



Matthew Lesson 13

July 28, 2020

Scriptures from TLV

“The *Megillah* of Matthew”

10:1-42

As we concluded Matthew 9 in our last message, Yeshua said to His disciples: 37 “*The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. 38 Therefore pray to the Lord of the harvest that He may send out workers into His harvest field*” (Matthew 9:37b-38). As chapter 10 opens, He is sending them out as workers into the field.

1 Yeshua summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, so they could drive them out and heal every kind of disease and sickness. 2 Now these are the names of the twelve emissaries: first, Simon, called Peter, and his brother Andrew; Jacob the son of Zebedee and John his brother; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; Jacob, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot, and Judah the man from Kriot, the one who also betrayed Him. (Matthew 10:1-4).

Yeshua’s disciples had been undergoing training, had been in boot camp, up until this time. At this point, they were by no means experienced disciples, but were now to go out on their own on their first training mission. Yeshua gave them “power,” the authority over death, demons and disease. Their actions would clearly show that He and His kingdom had authority over the physical and spiritual realms, the effects of sin, and the workings of *HaSatan*, the Adversary. By His disciples working of miracles, Yeshua’s claim as Messiah would be confirmed everywhere they went.

The TLV calls them emissaries. The Greek is *apostoloi*. Here, it simply means “sent ones,” but the term would later become the name applied to the twelve. Emissary essentially means the same thing; a person sent on a special mission. In verse 1 they are called disciples, *talmidim* in Hebrew, singular *talmid*. It means student or follower and followers were exactly what they were. In the 1st century, the *talmidim* of itinerant rabbis followed them everywhere, lived with their rabbi 24/7 and were constantly being trained. The twelve are listed here in pairs, possibly for the purpose of being sent out two by two.

Simon called Peter is listed first and we find the same thing in the other lists of disciples in Mark 3:16, Luke 6:14 and Acts 1:13. There is some difference in the names of certain disciples in these lists. Bartholomew is called Nathaniel in John 1:45-51. Thaddeus is called Judas in Luke 6:16. Simon the Zealot was called this because he had been a member of the Zealot party which was involved in resisting Herod the Great. Judah, the man from *K’riot* was the only disciple who was not a Galilean. *K’riot* is thought to be a Moabite city, across the Jordan River in the territory given to Lot’s son.

5 *Yeshua sent out these twelve and ordered them, “Do not go to the Gentiles, and do not enter into any Samaritan town. 6 But go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel”* (Matthew 10:5-6).

Yeshua didn't explain why they were not to go to anyone except to Israel at this time. Some time later when he was confronted by the Canaanite woman seeking healing for her daughter He said: 24 ... *“I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel”* (Matthew 15:24b). This doesn't explain why He was first sent only to Abraham's descendants, but I have an idea why. Some theologians say it was because Israel had to first reject the Gospel before it could be offered to the Gentiles. I don't agree with that and don't believe that Israel rejected the Gospel. The High Priest and many of his political party did, but the people readily received Yeshua's message. My thought is that Yeshua first taught His disciples, who were now going out and doing their own teaching through the ministry trip they were about to go on. The people of Israel as a whole were being taught during this period before the Gentiles to give them an opportunity to fulfil their calling. At Sinai, regarding Israel, ADONAI said: 6 *So as for you, you will be to Me a kingdom of kohanim and a holy nation.’ These are the words which you are to speak to Bnei-Yisrael”* (Exodus 19:6). Finally, in Matthew 28 Yeshua sent His disciples out to the Gentiles: 19 *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, immersing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Ruach ha-Kodesh, 20 teaching them to observe all I have commanded you. And remember! I am with you always, even to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:19-20). The twelve and all of the others of that generation who were also trained went forth and are continuing to go forth to this day. Messianic Jews today and particularly the Jews of the Messianic Jewish Movement are continuing to carry out Yeshua's charge to make disciples of all nations for Him.

7 *“As you go, proclaim, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near!’ 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with tza'arat, drive out demons. Freely you received, freely give”* (Matthew 10:7-8).

What Yeshua meant when He referred to “the kingdom of heaven” is very often misunderstood. I believe that Dr. Robert Lindsey has the right idea. *Malchut Shamayim* “the Kingdom of Heaven” in Hebrew, is often thought to be future, the time when Yeshua will return to rule the earth. That may well be one part of its meaning now, but when Yeshua first spoke about it, it was something different. The Kingdom of Heaven is exactly the same as “the Kingdom of G-d” *Malchut HaElohim*. Quoting Dr. Lindsey from his book, *Jesus, Rabbi & Lord*: “The Kingdom of God is the place where God is reigning, or, if you wish, the person or community he is ruling. Jesus explains that when he casts out a demon, “the Kingdom of God” has come upon all those present, that is, God has taken charge of a situation in which formerly the devil ruled. God has penetrated the very spot in which men find themselves under Satan's control.” This meant that G-d's kingdom had been extended to that spot. By using the words G-d, *Elohim*, and Heaven, *Shamayim*, Yeshua was doing the same thing which we ourselves do today. He did not say the Kingdom of YHVH. He was not pronouncing His Father's name but was using an epithet for the four Hebrew letters יהוה (YHVH) of His name. When Yeshua's disciples healed the sick and cast out demons, the Kingdom of Heaven had replaced the influence of *HaSatan*, death, sickness and demon control. The Kingdom of Heaven had come upon them. It is what we as Yeshua's modern day *talmidim* are also expected to do: take authority over the effect of *HaSatan*'s influence on the earth and bring the Kingdom of Heaven to that place.

9 “Do not get gold or silver or copper for your money belts, 10 or a bag for the journey, or two shirts, or sandals, or a walking stick; for the worker is entitled to his food. 11 “Whatever town or village you shall enter, find out who in it is worthy and stay there until you leave. 12 As you come into the house, greet it. 13 If the household is worthy, let your shalom come upon it. But if it’s not worthy, let your shalom return to you. 14 And whoever will not receive you or listen to your words, as you leave that house or that town, shake the dust off your feet. 15 Amen, I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the Day of Judgment than for that town” (Matthew 10:9-15).

Yeshua said: “Don’t take any money with you and don’t pack a suitcase. Just go with what you are wearing. You won’t even need a walking stick because most of your work will be done in town. When you enter a village, find someone who will welcome you into his home. Greet that home with *shalom aleichem* and if they say to you, ‘*aleichem shalom,*’ you are welcome here, let your peace remain upon it. But, if you enter a house and after placing your *shalom* on it, find out that they do not welcome you, take your *shalom* back and leave. If a house or a town doesn’t receive you, shake the dust off your feet,” that is, leave and go somewhere else.

16 “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. 17 But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and flog you in their synagogues. 18 You will be brought before governors and kings because of Me, as a witness to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you should say, for it shall be given to you in that hour what you should say. 20 For it is not you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you. 21 “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against their parents and have them put to death. 22 And you will be hated by all because of My name, but the one who endures to the end shall be saved. 23 Whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next. Amen, I tell you, you will never finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes” (Matthew 10:16-23).

They are being sent out into *HaSatan*’s territory and were cautioned to be expecting that they will encounter evil, but to respond to it with a pure heart. Regarding the persecution that they would face, Yeshua here seems to be not only speaking of His present day, but also the future. It’s almost sounds as if He is referring to *Sha’ul*, who was flogged three times for his faith (2Corinthians 11:25) and also appeared before Governors Felix (Acts 24) and Festus (Acts 25) and King Agrippa (Acts 25, 26). There have been many more Jews and also Gentiles through the centuries who have been imprisoned for their faith. And, even families have betrayed one another. We know a Messianic Jewish couple who was betrayed by their son. The father, a Messianic rabbi, spoke here in *Beit Shalom* years ago. Many years before that the whole family had made *aliyah* to Israel. After being there some years, the son departed from faith in Yeshua and became religiously observant. Encouraged by those around him, he reported his parents as followers of Yeshua. They lost their citizenship and were deported from Israel.

Yeshua’s final statement, *you will never finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes*, is a real puzzle. Theologians and others give a number of answers. I don’t personally believe any of them are correct. They range from Albert Schweitzer’s view that “Jesus believed that the end of time would come in His day” to believing that Yeshua was referring to the coming invasion of Israel by the Romans in the year 66 CE. And there are at least five other opinions in the middle. I don’t know the answer, but what comes to

my mind is “the transfiguration.” Shortly after *Shimon Kefa* correctly identified Yeshua by saying: “you are the Messiah, the Son of the living God in Matthew 16:16, Yeshua said this: *27 For the Son of Man is about to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then ‘He will repay everyone according to his deeds.’ 28 Amen, I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom*” (Matthew 16:27-28). Six days later, Yeshua took *Kefa, Ya’acov* and *Yochanan* up Mount Hermon and He was transfigured before them and the voice of ADONAI spoke from heaven saying **<14> both 5** “*This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased. Listen to Him*” (Matthew 17:5b)! As they walked back down the mountain, Yeshua said: *9 ... “Do not tell anyone about the vision until the Son of Man is raised from the dead”* (Matthew 17:9b). Does this answer the question we have about Yeshua’s words, *you will never finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes*? I don’t know, but I think it comes much closer than any of the other explanations I have found. The main reason is that when Yeshua referred to Himself as Son of Man, He was using *remez* to hint at Daniel 7 (verses 9-14). There we see one like a “Son of Man” coming on the clouds of heaven and He is given an everlasting kingdom by the Ancient of Days.

24 “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. 25 It is enough for the disciple to become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house beelzebul, how much more the members of his household! 26 “So do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed and nothing hidden that will not be made known” (Matthew 10:24-26).

These three verses are also connected with the next seven. When Yeshua spoke about Himself and His disciples and a master and his indentured servant, He was saying that if He is attacked, we can expect, because we are His *talmidim*, to be attacked as well. This could be an attack with words or even a physical attack. Many of His disciples through the centuries have endured both kinds. Regarding this same subject and at another time, Yeshua said: *20 “Remember the word I spoke to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also”* (John 15:20). Part of that is good news. If we are persecuted, it means that our witness for Yeshua has had some positive results.

“...*If they have called the head of the house beelzebul, how much more the members of his household*” (Matthew 10:15b)! But, some Pharisees and others had also called Yeshua *be’elzebul*, a word meaning, “lord of the house,” a name applied to *HaSatan* (Strong’s Concordance). I think it must mean “lord of the outhouse” because the Adversary is also called the “dung god.”

We are not to fear Yeshua’s enemies. They can attack us and possibly even kill us, but they cannot take away our relationship with Yeshua and our eternal relationship with Him. *HaSatan* has no authority over our souls and he, himself, will be eventually cast into the lake of fire. We are not to fear those who attack us because we are Yeshua’s *talmidim*. *26 “So do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed and nothing hidden that will not be made known”* (Matthew 10:26). The concealed evil things of those who come against Yeshua and His disciples will be revealed and judged.

27 “What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in your ear, proclaim from the housetops” (Matthew 10:27)!

The Greek word translated as darkness, *skotia*, has the secondary meaning of “spiritual darkness.” The word translated as light, *phós*, does mean light, but also “source of light,” and in this situation it refers to “divine illumination.” If we look at this verse in this way, we can understand that Yeshua was saying, “what you didn’t know when I first told you; what you were ignorant of at that time, now share with others as knowledge.” “What I spoke into your ear, now proclaim it from the housetops,” simply means: “what I said to you in person, you are now to tell everyone!” That message is for us today. We didn’t hear it directly into our ears from Yeshua, but we did read it in His Word. We were originally ignorant of these things which He taught, but now we have been illuminated and we are called to share it widely.

28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Instead, fear the One who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna. 29 “Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them shall fall to the ground apart from your Father’s consent. 30 But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So do not fear; you are worth more than many sparrows. 32 “Therefore whoever acknowledges Me before men, I will also acknowledge him before My Father who is in heaven. 33 But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 10:28-33).

This is a continuation of what Yeshua said in verse 26, “*So do not fear them.*” Those who persecute us can only harm our bodies. We should not be in fear of men. We should fear ADONAI who also has authority over our souls. Someone has said that fear is the opposite of faith. If we really trust Yeshua, have faith in Him and His Word, we can follow Him without fear. We are much more valuable than sparrows and He knows our bodies intimately, even down to how many hairs we have on our heads. The sovereign G-d of the universe knows everything and has authority over everything. And, He is with us, those who have trusted in His Son. We are very important to Him, we who are created in His image. He created the earth and everything on it for us and those who don’t know Yeshua are just as important to Him and He wants us to proclaim what we have learned to them. If we say we have accepted Yeshua, but in our timidity and fear don’t acknowledge Him before men, He will deny us before the Father. It is His own judgment call as to whether He will deny us. This is not speaking about just one incident or two where we have not spoken up for Him, but possibly a lifetime of denial after saying we trust Him. We cannot be secret believers. We must declare our faith publicly. We have heard that there are many among the orthodox who are secret believers in Yeshua. Those may be cases where they can be secret believers for a short while, but ultimately if they do not publicly confess Yeshua, He will not confess them before the Father. *Sha’ul said: 10 “Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the chosen, so they might obtain the salvation that is in Messiah Yeshua with eternal glory. 11 Trustworthy is the saying: If we died with Him, we will also live with Him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He will also deny us; 13 if we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself” (2Timothy 10-13).*

The final nine verses seem to also go together. Here are the next three. *34 “Do not think that I came to bring shalom on the earth; I did not come to bring shalom, but a sword. 35 For I have come to set ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; 36 and a man’s enemies will be the members of his household” (Matthew 10:34-36).* This seems so unlike Yeshua who said: *27 “Shalom I leave you, My shalom I give to you; but not as the world gives! Do not let your heart be troubled or afraid” (John 14:27).* Yeshua does give us His *shalom*. What He is saying here is that there will be so much division over His words that in many cases it will bring a sword. The sword will be

against such true followers of Yeshua as Joan of Arc and William Tyndale who were burned at the stake for their faith. The sword may also be between supposed followers of Yeshua, Christians fighting each other over doctrine. And, trusting in Yeshua can also result in very strained family relationships, particularly in Jewish families. I have a friend, who after he trusted Yeshua, was declared dead by his family. They had a funeral service for him and erected a tombstone in their family plot for him. I have other Messianic Jewish friends who don't have tombstones, but very strained family relationships. But, they have continued to walk in faith and have returned with love the animosity and hate they sometimes get from their families.

With regard to verses 35 and 36, *35 For I have come to set 'a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; 36 and a man's enemies will be the members of his household,'* Yeshua was using *remez* and hinting back at these words of Micah: *6 "For son treats father with contempt; daughter rises up against mother; daughter-in-law against mother-in-law: a man's enemies are the people of his own house"* (Micah 7:6). Micah was speaking at a time when the southern kingdom, Judah, was very much in idolatry. There were within the homes those family members who held onto ADONAI's way of righteousness and also those who sacrificed to false gods and some who even sacrificed their children to *Molekh*. Micah testified of himself: *7 But I—I will watch for Adonai. I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me"* (Micah 7:7). That has to be our testimony too. At this time in history, many children disrespect their parents, feeling that they are out of tune with the times. Many children rebel even at a very young age. It is catching, just like coronavirus, and spreads across their peer groups. Sometimes, faith in Yeshua causes division within families.

37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me isn't worthy of Me, and he who loves son or daughter more than Me isn't worthy of Me. 38 And whoever does not take up his cross and follow after Me isn't worthy of Me. 39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it" (Matthew 10:37-39).

Yeshua is not saying that He wishes us to forsake our parents or our children. He is saying that we are not to side with our family against Him. We don't have to be in total agreement with them, but we do have to be in total agreement with Yeshua. We are being told to resist pressure from the non-believers within our families if it is there. We are to take up our cross, our execution stake, and follow Him. We must be willing to accept whatever trouble we may encounter.

This is apparently the first mention of cross or execution stake in the Gospels (also in Luke 14). It would be some time before Yeshua would go to the cross, but He was already planting that image in the minds of His disciples. In the 1st century, the Romans crucified tens of thousands, possibly hundreds of thousands of their enemies across the empire. It is said that in Yeshua's day, that daily there were crosses bearing the dead and dying in Jerusalem. The Romans didn't just crucify Jews. They were doing it to all kinds of people all across the empire. To say that the method was a very barbaric, a very cruel way of execution, would be an understatement. To hang someone on a pole and leave them there to suffer and slowly die was most cruel.

The Greek word translated as cross in the TLV is *stauros* and it means an upright stake. An individual would be hung on it in some way. Regarding Yeshua's crucifixion, Scripture does not tell us that He hung there because nails were driven through His hands and feet. None of the Gospels describes what happened to Him beyond saying that "He was

crucified.” But, by faith we believe that the nails were there. In Luke 24:39 after His resurrection, Yeshua appeared to His disciples and told them to look at His hands and feet. And, we also have the Messianic Psalm 22 which states: “They pierced my hands and feet.” No doubt, they did these things as an additional way of torturing Yeshua and all the others. But, science tells us that if nails are the only support, the weight of a human adult would cause the nails to rip out of their hands or wrists. They would not hold a person on the stake for very long. And, then we have the question of nail placement. Were Yeshua’s feet crossed and a single nail driven through both feet? We see this depicted in art and statuary. Again, science tells us that if this was done, death would come much quicker because the individual would not be able to continue to hold up the weight of his upper body and that would bring death too soon to suit the Romans. For the Romans’ purposes, there had to be a way to support the body longer so that the victim would suffer longer. This means that they would also have placed ropes around the arms to hold the body up and to prevent the nails from ripping out of the hands or wrists.

But, in art and religious statuary, Yeshua’s feet are most often depicted one on top of the other with a single nail through them both. There is no evidence that that was the case. As a matter of fact, there is but one piece of well documented archeological evidence, of any kind, regarding a crucifixion. It is a heel bone discovered outside of Jerusalem in 1968. It was in an ossuary, a bone box used to gather a person’s bones after a year of decomposition in the tomb. The man’s name, *Yehochanan benHagakol*, was inscribed on the limestone box. His other bones were in the box, and both his legs had been broken as was sometimes done when the crucifiers wanted to speed up death. In this ossuary, one of his heel bones was found with a nail driven through it, not from the top, but from the side. This, along with the broken legs, is a very strong indication that he had been crucified. The position of the nail relative to the bone indicates that a foot had been nailed to a cross from its side and not from the front. Only one heel bone was in the box. The point of the nail has olive wood fragments on it indicating that he was crucified on a cross made of olive wood or on an olive tree. A piece of acacia wood was also found between the bone and the head of the nail, supposedly to prevent the individual from freeing his foot by sliding it over the nail, like a washer on a bolt.

When Yeshua told His disciples to take up their crosses, He would not have said *stauros* because Greek was not a language that He used. We are not sure what word He would have used because cross is not a word found in the *Tanakh*. He might have said “tree.” Deuteronomy 21:22-23 speaks of a criminal being executed and hung on a tree. The Hebrew word meaning tree is *עץ*, *eitz*. The modern Hebrew word for cross is *tselev*. Hebrew was the language of the synagogue but outside where the crowds heard Him, Yeshua probably used Aramaic, the language which had been brought back from Babylon.

When Yeshua spoke about the cross, it is my opinion that He was speaking figuratively about it and relating it to the trials of life for His followers. When He said “cross,” did He mean the upright stake part? He may have meant that figuratively, but we are pretty certain that He, Himself, did not carry the upright portion, the stake itself. He would have carried the crossbeam which would have been attached to the stake when He was hoisted up. Metaphorically speaking, His intent was that we must understand and be willing to suffer persecution and sometimes even death for Him. Suffering as His disciples is our cross. As He said, they, we, will suffer the same things as our Master. This general thought is also found again in Matthew 16:24 and in Mark 8:34 and Luke 9:23 and 14:27. Yeshua concludes this thought with: *39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake*

will find it ” (Matthew 10:39), indicating that there is eternal reward, eternal life, for those who fully and completely commit themselves to Him.

40 “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives the One who sent Me. 41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward, and he who receives a tzaddik in the name of a tzaddik shall receive a tzaddik’s reward. 42 And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, amen I tell you, he shall never lose his reward” (Matthew 10:37-42).

Those who receive us as Yeshua’s *talmidim* have also received Him. We are His hands and feet sent out today as He sent out His disciples in His day. Those who receive the *shalom aleichem* which we extend to them have also received Him. *Sha’ul* explained this to the congregation at Corinth: 20 “We are therefore ambassadors for Messiah, as though God were making His appeal through us” (2Corinthians 5:20). How His disciples and we are treated, whether good or bad, is how Yeshua Himself is being treated.

41 He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward, and he who receives a tzaddik in the name of a tzaddik shall receive a tzaddik’s reward. 42 And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, amen I tell you, he shall never lose his reward” (Matthew 10:37-42). If we help in the ministry of a prophet or an evangelist or a teacher or a *tzaddik*, a righteous person, or any servant of Yeshua, we ourselves will receive a reward from Yeshua for service in whichever person’s ministry we served. Assisting one of these is the same as directly assisting Yeshua. “One of these little ones” refers to a person assisting in one of these ministries in even a very minor way. Even the smallest service will be rewarded by Yeshua. The person who sets up the chairs for a great evangelist’s meeting will receive the reward of an evangelist!

Shalom aleichem!