



## **Parasha Vayetze**

December 7, 2024

*Torah:* Genesis 28:10-32:2

*Haftarah:* Hosea 12:12-14:10

**See message notes [beitshalom.us](http://beitshalom.us) for parasha specific messages**

*Ketuvim Shlichim:* John 1:29-34

**Specific to today's message**

### Disciples of Yeshua 7

*Shabbat shalom mishpacha!* We continue today with our series Disciples of Yeshua, session 7. Who are the ones hearing it? They are *talmidim shel Yeshua*, Yeshua's disciples, who focus on the Hebraic content of Yeshua's message. The Prophet Hosea wrote: *6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Since you rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being My kohen. Since you forgot the Torah of your God, just so I will forget your children.* (Hosea 4:6 TLV). These words by ADONAI were the judgment of a group of priests who were not ministering His truth to the Israelites. Still, it has a very definite application in Yeshua's body today. We are admonished not to forget the *Torah* of our G-d. King Solomon wrote: *6 For Adonai gives wisdom. Out of His mouth comes knowledge and understanding.* (Proverbs 2:6 TLV). The words of the *Torah* and all of Scripture are the words of His mouth. As faithful disciples of Yeshua, we must diligently seek that knowledge and rightly divide it as *Sha'ul* told Timothy. (2 Timothy 2:15). We are today's ordinary *kohanim*, priests serving under our High Priest Yeshua, who have received spiritual ordination to teach the knowledge of Him. The body of Yeshua is perishing for the lack of knowledge, and we, His disciples and *kohanim*, are being called to be faithful.

As we concluded the message last *Shabbat*, we were speaking about *Yochanan HaMatbil*, John the Immerser. Today, we continue to explore the relationship between Yeshua, the Messiah, and His cousin John, the Elijah figure of that day. The Judean leaders sent out *Kohanim* and Levites to ask John, *19 "Who are you?"* (John 1:19b TLV). He answered, "I am not the Messiah." They asked: *21 "What then? Are you Elijah?"* ..... "I am not," said John. "Are you the Prophet?" "No," he answered. (John 1:21 TLV). They asked John three questions, and he gave them three answers. He said that he was not the Messiah, he was not Elijah, and he was not the Prophet. When he said he was not the Elijah figure, he didn't know that he was for that generation. But he knew that he was not the Messiah or the Prophet. Who is the Prophet? He is "the prophet like Moses" about whom Moses himself prophesied: *15 "Adonai your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your midst—from your brothers. To him you must listen."* (Deuteronomy 18:15 TLV). Under Rome's power, the people of Israel sought a deliverer, desperately seeking relief from their G-d. They didn't know it, but the Messiah and the Prophet were the same individual and Yeshua, the person filling these roles, would soon be standing before them. The people of Israel of the 1<sup>st</sup> century were closely examining the words of the prophets and hoping for the prophesied Messiah, for Elijah and the Prophet like Moses to come in their time.

They were chafing under Rome's rule and desperately sought a deliverer. When they heard that John was at the Jordan River immersing for repentance, they had to go and find out who this man was.

So, these *Kohanim* and Levites went to the Jordan River. There, they found John immersing people in *teshuvah*, repentance of sins. John cried out: 23 ... "*the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of Adonai,' as the prophet Isaiah said.*" (John 1:23b TLV). Speaking to the crowds, he said, 26 "*I immerse in water,*" .... "*Among you stands One you do not know, 27 coming after me, whose sandals I'm not worthy to untie.*" (John 1:26a-27 TLV). We are not explicitly told, but I believe that John personally knew his cousin Yeshua, the carpenter from Nazareth. He knew Him as a family member but not that He was the Messiah until ADONAI revealed it that day when he saw Yeshua coming to him at the Jordan River. 29 *The next day, John sees Yeshua coming to him and says, 'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is the One about whom I told you, 'He who comes after me is above me, because He was before me.'* 31 *I didn't know Him, but I came immersing with water so that He might be revealed to Israel.*" (John 1:29-31 TLV). The Holy Spirit had revealed to John that there was One coming after him, but he didn't know until ADONAI revealed it to him at that moment that it was his cousin Yeshua. He said: "I didn't know Him," meaning that he didn't know Yeshua was the Messiah. The next verse explains that John knew it just at that time: 32 *Then John testified, 'I have seen the Ruach coming down like a dove out of heaven, and it remained on Him. 33 I did not know Him; but the One who sent me to immerse in water said to me, 'The One on whom you see the Ruach coming down and remaining, this is the One who immerses in the Ruach ha-Kodesh. 34 And I have seen and testified that this is Ben-Elohim.'*" (John 1:32-34 TLV). John saw the Holy Spirit coming down on his cousin Yeshua, revealing Yeshua to him as *Ben Elohim*, the Son of G-d.

Matthew presents this event differently, giving details not revealed in the Gospel of John, 13 *Then Yeshua came from the Galilee to John, to be immersed by him in the Jordan. 14 But John tried to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be immersed by You, and You are coming to me?'* 15 *But Yeshua responded, 'Let it happen now, for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.'* So John yielded to Him. 16 *After being immersed, Yeshua rose up out of the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Ruach Elohim descending like a dove and coming upon Him. 17 And behold, a voice from the heavens said, 'This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased!'* (Matthew 3:13-17 TLV). I believe I would be correct in saying that this is the only place in Scripture where we see the actions of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit together. The Father spoke from heaven, sending down His Holy Spirit as a dove to land upon Yeshua standing in the water. Incidentally, Yeshua was in the water and John was on the bank. In Judaism, a person immerses themselves, which is also how we at *Beit Shalom* immerse. In their book *Understanding The Difficult Words Of Jesus*, David Bivin and Roy Blizzard show an ancient painting of Yeshua's immersion from about 400 CE that depicts Moses on the bank and Yeshua in the water.

It is very conceivable that it was a spiritual necessity for *Yochanan*, a *kohen* who was the Elijah of that day, to immerse Yeshua. In Jewish tradition, immersion was essential when changing one's status. For Yeshua, this represented a shift from his role as a carpenter in Nazareth to beginning his ministry as Messiah. Yeshua said: "*it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.*" He said: "For us." It was something that they were to do together. Yeshua's immersion was a sign of ADONAI's approval of Him and His anointing

for ministry. The act of *tevillah*, immersion, fulfilled all righteousness because it was an acknowledgment that Yeshua was willing to take on His role as Messiah and that John had done his part in bringing it about. The immersion that John proclaimed was an immersion of repentance, something Yeshua did not need. This could have been another reason why Yeshua said, “I want you to immerse me,” even though He had no need to repent.

Yeshua’s immersion also fulfilled the tradition of Jewish leaders being immersed before assuming a new role. We learn more about *tevillah*, immersion, when Yeshua taught Nicodemus. (John 3:1-12). He told him he needed to be immersed in a particular immersion described as “born again of the Spirit.” Being immersed in Yeshua was something new, but in Jewish tradition, there were other long-standing reasons for being immersed. It could be for a change of status, such as being crowned king, becoming a member of the Sanhedrin, preparing for marriage, ritual purity before entering the Temple, and what John was doing, immersing for repentance. Immersion was not a new thing, not something that John invented. It was an important process commanded by ADONAI and dates back to giving the *Torah* in the wilderness. Because of what John was doing at the Jordan River, he became known as *Yochanan haMatbil*, John the Immerser, or John the Baptist, from the Greek *baptizo*, meaning to dip. Because John immersed Yeshua, Yeshua’s status changed from being an ordinary citizen of Israel to the anointed One, the coming *Mashiach*. The Hebrew word *Mashiach* means “anointed.” ADONAI used John to anoint His Son, thus fulfilling all righteousness.

Two more aspects about Yeshua as Messiah were revealed by His coming to John. John said, 26 ... “Among you stands One you do not know, 27 coming after me, whose sandals I’m not worthy to untie.” (John 1:26b-27 TLV). This statement suggests Yeshua as being *HaGo’el Yisra’el*, the Kinsman Redeemer of Israel. The question was, “Who has the right to redeem Israel?” The second aspect of Yeshua as Messiah that John spoke about was: 29 ..., “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29b TLV). This statement points to Yeshua as the Passover Lamb, who, by His loving action on the cross, is also shown to be *HaGo’el Yisra’el*, the Kinsman Redeemer.

A central theme of our message series is that the Bible is an entirely Jewish book and that we cannot correctly understand it without recognizing that it is what it is. Trying to read it in any other context distorts the original message. In that same regard, Yeshua is our Jewish Messiah, and He cannot be appropriately understood without seeing Him in His full Jewish context. The concept of kinsman redeemer is found in how lost property could be redeemed in the seventh year Sabbatical and the fiftieth year Jubilee. Its basis is found in Leviticus 25. We find an example in the Book of Ruth where we read about a person called a *go’el*, גֹּאֵל, meaning “redeemer.” This man, called the “kinsman redeemer,” is the nearest relative of another man who has something to redeem. In the story of Ruth, we learn how Boaz, a resident of Bethlehem, redeemed the land that had belonged to his deceased relative, *Chilion*. He redeemed it by taking *Chilion*’s widow Ruth, as his wife. Through the “kinsman redeemer principle,” a legal transaction method, Boaz and Ruth became the ancestors of our Messiah, Yeshua. *Bo’az* was a Jew, and *Rut* a Gentile, a Moabite. Their mixed marriage is also a beautiful picture of ADONAI’s eternal plan of redeeming the people of the nations of the earth, the Gentiles, through His chosen nation, Israel, the Jews. In the ancient principle, only the closest relative could make the redemption. Then, after determining who that individual was, another question had to be answered. Would this person be willing to accept the position of *go’el*, the redeemer?

In Boaz's situation, we learn that there was a closer relative to Ruth's deceased husband, but he declined to redeem the property. Read the four short chapters of the Book of Ruth as you reflect on this message. It's a great story that will help you better understand how it relates to Yeshua. 6 *The kinsman said, "Then I cannot redeem it for myself, or else I might endanger my own inheritance"* (Ruth 4:6a TLV). His refusal placed Boaz in the position of being the legal redeemer. The closer relative said: 6...*"You take my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it"* (Ruth 4:6b). And, Boaz did. The redemption always occurred in front of witnesses who would sign the document the way witnesses would sign a deed today. The witnesses were the elders of Bethlehem, gathered at the city gate where business was usually conducted. This whole affair seems cut and dried, legal, and emotionless, but I believe Boaz entered it because he loved Ruth, not that love was a requirement for redemption. But all of his actions showed that he loved her. He allowed her access to his fields for gleaning and even encouraged her not to glean in anyone else's field. He gave her food and water and watched over her. I believe that there was more to Boaz's motive than gaining property. And we cannot forget the inspiration of the *Ruach*, the Holy Spirit. Did ADONAI guide Boaz to this decision, and was love a part of that marriage? I believe that the answer is yes to both questions. ADONAI's divine plan was that a Jew and a Gentile would become the ancestors of our Jewish Messiah, a picture of Messiah's love for all of the people of His creation.

Here is how redemption was carried out. 7 *Now in the past in Israel, one removed his sandal and gave it to another, in order to finalize the redemption and transfer of a matter. This was a legal transaction in Israel. 8 So the kinsman said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," then took off his shoe.* (Ruth 4:7-8 TLV). The closer relative declined to redeem Ruth's husband's property. By taking off his shoe and handing it to Boaz, he signified that he gave up his legal claim to Ruth's deceased husband's lands, which Boaz could now redeem by marrying Ruth. The closer relative initially wanted to redeem the property, that is, until he found out that a marriage was involved. But, for Boaz, marrying Ruth was not a problem. He gladly accepted his relative's shoe, the action which declared him the *go'el*, the kinsman redeemer. Boaz redeemed the property, married Ruth, and the rest is history. Their marriage produced King David and his line, the kings of Israel, and David's descendant, Israel's rightful, eternal King, Yeshua.

What does this type of redemption have to do with Yeshua? There is no direct information regarding this subject in the Gospels, but there is one tiny hint. John was Yeshua's cousin. They were related. We learned this in the story about *Miryam*, Yeshua's mother, traveling to visit her relative Elizabeth, John's mother, last *Shabbat*. (Luke chapter 1). Elizabeth was married to Zechariah from the Tribe of Levi, a *kohen*, a priest of Israel. Their son John was also a *kohen* but had rejected his role of serving in the Temple to be in the wilderness and to proclaim ADONAI's message of repentance. John said: 26 .... *"Among you stands One you do not know, 27 coming after me, whose sandals I'm not worthy to untie."* (John 1:26b-27). Word had gotten back to Jerusalem that a man was immersing people in the Jordan River and preaching repentance. Those officials from Jerusalem wanted to know who this man was. But, John said to them, "No, I'm not the Messiah, I'm not Elijah, and I'm not the Prophet," and told them about another man, one who did have the authority about which they were inquiring. By saying that he was unworthy of untying Yeshua's sandals, he seemed to be saying to them that he, a relative of Yeshua, was "not" the Kinsman Redeemer. We can paraphrase what John might have said: "Yeshua is the owner of the sandal of the *go'el*, and He has the right to redeem Israel. He is the Kinsman Redeemer who is the Messiah." The redemption of Israel was spiritual, not physical. It

involved no real property, but it did involve the souls of every Israelite. By dying as a sacrifice for their sins, Yeshua provided a way of redeeming His kinsmen. Yeshua's ancestor David spoke of Him as *Go'el* when he wrote, *15 May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable before You, Adonai, my Rock, and my Redeemer.* (Psalm 19:14 TLV). *V'go'eli*, וְגוֹאֲלִי, means “and my Redeemer” my *Go'el*. Isaiah uses *go'el* numerous times when he refers to ADONAI, which is pictures of the coming redemption through His Son, Yeshua.

In the Book of Ruth, Boaz's relative said, “*Buy it for yourself.*” As the only possible redeemer of all Israel, Yeshua, the rightful descendant of King David, had the right to redeem Israel, to “buy” their salvation with His blood. Isaiah prophesied: *20 “But a Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those in Jacob who turn from transgression.” It is a declaration of Adonai.*” (Isaiah 59:20 TLV). ADONAI's *Go'el*, Yeshua, has come to Zion and the people of Israel, the Jews. But, He has also come to all who call upon His name. *Sha'ul*, speaking of the Messiah, said: *13 “For “Everyone who calls upon the name of Adonai shall be saved.”* (Romans 10:13 TLV). John, Yeshua's cousin, was a *kohen*, a priest of Israel, and the Elijah figure who called people into repentance in the 1st century, but he had no legal right to redeem Israel. His calling them to repentance was a step toward their redemption, but he was not their redeemer. As he said, he was not worthy to untie Yeshua's sandal. Yeshua was and is *HaGo'el Yisra'el*, the Redeemer of Israel.

Even though we know very little about Yeshua's childhood, we have seen in our past messages that He fulfilled Scripture and prophecy with His birth, His *b'rit milah*, his circumcision, and *pidyon haben*, His redemption as a firstborn son. Because He was ADONAI's Son, G-d in the flesh, He was always fully anointed with the *Ruach*, the Holy Spirit. But, there was another requirement that He had to fulfill: His immersion. Water immersion, a tradition of Judaism, was fulfilled by Yeshua as a part of His assuming His position as Messiah. *Tevillah* always took place before a change in status. That change could be becoming king, a rabbi, or even marrying. In Yeshua's case, He was becoming Israel's redeemer, the only descendant of King David who fulfilled the requirements of the Kinsman Redeemer, the *Go'el*.

After His immersion, Luke wrote: *1 Yeshua, now filled with the Ruach ha-Kodesh, returned from the Jordan. He was led by the Ruach in the wilderness 2 for forty days, being tested by the devil.* (Luke 4:1-2a TLV). The number forty symbolizes a period of testing, trial, or probation and seems related explicitly to the forty years of testing of Israel in the wilderness. I have underlined “now” in verse 1 because it seems to have a bearing on when Yeshua was filled with the Spirit. The Greek word translated as “now” is *de*, pronounced “deh,” and is a connective or adversative particle. An adversative implies opposition or contrast, and “now” in this verse implies that Yeshua's filling with the *Ruach* was a change from before. The verse says, “Now filled with the Spirit.” We are not explicitly told how much of the Holy Spirit Yeshua had or when He had it, but we know that when Yeshua entered the wilderness, He was filled with the Spirit. I believe he was filled with the *Ruach* at his birth, and this verse only refers to a ceremonial action required of Israel's *Go'el*, which Yeshua had completed, not that He was just now filled with the Spirit.

Yeshua's time in the wilderness was essential to His ministry as the Messiah, the Anointed One. We often speak of types and shadows of Yeshua that we find in the *Tanakh*, the Hebrew Bible. Here, we see parallels about forty: Yeshua's forty days and forty nights and Israel's forty years wandering in the wilderness. Yeshua's time in the wilderness was

encountering the Adversary of Israel, *HaSatan*. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Yeshua overcame *HaSatan* by resisting his temptations, which His ancestors could not do during their forty years in the wilderness. Whereas first-generation Israel was overwhelmed and ultimately defeated in the wilderness by *HaSatan*, Yeshua now addressed their defeat and reversed it at the beginning of His ministry. He let the Adversary know in no uncertain terms that he was facing a foe who would not yield to temptation as His ancestors had. But, before Yeshua faced *HaSatan*, He fasted: *1 Then Yeshua was led by the Ruach into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 After He had fasted for forty days and forty nights, He was hungry.* (Matthew 4:1-2 TLV). While fasting for forty days and forty nights, we see Yeshua in His role as “the Prophet like Moses” who went up to ADONAI on Mount Sinai and fasted forty days and forty nights when he received the Ten Commandments (Exodus 34:28). Looking more closely, we find that Moses fasted forty days and forty nights twice. Moses’ second fast was the shadow of Yeshua’s time in the wilderness. Referring to the time he found Israel worshipping the golden calf, Moses said: *18 “Then I fell down before Adonai like the first time, for 40 days and 40 nights. I did not eat bread or drink water— because of all your sin that you committed, doing evil in Adonai’s sight, provoking Him to anger.”* (Deuteronomy 9:18 TLV). The first time Moses fasted forty days and forty nights was to receive the Ten Words; the second time was when he returned to ADONAI because of Israel’s sin of the Golden Calf. This second fast appears to be what Yeshua addressed by fasting forty days and forty nights in the wilderness. The words were even the same, “forty days and forty nights.” As the Prophet like Moses, Yeshua went into the wilderness to pray and fast for the people of Israel regarding their sins and perhaps in some way to address the past sins of Israel.

The Gospel writers made it clear why Yeshua went into the wilderness. It was because the *Ruach Kodesh*, the Holy Spirit from ADONAI, sent Him into the wilderness. The Spirit being from the Father may seem like a technicality, but Yeshua had not been glorified. Later, speaking of His coming death on the cross, Yeshua said, *5 “Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world came to be.”* (John 17:5 TLV). After His resurrection, Yeshua told His disciples that because He was going to His Father, He would send them the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. After He ascended to heaven and assumed His role as High Priest in the heavenly Tabernacle, He poured out His Spirit on the day of *Shavuot*. The *Ruach HaKodesh*, which came from both the Father and the Son, descended upon them. Both Matthew and Luke say that the *Ruach* “led” Yeshua into the wilderness (Matthew 4:1; Luke 4:1). “Led” is translated from the Greek *anagó* (an-ag'-o), meaning “to lead.” But Mark uses more forceful language. He wrote: *9 In those days, Yeshua came from Natzeret in the Galilee and was immersed by John in the Jordan. 10 Just as He was coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens ripping open and the Ruach as a dove coming down upon Him. 11 And there came a voice from the heavens: “You are My Son, whom I love; with You I am well pleased!” 12 That instant, the Ruach drives Him into the wilderness.* (Mark 1:9-12 TLV). The Complete Jewish Bible says, *12 Immediately the Spirit drove him out into the wilderness,..* “Drives” or “drove” is translated from *ekballo* (ek-bal'-lo), meaning “to cast out.” This implies that what Yeshua was to do in the wilderness was imperative. It was something which the Father required immediately. He didn’t nonchalantly walk into the wilderness but was propelled into the wilderness. Yeshua was His Father’s obedient Son and willingly began His forty-day fast, His time of emulating the Prophet like Moses.

ADONAI’s plan, which He prophesied through Jeremiah some 600 years earlier, a plan He had laid before the earth’s foundation, began taking shape. *30 “Behold, days are*

coming” —it is a declaration of Adonai— “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—.” (Jeremiah 31:30 TLV). The New Covenant, now beginning to be revealed in Yeshua, was the instrument that would bring about not just a yearly covering of Israel’s sins but a complete and permanent atonement through G-d’s own Son. ADONAI’s love for His chosen people, Israel, is immense. Even when the Kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem were deeply entrenched in sin and rebellion—so much so that He was bringing judgment upon them through the Babylonians—He chose that time to reveal His plan for a New Covenant, a plan of redemption. And He would bring it about through His only begotten Son. Yeshua was begotten in the manner of the procreation of human beings through ADONAI’s Holy Spirit’s overshadowing of a woman. He was begotten by the Holy Spirit entering into the womb of the virgin *Miryam* and impregnating her human ovum, and Yeshua was born fully G-d and fully man. The earthly ministry of Yeshua, who about three and one-half years later would become the Mediator of the New Covenant through His death on the cross, was now being revealed to the people of Israel. Yeshua was revealed to His generation through the *Torah* as *Seh HaElohim*, the Lamb of G-d who takes away the sins of the world, as *HaGo’el Yisra’el*, the Kinsman Redeemer of Israel, and as *HaNavi k’mo Moshe*, the Prophet Like Moses. Everything that Yeshua did while on the earth as a man was related to these offices and His ultimate office as *Mashiach BenDavid*, Son of David, ADONAI’s anointed King! *Shabbat shalom!*