

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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Crucified, But Yet Alive with Him

Each time Yahshua (Jesus) told of His impending death and resurrection, His disciples demonstrated that they did not fully comprehend the significance of what He was saying. Instead of rejoicing over the revelation that He would be miraculously raised from the dead, they responded with denial, sadness, or even by trying to gain the power or position that they believed Yahshua would lose.

After it was revealed to Simon Peter and the other disciples that He was the Messiah, the “son of the living God,” Yahshua first showed them clearly that He would suffer, die, and then be raised again:

21 From that time forward began Yahshua to show to his disciples, how that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. -Matthew 16

It appears that Peter either did not hear or did not fully comprehend what Yahshua had revealed to them. Even though Yahshua had shown them that He would die and then be raised up from the dead after three days, Peter denied that His death and resurrection would really happen:

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from you, Lord: this shall not be unto you. -Matthew 16

Offended by Peter’s unbelief, Yahshua called him “Satan” because he was only thinking about the natural things of men, rather than the spiritual things of God:

23 But he turned, and said to Peter, Get you behind me, Satan: you are an offense to me: for you savor not the things that are of God, but those that are of men. -Matthew 16

The second time Yahshua told His disciples that He would be killed, but that He would be raised again on the third day, His disciples responded with sadness:

22 And while they stayed in Galilee, Yahshua said to them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceedingly sorry. -Matthew 17

The third time Yahshua told of His death, He said that after His betrayal He would be condemned, mocked, scourged, and crucified. However, He again clearly proclaimed that He would rise again on the third day:

18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and to the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify *him*: and the third day he shall rise again. -Matthew 20

This time, realizing that Yahshua was going to establish His kingdom, the mother of John and James tried to make an intercession to Yahshua for her sons. She tried to assure that her sons would have positions of power and authority in the kingdom:

20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What will you? She said to him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on your right hand, and the other on the left, in your kingdom. -Matthew 20

Yahshua responded saying, “You know not what you ask.” He asked whether they could “drink of the cup” that He would drink and receive His “baptism.” They proclaimed that they were able to follow Him in those things:

22 But Yahshua answered and said, You know not what you ask. Are you able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They said to him, We are able. -Matthew 20

However, He told them that it was not for Him to give them positions of power or authority, as those sitting on His right or left hand:

23 And he said unto them, You shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared by my Father. -Matthew 20

The other ten disciples were angered by the attempt of the two brothers to gain positions of authority:

24 And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved with indignation against the two brothers. -Matthew 20

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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Yahshua explained that His kingdom is not like the kingdoms of the Gentiles, whose leaders lift themselves up and exercise authority over the people:

25 But Yahshua called them *to him*, and said, You know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. -Matthew 20

Instead, the people that truly follow Yahshua are the opposite. They humble themselves and minister as servants, not as rulers:

26 But it shall not be so among you: but whoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 And whoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. -Matthew 20

Those who hold the doctrine that the ministers should be rulers over the people are called "Nicolaitans." Yahshua says that He hates that doctrine:

15 So have you also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. -Revelation 2

The word "Nicolaitan" is based on two Greek words. The first is νικος (nikos), meaning victor or conqueror, and the second is λαος (laos), meaning people. Therefore, Yahshua hates the doctrine that gives the leaders (the victors or conquerors) controlling power over the people (the laity).

According to Peter, the leaders among congregations, who he called "elders," should not lift themselves up as "lords" over God's people. Instead, they should serve as examples for them:

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. -1 Peter 5

In order to follow Yahshua, we must be willing to deny our own power so that we may live in His glory. Therefore, we must be willing to take up our "cross" and deny ourselves so that we may follow Him:

24 Then said Yahshua to his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. -Matthew 16

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We must be willing to crucify our old nature so that we might be able to live a new life in Him. As we die to our old self, we live by faith as the Messiah lives in us:

20 I am crucified with the Messiah: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but the Messiah lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. -Galatians 2

Just as the Messiah was crucified in weakness, so must we also diminish our power and our glory so that He can live in us by the power of God:

4 For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you.

5 Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves. Know you not your own selves, how that Yahshua the Messiah is in you, unless you are reprobates? -2 Corinthians 13

As we are baptized believing that the Messiah died for us, we demonstrate our weakness as we are baptized into His death. Our old self is dead and buried in baptism. A new person, however, is raised up from that baptismal burial to live a new life, in which the Messiah lives in us:

3 Know you not, that as many of us as were baptized into Yahshua the Messiah were baptized into his death?

4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as the Messiah was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. -Romans 6

Our baptism is an outward confession of our faith that Yahshua the Messiah died on the cross and that He is raised from the dead. Agreeing that our old self is also dead, we put on the Messiah and His righteousness as we live in Him and He lives in us:

26 For you are all the children of God by faith in the Messiah Yahshua.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into the Messiah have put on the Messiah. -Galatians 3

When we put on the Messiah, we accept that, although we were once born in the flesh, we are now reborn in the Spirit of God. Yahshua explains that we must be born of the Spirit in order to enter into the kingdom of God:

5 Yahshua answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless a man is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. -John 3

True believers no longer live for the flesh. They now live with the Spirit of God dwelling in them:

9 But you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man has not the Spirit of the Messiah, he is none of his. -Romans 8

As we are crucified with the Messiah, we live in the knowledge that we are His because His Spirit lives in us. Our old self has died and we now walk in a new life.