

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD?

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Does the God of Israel speak to you today? We know that He spoke to Abraham and Moses and Isaiah, but does He speak to you today? Is He not the same today as He was yesterday?

‘We know that God spoke to Moses. As for this man, we do not know where he is from.’

‘The man answered and said to them, “Why, this is an incredible thing that you do not know where he is from, yet he has opened my eyes!”’

‘Since the world began, it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind! If this man were not from God, he could do nothing!’¹

This incident happened 2,000 years ago at the Temple in Jerusalem. The ‘we’ of the dialogue that say they knew ‘that God spoke to Moses’ were the spiritual leaders or authority of our People, the Sanhedrin. They were in charge of both religious and civil affairs. The High Priest, Aaronic and Levitical priests, Pharisees and others made up the Sanhedrin. Their responsibility was to direct the nation of Judah, and the Jewish People, in the Way of the Lord. At this time though, the supreme authority of the Land rested in the Hands of the Roman Empire. This meant that the Sanhedrin could conduct the affairs of the nation, but only Rome held the Power of life and death.

As religious leaders, the Sanhedrin was also responsible for directing the People to the coming Messiah; weeding out false Messiahs and pointing to the true one. As they examined a man who had been born blind,² but had been given sight by Yeshua, the religious leaders of our People showed us how very dark and evil their hearts were. They *said* that they knew for sure that God had spoken to Moses. Therefore, they could trust Moses. But what they meant was that they were not open to what God was doing in their midst. It was easy ‘to believe’ in Moses; he wasn’t there!

When they refer to not knowing where Yeshua came from, it is not that they didn’t know that He had lived in Nazareth, and had taught and healed in the region of Galilee. They speak of this very thing a few chapters earlier in John 7:45-52, when their attempt at arresting Yeshua failed. One of the Rabbis of the Sanhedrin had questioned their condemnation of Yeshua, before they even had heard Him out, but the man was quickly put in his place by his peers:

‘They answered and said to him, “Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.”’

If they would have asked Yeshua where He was born, they would have found out that Bethlehem was His birth place.³ Bethlehem was the birthplace of King David, and the Son of King David, the Messiah of Israel.⁴ Their position as leaders of our People, was to determine if Yeshua was from God or Satan, for no man could do the miraculous things that Yeshua did without having spiritual power.⁵ This is what they

¹ John 9:29-30, 32-33.

² John 9:1-41.

³ Matthew 2:1: ‘Now after Yeshua was born in Bethlehem of Judah in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying...’

⁴ Micah 5:1(Eng. 2) states: ‘But you Bethlehem Ephrata, least among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth to rule Israel for Me, One whose going forth has been from ancient times, from Eternity.’

meant by declaring that they didn't know *where* Yeshua was from. Now the man who had been blind all his life, denounces *their* spiritual blindness and unwillingness to recognize that the Messiah of Israel was in their midst. He tells them that since the world began, no one had ever opened the eyes of one born blind. Of course this only emphasized to the Sanhedrin, the claim that Yeshua was indeed the Messiah.

Jewish legend had it that the spittle of a righteous man could open the eyes of the blind, but not one who had been born blind. Only the Messiah, the legend went, could open the eyes of one born blind. Spittle is crude, but the ancients saw the mixture of spittle (saliva) and dirt or clay as a salve or ointment, and a possible healing agent.⁶ Yeshua had spit into some clay dirt, placed it upon the blind man's eyes and told him to go and wash. When he did, he came away seeing. Now here was one who had been born blind, telling the religious authorities of his day, that they were blind to what God was doing among them.

To make sure that the man had been born blind, the Sanhedrin called in his parents who testified that the man was their son, and that he had been born blind.⁷ The Sanhedrin was now caught in a spiritual dilemma. The evidence was clear, Yeshua was the Messiah, but their hearts were muddy. In making the spittle, they would accuse Yeshua of breaking the Sabbath⁸ (John 9:16). In applying the spittle, He would have violated the ban on using remedies on the Sabbath Day⁹ to someone who was not in a life and death situation.¹⁰ Therefore, the logic of the Sanhedrin went, Yeshua could not be from God. What we have here is a classic case of what happens when tradition overrides God. The Sanhedrin did not want to imagine that *their interpretation*, of what God could do on the Sabbath, could be wrong. And so they remained 'blind' to the Messiah of Israel in their midst.

When Yeshua made the spittle, He told the blind man to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam (John 9:7). The Hebrew הַשִּׁלּוֹחַ (*hash-shil-low-ach*) translates out to be the Pool of *the Sent One*, another name for the Messiah. 'The Sent One' signifies that Messiah is 'sent from God' just as Moses was sent from God to save Israel (Ex. 43:10, 12-15; 4:13). When the blind man heard Yeshua and obeyed Him, washing his eyes in the Pool of the Sent One, he came away seeing for the first time in his life.

For 24 years, I too, was blind. Blind to the God of Israel and His Reality. Blind to the Life that Messiah Yeshua has come to give us. But one day, the Lord spoke to my heart. I too *heard* Him, and I gave my life to Yeshua. That day He opened my eyes no less than the blind man's. I thank and praise the God of Israel for this; for once I was blind, but now I see. He is Awesome in His Majesty and Power and Forgiveness.

⁵ For the many miracles that Yeshua did, read John, Matthew, Mark or Luke in the New Covenant.

⁶ Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah* (Peabody, MA, Hendrickson Pub. 1886) section 2, book 4, p. 180.

⁷ John 9:18-20: 'The Judean leadership then did not believe it of him, that he had been blind and had received sight, until they called the parents of the very one who had received his sight and questioned them, saying, "Is this your son who you say was born blind? Then how does he now see?" His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind..."'

⁸ Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p. 182. Mishnah, Tractate *Shabat* 24:3.

⁹ Ibid. 'And as regards saliva, its application to the eye is expressly forbidden on the ground that it was evidently intended as a remedy' (Jerusalem Talmud, *Shabat* 14d).

¹⁰ The Rabbis made a legal distinction between helping someone in a life and death situation and someone who had a chronic illness. It was alright 'to work' to save a life on the Sabbath Day, but not to work to heal someone with a disease that was not life threatening. Note well: all the healings that Yeshua performs on the Sabbath are to people with chronic diseases. Yeshua was confronting the religious establishment in their religiosity, which choked the life out of the Sabbath. Yeshua was showing us what the Sabbath pictures: Yahveh dwelling and walking with Israel, like the First Sabbath in Creation. Our Messiah seeks to set us free and give us Abundant Life!

Ask Yeshua to open your eyes and you'll see what the blind man saw: the Messiah of Israel. He is speaking to you right now. Can you *hear* Him?

The Dead Man Who Heard

Yohanan the Jew (John), tells of another time that Yeshua came to someone who had been a friend of His, but was now dead four days.¹¹ It seems that Yeshua intentionally waited till the fourth day¹² to come. Jewish superstition believed that the spirit of a dead person hovered over the body for three days, but after that, it permanently left. Yeshua deliberately stays away till the fourth day to allow the Jewish people to realize that it is not magic that raises the dead man, but the Power of God in His Messiah. After three days, the body is definitely in a state of decay: it is dead, dead, dead.

Yeshua said to Martha, the dead man's sister: 'I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live (John 11:25). He then goes to the tomb, which was a cave with a stone in front of it, and commands them to remove the stone. Martha though, argues with Him, 'Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days' (John 11:39b). They finally do what He asks them:

'Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Yeshua lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that *You have heard Me*. And I know that *You always hear Me*, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that *they may believe that You sent Me*." Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Elazar! Come forth!" And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Yeshua said to them, "Loose him, and let him go." Then many of the Jews who had come to Miryam and had seen the things Yeshua did, believed in Him.'¹³

This is a mini-Resurrection Day. Yeshua reveals that He has the Power to raise the dead. Only the creative power of God Himself could raise Elazar and give him new life. Yeshua is the Messiah! In another place He tells us that one day, all will hear His Voice and come from the grave. Yeshua said:

'For as the Father has Life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have Life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Adam. Do not marvel at this, for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His Voice and come forth; those who have done good, to the Resurrection of Life, and those who have done evil, to the Resurrection of Condemnation.'¹⁴

Yeshua speaks of having Power from God to raise the dead, and then proceeds to raise the dead. There is a death that one walks in before one ever lives. And that is spiritual death. Unless you come to Yeshua, you are condemned already, living in darkness. Only Yeshua can give you Heavenly Life. Yeshua declared:

'For God so loved the world that He gave His only unique¹⁵ Son, that whoever believes in

¹¹ John 11:1-57.

¹² John 11:6, 39.

¹³ John 11:41-45.

¹⁴ John 5:26-29.

¹⁵ There are many religions today that will tell you that you, too, are a child of God, no less than Yeshua. Obviously, God created the world and all that is in it, but the word for 'unique' gives the sense that Yeshua is the Son of God by deity, not by creation, as we are.

Him should not perish but have Everlasting Life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. He who believes in Him is not condemned, but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the Name of the only unique Son of God. And this is the condemnation: that the Light has come into the world and men loved darkness rather than Light, because their deeds were evil.¹⁶

You must become like our Father Abraham. He believed the unbelievable also. When told that he would have a son and as many descendants as the stars of the Heavens, he believed God, and God counted that as righteousness for him. Abraham didn't 'do' anything for that righteous; except believe God's Word to him. He believed the unbelievable (Genesis 15:6). Belief in Messiah Yeshua opens up the very Kingdom of the Heavens for you. It is the only Way. By His Spirit you will be born from above. Unbelievable? Yes! But anything less would not be the Living God!

You might think that you are a good person, but what will you do in front of the Living God on the Day of Judgment, whose Being is spiritual Fire? You must be born from Heaven above in order to stand in His Presence. And the way to do that is to ask Yeshua into your heart. He wants to forgive and cleanse you of your sin nature, and give you Eternal Life. Only He can do this. Not Buddha, not transcendental meditation, not Zen or any other. Only Yeshua, God in the Flesh. The dead man heard Him, do you? Come to Him now, for you are not guaranteed tomorrow. When Yeshua is in front of the only man in Judah that can keep Him from being crucified, Yeshua says to Pilate that His Kingdom is not of this world:

'Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Yeshua answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the Truth. Everyone who is of the Truth *hears My Voice*." Pilate said to Him, "What is Truth?!"'¹⁷

What is Truth?

God Himself is Truth.¹⁸ The Living Truth was standing before Pontius Pilate, but he was blind to God the Son. When we know Yeshua and love Him we become True, like Him. The Hebrew word for truth is אֱמֶת (*eh-met*) and conveys the sense of Yeshua being totally dependable and solid. He is *completely* trustworthy.

Yeshua says to Pilate that He had come to reveal the God of Israel, the One who is Truth; the One who is True. All who are searching for Truth, for God, will hear what Yeshua has to say. Obviously, Pilate wasn't listening or interested enough to do what he knew was right. Are you listening with your heart? Yeshua says:

'He who has My Commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and reveal Myself to him.'

'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word and My Father will love him. And We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me, does not keep My Words. And the Word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me' (John

¹⁶ John 3:16-19.

¹⁷ John 18:37-38.

¹⁸ R. L. Harris, Editor; Gleason Archer, Jr. and Bruce Waltke, Associate Editors, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980) p. 52 (see also Exodus 34:5-8).

14:21, 23b-24).

He is speaking to you. Do you hear Him? Ask Yeshua into your life. Tell Him you hear His Voice calling you and that you want to be forgiven of your sins and immersed in His Presence. Then you will know what the blind man saw and what the dead man found: Life in Messiah Yeshua. Contact me. I want to help you to walk into His Kingdom, the Kingdom of Truth.