

Thomas

We all have a besetting sin that keeps us from being a channel that makes glad the city of God. We are all beset by certain things, every last one of us. We are chosen on that basis. We all have to put something to death. We *all* have to be a stream that makes glad the city of God. Lk 9:23 — Daily we have to pick up the cross. We take it up to crucify that thing that keeps us from being a channel, a stream. You do not pick your cross up to carry it around all day, but to crucify the old man on.

We are judged by how much we loved with the love He gave us. He gave it all to us. It is just according to how much we want to give it and how much we hold back. Our besetting sins hold us back. What do you want to do Phineas? What is in your heart to do Zachariah? It all comes down to what we are willing to do.

How are you loving your brothers? How are you doing it? What are you doing everyday, and what are you doing it for? It is required of us to have a pure heart and clean hands. We have the availability of His throne and the blood. We can confess our sins and weaknesses. We can tell Him about it. Our Master was without sin because He went to the throne of grace.

We will be judged on our motives. Our motive must be love from a pure heart and a sincere faith. That is the goal of apostolic instruction.

(It is a satanic principle to think that you should take the victory cup because you are afraid someone will see you pass it up.)

A Story —*Taom*

This story is about Yahshua. Tonight is a special night when you're supposed to remember Yahshua, remember Him. And the best way is to hear things that He did and think about Him. And so I'm going to tell you about somebody who knew Yahshua personally. He actually lived around Him, sat right by Him — he knew Him just that way. Somehow, along the way, he met Him. And I don't know if this was always his name or if it was just his name when he was around Yahshua, but they called him *double*. I don't know if it was double trouble, or double blessing, or what it was double of, but it was double. In Hebrew that was *Taom*. And they gave that name to people who were born double also, for twins. In English we say *Thomas*, but it comes from *Taom* which means double. So this is the story about him.

Thomas met Yahshua. He met Him somewhere and he walked with Him and he listened to Him. You know how it is, just like with you brothers when you're in meetings and you hear so many words and most of them you don't understand? Yoneq will be talking and you hardly catch anything. You know how it is. But every once in a while something that he says or Hakam says or your abba says will click and you'll get it. But mostly you don't get hardly anything. And that's how it always was with Yahshua. He said so many wonderful things but they could hardly catch everything that He was saying.

Thomas couldn't catch it all. He caught something every once in a while but there was something special about him. Because a lot of times he would be the one who would ask. He was someone who could ask. Because a lot of times people say, "Yeah, I understood everything." But then there are one or two in the crowd who'll ask a question and you're so glad they asked because that's just what you were thinking too but you were scared to ask. Did that ever happen to you? You were kind of glad they asked because you would never have had the nerve? Well, that's the way he was. He's the one who said what he was thinking. And because of this our Master saw that he was kind of special.

So when the day came that Yahshua was choosing His special ones who would stick with Him, that message came to *Taom* from Yahshua that he would be one of the twelve. One of the twelve disciples, the special ones that were always by Yahshua's side! They ate supper with Him, breakfast and lunch, and they stuck by Him all the time. Wow, Thomas is going to be right with Yahshua, right with Him! Can you imagine it? He walked with Him.

So our story starts after quite a long while that he had been together with Yahshua, and Yahshua said, "Let's go to Jerusalem."

Now, when he heard that, Thomas had kind of mixed feelings because they'd been in Jerusalem a few times and somehow they always seemed like they got in trouble when they got there. It was because our Master would

start talking to people and the Pharisees (there were lots of them there), those real religious people — like Christians, but real religious ones, and they always seemed to gather around Him. But it wasn't like the other people who would come and listen, the common people, but those religious ones they were always getting really upset at Yahshua.

So this is where our story starts, it starts there, in Jerusalem. And Yahshua, our Master walked into the temple and Thomas was right by Him and they began to talk and sure enough, those men began to hang around the outside. But today Yahshua was saying the most wonderful things and Thomas thought, “Ah, for sure this is going to effect these people.” He was saying the best things. Because today Thomas could get everything He was saying. It was really clear.

So one of the Pharisees stood up and asked our Master a question. This is what he said: “How long are you going to make us doubt. If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.”

Thomas was so excited for Yahshua to answer this one. He couldn't wait. And this is how He answered: “I told you,” said our Master, “and you didn't believe. The works that I do in my Father's name, they also show you who I am, but you don't believe because you are not my sheep.” That was clear, really clear. “You're not my sheep, because my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me.”

Now that's clear, isn't it? I mean, you can understand that, huh? It's really clear. Thomas got that really plain. So he looked around to check out the response of the people around, to check out if they were really getting it. If they could hear His voice, they would want to be sheep. He wanted them to be sheep. And are they hearing His voice?

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them. I give them eternal life,” said Yahshua, “and they'll never die. And nobody will ever pull them out of my hand. Nobody will get them out of my hand.” Ahhh, Thomas thought. He didn't have a lot of self confidence, but just to hear that made him feel pretty good — nobody could get him out of our Master's hand. It was because Thomas was a sheep, he was one of Yahshua's sheep. Thomas kept looking at the crowd to see if they were getting it. Because it was so clear today. And our Master just kept on talking to them. And Thomas sensed something strange happening at the edges of the crowd and he couldn't understand this response. You know what they were doing? They were getting rocks! Big ones! Thomas thought, “What's going on?” The people were angry and they were getting rocks. They were going to throw them at Yahshua. Thomas started approaching Yahshua, “What's going to happen?” Then our Master looked right at the crowd and He said to them, “Now, any good works I've shown to you is from the Father. For which one of those good works are you going to stone me?”

The people didn't have an answer to that. They couldn't answer that. “Well,” they said, “it's not the good works that we're going to stone you for, it's for blaspheming, because you said you're equal to God.”

Well, that was clear, Thomas thought, He *was*! That's not blaspheming. Then Yahshua went on to try to explain exactly what He was saying, but Thomas could see they weren't listening, they weren't getting it. Were they hearing His voice? No. They were hearing His words, but were they hearing His voice? No, that's right.

Thomas got really nervous because he knew what was going to happen now. And sure enough, the people rushed on Yahshua to grab Him but the miracle was that the next thing Thomas realized, they were outside the temple walking down the street. They'd gotten away! They hadn't got them. They were ok! Thomas' heart was pounding. That was the closest they'd ever come. Whew! They started walking and he heard Yahshua say, “Come on, let's leave town. We're going across the Jordan now.”

“Ahh, good,” Thomas walked along. He was thinking about everything that happened. He was so glad. “Let's go to some people who are going to listen to us and appreciate Yahshua.” They went across the Jordan river and talked to people and just like he thought, people were listening and believing, believing what Yahshua said. And then, came a message. Someone came running up to Yahshua, “Your friend back over there across the Jordan is sick and he needs you.” Thomas couldn't quite figure out what was going on. “Across the Jordan, back over there by Jerusalem... Oh no,” Thomas thought. That's definitely not where the disciples wanted to go, back across the Jordan, over by Jerusalem. He heard them talking back and forth and then after Yahshua didn't

respond right away they thought, "That's good, because we don't want to go back over there because you know what happened over there. That's the last place we want to go." But sure enough, two days later Yahshua said to them, "Come, we're going back to see my friend Elazar."

"Oh, why over by Jerusalem?" all of them were kind of rumbling back and forth looking at each other. Yahshua went on to explain, "Yes, we need to go back because he's sleeping." "That's good that he's sleeping, isn't it?" they thought. "He died." "Well," they thought, "if he died, there's not anything we can do anyway." But our Master said, "Let's go." Let's go, *vamos*, let's go. And then everyone looked, waiting for someone to say something. And of course, the one who said something was Thomas. He said, "Come on brothers, let's go and die with him." They thought they were going to die. They thought for sure that when they get over there, something's going to happen. They almost died last time they were over there. "Let's go and die with him." And everyone said, "Yeah, let's go," and they started walking together to cross back over there.

And there Thomas saw the most amazing thing, the most amazing thing that he could imagine: a man was raised from the dead. People were talking, everything was going on, he couldn't understand anything, but for sure he knew that Yahshua was the most amazing and wonderful friend that he'd ever found and he loved Him with all his heart.

But then something happened. Something that he never expected. He saw our Master crucified. The night came, and they came against Him just like Thomas thought they would. But did he die with Him? No. He didn't do it. A lot of times you say things and you have that big desire when you begin something, but when the time comes right down to doing it, Thomas didn't live up to what he wanted to do. He saw our Master die; he saw Him nailed up to the cross with big nails. And he was back in the crowd. He didn't do what was in his heart to do. He felt terrible about it. He felt terrible, so ashamed, so awful. He saw him die! The One that he loved, he saw Him die! He saw it! He saw that soldier go up to him on the cross and drive a big spear into His side. Oh, it was such a clear picture in his mind, it was horrible, and he couldn't think about anything else.

Days went by. It seemed like a long, long time went by. He spent a lot of time by himself. And then one day something happened. The brothers, the others came to him and said to him, "THOMAS, THOMAS, you'll never guess what happened. Where were you today, where were you? We were all gathered up there. We thought you were going to be gathered up there. Where were you? We were all together." He was just feeling bad, "Oh, I was just by myself, I was just thinking." "We want to tell you, we saw Yahshua!!!!" "You saw Yahshua? I saw Yahshua too — He died. I saw, I saw them put those nails in His hand and I saw them put that spear in His side." "We saw Yahshua! He came back to life from the dead!! He appeared to us! Yes, He appeared to us!!" Thomas said, "Unless I could put my hands right on the holes in His hand and on the hole in His side from that spear, I won't believe it — I know He died." "Believe Thomas, believe, believe us." But Thomas stayed firm on what he said. [He's not believing; what's going to happen to Thomas?]

A few days went by; actually a whole week went by. But this time his brothers wouldn't let him stay by himself. His brothers were good friends. He wanted to go over and sit by himself and be depressed, but they didn't let him. And then it was another night, about this night, and they were together in one place, and they closed the door. (They closed the door because they were still scared of what might happen to them.) And they were all together. And Thomas was there, just looking, thinking about how he didn't live up to what he said, he wasn't faithful, he didn't believe. Then he heard a voice that he recognized.

"Shalom," said the voice. Thomas looked up. There He was — Yahshua. And the first thing He did, He looked right at Thomas. He was really going to rebuke him, wasn't He? Really come down on him hard? Yahshua walked right over to him and then he said, "Taom, put your finger, here. Put your *finger* here. Look at my hands. Here, reach, my side, reach. Don't be faithless Taom, believe. Believe."

Wow, wow! What a kind Savior He is! Those words pierced his heart more than any sword could pierce it. Thomas *fell* down on his face in front of Yahshua, right down on his knees and he said, "My Master, my God!" He cried out, "My Master and my God." He really believed, didn't he? And Yahshua said, "Taom, because you've seen me you've believed. Blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed."

Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed. Have you seen? Did you ever put your hand in the hole of our Master's hand? No? Blessed are they who have not seen and yet believed. We need to learn from the life of our friend Thomas — a big lesson. He went through that so it would be written down and you all would never forget it. That's the story of Thomas. There's more about him, but I'll have to tell you another time.

Yoneq: We are going to see him someday.

ha-Emeq: I read in a history book about Thomas. They don't really know what happened to him, but it's been passed down that later, Thomas got to do what he really wanted to do. Because he said, "Let's go die with Him," and he didn't do it, remember? But once he really believed, he had double faith, because he really listened and he really brought the good news to a lot of people, and he's recorded to have died, been killed as a martyr, to have died for standing up for Yahshua. So he didn't do it right then, but later he did do what was in his heart to do. Because then he had the power to do it

I wonder how glad he is now that he did that, that he was not a coward.

Which would you rather be, one of those who have seen Him, or one who has never seen and yet believed?

Which one would you chose to be?

Havah: This story makes me think of how much our Master saw our hearts. So many people don't believe because they say there's not any evidence. But if Thomas' heart was different, he could have touched those holes and still not believed. But in Thomas' weakness, our Father still honored his heart. He made a way for him to believe. Our Father will make a way for us to believe, no matter what our condition is.

ha-Emeq: When I was reading about Thomas today I saw how he was and I wanted to be like him. Somehow, the way he was was so good for us. Because just a little bit earlier in Breaking of Bread when he was sitting there with our Master, and our Master was talking and said, "Don't let your heart be troubled or afraid because if you believe..." And you know their hearts were troubled because of all that was going on. And then He said, "I'm going to prepare a place for you." And Thomas didn't understand what He was talking about. "And then I'm going to come again and I'm going to receive you. Where I am, there you will be. And you know the way, you know where I'm going, you know the way." And Thomas didn't know what He was talking about. Everyone else was sitting there as if they understood everything. But he was so real, he just said, "We don't know where you're going, and we don't know the way to get there. How can we know? I don't know what you're talking about." But he wanted to know. And because he didn't have any kind of intimidation, he could say it. And because he did that, you know what our Master did? He said that sentence, "I am the way, the truth and the life whoever comes to the Father comes through me." It was because he said, "Hey, I don't know the way, I don't know what you're talking about. What way? where?" And our Master responded. And we never would have had that sentence if Thomas hadn't asked. He was a really real person. Then, right after that, Philip got courage because Thomas had asked that and then Philip asked Him a question and said, "Show us the Father." And our Master said, "Philip have I been with you so long and you don't know, anyone who's seen me has seen the Father." They were real, real people, not religious people. I want to be like Taom. Because Yahshua loved him.

Bahirah: I was really thankful for the story because I learned a little bit more about our Master Yahshua. It really touched me when our Master came to Thomas and he hadn't believed, he had said, "I'll believe it when I see it," and He came to him and said, "Here." You know, He just gave it to him. He came right to him and He just *helped* him. He came to help him to believe. And it made me love our Master so much more to know that that's his character and that's the character of our Father, that He just comes right to us to help us.

I'm thankful that's who our Savior is.

ha-Emeq: That encouraged me because that's what I wanted to communicate.

When Yoneq was talking about that song that we were singing before, "In the Midst of Agony and Misery,"

some of us know it as Gidon's song because when he was about 15 years old, I remember seeing Gidon and thinking, "If he just knows that Yahshua loves him, he could be set free and have meaning for his life." He was so into himself and intimidated. But that intimidation came out like he was some kind of tough guy, you know, sitting over in a corner not saying anything. That's why Yoneq would have him sing that song. He could play the guitar and sing, that was not a problem, but he was just so held back and intimidated. That kind of thing just brings death to us. That's why there's always so much exhortation to be flowing channels, to let the life flow in you, but intimidation is what kills. And I thought Thomas was an example because he just said it, he wasn't worried, he was sitting there and he didn't understand. Even if he said the wrong thing, even if he didn't understand, he just opened himself up. I'm thankful for him and for Yahshua's response to him. So you don't have to be scared, there's no reason to be afraid of Yahshua or of people because his response brought life. But if you're held back, then it brings death — nothing.

Kepha (of Gad): I heard that story in Christianity and it made me not want to be like Thomas, but to be exactly what he wasn't — to hide behind intimidation and things like that. But tonight it made me so thankful for Thomas and how his character was. Before, what our Master said was portrayed as a rebuke to him, when He said, "Put your hand in my hand, etc." But that wasn't our Master's heart. Our Master was just explaining through love to him because He wanted him to believe, He had compassion on him, He knew his heart. I was so thankful that we're being set free from these wrong views of what the Father's character is. Our Father's heart is for us.

Tom (from Gad): appreciated in Thomas that even though he wasn't the most optimistic person, his heart was that he said, "Let's go and die with him." But he wasn't able to do it then. But later he got the opportunity, later our Master showed him the way, that it was following Him.

If you love the world, the love of the Father has *never* been poured out in your heart. We are learning what the world is. We have been *saved* from the world, from this wicked generation. If you do love the world, you need to repent and receive Yahshua because the commandment is this: Do not love the world; if you love the world, the love of the Father is not in you. Whoever says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments is a liar. A liar's final destination is the lake of fire. It is because they claim to know Yahshua but they love the world. It is impossible to love the world and love Yahshua at the same time.

[In the room:]

Our rejoicing will exceed the praise of the angels even though we have the flesh, because we are going to overcome the flesh. And it will startle the nations. It will be the result of the agony of His soul. He will see it. We will have a greater effect on the world than the first church — go beyond it and bring about our Master's return, singing with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, lifting up our voice like a trumpet.

If I do not treat you like I treat Yahshua, I'm a hypocrite. We must discern the Body — the Body houses the Spirit

Your Father is my Father, our brother is Yahshua. We are not ashamed to call Him our Master, our Sovereign, and He is not ashamed to call us brothers. We have total respect for Him and for the bread and wine. It is not the only time we eat His flesh and drink His blood — we do it all week. We have to (Jn 6:53-58) be willing to forgive and to participate in His body.

We came to birth by revelation and we live by revelation. Faith is revelation. Apart from Him I can do nothing.

That is a great revelation to have. Therefore I have to abide in the vine, and if I do not, there will be no fruit. Therefore each one of us must have that revelation, or else we are in the flesh. We must be totally dependent on Him.

We came to birth by faith, and we continue to live by faith. Faith is revelation. If we have faith, we have what it takes to continue to be obedient. The gospel reveals to us what we have to do to be saved by Him and then it reveals to us what we have to do to obey Him.

We are the joy that was set before Him.

Ben David: When He suffered for us, it might have seemed like it was wasted, but He did it and it wasn't. When we are faced with the decision to lay down our lives and pour out our lives, it must seem like a waste, but by faith we can do it knowing that it's not a waste.

We are His inheritance. We are the very purpose for which He died on the cross. So it is fitting for us to pour out our lives so His joy may be completed someday. When He has total preeminence in our lives, He is going to come back (Col 1:18). When He became our King, we were transferred out of the other kingdom and into His kingdom. 1 Pet 2:9 is what those chosen people will do. And if we do not do that, we are not them.

ha-Emeq: If it would only dawn on us that we *are* the chosen ones, those royal ones. It would be so wonderful if it would just see it. But there is a dark thing over us (it's the kingdom of darkness) keeping us from realizing we are chosen.

Heb 3:6 — We have to hold on to that true pride, that boast, that we are His sons. This is a positive boast. We are that house *if* we hold fast to that confidence, that boast. We are that house. Lk 1:33 said that he came to rule over that house. He has been ruling over that house for 1,900 years even though it is not on earth. He has been ruling over it in heaven, since the overcomers are there. But now it is being restored here on earth. *“Your will be done here on earth as it is in heaven. Your kingdom come here on earth as it is in heaven.”* So therefore there has to be a demonstration on earth. The kingdom is going on there but who knows about it. There must be a demonstration. He had to take the kingdom away from old Israel and give it to a nation who would produce the fruit of it (Mt 21:43). If we are connected to the vine, we will produce the fruit of it.