

Yochanan ~ Part 7

Yeshua and Nakdimon (Nicodemus) ~ Part 3

3¹⁹ "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."*

2² After this, Yeshua and His talmidim went out into the countryside of Y'udah, where he stayed awhile with them and immersed people. ²³ Yochanan too was immersing at Einayim, near Shalem, because there was plenty of water there; and people kept coming to be immersed. ²⁴ (This was before Yochanan's imprisonment.)

Einayim. The **Greek** text has "**Anion,**" possibly a corruption of **Hebrew Einayim** ("Two Springs"); its location is uncertain but is thought to be in the eastern hills of **Shomron** (Samaria).

2⁵ A discussion arose between some of Yochanan's talmidim and a Judean about ceremonial washing; ²⁶ and they came to Yochanan and said to him, "Rabbi, you know the man who was with you on the other side of the Yarden, the one you spoke about? Well, here he is, immersing, and everyone is going to him!"

The argument between a **Jewish** inquirer and *Yochanan's talmidim* suggests there was confusion about the respective merits of **Yeshua** and **Yochanan**. If both were baptizing, whose baptism was valid? By popular acclaim, **Yeshua's** influence was growing, and **Yochanan's** was waning. **Yochanan's** interrogators felt that their friend and teacher had been eclipsed by **Yeshua's** sudden popularity, and they wanted an explanation.

2⁷ Yochanan answered, "No one can receive anything unless it has been given to him from Heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves can confirm that I did not say I was the Messiah, but that I have been sent ahead of Him. ²⁹ The bridegroom is the one who has the bride; but the bridegroom's friend, who stands and listens to him, is overjoyed at the sound of the bridegroom's voice. So, this joy of mine is now complete. ³⁰ He must become more important, while I become less important.

Yochanan showed no jealousy whatever; on the contrary, he reaffirmed his subordinate position. He would not claim for himself final authority but avowed that he had been sent in preparation for the **Messiah**.

Just how far the simile of **bride** and **bridegroom** should be pressed is questionable. Should the **bride** represent **Isra'el**, to whom the **Messiah** came, or the church? The imagery is applied to both (cf. Hosea 2:19–20; Ephesians 5:32), but the focus of this passage is on the **bridegroom** rather than the **bride**. The emphasis is on the relationship between **Yeshua** and **Yochanan** rather than on the relationship between **Yeshua** and **Isra'el** or the church. The extent to which this explanation of the relationship between **Yochanan the Baptist** and **Yeshua** was prompted by later conditions in the church is not stated. Adherents to **Yochanan's** preaching and baptism certainly existed in the middle of the first century and were widespread.

3¹ "He who comes from above is above all. He who is from the earth is from the earth and talks from an earthly point of view; he who comes from heaven is above all. ³² He testifies about what he has actually seen and heard, yet no one accepts what he says! ³³ Whoever does accept what he says puts his seal on the fact that God is true, ³⁴ because the one whom God sent speaks God's

words. For God does not give him the Spirit in limited degree - ³⁵ the Father loves the Son and has put everything in his hands. ³⁶ Whoever trusts in the Son has eternal life. But whoever disobeys the Son will not see that life but remains subject to God's wrath." ¹

Yochanan the Immerser closes with an either-or challenge, still applicable to every **Jew** and every **Gentile**: trust in **Yeshua** and have eternal life or disobey Him and experience God's wrath.

In your public interactions, be attentive to how you reflect the light of **Yeshua** in your actions and words. If you find yourself in conversations filled with cynicism or judgment, intentionally steer the conversation toward hope and redemption. Use illustrations from **Yochanan** 3:19-36 that showcase the importance of making choices that align with **God's** light. By modeling positivity and encouraging grace in interactions, you become a vessel of **God's** love, inviting others to explore faith through your example.

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

¹ Yochanan 3:19 - 36.