between him and his brother's wife. Apparently, while in prison, Herod was treating Yochanan with some dignity as he was allowed to have his talmidim to minister to his needs. They would tell Yochanan about the news of what was happening in Israel with his cousin, Yeshua, and all the miraculous works that He was doing. It was the hearing of all these wonderful works that Yochanan sent some of his talmidim to Yeshua to inquire from Him.

The Inquiry

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:3

and said to Him, "Are You He that comes, or should we look for another?"

Many misunderstand the nature of Yochanan's question to Yeshua. Many today wrongly believe that Yochanan had doubts as to who Yeshua was. But this is not the nature of, nor the context of, his question to Yeshua at all. When Yochanan asked if they should look for another he was seeking information about a particular line of understanding concerning prophecy. In that day and time it was generally understood that there would be several messiahs. What Yochanan was simply asking was if Yeshua was the only one, or where there to be more to come.

Here are some of the Mashiachs that have been taught that were to come.

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 18:15

"YHWH your Elohim will raise up to you a prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, like me; to Him you shall shema;"

This messiah was to be like Moshe and became known as Mashiach ben Moshe.

B'reshit [Genesis] 49:22-24

22 ***"Yoseph is a fruitful bough,
A fruitful bough by a fountain;
His branches run over the wall.***

23 ***The archers have sorely grieved him,
And shot at him, and persecuted him:***

24 ***But his bow abode in strength,
And the arms of his hands were made strong,
By the hands of the Mighty One of Jacob,
From there is the shepherd, the stone of Israel,"***

This messiah was to be like Yoseph and became known as the Mashiach ben Yoseph.

Yeshayah [Isaiah] 11:1

"And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Yesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit."

This messiah was to be like or from the house of David and became known as Mashiach ben David. These first three listed are the most commonly known, but are certainly in no way the only ones seen or taught that were to come. Here are some others.

Dani'el 7:13

I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like the son of man, and He came even to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.

This messiah was known as the Mashiach ben Adam.

Zechariah [Zechariah] 3:8

“Hear now, Yehoshua the high priest, you and your fellows that sit before you; for they are men that are a sign; for, behold, I will bring forth My servant the Branch.”

This messiah was known as the Mashiach ben Yehoshua (Joshua).

There are at two others, which currently slip my mind. But I think that you can now see the context of what Yochanan was asking Yeshua. He was asking are there many messiahs as some teach? Or, is there only one messiah as others teach?

The Evidence

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:4-5

4 And Yeshua answered and said to them, “Go and tell Yochanan (John) the things which you hear and see;”

5 “the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them.”

There are numerous passages that give us indication of what Mashiach was to do when He came as an indicator of who He was. Here are two of them.

Yeshayah [Isaiah] 29:18

And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.

Tehillim [Psalm] 72:12

***For He will deliver the needy when He cries out,
And the poor, that has no helper.***

And of course, we would also need to include much of Yeshayah (Isaiah) 61, particularly the first three verses.

Yeshayah [Isaiah] 61:1

1 The Spirit of Adonai YHWH is upon Me; because YHWH has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the meek; He has sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 to proclaim the year of YHWH's favor, and the day of vengeance of our Elohim; to comfort all that mourn;

3 to appoint to them that mourn in Tzion, to give to them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of YHWH, that He may be glorified.

Stumbling on Mashiach

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:6

“And blessed is he, whosoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me.”

There were many, even then, who could not open their eyes and see Him for who and what He was. They stumbled over Him.

Romans 9:32-33

32 Therefore because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by works, they stumbled at the stone of stumbling;

33 even as it is written,

Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence;

And he that believeth on Him shall not be put to shame.

This is taken from Yeshayah.

Yeshayah [Isaiah] 28:16

Therefore thus says Adonai YHWH, “Behold, I lay in Tzion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone of sure foundation; He that believes shall not be in haste.”

We can come to Yeshua our Mashiach now and be broken and allow Him to give us His life. We fall on Him. Or, on the Day of Judgment, He will fall on those who have not been broken and they will be ground into dust.

A Reed Shaken

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:7

And as these went their way, Yeshua began to say to the multitudes concerning Yochanan (John), "What did you go out into the wilderness to behold? A reed shaken with the wind?"

It is interesting how Yeshua draws these people's attention to certain messages in Scripture. Notice this passage of Scripture.

Melakim Aleph [1st Kings] 14:15

For YHWH will smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and He will root up Israel out of this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River, because they have made their Asherim, provoking YHWH to anger.

Yeshua was directing them to consider the need for repentance.

A Man in Soft Clothing

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:8

"But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft raiment are in king's houses."

In a great contrast to how Yochanan was dressed, Yeshua draws attention to Yochanan's clothing to point at another individual in Scripture.

Melakim Bet [2nd Kings] 1:8

And they answered him, "He was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins." And he said, "It is Eliyah the Tishbite."

He is leading the people to see and understand Scripture and what is happening in their day, if they will have proper hearing.

More Than a Prophet

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:9

"But why did you do out? To see a prophet? Yea, I say to you, and much more than a prophet."

It had been quite a while since YHWH had sent a prophet into Israel. Now, suddenly the silence was broken and there was a word from YHWH in the land once again. But Yeshua is telling those who would listen, that this man, Yochanan, was much more than just a prophet.

Messenger of YHWH

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:10

***“This is he, of whom it is written,
‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
Who shall prepare your way before You.’”***

Yeshua then refers to a prophecy from Malachi.

Malachi 3:1

“Behold, I send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and YHWH, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, behold, He comes,” says YHWH Tzava’ot.

While in this particular verse the messenger is not named, this same messenger is named in the next chapter.

Malachi 4:5

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of YHWH comes.”

We must be careful to understand this prophecy properly. There is the great day of YHWH in which Yeshua came and purchased salvation for His people with the shedding of His blood. Then there will be the terrible day of YHWH in which He will judge those outside and those who are unrepentant. This passage seems to be saying that Elijah will come before both of these days. It is quite possible that Elijah will appear again. However, while there are many alive today who are now claiming to be Elijah who is to come, when Elijah came the second time right before Mashiach Yeshua came the first time, he did not bear the name of Elijah. Furthermore, when asked if he was Elijah, he denied it. Please be careful of those who are claiming to be Elijah.

Born of Women

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:11

“Amein, I say to you, among them that come forth born of women there has not arisen one greater than Yochanan the immerser; yet he that is but least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

Yeshua teaches us that of all those born of a woman, there is none greater than Yochanan. Many question what Yeshua was saying here in relation to Himself. Surely Yeshua was greater than Yochanan, wasn't He? Please consider this passage.

Luqa [Luke] 1:35

And in reply, the malach said to her, "The Ruach HaQodesh will come upon you and the gevurah of El Elyon will overshadow you. Therefore, also, the one being born will be called HaQadosh, Ben HaElohim."

Please note that it was not only the Ruach (Spirit) that was involved in the conception of Yeshua, but the gevurah (strength or power) of El Elyon as well. So what we see, is that not only were the masculine qualities (El Elyon) of Elohim involved with this bringing of Yeshua into the flesh, but also the feminine qualities as well (Ruach). The importance of this then can be seen in the previous passage in that Miriam did not contribute to His humanity, but was simply a surrogate mother. But make no mistake about it, Yeshua our Mashiach was as human as we are, only He was without sin.

By Force

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:12

"And from the days of Yochanan the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and men of violence take it by force."

Here is a translation of this same verse from the Hebrew Peshitta.

"And from the days of Yochanan HaMatbil and until now the kingdom of heaven potentially has been taken and the strong kidnapped her."

The basic idea here seems to be to be taken by force as in an act of war when a raiding army plunders a city. This same concept is found in this passage.

Matithyah [Matthew] 7:15

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves."

Wolves are violent, strong and powerful animals. They work best in packs. What we need to understand is that there are many in this world that would dearly love to take you captive and make you every bit as wicked and evil on the inside as they are. And if that cannot be done, then they will settle for whatever they can steal and plunder from you.

Yochanan [John] 10:10

“The thief cometh not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.”

Satan will break into or force his way into our lives in any way that he can. But we do not need to allow this in the least.

Yochanan Aleph [1st John] 4:4

You are of Elohim, my little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.

Let us walk in the strength of His might and then we can and will walk in victory in this world.

From Then till Now

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:13

“For all the prophets and the Torah prophesied until Yochanan (John).”

YHWH sent many prophets into this world and to His people. The Torah itself even prophesies many things concerning His people, if we would just simply listen and obey – shema.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 1:1

Elohim, having of old time spoken to the fathers in the prophets in various portions and in various manners,

We need to learn the importance of truly listening to and obeying the word of YHWH! If we can do this, He will surely bless us and He will make us His people.

Elijah

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:14

“And if you are willing to receive it, this is Elijah, that is to come.”

There has been much written about this passage discussing what Yeshua meant; this one along with this next passage.

Yochanan [John] 1:21

And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” And he says, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” And he answered, “No.”

They asked Yochanan two separate questions. First they wanted to know if he was Eliyah. His answer was that he was not Eliyah. The second question that they asked him was if he was the prophet like Moshe who was to come. Again, his answer was no.

Please take special note of exactly what Yeshua said about Eliyah. He said that Yochanan was the Eliyah that was to come. He did not say that Yochanan was the Eliyah that had come in the past and had come again. Rather, Yochanan was the Eliyah that was prophesied to come. Let us also consider the prophecy to which Yeshua was referring.

Malachi 3:1

“Behold, I send My messenger, and he shall prepare the way before Me; and the Adon, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the Messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, behold, He comes,” says YHWH Tzava’ot.

Please note that this passage is applied to Yochanan, but the messenger that is to come is not named in this passage. However, later on he is given a name and title.

Malachi 3:23 [in English Bibles 4:5]

“Behold, I will send you Eliyah the prophet before the great and terrible day of YHWH comes.”

Many suppose that this prophecy is actually referring to Eliyah the prophet who had already come before this time. However, this is probably not the case in the sense that the previous Eliyah would return. For, YHWH does not say that this future prophet known as Eliyah would return, but that he would come to them. What we should see is that this verse is actually referring back to verse one quoted above, in which this messenger would come and prepare the way for the Messenger who was coming right after him.

It was to this prophet and prophecy that Yeshua was referring, rather than to Eliyah the prophet who prophesied during the days of King Ahab. When we begin to see this subtle distinction, then all the difficulty goes away and we know that Yeshua was not teaching reincarnation, as some wrongly suppose.

Having Ears to Hear

Matithyah [Matthew] 11:15

“He that has ears to hear, let him hear.”

What does it mean to have ears to hear? One thing it is not referring to is the physical ability to hear. It is not referring to whether a person is deaf or not deaf. What this is referring to, is what happens when

we do hear something, particularly when we hear truth. What do we do about it? What do we do with that truth?

Devarim [Deuteronomy] 4:6

“Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, that shall hear all these statutes, and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’”

What makes us a wise and understanding people in the sight of the nations? It is when we hear, obey and do all the statutes of YHWH our Elohim! You have probably have already guessed that the Hebrew word for *hear* in this verse is *shema*, which means to hear and obey.

The word “shema” is a common word and theme in Scripture. This word occurs 1158 times in 1072 verses in the Tanak, of those 240 of them in 222 verses occur in the Torah Moshe. This is something that we truly need to understand and do. We need to shema His statutes, commandments, ordinances and especially His Voice! Doing so will show that we are a wise and understanding people. In contrast to this if we do not shema, then we will be seen as foolish.

ABBA YHWH, give us the wisdom, strength and insight that we might shema Your Voice in all matters, great and small, that You might receive glory and honor through us; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amen.

Shabbat Shalom

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