



## **TOLMM WEEKLY NEWSLETTER for 2-17-24 TERUMAH**

### ***Ministry News***

***IF YOU HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST YOU WOULD LIKE PEOPLE ON THE LIST TO PRAY FOR YOU CAN SEND THEM TO US AT [TOLMM@ETZ-CHAYIM.ORG](mailto:TOLMM@ETZ-CHAYIM.ORG) OR BY TEXT MESSAGE TO 575 644-7706 AND I WILL SEND THEM BY EMAIL ONLY.***

Remember that you can support the work of Tree of Life Messianic Ministries with a donation made via PayPal or by check to PO Box 467, Organ, NM 88052. Your donation helps our continued outreach to inmates and the time it takes to put this Newsletter together.

**Donate**



**Tree of Life Messianic Ministries is a 501 C-3 non-profit. To donate go to [etz-chayim.org](http://etz-chayim.org) and click on the PayPal or Venmo Link.**

**Tree of Life Messianic Ministries primarily focuses on its Prison Ministry and helping form groups in the prisons. TOLMM also seeks to help Home Groups and offers a covering for Home Groups and the combined experience of leadership**

from Rabbi Philip Hammond and Rabbi Mordecai Silver. Group leaders can receive recognition as Elders under TOLMM, which will help in an advisory role. Your support is needed for the Prison Ministry due to continuing rising costs. We now have an Affiliate in Australia.

## ***HOME GROUPS, CONGREGATIONS AND PEOPLE SEEKING FELLOWSHIP..***

Shawn Warren lives in Arizona. If you know of someone who is looking for a group in that area, please let me know and I will send the information to Shawn. Elder Shawn Warren is an Elder affiliated with TOLMM and helps with one-on-one correspondence with inmates in our Prison Ministry Outreach. He also encourages people to contact us about affiliating with TOLMM through Home Groups and our help to group leaders.

Gabriel Martinez has a home group in El Paso. If interested let me know and I will send him the information. Gabriel is an Elder affiliated with TOLMM as is his Home Group, Ohr Ha'Brit Messianic Torah Assembly.

There is a Home Group in Las Cruces. For more information email [tolmm@etz-chayim.org](mailto:tolmm@etz-chayim.org).

Michael and Gayle Michelucci are forming a new Home Group in Idaho.

Rabbi Phillip Hammond has a Zoom Bible Study and a Erev Shabbat and Shabbat Service on Zoom Friday evening and Saturday morning at 11:00am. Rabbi Hammond is in Australia and the time difference would be 5:00pm Friday Mountain Time. Rabbi Hammond is looking into starting a men's group focused in the United States. You can contact Rabbi Hammond at [Philip@etz-chayim.org](mailto:Philip@etz-chayim.org). Rabbi Hammond is now affiliated with Rabbi Mordecai Silver and his ministry, Tree of Life Messianic Ministries. Check out Rabbi Hammond at <https://www.etz-chayim.org/australia-affiliate/>.

We thank you for your support. Blessings in Messiah Yeshua, Rabbi Mordecai Silver, Ph. D., and Rabbi Philip Hammond, Ph.D. and our team

## ***General News***

TO SEARCH FOR MY BOOKS ON AMAZON ENTER “**BOOKS BY RAV MORDECAI SILVER**”. MINE ARE AVAILABLE IN PRINT FORMAT ONLY. I HAVE TWO NEW BOOKS ON AMAZON: RAV SHA’UL AND REFLECTIONS ON TORAH. TO SEE MORDECAI’S BOOKS, GO TO: [HTTPS://WWW.ETZ-CHAYIM.ORG/SHOP-OUR-STORE/PRINT-AND-KINDLE-BOOKS/](https://www.etz-chayim.org/shop-our-store/print-and-kindle-books/)

**RABBI MORDECAI HAS A NEW BOOK AVAILABLE. IT IS A SPANISH TRANSLATION OF THE TORAH IS VALID: THE COVENANT OF ISRAEL. IT’S AVAILABLE ON AMAZON.**

FOR RABBI HAMMOND’S BOOK, **HIS PERFECT GRACE**, GO TO AMAZON.COM AS WELL.

CHECK OUT RABBI MORDECAI SILVER’S 3 YEARS OF VIDEO TEACHINGS ON THE TORAH PORTIONS AND FESTIVALS ON YOUTUBE.

WE HAVE 8 PRISON AFFILIATES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES.

# **MESSIANIC TEACHING ON THE WEEKLY TORAH, HAFTARAH, AND APOSTOLIC SCRIPTURE PORTIONS...**



Rabbi Mordecai Silver [tolmm@etz-chayim.org](mailto:tolmm@etz-chayim.org)

## **MESSAGE FOR 2-17-24 TERUMAH**

**TERUMAH / OFFERING**

**Shemoth 25:1-27:19**

**1 Kings 5:26-6:13**

**Mattiyahu-Matthew: 28:16-20**

***And they shall make Me a Set-apart Place, and I shall  dwell  in their midst.***

07931 shakan {shaw-kan'} sha-**chan-te**

⌘ a primitive root [apparently akin (by transmission) to 07901 through the idea of lodging]; TWOT - 2387; v

⌘ AV - dwell 92, abide 8, place 7, remain 5, inhabit 4, rest 3, set 2, continue 1, dwellers 1, dwelling 1, misc 5; 129

⌘ 1) to settle down, abide, dwell, tabernacle, reside 1a) (Qal) 1a1) to settle down to abide 1a2) to abide, dwell, reside 1b) (Piel) 1b1) to make settle down, establish 1b2) to make or cause to dwell 1c) (Hiphil) 1c1) to lay, place, set, establish, settle, fix 1c2) to cause to dwell or abide

Consider the connection between God wanting to dwell among His people as being connected to when God dwelled among His people in the Garden of Eden.

**Gen.** - Bereisheet 3:8 *And they heard the sound of Adonai Elohim walking about in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of Adonai Elohim among the trees of the garden.*

**Exodus - Shemoth 25:20:** *And the keruvim shall be spreading out their wings above, covering the lid of atonement with their wings, with their faces toward each other, the faces of the keruvim turned toward the lid of atonement.*

**Verse 22:** *And I shall meet with you there, and from above the lid of atonement, from between the two keruvim which are on the ark of the Witness, I shall speak to you all that which I command you concerning the children of Yisrael.*

03742 כַּרְוִיִם {ker-oob'}

⌘ of uncertain derivation; TWOT - 1036; n m

⌘ AV - cherubims 64, cherub 27; 91

⌘ 1) cherub, cherubim (pl) 1a) an angelic being 1a1) as guardians of Eden 1a2) as flanking God's throne 1a3) as an image form hovering over the Ark of the Covenant 1a4) as the chariot of Jehovah (fig.)

05715 אֵדוּת {ay-dooth'}

**'Ay-det' (correct transliteration)**

⌘ from 05707; TWOT - 1576f; n f

⌘ AV - testimony 55, witness 4; 59

⌘ 1) testimony

03727 כַּפֹּרֶת {kap-po'-reth} kop-or-et (**correct transliteration**)

⌘ from 03722; TWOT - 1023c; n f

⌘ AV - mercy seat 26, mercy seatward 1; 27

⌘ 1) mercy-seat, place of atonement 1a) the golden plate of propitiation on which the High Priest sprinkled the seat 7 times on the Day of Atonement symbolically reconciling Jehovah and His chosen people 1a1) the slab of gold on top of the ark of the covenant which measured 2.5 by 1.5 cubits; on

it and part of it were the two golden cherubim facing each other whose outstretched wings came together above and constituted the throne of God

***1 Kings - 1 Sovereigns 6:11-13: And the word of Adonai came to Shelomoh - Solomon, saying, This House which you are building - if you walk in My laws, and do My right-rulings, and shall guard all My commands and walk in them, then I shall confirm My word with you, which I spoke to your father David, and shall dwell in the midst of the children of Yisrael, and not forsake My people Yisrael.***

***Matthew - Mattiyahu 28:16-20: And the eleven taught ones went away into Galil, to the mountain which Y'shua had appointed for them. And when they saw Him, they bowed to Him, but some doubted. And Y'shua came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make taught ones of all the nations, immersing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Set-apart Spirit, teaching them to guard all that I have commanded you. And see, I am with you always, until the end of the age." Amen.***

My Scripture version has a footnote here: All the taught ones coming from all nations, from the Yehudim, are to be taught to observe all that Y'shua had commanded.

So, what do we see here, in all these verses from Genesis on through to Mark? We see God's desire is to be able to dwell among His people. To be able to walk in the cool of the day as He did in the Garden, sharing things with Adam and his wife.

But He also desires that we live according to His commands. The teachings that He gave to Moses on Mt. Sinai. The teachings that He re-affirmed to Solomon in 1 Kings. The teachings re-affirmed by Y'shua to His Shaliachim - Apostles in Matthew.

And Y'shua went one step beyond. He instructed that His students were to go to all the nations. No longer were God's teachings to be the sole property of the Jewish people. God was going to take His Word beyond Israel.

And once again we see that nothing in the Brit Chadashah - New Testament was new. We see that Y'shua's instructions to His students were found in

the Tanach - the Old Testament. So, we see the continuing connection between the Old and New. We see the fulfillment of Old Testament Scripture in the New.

God's Word never ends. His teachings continue, His desire to be with us never stops. He is a Father who loves His children so much, that death could not stop Him.

**In Revelation we see the completion of God's work.**

***Rev. 21:3, 6: And I heard a loud voice from the heaven saying, "See, the Booth of Elohim is with men, and He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and Elohim Himself shall be with them and be their Elohim." And He said to me, "It is done! I am the A and the Z, the Beginning and the End. To the one who thirsts I shall give of the fountain of the water of life without payment."***

**4633 skene {skay-nay'}**

☒ apparently akin to 4632 and 4639; TDNT - 7:368,1040; n f

☒ AV - tabernacle 19, habitation 1; 20

☒ 1) tent, tabernacle, (made of green boughs, or skins or other materials) 2) of that well known movable temple of God after the pattern of which the temple at Jerusalem was built

**4637 skenoo {skay-no'-o}**

☒ from 4636; TDNT - 7:385,1040; v

☒ AV - dwell 5; 5

☒ 1) to fix one's tabernacle, have one's tabernacle, abide (or live) in a tabernacle (or tent), tabernacle 2) to dwell

**1372 dipsao {dip-sah'-o}**

☒ from a variation of 1373; TDNT - 2:226,177; v

☒ AV - thirst 10, be thirsty 3, be athirst 3; 16

☒ 1) to suffer thirst, suffer from thirst 1a) figuratively, those who are said to thirst who painfully feel their want of, and eagerly long for, those things by which the soul is refreshed, supported, strengthened

**4077 pege {pay-gay'}**

☒ probably from 4078 (through the idea of gushing plumply); TDNT - 6:112,837; n f

- ⌘ AV - fountain 8, well 4; 12
- ⌘ 1) fountain, spring 2) a well fed by a spring

### **5204 hudor {hoo'-dore}**

⌘ genitive case, hudatos {hoo'-dat-os}, etc., from the base of 5205; TDNT - 8:314,1203;

⌘ AV - water 79; 79

⌘ 1) water 1a) of water in rivers, in fountains, in pools 1b) of the water of the deluge 1c) of water in any of the earth's repositories 1d) of water as the primary element, out of and through which the world that was before the deluge, arose and was compacted 1e) of the waves of the sea 1f) fig. used of many peoples

⌘ 1) life 1a) the state of one who is possessed of vitality or is animate 1b) every living soul 2) life 2a) of the absolute fullness of life, both essential and ethical, which belongs to God, and through him both to the hypostatic "logos" and to Christ in whom the "logos" put on human nature 2b) life real and genuine, a life active and vigorous, devoted to God, blessed, in the portion even in this world of those who put their trust in Christ, but after the resurrection to be consummated by new accessions (among them a more perfect body), and to last forever.

⌘ For Synonyms see entry 5821

### **1432 dorean {do-reh-an'}**

⌘ AV - freely 6, without a cause 1, in vain 1, for nought 1; 9

⌘ 1) freely, undeservedly

***He has so much, and He wants to give it to us, without strings attached. Well just one. We need to believe that Y'shua is the Messiah, the Son of God and God. And to follow His ways.***

***Is He really asking that much of us for what He wants to give in return?***

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**We include a Traditional Torah Commentary and my Messianic Commentary. The reason for this is so you can see a Messianic Perspective and a Traditional Jewish one. Remember to use discernment in approaching Traditional Jewish teachings as they do not recognize Yeshua as the Messiah. There are various ideas in traditional Jewish circles about the Messiah and even that there is no Messiah, the thinking in Reform Judaism. So, please be careful to balance the teachings.**



We do not agree with the Jewish position on Yeshua, but Believers need to know the Jewish thinking on Yeshua and not buy into this thinking and forsake faith in our Messiah. For those who say they would never do this, we must beg to differ, because we have seen it over our lives as Jewish Believer's in Yeshua. We have been Believer's in Messiah Yeshua for decades. We have seen a lot and had many discussions with our fellow Jews and non-Jews who ultimately turned away from Yeshua because they steeped themselves in Jewish teachings. One does not come out of either traditional Judaism or Christianity and come into the Messianic walk, and then going back, or into, traditional Judaism. *There are many good things in Judaism but denying Yeshua as Messiah is not one of them.* Berachot (Blessings), Rabbi Mordecai Silver, Ph.D., and Rabbi Philip Hammond, Ph.D.

## **A TRADITIONAL JEWISH PARASHAH AND HAFTARAH COMMENTARY**



### **Parashat Terumah: Summary**

#### **Exodus 25:1-27:19**

***God instructs Moses to collect gifts from the Israelites in order to build a Tabernacle so that God can dwell among the people; God describes to Moses the vessels and structures that comprise the Tabernacle.***

God has just told Moses “to come to the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, to receive God’s Commandments.” Moses goes up the mountain, and a cloud comes to cover it, hiding the mountain completely. On this mountain, within the presence of the Lord, Moses remained for forty days and nights.

God first instructs Moses how to fashion a Dwelling Place, a sanctuary for God’s presence.

“In this sanctuary,” God says, “the Israelites are to bring me gifts.”

The gifts can be of any kind from any person whose heart moves them in a giving way. In this sanctuary, there shall be oil for the light and spices for the sweet incense and anointing oil.

God continues, “And let the people make Me this sanctuary so that I may dwell among them. This is the pattern of how the Tabernacle and furniture is to be made.

“The Ark must be a precise blend of acacia wood, two and a half cubits long, a cubit and a half wide, and a cubit and a half high. Overlay this Tabernacle with pure gold and golden rings and poles to carry the Ark. You shall make a cover of pure gold with two gold Cherubim on both ends of the cover.

“Into the ark, you shall you put the Testimony which I, the Lord, will give you. There I will meet with you at appointed times. I will speak with you from above the Cover, from between the two cherubim on the Ark of the Testimony.

“Make a table of acacia wood for the Ark and cover it with pure gold with a gold crown all around. Then adorn it with bowls, ladles, jars and jugs made of gold. Make also a pure gold menorah with six almond-blossom type branches and seven lamps to give light.

“In the Tabernacle, enclose the Dwelling Place with ten curtains of fine twined linen of blue, purple and scarlet. Make the tabernacle with wooden planks and silver rings and stakes of copper.”

## **Parashat Terumah: Discussion Questions**

**1) God instructs Moses how to make a sanctuary for God’s presence. Can you describe different kinds of sanctuaries that are filled with God’s presence?**

**2) Why is God so precise on the details of constructing the sanctuary and ark and tabernacle? What difference does it make what these look like and how they are made?**

**3) Describe the most spiritual sanctuary you have visited. What made that sanctuary the most spiritual for you?**

**4) In the sanctuary, God requests gift offerings of any kind from any person whose heart moves them in a giving way. What kind of gift offerings do you bring God from your heart?**

## **Haftarah for Terumah**

### **1 Kings 5:26-6:13**

***How to build a Temple: Follow the instruction book.***

***Part of this Haftarah (Kings 1 8:2-21) is also read on the second day of Sukkot.***

In the Haftarah for Miketz a few weeks ago, Solomon was granted wisdom. The Bible takes great pains to repeatedly point out this event and does so at the introduction of every episode in which Solomon's wisdom plays a relevant role. This week's Haftarah opens with a reminder: "The Lord had given Solomon wisdom, as He had promised him" ([Kings I 5:26](#)).

The narrative goes on to tell of the peace treaty between Israel and King Hiram of Tyre, who was to become one of Solomon's greatest allies. Together, they would establish one of the most wide-ranging trade routes in the world at the time.

The story continues by outlining Solomon's plan to construct the Temple. In Parashat Terumah, the Torah outlines the plans and layout for the Mishkan, the Tabernacle in which the Ark was carried through the desert. Similarly, the haftarah for Terumah details, step by step, how many people were used in each job for the Temple's construction. "Solomon employed 70,000 who carried the loads and 80,000 quarry workers in the hill country" (5:29) it reports and proceeds to tell how the builders "shaped and made ready the timber and stones for the building of the Temple" (5:32).

The exact dimensions of the Temple, its windows, lattice, the winding staircase that led to the second and third stories, and even the dimensions of the porch are given. The text also gives details of the instruments utilized in the Temple's construction: "no hammer or ax or any other iron tool" (6:7) was allowed to be used.

When the Temple was completed, Solomon received a prophecy from God: "If you obey My statutes and carry out My rules of justice and take care to keep all My commandments, I will fulfill My promise, the one I made to your father David, and I will dwell among the people of Israel, and never forsake My people Israel" (6:12-13).



## ***From the Desk of Rabbi Philip Hammond. Ph.D.***

Rabbi Hammond can be contacted at – [Philip@etz-chayim.org](mailto:Philip@etz-chayim.org)

### **Tzav - Command**

#### **Tzav – צ – Command.**

- As we enter into the coming Pesach and Unleavened bread moed/appointed time, let us be reminded of the importance and blessings that surround this moed.
- This weeks Parashah and haftarah point the way.
- Leviticus 6:8-8:36 Jeremiah 7:21-8:3 & 9:23-24.
- Read Leviticus and you will notice it is all about offerings for sin, guilt, peace, instruction for priests and so on. However we are going to Jeremiah:
- <sup>21</sup> Thus says ADONAI-Tzva'ot, the God of Israel: "Add your burnt offerings to your sacrifices and eat the meat!<sup>22</sup> For on the day that I brought your fathers out of the land of Egypt I did not speak to them nor did I command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices;<sup>23</sup> but I explicitly commanded them: 'Obey My voice and I will be your God to you and you will be My people. Walk in all the ways that I command you that it may go well with you.'

- <sup>24</sup> But they did not listen or pay attention. Instead they followed their own counsel, in the stubbornness of their evil heart. They have gone backward and not forward, <sup>25</sup> from the day your fathers left the land of Egypt until today. Although I sent to you all My servants the prophets, daily and persistently, <sup>26</sup> they did not listen to Me or pay attention. Rather, they stiffened their neck, doing more evil than their fathers. <sup>27</sup> “When you tell them all these things, they will not listen to you. When you call to them, they will not answer you. <sup>28</sup> So you will say to them, ‘This nation has not obeyed the voice of ADONAI their God or received correction. Truth has perished and is cut off from their mouth. Jeremiah 7:21-28 [TLV]
- Unfortunately not much has changed – we still qualify as people of disobedience ...

- Consider the following:
- “I am ADONAI your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. <sup>3</sup> “You shall have no other gods before Me. Exodus 20:2-3. [TLV]
- Bondage/Ebed עֶבֶד = Doing work for another's will. A servant ...
- Before Me/Al-Panie על-פְּנֵי We have 2 Hebrew words:
- על comes from עלה = Rise up and develop. Ascend, lift up ...
- פְּנֵי = This word is intriguing. It is translated as Rubies/Pearls in: Job 28:18. Proverbs 3:15, 8:11, 20:15 & 31:10. It is associated with פִּנָּה = Pinnacle, chief, Corner stones @ Judges 20:2, 1 Samuel 14:38. Psalm 118:22. Isaiah 28:16
- Ignore the WORD of our Father, and you will end up as in Jeremiah 7:24 – going backwards.

- These people turned their back on YHVH who brought them out of Egypt, and focused on other gods and idols.
- Now wouldn't you think, that the One who rescued you out of the clutches of Mitzrayim, out of the horrible world of slavery/ebed to the pharaoh, would actually receive some thanks for doing so. After all only YHVH could have performed such a rescue. Spend a little time reflecting upon these things, as you consider what Yeshua has done for you.
- This same Elohim not only performed these wonderful miracles to rescue His people, but He sent His only unique/begotten Son to die on a tree so you could be rescued from Mitzrayim.

- YET what thanks does He receive? Our religious institutions are over run with the worshipping of various and different types of Idols – declaring it is of God – Talk about taking His name in vain. Taking His name in vain is not yelling out Jesus when one hits their thumb with the hammer, no it is misrepresenting Him.
- How do you misrepresent YHVH? Well one way is to put “words” in His mouth, telling lies about Him, but claiming they are truth. It is attributing that which is sin, to Him.
- Some Pharisees did such with Yeshua:
- “But the Pharisees said, ‘He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons.’” Matthew 9:34

- We should be giving constant thanks to our Father for rescuing us from certain death.
- <sup>11</sup> “Now this is the *Torah* of the sacrifice of fellowship offerings which may be offered to *ADONAI*. <sup>12</sup> If he brings it for a thanksgiving, then he is to present with the sacrifice of thanksgiving *matzah* cakes mixed with oil, *matzah* wafers anointed with oil, and fine flour cakes mixed with oil. Leviticus 7:11-12 [TLV]
- This passage of scripture was chosen simply to remind us of the *up* and coming *Moed* – it has the word *Matzah*. However, it does show that there is an appropriate way to give thanks to our Father. The *blue* print is available for all – His *Torah/Instructions* ... why do we ignore them???

- As we draw to a close on this wonderful Sabbath gathering, let us consider the following:
- <sup>5</sup> *Test yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Examine yourselves! Or don't you know yourselves—that Messiah Yeshua is in you? Unless of course you failed the test.* 2 Corinthians 13:5
- Paul throws out a command, and a challenge. Test yourselves ...
- *Peirazo* = Have a good look and see if you are still what you were. Check to see if you have or still are evil and in sin. Doing that which is against the will of God.
- *Dokimazo* = Prove, approve, see if worthy, inspect what is good, @ Romans 12:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:21, 1 Timothy 3:10
- So, let us re-examine our faithfulness, and continue to shun evil, rebellion and sin – instead pursue righteousness, giving thanks to our Saviour Yeshua the Lamb – the Bread of life.
- There is no God...

# ***Jewish Practices***



## **FORGIVENESS**

### **How To Forgive Is Just as Important as When to Forgive**

***The Book of Micah offers a roadmap.***

Right now, somewhere, a toddler is melting down. A teenager slams a door. There are husbands and wives, annoyed and disappointed. There are neighbors and co-workers with grievances large and small. Each situation involves a breach in a relationship that will be repaired. Or it won't be.

The issue of forgiveness will arise at some point in most relationships. We need accountability as well as kindness, so it can be hard to know when forgiveness is right and when it is just "giving in." It's a challenge, especially, to teach children the importance of their own good behavior while helping them develop a flexible, forgiving attitude toward others.

Acknowledging our own wrongdoing can be painful, but Jewish rituals, especially around the High Holidays, provide a helpful framework. There's less explicit guidance about granting forgiveness, even though it's central to the mitzvot of not seeking revenge or bearing grudges ( [Leviticus 19:17-18](#) ). Judaism teaches us to forgive when a sincere apology is offered. But how?

If we look carefully, Judaism does seek to balance justice and mercy in daily life. We can learn a lot from a careful reading of the famous lines from the Book of [Micah \(6:8\)](#) in which God commands: "do justice (*asot mishpat*), love loving-kindness (*ahavat chesed*), and walk humbly with your God (*v'hatzneah lechet im Eloheicha*)."

To "do justice" means to take a specific action, related in the Hebrew to something like a court case. It's necessary, but when it's finished, it's finished. By contrast, "loving-kindness" is unbounded by time, situation or relationship.



Embracing loving-kindness means you are not only generous-hearted, but you love being that way. This approach to life can protect you from staying stuck in your hurt and anger, lashing out vengefully and holding grudges. It means that even in the face of strong emotions, you can reserve a part of your mind for caring interest in another person.

When my now-adult children experienced overwhelming teenage anger over parental offenses, real or perceived, I would sometimes say, “Remember: I am a person.” Restoring their awareness of the other person helped take the edge off their anger and freed them up to be more forgiving. This wasn’t about calming down in order to be loving and thoughtful — it was about the power of love to keep anger in perspective.

The recognition of the other person as human may limit the intense emotions that place your own feelings above anything or anyone else. Indeed, Jewish tradition teaches that overwhelming anger can be akin to idolatry, in this case the narcissistic worship of the self.

“[O]ur sages said: ‘whoever gets angry is as if he worships idols’ (Zohar Korach daf 179, Rambam Deos 2:3, Shab.105b). This person gets angry at anything that is done against his will. He becomes filled with wrath till ... his judgment is lost. ... A man like this would destroy the whole world if he had the ability” (R. Hayim Luzatto, [Mesillat Yesharim, 11](#)).

Anger’s enormous power is not easily contained by rational thought. But its destructive force can be tempered by love, the mitzvah at the very center of Jewish practice. In fact, while Leviticus doesn’t specify a ritual to resolve grudges, it includes “love your neighbor as yourself” ([Leviticus 19:18](#)) in the same passage, directly linking love to forgiveness.

The willingness to temper your own outrage and anger out of respect for the other has another implication: By focusing on the offender as a human being, you create the emotional conditions necessary for that person to take full responsibility and to make appropriate amends. It therefore increases the likelihood of both forgiveness (mercy) and some kind of reparations (justice). This all sounds beautiful. But when we are deeply hurt, how do we maintain that loving perspective?

This brings us to the third item in Micah’s list: “walking humbly with your God.” For those times it’s hardest to conjure loving thoughts on your own, this prescription provides a paradoxical answer. It connects humility and strength. When our resources feel depleted, and we recognize our own limits, we can find support by tapping into something greater than ourselves.

“Walking with God” signifies the placing of values above our personal desires and, perhaps, even a sense of personal connection to the Divine. Living like this promotes inner strength, and we may also receive social support from others who walk a similar path. These factors can make us less vulnerable to the insecurities that arise when we’re hurt, and, in turn, they make it easier to forgive.

The word *lechet*, Hebrew for “walk” or “go,” is a form of the word used when God told Abraham, *Lech lecha* (go forth). Each of us has a personal journey. It is a great gift to be invited

to walk that path with a sense of purpose and to draw strength from love, whether or not someone experiences that purpose, that love as related directly to God.

Focusing strongly on the question of when or whether to forgive makes us judges of the people who have offended us. By contrast, paying more attention to how we live and how we forgive can reinforce our sense of shared humanity and connectedness.

We can't resolve the basic tension between justice and mercy in the world, but we can transform the process of judgment and forgiveness by grounding them firmly in the context of a loving life.



## **In God's Image: B'tselem Elohim**

***Jewish texts teach that all humans are created in the image of God.***

***We are created in the image of God, if you will, and we are obliged to return the favor.***

I was recently on an overnight flight. A young woman who sat on my left was rather unfriendly. I ignored the slight until, by chance, I was actually introduced to her a few days later. "We've actually met," I said. "We sat next to each other on our flight over." Her face reddened. She was clearly embarrassed. "I had no idea it was you."

Many people have shared similar stories with me. They weren't treated like a someone until they were recognized as a someone. There's a saying out there: "Be careful how you treat people on the way up because you never know who you will meet on the way down." That

expression doesn't quite capture the dignity of what it means to be a human being but merely what it means to be politically expedient.

## Two Hasidic Tales

The best of such encounters is captured in two Hasidic tales. The first is about a pious, well-known but poorly dressed Hasidic rebbe who took a lengthy train ride to a town far away. He was subject to insult and verbal abuse from a base fellow in his train car. When the train finally came to a halt, the rebbe came off the platform to thousands of excited disciples who waited for his arrival.

The fellow in his car looked mortified as he stood beside the rebbe. "I'm so ashamed. I had no idea who you were. Please accept my apologies." The rebbe turned to him and said, "Don't apologize to me. Apologize to everyone else. When you insulted me, you did so because I was everyone else."

Another: A young man studying in a yeshiva went barefoot to the doorstep of a philanthropist. He knocked on the door and asked the man for the money to buy a pair of shoes. The philanthropist merely slammed the door in his face. Humiliated, the student went back to the *beit midrash*, the house of study. Over time, his hard work paid off, and he became a scholar of great repute. The very same philanthropist approached him many years later and asked if he could be his patron and publish his first book. The student-turned-scholar remembered this man's face and said in sadness, "No thanks. There was a time when you could have had me for a pair of shoes."

The quote is taken from his book *Seek My Face* in an essay about God's image. Looking back at his quote, we ask ourselves what it means to be created in God's image. It is not only a description of our creative powers; it is also a statement of responsibility for the way that we treat others. Do we see God in them? Do we recognize that all people are created in this image, not just famous people or people who can serve us in some way?

The author continues and elaborates on this responsibility: "The inner drive to imitate the ever-giving source of life calls forth in us an unceasing flow of love, generosity of spirit, and full acceptance, both of ourselves and of all God's creatures." In the ideal sense, if we truly believe we are all created in God's image we have to recognize everyone around us at all times. The Hasidic stories of these two men surface the rather superficial way that we so often acknowledge or ignore the existence of others.

Perhaps this explains the saying from *Pirkei Avot* (Ethics of the Fathers) that we are to greet everyone with a pleasant face. We shine upon others in order to help others shine and to validate their sense of self-worth. The worth of a person is not transactional; who are you that I should pay attention to you? The better question to ask when we withhold our attentions is: Who am I that I should ignore you?

**Hebrew - עֵבְרִי**

**Word (s) of the Week**

**Custom / מִנְהַג**

**Pronounced: meen-HAHG**

**Different communities can have shared *minhagim*, "customs," and individuals may also develop their own personal ones.**



## ***A Taste of Jewish Humor***

### **A Good Clean Lesson**

Rabbi Epstein received a call from a wealthy businessman who was interested in exploring Judaism but had many questions. He asked if Rabbi Epstein could pay him a visit at the office, which he obliged.

The next day, Rabbi Epstein pulled up to an enormous manufacturing facility which produced soaps and other household cleaners. The company president, Aaron Miller was there to greet him.

"Thank you for coming rabbi," Mr. Miller said. "Let's go for a walk, shall we?"

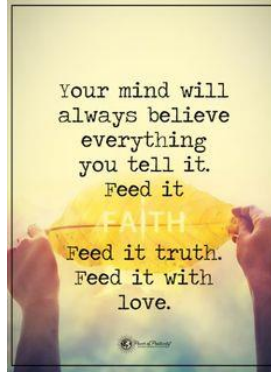
After some small talk Mr. Miller said, "Rabbi, please help me answer this question that I've been thinking about: what good is religion, really? Look at all the trouble and misery in the world! Even after thousands of years of religions teaching about goodness and truth and love and peace, there's still war and deceit and so many terrible things. If Judaism is true, why should this be?"

Rabbi Epstein just stroked his beard in thought.

They continued walking until he noticed a child playing in the gutter. Rabbi Epstein said, "Look at that child. You say that soap makes people clean but see the dirt on that youngster. Of what good is soap? With all the soap in the world, over all these years, the child is still filthy. I wonder how effective soap is, after all!"

**Mr. Miller, president of a soap company protested, "But Rabbi, soap can't do any good unless it is used!"**

**"Exactly," replied the Rabbi. "Exactly."**



## ***This is not your Bubbie's Chicken Soup Recipes shared by Cooks and Bakers***



### **Bubba's Easy Peach Cobbler Recipe**

***A tried-and-true favorite South Carolina cobbler recipe.***

Today, Sumter is a mid-sized city in the Midlands of South Carolina, but its history reveals that it was also home to some of the Palmetto State's earliest Jewish families. Sephardic family members became merchants and professionals after making their way inland from Charleston between 1815 and 1820. Later, during the mid-1800s, Jewish immigrants arrived from Germany and Prussia. Among them were members of the Levi and Barnett families. Starting out as merchants and farmers in rural Clarendon, Sumter and Lee Counties, they eventually made their way to the town of Sumter to open stores and continue farming. Later generations became professionals, but agriculture remained at the heart of the family business.

Henry D. Barnett — “Bubba,” the son of H. D. Barnett Sr. — came to farming naturally. His grandfather, B. J. Barnett, arrived in the country in the mid-1800s, opened a rural store, acquired acreage and began farming. After his duty during World War II, Bubba returned to



Sumter to take over the family farms. He and Patty Levi were married in 1950 and settled in the family home on Warren Street. Bubba's love for farming and interest in innovative crops led him to peach farming. He planted his first peach tree the year his oldest son was born. Barnett explained that a horticulturist urged him to experiment with peach crops because the underground water levels and contour of his land made it conducive to peach farming. The year was 1956. Barnett's Peaches grew to become one of the largest peach orchards in the state.

"Centuries before Americans popularized pasta salads Jews were the only Italians to eat cold pasta," Rodin wrote in the Spring 2003 issue of Notes from Zamir.

Cookbook author Marcia Freidman agrees, explaining that pasta salad evolved as a clever Italian Jewish invention intended to make cold pasta more palatable on Shabbat, when it is prohibited to cook. This prohibition has particularly shaped Saturday lunch fare, which traditionally consists of slow-cooked dishes assembled before Shabbat begins on Friday night, or cold dishes. It's worth noting that pasta salads are very popular among Orthodox Jews in the U.S. for this reason, and often skew more American than Italian when it comes to flavor and ingredients (hello, mayo!).

"In Southern Italy, Jewish communities often used a sweet and sour dressing made of vinegar and sugar, or sometimes lemon and sugar, to dress their pasta salad," said Freidman. This not only added flavor but also served as a preservative.

In "Jewish Flavors of Italy: A Family Cookbook," for instance, Silvia Nacamulli includes a recipe for Tagliolini Freddi per Shabbat (cold tagliolini for Shabbat), where pasta is enrobed in a punchy tomato sauce laced with vinegar, sugar, lemon, and chili. "The dish tastes slightly different when warm rather than cold, but it is delicious either way," writes Nacamulli. The tomato sauce is "actually better used cold," she says.

Part of the reason Italian Jewish cuisine is so distinctive is due to Italian treatment of the Jews in the 15th and 16th centuries. Jews were often discriminated against through social and economic restrictions and were segregated in ghettos. In these ghettos, Jews crafted a cuisine that adhered to their dietary restrictions and incorporated local ingredients that were disliked by non-Jews (and thus cheap and plentiful), like eggplant, artichokes, fennel and onions. They transformed them into delectable dishes like caponata, fennel gratin and — yes — pasta salad.

Benedetta Jasmine Guetta, author of "Cooking all Guidia: A Celebration of the Jewish Food of Italy," hasn't found direct evidence of Jews inventing the concept of eating cold pasta in her research, though she sees why it would have been popular among Jews who observed Shabbat. Instead, Guetta suggests a cold rice salad, with recipes she's seen dating back to the 16th century, could be the origin of pasta salad. Many of the vegetables and ingredients typical of Italian pasta salad feature in this cold rice dish.

“As pasta gained more variety, it’s possible that people started treating it like rice. It’s possible that Jews, accustomed to serving their pasta cold, contributed to this evolution,” she hypothesized.

In Italy and beyond, pasta salad has become an integral part of the Shabbat table, with families passing down their unique recipes from generation to generation. Whether it’s a classic American macaroni salad or a sweet-and-sour Roman recipe, pasta salad symbolizes culinary creativity and tradition. And while the historical connection between Jews and pasta salad remains open to interpretation, its enduring presence reflects the richness of Jewish culinary heritage and its ability to adapt and evolve over time.

*A tried-and-true favorite South Carolina cobbler recipe, a Southern favorite of the Barnett family, owners of Barnett’s Peaches, Sumter, S.C.*

- **Total Time:** 1 hour

## **Ingredients**

- **1 stick butter (½ cup)**
- **1 cup flour**
- **2 cups sugar**
- **1 Tbsp baking powder**
- **1 cup milk**
- **4 cups peaches, peeled and sliced**

## **Instructions**

- 1. Melt the butter in a 9×13-inch baking dish. Mix the flour, 1 cup sugar, the baking powder and the milk. Pour the batter over the melted butter. Do not mix.**
- 2. Add peaches. Do not mix. Sprinkle the remaining cup of sugar over the peaches. Bake at 350°F until the crust forms and browns.**
- 3. Serve warm or cool.**



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