

Yochanan ~ Part 6

Yeshua and Nakdimon (Nakdimon) ~ Part 2

Picking up where we left off in our last post, **Yeshua** responds to **Nakdimon's** question: *How can a grown man be 'born'? Can he go back into his mother's womb and be born a second time?"*

3⁵ Yeshua answered, "Yes, indeed, I tell you that unless a person is born from water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.

Born from water and the Spirit. Immersion in water is associated with ritual cleansing of the body, while the **Ruach HaKodesh** empowers one to turn from sin and live a holy life; both speak to aspects of purification. This is why *"born from water"* does not mean ordinary human birth; moreover, since everyone is *"born from water"* in that sense, it would be silly for **Yeshua** to make a condition out of it with the word *"unless."*

6 What is born from the flesh is flesh, and what is born from the Spirit is spirit. 7 Stop being amazed at my telling you that you must be born again from above! 8 The wind blows where it wants to, and you hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it's going. That's how it is with everyone who has been born from the Spirit."

Yeshua asserted that the entrance into the **Kingdom of God** that **Nakdimon** desired could not be achieved by legalism or outward conformity. It requires an inner change. Membership in the **Kingdom of God** is not a prerogative of any particular race or culture, nor is it hereditary. It is given only by the direct act of **God**. The origin and the destination of the wind are unknown to the one who feels it and acknowledges its reality. Just so, the new life of one born of the **Ruach** is unexplainable by ordinary reasoning; and its outcome is unpredictable, though its actuality is undeniable.

9 Nakdimon replied, "How can this happen?" 10 Yeshua answered him, "You hold the office of teacher in Isra'el, and you don't know this?"

You hold the office of teacher in Israel, literally, **"You are the teacher of Israel."** The use of the definite article implies that the position was uniquely important, although it is difficult to reconstruct precisely what it was.

11 Yes, indeed! I tell you that what we speak about, we know; and what we give evidence of, we have seen; but you people don't accept our evidence!

No doubt **Nakdimon** thought **Yeshua** to be presumptuous when he said, *"We speak of about what we know."* **Yeshua** spoke with an air of authority. However, though the **P'rushim** spoke with a humanly imposed authority, **Yeshua** spoke with an inherent authority.

12 If you people don't believe me when I tell you about the things of the world, how will you believe me when I tell you about the things of heaven? 13 No one has gone up into heaven; there is only the one who has come down from heaven, the Son of Man.

The *things of the world* **Yeshua** alluded to were probably the phenomena he used for illustrations, such as the wind. If **Nakdimon** couldn't grasp the meaning of spiritual truth as conveyed by concrete analogy, how would he do so if it were couched in an abstract statement? No one had ever entered heaven to experience its realities directly except **Yeshua** himself, the **Son of Man**, who had come from heaven. Revelation, not discovery, is the basis for faith.

14 Just as Moshe lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 15 so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life.

Just as the **Israelites** were saved from the plague of serpents when they gazed on the **brass serpent** raised by **Moshe** (Numbers 21:6–9), so all people are saved from eternal death, torment, and separation from **God** by gazing with spiritual eyes on the person of the **Messiah Yeshua** “**lifted up**” in death on the execution stake.

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed.

This, perhaps, is the most famous and most quoted verse in the **Brit Hadashah**, epitomizing the truth of **God** that has come to **Jews** and **Gentiles** alike in **Yeshua the Messiah**. It teaches that (1) **God** loves His creation, the world; (2) to love is to give, to love much is to give much, and **God** loves the world so much that He gave what is most precious to Him; (3) **Yeshua** was fully aware in advance that He would die as **God's** own sacrifice; (4) **Yeshua** knew that He was uniquely **God's** son; (5) the destiny of man when he relies on himself and does not trust in **Yeshua** is total destruction - not cessation of conscious existence, but the eternal suffering that is the inevitable consequence of sin; and (6) the destiny of an individual who trusts in **Yeshua** is everlasting life - not only in the future but right now - not just survival beyond the grave, which everyone has (5:28–29; Rev. 20:4–5, 12–15), but positive life “in” **Yeshua** (1:4, 11:25–26). Trusting in **Yeshua** is not mere intellectual acknowledgment but adherence to, commitment to, trust in, faith in, reliance upon **Yeshua** as fully human, completely identified with us, and at the same time fully divine, completely identified with **God**.

17 For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but rather so that through him, the world might be saved.

The world is subject to condemnation and, in the end, will have its sinfulness condemned. But **Yeshua's** first coming was not for that purpose. In the **Day of Judgment**, He will be the Judge who condemns the world (see Yochanan 5:27).

18 Those who trust in Him are not judged; those who do not trust have been judged already, in that they have not trusted in the one who is God's only and unique Son.

Those who do not trust. Clearly, those who, upon hearing the **Good News** and understanding it, nevertheless refuse to trust are judged already. But what about those who have never heard of **Yeshua**, or who have heard but not understood?

19 "Now this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, but people loved the darkness rather than the light. Why? Because their actions were wicked. 20 For everyone who does evil things hates the light and avoids it, so that his actions won't be exposed. 21 But everyone who does what is true comes to the light, so that all may see that his actions are accomplished through God."

This passage echoes Isaiah 59:2, “***Your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.***”¹

In our next post, we will continue to explore the **Gospel of Yochanan**.

¹ Yochanan 3:5-19.