

## The Red-Letter Words of Yeshua ~ Part 80

### Yeshua's Preparation of the Emissaries for the End ~ Part 2

In our last post, we began a new series on **Yeshua's Preparation of the Emissaries for the End**. In this post, we continue with His preparation.

#### Suffering Foretold

***<sup>21</sup> From that time on, Yeshua began making it clear to His talmidim that He had to go to Yerushalayim and endure much suffering at the hands of the elders, the head cohanim, and the Torah-teachers; and that He had to be put to death; but that on the third day, He had to be raised to life. <sup>22</sup> Kefa took Him aside and began rebuking him, "Heaven be merciful, Lord! By no means will this happen to you!"***

**Yeshua** teaches His **talmidim** what must happen to Him as Messiah and is completely misunderstood, both here and on two later occasions (Mattitayhu 17:22–23, 20:17–19), so different is His scenario from that popularly expected. Even at the Last Supper (Yochanan 14:28) and after His resurrection (Acts 1:6–7), they did not comprehend **God's** plan for the Messiah.

***<sup>23</sup> But Yeshua turned His back on Kefa, saying, "Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my path because your thinking is from a human perspective, not from God's perspective!" <sup>1</sup>***

When **Yeshua** says, "Get behind me, **Satan!**" He could be talking to Satan, conceived of as speaking through **Kefa**; if so, **Yeshua** is telling **Satan** not to be an obstacle to him but to get behind him, out of the way. Or **Yeshua** could be addressing **Kefa**; it could refer to **Peter** as an adversary who is opposing **Yeshua** so that **Yeshua** is saying: "**Bo acharai,**" (come after me), and see that the things I have predicted for Myself will indeed happen, contrary to what you are saying and that this will be for the benefit of all concerned. This interpretation is based on the fact that Hebrew **achar** means both "behind" and "after" or "following," with the implication that the translator of the incident into Greek misunderstood it. The context certainly does not support an interpretation I occasionally hear that **Yeshua** is inviting **Satan** to become His follower (with the universalistic doctrinal implication that eventually, even Satan will be "saved").<sup>2</sup>

#### Take Up Your Cross

***<sup>24</sup> Then Yeshua told his talmidim, "If anyone wants to come after Me, let him say 'No' to himself, take up his execution-stake, and keep following Me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever wants to save his own life will destroy it, but whoever destroys his life for My sake will find it. <sup>26</sup> What good will it do someone if he gains the whole world but forfeits his life? Or, what can a person give in exchange for his life? <sup>27</sup> For the Son of Man will come in His Father's glory, with His angels; and then He will repay everyone according to his conduct. <sup>3</sup>***

**Yeshua's** great call to discipleship is His teaching on how to think the way **God** thinks (v. 23). Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German Lutheran theologian who was imprisoned in the Theresienstadt concentration camp and shot by the Nazis at age 39, days before the close of World War II, wrote in *The Cost of Discipleship* that there is no "cheap grace," no primrose path to Heaven. **Jews** have often thought Christianity to offer exactly that; some Christian theologies, emphasizing **God's work** and de-emphasizing man's in the salvation process, encourage this misunderstanding. This verse is the antidote. To follow **Yeshua** is to say no to oneself, not by

<sup>1</sup> Mattityahu 16:21–23 (see also Mark 8:31–33 & Luke 9:21–22).

<sup>2</sup> David H. Stern, Jewish New Testament Commentary.

<sup>3</sup> Mattityahu 16:24–27 (see also Mark 8:34–38 & Luke 9:21–26).

practicing asceticism or developing low self-esteem, but by placing the will above one's own feelings, desires, and urges. To take up one's execution-stake is to bear the instrument of one's death, for, as Bonhoeffer put it, "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die." The consequences of wholeheartedly taking this stand are given in vv. 25–26. <sup>4</sup>

## Kingdom Within Lifetime

***28 Yes! I tell you that there are some people standing here who will not experience death until they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom!"***<sup>5</sup>

Some of the **Twelve** standing there with **Yeshua** in **Caesarea Philippi** would live to see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom. This predicted event has been variously interpreted as referring to: (1) **Yeshua's Transfiguration** (17:1–8); (2) His resurrection; (3) the coming of the **Ruach** at **Shavuot**; (4) the spread of the Kingdom through the preaching of the early church; (5) the destruction of the **Temple** and **Yerushalayim** in 70 CE; or (6) the **Second Coming** and final establishment of the **Kingdom**. The immediate context indicates the first view, the **Transfiguration**, which immediately follows (see also Mark 9:2–10; Luke 9:28–36). There, "some" of **Yeshua's talmidim** "saw" what **Yeshua** will be like when he comes into the power of his Kingdom. This interpretation is also supported by 2 Kefa 1:16–18, where **Kefa** equates Yeshua's "glory" with His **Transfiguration**, to which **Kefa** was an eyewitness. At the same time, interpretations (2), (3), and (4) are also quite possible, for they are all instances where Yeshua "came" in the decisive advance of His **Kingdom**, which was partially but not yet fully realized. Some interpreters think that **Yeshua** generally speaks of many or all events in views (2) through (4). View (5) is less persuasive because the judgment on **Yerushalayim** does not reflect the positive growth of the Kingdom. View (6) is unacceptable, for it would imply that **Yeshua** was mistaken about the timing of His return.<sup>6</sup>

In our last post, we introduced our next topic on **Yeshua's Preparation of the Emissaries for the End**. In our next post, we continue to examine **Yeshua's Preparation of the Emissaries for the End** by looking at the **Transfiguration**.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Mattityahu 16:28 (see also Mark 9:1 & Luke 9:27).

<sup>6</sup> Crossway Bibles, The ESV Study Bible.