

GOSPEL OF YOHANAN

Chapter 6b

When someone writes a book, he is careful to write it in such a way as not to lose his audience, especially when he has to deal with an unpleasant truth. He will then, most likely, coat it with irony or with an illustration so as not to offend the reader, even at the cost of harming the subject matter. The general rule is to write in such a way as to sell as many copies as possible.

But the Bible was not written with this perspective. It contains things that a writer would want to avoid. Not only are there hundreds of apparent contradictions, there are also complicated mazes leading to facts scattered all across the Bible. Many times, the Spirit of God does not spare His Words and presents a hard truth as it is. Clearly, the Bible was not written with the objective of pleasing the reader, because it is a book of truth. It is not a book that was written to entertain, but to present spiritual realities that we often want to avoid.

Yes, there are many great passages that are very pleasant and comforting. But if you are only reading the Bible for these things, there will probably come a point when you will discard the book and put it on a shelf, where it will accumulate years of dust. They say that the Bible is still one of the best sellers. But I believe it is the least read best seller because of its uncompromising sincerity and its genuineness, which present the truths with no concern for finding a middle ground. Many of its passages have troubled numerous people. The passage that we are about to read is one of those that has offended many in such a way that they left the faith.

The Words that we are about to study are directly from the mouth of Jesus Christ, Yeshua HaMashiah. These words will surprise those who have a degraded perspective of the Son of God as being an insignificant seller of salvation or as a beggar for fame. As well as for those for whom Yeshua has become a rag that wipes away sins and then is thrust aside at will. But for those who love God and strive to work on their sanctification, the following passages will give them great comfort.

Let's begin to read **John 6:51-56**. Here the Messiah says:

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"

Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

"Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

"For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.

"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

What did Jesus mean by that? What does it mean to eat His flesh and to drink His blood? Jesus knew that these Words were very offensive to His audience, so why did He pronounce them? There is not attempt here to soften the impact. Yeshua even repeats the words *eat my flesh* three times in this passage. In fact, five times this concept is repeated in these five verses. So offensive they were to many, that the Bible reports in **verse 60** that many just left Him.

John 6:60

Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?"

For many, it was more than they could take; so much so that we read in **verse 66**:

From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

They were disappointed in Jesus because they did not know Him as such. A disciple is a learner, but these, who were called disciples, chose what to learn and they decided to go back to the old life and to the old religion.

Jesus makes no attempt to call them back; He knew their hearts. Instead of explaining His actions and Words to His disciples, He goes even further. It is at this time that He turns to them and asks them in the next verse:

John 6:67

Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"

How could this be? Did you know Jesus to be like this? Also, how could people be with Him personally and witness His miracles, then just decide to go?

Jesus warned us that out of all the people that receive the Word of God, only a few will stay. According to the first parable about the Kingdom of God on this earth, only one out of the four scenarios will result in keeping the Word of God and the rest will result in rejecting it at different times in their short journey with the Messiah; this is the Parable of the Sower.

Matthew 13:19 First Jesus says:

When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

Satan and his demons are very busy trying to annul the effect of the Word. These people hear, but an hour or a day later, all is gone; because they allowed the evil one to snatch it away from them.

In the second case, Jesus says in **Matthew 13:20, 21**:

But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

These people stay a little while. They represent the exuberant ones who are ever ready to join

almost any kind of religious propaganda. The seed appeared to take root, but the sun scorched it. It does not last long.

Jesus then speaks of the third case in **Matthew 13:22**:

Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

Here, the seed fell among the thorns and was choked. These people never counted the cost of faith in Christ. They were busy with the cares of this world and were seeking after wealth or other earthly matters.

The above three cases represent those who forsook and departed from Yeshua. It also represents those who do forsake, have forsaken, or will forsake Him.

We find the fourth case in **Matthew 13:23** where Jesus says:

But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

The seed here fell on good ground, took root, sprang up, and became fruitful; some producing a *hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty*. These are the people who say along with Peter in **John 6:68, 69**

.....Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

These are the ones who abide by the Word of God.

So, the question is: why did Jesus use such hard words? Also, what prompted Him to come to that point?

As we are looking at this passage, it is my prayer that we will find the grace of God beyond these Words. I believe that beyond the harshness of these words lays a message of love, which will become apparent to those who love God. It is also my prayer that this passage will strengthen you when you consider these so called *disciples* that left.

We are at a point, in the Gospel, where the numerous attempts to show the world that Yeshua is the Messiah had almost been exhausted. We have been presented with all the different witnesses in chapter 5, especially that of the Scriptures—a witness that is still crying out loud.

Chapter 6 is one of the last attempts to call men to consider who Yeshua is; one of the last attempts before He is crucified—before someone crucifies Him. It is not for nothing that it is the longest chapter in the Gospel.

Here, the Messiah fed the people by performing a great miracle of the multiplication of the bread and fish. It was not a miracle that was done just once, but was repeated more than 5000 times, as each time Jesus or the disciples put their hands in the basket to pull out bread and a fish, for each of the 5000 men and their women and children. It was an ongoing miracle of grace, an appeal to

draw man to their God, as they were spiritually and physically fed. But, when man does not want to believe, there is nothing that even God can do, because He will never force anyone to believe.

Besides this great miracle, as you read the words in this chapter you might have the impression that it is lengthy and that the Lord allows it to drag for quite a long time. This, I believe, was another attempt to pull the people out from the quicksand of rejection. At the end, it was leading nowhere and the people were not realizing what Yeshua was trying to tell them. This is why, as a final attempt, He brings them to an extreme so that they might realize the importance and the seriousness of the situation and of the condition they were in.

At one point in the chapter, it is as if Yeshua says: I have come to you and tried to tell you how much I want you to spend eternity with Me; I have come to you and showed you so many miracles, even the miracles you expected Me to do. But nothing worked.

It is at this point that Yeshua brings His audience down to the reality of their condition by pronouncing very hard sayings. He comes to the point of saying to them: *eat My flesh and drink My blood.*

Offensive! Isn't it? But I believe that this is how these Words intended to be. By these Words, the mirror is turned the opposite way to face us, so that the unpleasantness and distasteful nature of sin is conveyed to the reader. The point is that Jesus came to die for the offences, the awful and enticing things that constitute the sins we commit against a Holy God. Now, see who is offended!

Yes! You have the witness of the Scriptures. Yes! You have the witness of the miracles. But all this is to tell you that as offensive as these Words are to you, so are your sins as offensive to God.

Here Yeshua is speaking to all those who have simplified and rationalized the concept of sin. He tells us that no matter how far we go into rationale, sin is always sin and it will always be a hindrance to our access to heaven. If you cannot believe through love, grace and compassion, then recognize the condition into which you are and into which you will be for eternity.

He says this by using such words and language so as to awaken the people. For example, from **verses 25-65**, three times Jesus uses the strong titles of *the Son of Man* (**verses 27, 53, 62**)

Why use this title here? They knew this title from **Daniel 7:13-14**. They understood it to be attributed to the Messiah in all His power. See what it says:

I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

The usage of this title was a warning that the One who was speaking here, was to come back from heaven as a judge. Furthermore, seven times in this section, he uses the word *descend*

(verses 33, 38, 41, 42, 50, 52, 58) to show them that He comes from above and that He is not a mere man. This is how much He wants the people to understand. Now we can understand why this chapter is the longest one in the Gospel of Yohanan.

This is not a new revelation or a new concept that the Messiah pronounces here. Did not God try to convey this idea with every single sacrifice that was offered on the altar in the temple, day in and day out? Perhaps, by saying these Words, Jesus wanted to bring back the people right to the altar of sacrifice at the Temple. If one is talking about offense, this was a real place of offense, where each animal was cut to pieces and where blood flowed everywhere; where the priests' garments were drenched in blood and where the soles of one's shoes were also soaked to the skin from the blood of all these animals. The Burnt offerings and peace offerings, for instance, were offered and then half of the blood drained from them was thrown against the altar and half upon the people. Have we forgotten these offenses...the burnt offering, the sin offering, the meal offerings, libation offerings, fellowship offerings, thanksgiving offerings, freewill offerings, and ordination offerings? It was a well designed system for the people to be offended by their own actions. They should have been so offended that they would desire not to sin anymore, so that they will not come back to the altar and witness these deaths.

In all these sacrifices, life was being forfeited by the extraction of animals' blood. As the Spirit of God says in **Leviticus 17:11**:

For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.

In **John 6**, the point is the same. I believe that Yeshua wanted to convey to us the seriousness of our sins and how God sees them. But here was the time for the final sacrifice which was about to be given in the person of the Messiah, as prophesied by the Old Testament prophets.

In all that, the religious ones were perplexed and argued among themselves. **John 6:52** says that they *quarreled among themselves*—meaning they strove, argued, fussed, debated. They were debating about what Jesus meant. They couldn't make sense of what Yeshua was saying. They could not because they had already rejected Him.

According to the biblical principle, if men reject God, they will be further blinded to the truth. We find this throughout the Scriptures, where God was compelled to lure them away from His Word in order to protect His Word. One example is in **Isaiah 6:9, 10**, when God told the prophet:

And He said, "Go, and tell this people: `Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed."

God had desired their salvation, but they did not want it, so He was constrained to act.

We remember in **Psalms 81:11-12** where God says:

But My people would not heed My voice, And Israel would have none of Me.

So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart, To walk in their own counsels.

So, what happened to all the sacrificial commands that we find in the Mosaic Law? They were given with the same thrust as the Words of the Messiah which are given here. For those also, only a few understood their intent.

At one point in history these sacrifices had completely lost their meaning. See what God says in **Isaiah 1:10, 11**. Speaking to Israel, He says:

Hear the word of the LORD, You rulers of Sodom; Give ear to the law of our God, You people of Gomorrah:

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?" Says the LORD. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams And the fat of fed cattle. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, Or of lambs or goats".

And in **Verse 13** He further says:

Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies--I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting.

Yeshua found Himself at the same point in **John 6**. The situation is very similar.

In the same way many Israelites drew themselves so far apart from God, so did many of Yeshua's *disciples* who left. But, thank God, some held on to the faith and it is refreshing to see Peter's words as he spoke on behalf of this group.

John 6:68-69

But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

I love this part: Where in the world can we go, since You have the Words of eternal life. His Words are life and His Words are spirit, as it is written in **Verse 63** where Jesus says:

...The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

His Words are now contained in our Bibles so that we may draw from them eternal life!

Someone once said: No one ever graduates from Bible study until he meets the author face to face. This is true, as its richness is endless.

These words speak volumes to the believers. First, what does it mean to us when He says to eat His flesh and drink His blood? Obviously He is not speaking in literal terms.

In **John 6:63**, He clearly says:

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing.

But when you look closer at the Words in **verse 53**, the words "eat" and "drink" are in the Greek aorist tense which means a once-for-all act. Jesus was not speaking of partaking in this time and again. He was not speaking of feasting upon Him day by day. He was speaking of a one time event.

Some have turned this event and connected it to the breaking of the bread. But here, He was speaking to unbelievers as well; also the church was not yet born. Others went very far and

invented what is called the Eucharist. It is amazing how some can be ultra literalist when they want to, and allegoristic when it pleases them. For instance, regarding this particular segment of Christendom, there are literalists who push these words to the Eucharist. But when it comes to Israel, they drop their literalistic position and allegorize, saying that Israel is no more and now it means the church. For many, the Bible has become a book to fit everyone's belief.

But in this passage of the Gospel of Yohanan, to eat and drink is to receive, to accept and to be sealed with the Spirit. The point is that by eating and drinking, a man must receive the Messiah into his heart, into his innermost being if he wishes to live.

What is interesting is that in **verse 54**, the word "eat" is different from **verse 53**.

What we read in **verse 53** concerns the moment of salvation.

John 6:53

Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you."

Here, to eat is to consume only once.

But in **verse 54** when it says:

Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life...

The word for "eat" means to eat eagerly, fervently, to eat with pleasure. It is the picture of hungering after the Messiah. The tense is also different; it is in the present tense, which means continuous action. A person must continue to eat, develop and grow into the habit of feasting on the Messiah; this one has eternal life. This is a picture of the growth of a believer. The point is that a genuine believer is one who really receives the Messiah and feeds on Him continually. The one who feeds on His Word, day after day, is the one who has eternal life. Those who come and go do not find this hunger in them, and eternal life becomes even much further away.

What is the outcome of feasting in the Lord? For a believer, it means to have true satisfaction. The things of the world do not feed or fill men with a true satisfaction. These things do not last; they are not permanent. This is why one will be left hungry afterwards. This is why, later on in this passage, Yeshua says in **John 7:37-38**

On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."

He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

True satisfaction can only be found in Yeshua.

Phillip Keller, once a shepherd himself, in his book *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* relates:

The strange thing about sheep is that because of their very makeup, it is almost impossible for them to be made to lie down, unless four requirements are met.

First, due to their timidity, they must be free from all fear.

Next, because of their sociability, they must be free from friction with others of their kind.

Third, they must be free from flies or parasites if they are to relax.
Lastly, they will not lie down unless free from hunger.
It is only the shepherd who can provide release from all these anxieties.

Worldly pleasures and satisfactions always leave men somewhat empty, dissatisfied, craving, void, and wondering if this world is all there is—wondering if there is not more to life than what this world and its possessions have to offer.

It is only when we receive Him that we develop an abundant life in which we see where the fruit of the Spirit is.

Galatians 5:22, 23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

This is what I believe Yeshua meant when He said in **Matthew 5:6**:

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

Therefore, true satisfaction comes from genuinely receiving Yeshua into one's life. By the way this theme will come back many more times in the same Gospel, especially when we consider **Chapter 15** with the Vine Tree and its branches.

Another dimension is given to the believer in **John 6:56**:

He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

Notice the word *abides*. The one who has eternal life is the one who abides in Yeshua; it is the one on whom Yeshua abides. Here we speak of a supernatural companionship and fellowship. The word "*abide*" means to *dwell, to rest in or on*. It is the state of being fixed, set and remaining there in continuity. Such is the state, condition and being of the person who has eternal life. Furthermore, this fellowship extends to the whole Body of the Messiah. To have fellowship with the Messiah is also to have fellowship with His body, as we see at the beginning of the Church in **Acts 2:42**

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

This fellowship is much more than the fellowship we find in secular groups. There is a vast difference between *community participation* and *spiritual participation*. The major difference is that *spiritual participation* is based upon a spiritual union with the Spirit of God; something other fellowships cannot have.

One commentator said it this way:

“The distinctiveness is this: the Holy Spirit is within the believer. The Holy Spirit creates a spiritual union by melting and molding the heart of the believer to the hearts of other believers. He attaches the life of one believer to the lives of other believers. Through the Spirit of God, believers become one in life and purpose. They have a joint life sharing their blessings and needs and gifts together.”

Therefore, being a bible believer is first an individual matter and then it becomes a social matter. The believer is attached to the Messiah individually, but he is also attached to other believers. He walks with other believers in the Scriptures and in worship. The believer has an *inward life*, but he also takes on an *outward form* of life. The Scriptures demand that a believer personally live out such virtues as kindness, longsuffering, and love; but the believer can do this only in association with others.

See what else we can learn from **John 6:57**

As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.

Here we see that the result of receiving Yeshua is a life that is full of purpose and meaning. This verse is dealing with purpose, meaning, and significance. Jesus said, "*I live because of the Father.*" First, this means that He lives *by* the Father; that is on account of the Father and because of the Father. Second, He lives *for* the Father; that is He lives to do the Father's will.

So the person that *lives by* the Messiah begins to live in all the purpose, meaning, and significance of life; for apart from Him, there is no life. Here again, the tense is present, continuous action. A person must *continue* to partake, eat, and feast on the Messiah to keep his sense of purpose and meaning, to really live and live abundantly.

John 6:58 brings yet another important dimension on the life of the believer:

This is the bread which came down from heaven----not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.

The result of receiving Yeshua is incorruptible food within our hearts, energizing our lives forever. He is the bread that comes from heaven. We can say the same thing about the Word of God; these are Words that come down from heaven. The manna eaten by Israel in the Old Testament did not give them eternal life, as all false religions don't give eternal life today. But Yeshua, being the living bread, is the one who energizes a man to live forever. He—and He alone—has such energizing power.

This chapter ends with two sad verses, as if to warn the believers that not all of the disciples that should have left actually did leave. One, in particular, did stay with them; see what Jesus says in

John 6:70, 71

Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.

At this point, the disciples did not know who Jesus was referring to. Yet, in their midst, there was a devil. Months passed by and they were still not suspicious of Judas. Even Peter, when speaking on behalf of the whole group, did not suspect who Judas really was. The powers of darkness have been and still are successful in penetrating the select circle of chosen followers. It was serious enough when some disciples left; there are many verses concerning them and the effect of their departure. But it is quite another sort to become an antichrist, as Judas Iscariot had become, after departing. After all, the prince of darkness is called the god of this world.

One question we may ask is: Was Judas a devil when the Lord chose him? I don't think so, even though his heart was not with Jesus and His ministry. Judas was not yet possessed by an evil spirit here. Satan entered Judas a little later on.

The point is that he was with the disciples, even for a long time, while the others were not suspicious. He had a prominent place within the twelve and was given the power to heal; yet he was a devil. But we should not be worried about these people, for the Lord promised in **1John 2:19** to manifest them to us, when the time comes for them to leave.

They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

GOSPEL OF YOHANAN

Chapter 7

In chapter seven of the Gospel of Yohanán, we find the aftermath of the rejection of the people. What is striking is that you find Jesus all alone. He is first forsaken by His brothers and the multitude is no longer sympathetic toward Him. The religious leaders are now seeking to kill Him. In fact, six months later, He was crucified.

By this time the name of Jesus had become forbidden in Jerusalem:

John 7:13

However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

Note that “*the Jews*” refers to the religious leaders of the Jews.

Again in **John 7:25** Jesus became known as the One they wanted to kill. They said:

Is this not He whom they seek to kill?

He had begun to become *despised and rejected* and Isaiah the prophet tells of this report in **Isaiah 53**.

Concerning His brothers we read in **John 7:5**

For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

Don't feel so bad if you have brothers or sisters who don't take your faith seriously. Look, Jesus'

brothers were with Him all their lives, nevertheless they did not believe. Not only that, but His brothers were very religious. They were going up to Jerusalem to worship, yet they did not believe in the Messiah.

It was not nice what they said to Him in **John 7:3**.

His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing.

His brothers knew that many disciples deserted Jesus, as told in **John 6:66**. According to them, this was Yeshua's opportunity to regain what He lost and show that He was the Messiah, but they were being sarcastic.

In **Psalms 69**, a Messianic psalm, we read in **verse 8** the Messiah saying:

I have become a stranger to my brothers, And an alien to my mother's children;

This is so specific to what is happening in **John 7**. The *brothers* were His people—the Jews—and His *mother's children* were His half brothers—from the same mother. He could not say *father's children* or simply *brothers* concerning them, because Joseph was not His real Father.

There are only two places where we read the expression "*mother's children*." One is here in **Psalms 69** and the other is in **Genesis 44:18-20**. This is the great touching moment when Joseph spoke to His brothers, while they did not recognize Him, where we read:

Then Judah came near to him and said: "O my lord, please let your servant speak a word in my lord's hearing, and do not let your anger burn against your servant; for you are even like Pharaoh.

My lord asked his servants, saying, 'Have you a father or a brother?'

And we said to my lord, 'We have a father, an old man, and a child of his old age, who is young; his brother is dead, and he alone is left of his mother's children, and his father loves him.'

The brother was Joseph, a brother from the same mother, Rachel. Joseph represents here a type of the Messiah.

Note however that Yeshua's brothers, James and Jude, did believe in Him after the resurrection.

Acts 1:14

These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

And see how chapter seven starts dramatically.

John 7:1, 2

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him.

Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.

The feast of Tabernacles is known in **Leviticus 23** as the feast of Jehovah, but now it has become the feast of religionists. God was put aside and His Son is now despised.

During this feast, the people were required to dwell in booths for eight days, as a reminder of what took place in the desert and in view of the Promised Land that was to flow with milk and honey. Typically, this feast pointed to the messianic times, for which everyone in Israel was yearning. Little did they know that the only One that could give them this peace and usher them into the Millennium was the very One they rejected.

Speaking of God, **Isaiah** says in **Isaiah 8:14**

He will be as a sanctuary, But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense To both the houses of Israel, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

More than 2000 years after the events in **John 6**, things have not changed. As farfetched as it might sound to some, it is only through Yeshua that peace in Israel could come about. Without Him, there will never be peace. Yet today, they despise Him and His Jewish followers.

Interestingly, it is in that feast that the greater numbers of sacrifices were offered—212 sacrifices. The Talmud even connected this feast to the salvation of the nations because 70 bulls were offered which corresponded to the 70 nations mentioned in **Genesis 10**.

Beyond all this rejection, there is a refreshing verse. After all, God told us that His Word never comes back in vain.

John 7:31

And many of the people believed in Him, and said, "When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?"

Amid the chaos, the Spirit of God was working in the hearts of some people. We see this again in **verses 45-47**, when some officers who represented the temple police were touched by the Word of Jesus. These were all from the tribe of Levi and they were 270 in all. See what they said to the Sanhedrin, when they were ordered to bring Jesus to them.

John 7:45-47

Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?"

The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!"

Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also deceived?"

Some were nevertheless touched by the words of Yeshua, as many are today.

We also hear of Nicodemus, the great rabbi who became a believer.

John 7:48-52

Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him?" But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed."

Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them,

"Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?"

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

We see here Nicodemus, after his feeble attempt to defend Jesus' right to be heard. But he could not do much because the forces of darkness had already moved in. They even accused him of being from *Galilee*.

The teaching of the rabbis was: "If you want to get rich, go north. If you want to get wise, go south." Galilee was looked down upon by the Jews of Judea. Those in Galilee were looked upon as being materialistic, and ignorant in spiritual matters. If one was only interested in getting rich, then he should go north. But if one was interested in getting wisdom, divine wisdom, spiritual wisdom, he should go south because that is where the rabbinical schools and the rabbinical academies were located.

Judeans looked down upon Galileans and they accused Nicodemus of being a Galilean. They ignored that there were prophets that did arise out of Galilee, such as Hosea, and Jonah. Yet, it was from this region that a Messianic prophecy spoke of the rising of Light itself in that very region which these rulers so despise.

Isaiah 9:1, 2

Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, As when at first He lightly esteemed The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed her, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

God has not chosen Jerusalem as the starting point of His Son's ministry, but the very place these people despised.

It is precisely this title for the Son of God which is introduced *for the first time* in John's Gospel, immediately after the story of the adulteress in **John 8:12**.

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."