

# The WildBranch Ministry

*...thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Romans 11:18*

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## On This Rock I Will Rebuild My Church

### Part 4

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So far we have spent some considerable time perusing some of the background of what Kefa has seen and experienced before making his famous declaration concerning Y'shua. Some time before his remarks, he hears Y'shua tell him and the other disciples that they are not to go to the 'way of the Gentiles' or unto any city of the Samaritans, but to go rather unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Now this is an interesting statement considering the fact that we understand through the prophecies that the lost sheep of the house of Israel are indeed to be found among the Gentiles and the Samaritans. This is a hard saying, but I believe this statement must be seen in light of Acts 1:8. The disciples, after the resurrection of Messiah, were to receive power from the Holy Spirit. As a result, they were now ready to go to the Gentiles and the uttermost part of the earth. I believe that Y'shua knew exactly what He was doing, and that His disciples were not ready to go forth into the 'way of the Gentiles', and they were, instead, directed by Y'shua, and in many cases taken with Him, to the lost sheep in 'their' cities (Mattityahu 11:1).

Nevertheless, Kefa once again hears Messiah make reference to the 'house' of Israel. Kefa had already heard Y'shua refer to Himself as the temple that He would rebuild. Mattityahu chapter 7 records where Kefa heard Y'shua reference the building of a house, where He mentions the 'rock' upon which a house is to be built. He hears Messiah reference a house in many of His teachings and parables (Matt 10:25, 12:25, 12:29, 12:44). Kefa has traveled with Y'shua long enough to hear most of His claims and teachings. After Y'shua rebukes the Jewish leaders for not understanding the prophecies, and just after He warned His disciples to beware of the doctrines and teachings of these Jewish leaders, He asks His disciples saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" Of course, the responses from all the average Joes are all just men, great men

mind you, but only men. He then turns to those who have watched Him and heard Him and asks, "But who say ye that I am?" Now, before Kefa answers Him, He has already proclaimed that He is the Son of man. If I were Kefa I probably would have said, "Hey! you just said who you are, you are the Son of man." I think Kefa knew that this Y'shua was much more than that. I think he knew that the One foretold by the prophets of old, the Messiah, was the Holy One of Israel, the Great Shepherd who would bring back the lost sheep and restore His people Israel. I think Kefa did recognize that the sky was red and therefore what tomorrow would bring. Kefa replied first that Y'shua was the Messiah, and then he said that He was the Son of the living God. I believe that Messiah blessed him because Kefa did not understand this from flesh and blood, that is the Pharisees and Sadducees, the teachers from the house of Judah, but rather by revelation from the Father. I think that the Father quickened His word to Kefa's ears that this is the Messiah based upon his recognition of the Word of God.

Perhaps there are times when I go overboard with my convictions about the power, truth, and revelation that is in the Word of God. When there are those whose heart seeks God, but do not know all that is in His word, then He will reveal His word to them. But the answer to Messiah's question was and is still contained within His Word. I believe that every word written in this event is there for a specific purpose. I believe that the term 'Son of God' is not a reference to His deity so much as it is Kefa's supernatural response to all that he had witnessed of this Son of man. I believe that everything Messiah says of Kefa's response is based upon those words 'Son of the living God'. For example Y'shua first calls him Simon son of Yochanan (Simon bar Jona) and not Kefa, Cephas, Peter or even Simon Peter. The word Simon is an anglicized version of his given Hebrew name, Simeon. It comes from the root *shama'*, which means to hear and understand. I find it very interesting that Y'shua calls him that before blessing him for his revelation. Kefa's revelation has opened the door to the pebble by pebble teaching of Y'shua. His eyes have been opened to the revelation that this is The Shepherd, the One who was prophesied to gather the sheep and feed them. This Y'shua taught in His reminder of the feeding of the five thousand.

I find it more than a coincidence that Mark's version of this same parable has an interesting addition to it, that expresses further revelation to Kefa's recognition of the Great Shepherd of the New Covenant. Lying in between the feeding of the multitudes and the famous question to the disciples is an account that immediately follows Y'shua's comment "How is it that ye do not understand?".

Mark 8:22-25

*"And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. 23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. 24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. 25 After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was RESTORED, and saw every man clearly."*

Blind is a word that is used to describe someone who has wandered out of the way, does not understand, or has been deceived.

D'varim 27:18

*"Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen."*

Yesha'yahu 56:10

*"His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber."*

The blind man in this occasion is looking at men, but perceives that they are only trees. He was still partially blind and unable to clearly discern what he was looking at. In a cursory reading of Yechez'e'l (Ezekiel) chapter 37, one might think that God is also only speaking of trees. But when Y'shua puts His hand on him the second time, he is now RESTORED and can see who he is looking at very clearly. This stands in stark contrast to the telling of the parable of the sower to the multitudes in Mattityahu chapter thirteen, who also cannot understand what the Messiah is trying to reveal, and they also are told that they have eyes but cannot see, and ears but cannot hear. Do you sense the consistent thread in all of this?

Here is where the diverse interpretations of this event begin. Y'shua goes on to say that He has something else to tell Simon. You are Peter (*petros*) and upon this rock (*petra*) I will build my church. I am going to stick with this statement for now, and stay with one controversy at a time. The word *petros* is a reference to Kefa himself. It means 'a rock' and is in the masculine singular. However Y'shua then shifts to the feminine singular through His choice of the words *taute te petra*, or 'this rock', clearly a shift in focus and gender. Now for those who believe that 'this rock' was Peter himself, you have a problem. If you believe that Y'shua is referring to Himself, then there is also a problem. However if you can see that His people will be built upon the truth and revelation of God's word to Kefa, then you have a better leg to stand on. This I hope to continue to support.

I would like to turn the focus to three words in the text here that are just assumed to be referring to the future construction of 'the church'. A proper understanding of this phrase helps to put the remarks of Y'shua into a proper prophetic perspective. These three little important words are 'I will build'. The phrase used here is indeed in the future tense. This is something that He WILL do. The word 'build' however, is chosen very carefully. This English translation comes from the Greek word *oikodomeso*. This word, according to the following Greek lexicons, means the following: Strong's Concordance - to erect a building, to build, to rebuild, to repair, to restore; Thayers - to build a house, erect a building, to restore by building, to rebuild, to repair; Friberg Greek Lexicon - to build, to erect, to build again, to restore; UBS Greek Lexicon - to build, to erect, strengthen, edify, to rebuild, to restore. Most lexicons also have 'to build upon' or 'to found upon' as well. Did you notice the consistent presence of rebuilding, repairing and restoring? One would ask "how do you know which words should be applied?". The answer is based upon the context. The translator must apply the correct word based upon his or her understanding of the context. The presupposed bias of the King James translators chose 'I will build' instead of 'I will rebuild', based upon their presuppositions that the 'church' was a new construction. If, however, your presuppositions are based upon the prophecies of the Tenakh then you would clearly see, i.e., not be blind anymore, that it fits perfectly with Kefa's confession of the Messiah.

What is even more revealing is the meaning of the same word in the Hebrew. The Greek word used here first appears in the Hebrew as *banah*. This word also means to build, to rebuild, to establish, to cause to continue. Here are a few examples of how this term has already been defined for us.

Yesha'yahu 44:26

*"That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be BUILT, and I will RAISE UP the decayed places thereof:"*

Yesha'yahu 58:12

*"And they that shall be of thee shall BUILD THE OLD waste places: thou shalt RAISE UP the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, **The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.**"*

Yirmeyahu 24:6

*"For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will BRING THEM AGAIN to this land: and I will BUILD them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up."*

Yirmeyahu 31:4

*"Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be BUILT, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt AGAIN be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry."*

Yirmeyahu 33:7

*"And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first."*

If you read and plant in your heart these words of YHVH before reading these words of Messiah, you would immediately recognize the proper context. The use of this Greek word in other places in the New Testament puts it all into even better perspective.

Mattityahu 26:61

*"And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days."*

Yochanan 2:21

*"But he spake of the temple of his body."*

I chose this last reference because it is a use of this same word as it applies to the very entity we are discussing, the restoration of His assembly, the body of Messiah. Did Messiah raise from the dead with a whole new body? Most certainly not, but rather a glorified body, but using the analogy of the temple. I ask a simple question. Considering the prophecies of the ancient prophets, is the word rebuild or restore a better use in the context? If this is true then that shakes a major part of the foundation of much Christian teaching and places the assembly (the church) back into it's proper prophetic context. Next time we will begin to see how this relates to Kefa's pronouncement that Y'shua was the Son of the living God.

Shalom Alecheim!

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