



THE WAY OF MESSIAH  
MESSIANIC CONGREGATION

## THE WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE OF TESTING

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### MATTHEW 4: 1-11

#### I. THE WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE

Mat 3:1 It was during those days that Yochanan the Immerser arrived in the desert of Y'hudah and began proclaiming the message,

Mat 3:2 "Turn from your sins to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near!"

Mat 3:3 This is the man Yesha`yahu was talking about when he said, "The voice of someone crying out: 'In the desert prepare the way of Adonai! Make straight paths for him!' "

Mat 4:1 Then the Spirit led Yeshua up into the wilderness to be tempted by the Adversary.

#### II. Messiah Volume 1 – Avi Ben Mordecai

"Why clear the way for the L-rd in the wilderness? What is so special about this place? In Jewish thought, the wilderness is a kind of neutral zone belonging to G-d. It is the place where HaShem comes close to His people. In the wilderness the manifestation of G-d is made real and tangible' here, the Holy One blessed be He reveals Himself to anyone needing salvation, deliverance, strength or a new start in life.

#### III. The Wilderness Motif in Scripture:

1. Hagar is saved in the wilderness – B'risheet /Genesis 16:5-9
2. Moshe & Aaron receive their calling in the wilderness – Shemot/Exodus 4:27-31
3. G-d provides escape for His people in the wilderness – Shemot/Exodus 13:17-22
4. Atonement is made in the wilderness – Vayikra/Leviticus 16:18-22
5. David is delivered in the Wilderness- 1 Samuel 23:14-18
6. Elijah is comforted in the wilderness – 1 Kings 19:1-8
7. Israel is redeemed in the Wilderness – Tehillim/Psalms 106:8-12
8. Yochanan the immerser prepares the way for Messiah from the Wilderness-Mattiyahu 3:1(see above)

#### IV. In the Midrash Rabbah, an ancient collection of rabbinic thought, a teaching on the wilderness is put this way:

*Israel's elevation is from the wilderness; her decline is from the wilderness; her death is from the wilderness...The Torah came from the wilderness, the tabernacle from the wilderness; the Sanhedrin from the wilderness; the priesthood from the wilderness, the service of the Levites from the wilderness, royalty from the wilderness and all the excellent gifts that G-d bestowed on Israel came from the wilderness. R. Simeon b. Yohai said; In the wilderness they were invested (with*

*their ornaments) and in the wilderness they were divested of them. Prophecy was from the wilderness; thus Israel's elevation was from the wilderness. (SS Rabbah 3:7)*

Of all wilderness testimonies, the most powerful is HaShem's revelation of Himself at Mount Sinai. **It was here in the wilderness that G-d chose to reveal His perfect Laws to the Israelites (which explains why Yochanan the Immerser is calling Israel back to G-d in the wilderness).**

#### **V. Shemot/Exodus 19:1-2**

Why did HaShem bring His people out to the wilderness? Why not choose to give them the Torah in some other place like "Y'rushalayim, the future teaching center of the world? Because the Torah was and still is a divine Law for all peoples and this our rabbis explain that the wilderness is where all can come to G-d freely and openly.

..it (the Torah) was given in the wilderness, so that all should have an equal claim to it..Another reason why it was given in the wilderness; Who preserves (upholds) the Torah? He who makes himself like a wilderness and segregates (sanctifies) himself from everyone. (Numbers Rabbah 19:26)

Anyone who does not throw himself open to all like a wilderness (acquiring knowledge in all humility) cannot acquire wisdom and Torah; and so it is said , IN THE WILDERNESS OF SINAI.

#### **VI. There were two other elements accompanying this indescribable gift....they are fire and water:**

- Shemot/Exodus 19:18
- Judges 5:4-5
- Psalm 77:17-20

On this subject it was taught by the sages of Israel

*Why was the giving of the Torah marked by those three features (wilderness, fire and water)? To indicate that as these are free to all mankind so also are the words of the Torah free; as it is said "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye for water" (Isa. LV 1) (Numbers Rabbah 1:7)*

Yochanan's message of making straight paths in the wilderness incorporating images of fire and water, was understood by the people to be a divine message of preparation for the arrival of HaMashiach; only He was expected to come bearing an immersion (a baptism) into the living words (the real fire and water) of the Torah. Concerning the wilderness, His Torah was to be delivered freely to all who would come out to the mountain and accept this indescribable gift, as the Prophet Yechezke'el said would happen

- Yechezki'el /Ezekiel 36:24-28,33-38

Purpose: Deuteronomy 8:2-18

Deu 8:2 You are to remember all the way that Adonai your God has led you these 40 years in the wilderness—in order to humble you, to test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His mitzvot or not.

Deu 8:3 He afflicted you and let you hunger, then He fed you manna—which neither you nor your fathers had known—in order to make you understand that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of Adonai.

Deu 8:4 Neither did your clothing wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these 40 years.

Deu 8:5 Now you know in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so Adonai your God disciplines you. TLV

## VII. Miracles, Provision, Sanctification

- An angel of God and a pillar of cloud and fire guarded the multitude (Exodus 13:21-22; 14:19).
- A strong wind made a path for the Israelites through the sea (Exodus 14:21-29).
- The Egyptian's chariot wheels were made to swerve; the army was drowned in the sea (Exodus 14:25-31)
- Bitter waters were made sweet and drinkable (Exodus 15:22-25).
- Manna rains from heaven for bread. Quail are sent to provide meat(Exodus 16:4,13-18).
- Water comes from a rock (Exodus 17:1-7)
- Moses's raised hand allows the Israelites to prevail over Amalek (Exodus 17:9-13).
- God speaks from the mountain at Sinai (Exodus 19:2-6; 16-21)
- The wind brings the quail (Numbers 11:31)
- Miriam's rebellion and leprosy (Numbers 12:5-10)
- The ground opens and swallows Korah (Numbers 16:1-3, 16-31)
- The budding of Aaron's staff (Numbers 17:1-11)
- Water from the rock and Moses's sin (Numbers 20:2-13)
- The bronze snake on a pole (Numbers 21:4-9)
- The crossing of the Jordan (Joshua 3) 3:5-8, 14-17

**If you do not learn and spiritually mature and grow in the wilderness, you never will.**

### **In order to Humble you, Test you to see what is in your heart.....**

I remember many years ago when I had been a new Talmidim/Disciple of Yeshua that God put me through a test as well. I remember spending hours in the Word and in Prayer and feeling His presence even when I felt alone, then one day I felt like His presence had left me, it was a terrible feeling of being in the dark, wondering why I felt this way. This went on for about a week, but I kept standing on the Word that He said He would never leave me nor forsaking me. Then one day at a Church I was attending the Pastor's wife had a prophetic word for me and the Ruach Hakodesh said this "You have said I am in darkness and I do not know why. For a season I withdrew my presence from you to test you to see what was in your heart, if your heart would be turned towards me and I saw that it was"

Then He gave me this scripture, Jer. 1:18 Look, today I have set you up as a fortified city—an iron pillar and bronze walls—against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, its princes against its kohanim, and against the people of the land.

Jer 1:19 Though they will fight against you, they will not win, for I am with you, to deliver you." It is a declaration of Adonai.

The Pastors wife knew nothing of what I as going through so I knew this was God reassuring me that He hadn't left me, He was always there, it was a test for my benefit to strengthen me for the many tests and spiritual battles that would come in my life and how to trust Him through them all.

**Yeshua explained this the parable of the Word that was sown and the types of soil (heart) that would receive the Word or not receive the Word.**

**Mar 4:1** Again Yeshua began to teach by the sea. A large crowd gathered around Him, so He got into a boat on the sea and sat down. And the crowd was by the sea on the land.

**Mar 4:2** He began teaching them many things by parables, and in His teaching, He said to them:

**Mar 4:3** "Listen! Behold, a sower went out to spread some seed.

**Mar 4:4** It happened that as he sowed, some fell beside the road; and the birds came and ate it up.

**Mar 4:5** "Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it didn't have much soil. It sprang up immediately, because the soil wasn't deep.

**Mar 4:6** But when the sun came up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

**Mar 4:7** "Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew and choked it, and it yielded no crop.

**Mar 4:8** "And others fell into the good soil and were producing fruit, springing up and increasing. They yielded a crop, producing thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

**Mar 4:9** And He said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." TLV

**Yeshua's Wilderness test, our example on how to deal with the advisory when we are in the wilderness of testing.**

**Luk 4:1** Yeshua, now filled with the Ruach ha-Kodesh, returned from the Jordan. He was led by the Ruach in the wilderness

**Luk 4:2** for forty days, being tested by the devil. Now He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He was hungry.

**Luk 4:3** The devil said to Him, "If You are Ben-Elohim, tell this stone to become bread."

**Luk 4:4** Yeshua answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"

**Luk 4:5** And leading Him up, the devil showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in an instant.

**Luk 4:6** And the devil said to Him, "I'll give to You all this authority along with its glory, because it has been handed over to me and I can give it to anyone I wish.

**Luk 4:7** Therefore, if you will worship before me, all this shall be Yours."

**Luk 4:8** But answering, Yeshua told him, "It is written, 'You shall worship Adonai your God, and Him only shall you serve.'"

**Luk 4:9** Then he brought Yeshua to Jerusalem and placed Him on the highest point of the Temple. He said to Him, "If You are Ben-Elohim, throw Yourself down from here.

**Luk 4:10** For it is written, 'He will command His angels concerning you, to guard you,'

Luk 4:11 and 'upon their hands they will lift you up, so that you may not strike your foot against a stone.'"

**Luk 4:12 But answering, Yeshua said to him, "It is said, 'You shall not put Adonai your God to the test.'"**

Luk 4:13 And when the devil had completed every test, he departed from Him until another occasion.

**Reason for the tests, so that we will learn to walk by faith/trust and not by our feelings. Our trust should always be in what He said in His word.**

Pro 3:5 Trust in Adonai with all your heart, lean not on your own understanding.

Pro 3:6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.

**God showed our ancestors in the wilderness that He would provide for them, where there was no provision. He would shelter them, where there was no shelter. He would feed them, where there was no food. He would be their wall of protection, where there were no walls.**

**The world at times can feel like a wilderness in our walk with Messiah, but He has promised that He would never leave us nor forsake us, that He would always be with us, even to the end of the world.**

**How are we dealing with your tests and trials in the wilderness? Are you kvetching or praising? Are we obeying His voice or are we going our own way? Are we doubting YHVH's provision or are we trusting that He will meet all of our needs according to His riches in glory by Messiah Yeshua.**

Num 14:20 Adonai answered, "I have forgiven them just as you have spoken.

Num 14:21 But as certainly as I live and as certainly as the glory of Adonai fills the entire earth,

**Num 14:22 none of the people who saw My glory and My miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness—yet tested Me these ten times and did not obey My Voice—**

Num 14:23 not one of them will see the land I promised to their forefathers. None of those who treated Me with contempt will see it!

**Num 14:24 However, My servant Caleb, because a different spirit is with him and he is wholeheartedly behind Me, I will bring him into the land where he went—his offspring will inherit it.**

**We want to be a Caleb who has a spirit that wholeheartedly trusts that will do what He said He would do, and not be among those who grumble, complain and do not believe His Word or promises.**

Embrace the wilderness, it is a place of Miracle, Provision and sanctification, while we are headed for the promised land, the New Jerusalem to come and the return of our Messiah Yeshua.