

|45| And, not having found him, they returned to Yerushalayim, looking for him.

|46| And it came about, that after shlosa yamim (three days) they found him in the courts of the Beis HaMikdash, sitting in the midst of the rabbis, both listening to them and asking them she'elot (kashes, questions).

|47| And all the ones listening to him where amazed at his binah and at his teshuvot (answers).

|48| And when his horim (parents) saw him, they were astounded, and his Em (mother) said to him, Beni, why did you do thus to us? Hinei, your abba and I were anxiously looking for you.

|49| And he said to them, Why is it that you were looking for me? Did you not have daas that I must be in the Beis Avi [*i.e., dealing with His affairs*]?

|50| And they did not have binah of the dvar which he spoke to them.

|51| And he went down with them, and they came to Natzeret; and he continued in mishmaat (obedience) to his horim (parents). And his Em (mother) was treasuring all these things in her lev (heart).

|52| And Yehoshua kept increasing in chochmah  
VGADEL VATOV GAM IM  
HASHEM VGAM IM  
ANASHIM (and stature and favor with Hashem and men, SHMUEL ALEF 2:26).

**3** In the shenat chamesh esreh (15th year) of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, while Pontius Pilate was governing Yehudah, when Herod [Antipas] was tetrarch of the Galil, and when Philip the brother of Herod Antipas was tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis, and at the same time Lysanias was

tetrarch of Abilene,

|2| And when, during the same historical period, Anan and Caiapha were Kohanim Gedolim, then it was that the dvar Hashem came to [*the kohen-navi*] Yochanan Ben Zecharyah bamidbar (in the wilderness).

|3| And Yochanan went into all the surrounding region of the Yarden preaching a tevilah of teshuva for the selichat avon,

|4| As it has been written in the sefer divrei Yeshayah Hanavi, KOL KOREY BAMIDBAR (A voice of one shouting in the wilderness, YESHAYAH 40:3): Prepare the Derech Hashem (the Way of the L-rd). Make his paths straight!

|5| KOL GEY YINNASE VKHOL HAR VGIVAH YISHPALU (Every valley will be filled in and every mountain and hill will be leveled off), VHAYAH HEAKOV LEMISHOR VHARKHASIM LVIKAH (The crooked will be made straight, the rough paths made into smooth roads);

|6| VRAU CHOL BASAR ES YESHUAT ELOHEINU (and all basar will see the salvation of our G-d). [YESHAYAH 40:3-5; TEHILLIM 98:2; YESHAYAH 42:16; 52:10]

|7| Therefore, Yochanan was saying to the multitudes coming out to have the mikveh mayim's tevilah supervised by him, You banim of nachashim, who warned you to flee from the charon af [Hashem] habah (the coming burning wrath of Hashem)?

|8| Therefore, produce p'ri tov l'teshuva (fruit worthy of repentance), and do not begin to presume within yourselves, saying, We have the zechut Avot (merit of the Fathers) of Avraham Avinu, for, I say to you, that Hashem is able from

these avanim (stones) to raise up banim to Avraham Avinu.

|9| And already the ax is laid at the shoresh haetzim (the root of the trees). Therefore, every etz not producing pri tov is cut down and is thrown into the Eish.

|10| And the multitudes were questioning him, saying, What then should we do?

|11| And in reply, Yochanan was saying to them, Let the one having two kaftans share with the one having none, and let the one having okhel (food) do likewise.

|12| Now came also mochesim (tax collectors) to receive the tevilah of teshuva, and they said to him, Rabbi, what should we do?

|13| And Yochanan said to them, Collect nothing more than the amount having been commanded you.

|14| And chaiyalim (soldiers) as well were asking him, What should we do also? And Yochanan said to them, Extort kesef from no one, and be satisfied with your loin (wages).

|15| As the Am [*Berit*] were filled with expectation, and all were wondering in their levavot (hearts) concerning Yochanan, whether perhaps he might be the Moshiach,

|16| Yochanan answered everyone, saying, I give you a tevilah with a mikveh mayim, but Hu HaBah (He Who Comes, *i.e., Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach*) has more chozek (strength) than me; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will give you a tevilah with the Ruach Hakodesh and with Eish.

|17| The winnowing fork is in his hand to clean out his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his storehouse, but the