

Matthew Lesson 15

Over the past few weeks, we have seen Matthew masterfully unfold the truth to the Jewish people and all who would listen, that Yeshua is the long awaited Messiah. Yeshua has performed the prophecies foretold in the Tanach about the Messiah. Even the blind men called Him the Son of David, a Messianic title.

Today Matthew turns our attention toward the disciples of Yeshua. He calls a group that will be very close to Him. We can look back and see that not all who were called decided that they were willing to give up what was necessary to wholly be called a disciple. The rich young ruler and the man who decided he had to bury his father both declined the invitation. Why would anyone do this?

When one was called to be a follower of a certain rabbi, they were giving themselves wholly to follow the rabbi in a concerted apprenticeship.

This time with the rabbi was not about filling a person's head with knowledge as the Greeks goal was, but to **transform your life**. You were going to live so closely with your rabbi that you would observe the lessons he was teaching you. You would not just see information on a blackboard. This was NOT about head knowledge, but about a **transformation of how you think and behave and live**.

From this we see how very seriousness following Yeshua was, because His primary purpose as Messiah, was to establish the kingdom of G-d on earth.

These disciples then, were to proclaim the kingdom and to manifest the power of the kingdom wherever they went. Why? Because this is what their Rabbi, our Messiah, did. This is what He was showing them with His very life.

This brings up the word Chibur. **Chibur** comes from the word **chaver** meaning friend. Friends hang out together, they like being around each other, they have things in common, they hopefully trust one another. You have a relationship with a friend. From this word and beginning with this understanding, comes the word Chibur. Chibur takes us to another level with G-d and with people.

A person pursuing righteousness pursues this kind of fellowship with G-d.

Chibur is an internal relationship with G-d that makes our joy complete.

Chibur is intimacy with G-d that eliminates the need for external things or positions to make us joyful.

Chibur is not a casual relationship.

Noah is an example of living out Chibur.

Chibur wasn't in his building of the ark. He obeyed G-d in doing that.

But he came out of the ark to a world without other people, without animals - to a world that had been devastated.

What did Noah do? He built an altar and thanked G-d.

Noah brought the praise of G-d into the earth!

Chibur is not at all focused on us - on you or me. It puts our focus entirely on G-d and His goodness.

This is one aspect of Chibur.

****How are we bringing chibur into our circumstances?**

Now Yeshua will begin to teach His talmidim about their roles.

The things a talmid (student) studied were not to make him prideful about what he knew, but rather, this student was to go out (become a sheliach) and make new students - passing on the way of life he had learned from his rabbi.

A sheliach is like an emissary, equal to the one sending him. That is a big statement.

Yeshua sees these disciples' mission as important as His mission.

1. How does this affect the way you think of being a disciple of Yeshua?

Let's see what Yeshua specifically directed the disciples to do....



Matthew 10:5-8 These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

What was the primary focus of these 12 to be? They were to specifically minister to the lost sheep of Israel. We know that the Sermon on the Mount was taught by Yeshua in an area where many Gentiles lives. We know that He had spoken highly of the Gentile, centurion's faith as being even greater than any He had found in Israel; He had gone to the Gergesenes, a mainly Gentile area and they begged Him to leave.

We know that **John 3:16** tells us that G-d so loved the world that He gave His only Son,.....we see clearly that Yeshua is not against Gentiles,

but He wants the focus of these 12 to be on letting Israel know that the One they had been awaiting and longing for had come just as He said.

Could G-d have evangelized the world by Himself? Of course, but this shows us how much **He trusts us and desires to partner with us.**

This shows us how critical CHIBUR is.

As the **closer we are to Him**, the more we love Him and hear His voice and lay our lives down for Him,

The more **our passion will be to establish His kingdom on earth.**

2. Did this strategy for these 12 **to concentrate on taking the gospel to the Jewish people work?** Beginning with those 12 men, the gospel has spread around the globe, and continues to, as here we sit today Loving the Jewish Messiah, and now we are the disciples.

How seriously are we taking our role?

Matthew 10:9-15 Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. As you enter the house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

These verses show us a total picture of the Gentiles in Gergesenes who were **only interested in their livelihoods.**

They were **not interested in the peace and deliverance** Yeshua could bring. They had not been waiting for the Messiah!

He is asking them to **apply the prayer** He had taught them - Give us this day our daily bread.....to remember that our Father knows what we need before we ask Him.

Was he saying they should not work? Of course not, but money is not to be their first priority. We know for instance, that Rabbi Shaul was a tent maker.

They are to be ones who trust G-d to provide. And when they came upon people who were not interested in the message, He tells them, just shake the dust off and leave.

He showed them how to do this in Gergesenes. When not wanted, He left.

Remember we are not to argue about our faith, we are to live it.

Matthew 10:16-19,22,25 Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given you in that hour what you should speak.

Notice why G-d is allowing this:

It is for His sake that they would be a testimony to kings and governors and Gentiles when they were delivered up and scourged.

2. What could this be telling us about the days ahead? How are we to view difficulties when taking the Good News out?

Matthew 10:23-26 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household! Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.

2. What could this be telling us about the days ahead? How are we to view difficulties when taking the Good News out?

But they called Yeshua, "Beelzebub."

Beelzebub means lord of the flies or lord of dung and is associated with pagan gods.



3. With these statements what is Yeshua trying to get the disciples to understand? What is the message for us?

As we endure these injustices and lies, we will be **confirming our faith in who Yeshua is to us.**

We are **not to fear the people** that will do these things.

We will put our **faith in the One whose truth will prevail and who can raise up body and soul even from the dead.**

There is a famous rabbi in the history of Israel named Rabbi Akivah. He was the rabbi of 24,000 students, and he taught that honoring one another was the greatest thing they could do. However, they did not, and all 24,000 of them, minus five, died in a plague.

Later, Rabbi Akivah also died as a martyr when he refused to stop teaching Torah. There is more than one account of Rabbi Akivah's final words as he was being martyred, but the one that sums his words up states:

".....I rejoice at the opportunity now given to me to love my God 'with all my life,' seeing that I have hitherto been able to love Him only 'with all my means' and 'with all my might,'" and began reciting the Shema, with the word "[G-d is] One!" he expired.

A later student of Rabbi Akivah, Rabbi Eleazar Ben Shamua, who helps define for us the importance of kavod. He teaches, "The dignity (*kevod*) of your student should be as precious to you as your own; the dignity (*kevod*) of your colleague should be as precious to you as your reverence for your teacher; your reverence for your teacher should be as great as your reverence for God" (Pirkei Avot 4:15). Taking this lesson to heart in the context of the *sefirah*, may we dedicate ourselves to discourse with honor for each other, thereby giving honor to the Torah and to God. (Rabbi Michael Singer)

Matthew 10:31-33 So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father in heaven....

4. Are we willing to stand for Yeshua even when it is unpopular and people around us are hurling lies and insults?

Yeshua answers this question and makes the answer for us easy....

Matthew 10: 39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.

5. From this verse, what is Yeshua's perspective on our physical life?

6. Would you say there is a difference between a believer and a disciple from the information we have gone over in chapter 10?

Matthew 10:40 He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.

Yeshua reviews the concept that the disciple is equal to his teacher saying, he who receives you receives me, and He re-emphasizes this concept he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me -

Saying if you receive Me you are receiving My Father, G-d, who sent Me.

And He notes that He sees the smallest kindness and there will be reward for those kindnesses.

We can all do kindnesses!

Matthew 11:2,3 And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, Are You the Come One, or do we look for another?

How do we know that John ever really believed that Yeshua was the Messiah?

John 1:23-29 John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, Make straight the way for the Lord. Now the Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet? I baptize with water, John replied, but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. This all happened at The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

We can learn from John that persecution and imprisonment can affect your faith. **What do we do to guard our faith if we ever go through times that John the Baptizer is experiencing?

I Chronicles 16:11 Seek the Lord and His strength;

This again is Chibur! **Seek is the word darash - to ask, to seek diligently to study repeatedly**

Never stop wanting to know Him more intimately.

You want to hear His secrets.

You have a constant yearning and you are searching to know Him, to know His heart, and to please Him,

Daniel is an example for us in how to face difficult times.

Daniel 1:6 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank;

Before the issue ever presented itself, **Daniel had purposed** in his heart not to go against G-d's ways.

Other ways to say this: Daniel gave his heart an assignment. He charged his heart. He established in his heart what he would do before the situation presented itself. He impressed his heart.

He gave orders to his heart. He surely set his heart, so he would not be moved.

5. Can you do this with a casual relationship? If we have a "chibur" relationship with the Lord, we will be able to purpose in our hearts, because our love is overwhelming for Him. Then our chibur relationship will override hard times, and we will purpose in our hearts, regardless of hard times.

Matthew 11: 16-18 But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions, and saying: **We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not lament.** For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He has a demon. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners! But wisdom is justified by her children.

In the cases when the **flute was played - people should have danced with joy.** **When mourning occurred, people should have wept.**

But these people did not respond normally. They saw and heard all that Yeshua did, but they did not proclaim Him to be the Messiah.

They did not react to the scriptures and the sureness of what they were seeing with rejoicing that the Messiah had arrived.

****In spite of difficult times ahead, are we rejoicing that He is coming?**

****In spite of difficult times ahead, are we rejoicing that He is coming?**

Matthew 11:24 But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.

6. How would you rate the western world in terms of exposure to the message of the gospel and the availability of learning about and knowing Yeshua?

And as Yeshua is teaching about these judgments, He says:

Matthew 11:25-30 At that time Jesus answered and said, **"I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and**

prudent and have revealed them to babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

He is showing us the secret here of setting our hearts and purposing in our hearts.

In what ways are we encouraging each other, both today and for the days ahead?