

## TOLMM WEEKLY NEWSLETTER for 3-30-24 TZAV

## **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 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 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.

Elder 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.

Elder 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 <a href="mailto:Philip@etz-chayim.org">Philip@etz-chayim.org</a>. Rabbi Hammond is now affiliated with Rabbi Mordecai Silver and his ministry, Tree of Life Messianic Ministries. Check out Rabbi Hammond at <a href="https://www.etz-chayim.org/australia-affiliate/">https://www.etz-chayim.org/australia-affiliate/</a>.

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 RABBI SILVER 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: <a href="https://www.etz-chayim.org/shop-our-store/print-and-kindle-books/">https://www.etz-chayim.org/shop-our-store/print-and-kindle-books/</a>

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 SILVERS 3 YEARS OF VIDEO TEACHINGS ON THE TORAH PORTIONS AND FESTIVALS ON YOUTUBE.

WE HAVE 7 PRISON AFFILIATES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES.

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



Rabbi Mordecai Silver tolmm@etz-chayim.org

### MESSAGE FOR 3-30-24 TZAV-COMMAND

Vayikra - Lev 6:1-8:36 Jeremiah 7:21-8:3, 9:22-23 Hebrews 8:1-6

Vayikra 8:29: And Mosheh took the breast and waved it, a wave offering before Adonai. It was Mosheh's portion of the ram of ordination, as Adonai had commanded Mosheh. 30: And Mosheh took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood, which was on the altar, and sprinkled it on Aharon, on his garments, and on his sons, and on the garments of his sons with him. And he set apart Aharon, his garments, and his sons, and the garments of his sons with him.

**33:** And do not go outside the door of the Tent of Meeting for seven days, until the days of your ordination are completed - for he fills your hands for seven days.

**Beresheit 2:2**: And on the seventh day Elohim completed His work which he had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.

#### Vayikra-Leviticus 8:34-36

**8:34** He ordered done what has been done today, in order to make atonement for you. <sup>35</sup> You are to remain at the entrance to the tent of meeting day and night for seven days, thereby obeying what *ADONAI* ordered done, so that you may not die. For this is what I was ordered." <sup>36</sup> Aharon and his sons did all the things which *ADONAI* ordered through Moshe. (CJB)

**Yirmeyahu 7:23:** But this word I did command them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I shall be your Elohim and you be my people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, so that it be well with you.' 24: But they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked in the counsels, in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.

**26:** But they did not obey Me or incline their ear but stiffened their neck. They did evil, more than their fathers. 27: And you shall speak all these words to them, though they do not listen to you. And you shall also call to them, though they do not answer you. 28: But you shall say to them, 'This is a nation that did not obey the voice of Adonai their Elohim, nor did they accept instruction. Truth has perished and has been cut off from their mouth.

**Yochanan 8:45:** And because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

**14:17:** The Spirit of the Truth, whom the world is unable to receive, because it does not see Him or know Him. But you know Him, for He stays with you and shall be in you.

**Romans 1:18:** For the wrath of Elohim is revealed from heaven against all wickedness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

Hebrews 1-6: Now the summary of what we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Greatness in the heavens. 2: And who serves in the set-apart place and of the true Tent, which the Master set up, and not man. 3: For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and offerings. So, it was also necessary for this One to have somewhat to offer. 4: For if indeed He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the Torah. 5: Who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly, as Mosheh

was warned when he was about to make the Tent. For He said, "See that you make all according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." 6: But now He has obtained a more excellent service, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was constituted on better promises.

#### Hebrews 8:9-13 (Read and reflect)

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 Tzav: Summary Leviticus 6:1-8:36

God tells Moses to describe the rituals for some of the offerings to the priests; the priests then undergo the process of ordination.

God spoke to Moses, saying: Command Aaron and his sons to do the following rituals.

This is the ritual of the burnt offering. The burnt offering shall remain burning upon the altar all night until morning. Every morning the priest shall feed wood to it, lay out the burnt offering on it and turn the fat into smoke. A perpetual fire shall be kept burning on the altar for the fire is not to go out.

The ritual of the homage offering is out of respect to God. A handful of choice flour, oil and incense shall be mixed and a token portion shall be turned into smoke on the altar as a pleasing odor to the Lord. What is left of it shall be eaten by Aaron and his sons as unleavened cakes in the sacred space of the Tent of Meeting. It shall not be baked with leaven.

The offering of anointment is to give everlasting tribute to God. Like the homage offering, take some choice flour, but this time prepare it with oil in a pan. It shall go entirely up in smoke. It must be burned in its entirety. It must not be eaten.

The sin offering which clears one who sins is a holy of holies. The place where the ascent offering is slaughtered for God shall also be the place where the sin offering is slaughtered. The priest, who offers this sin offering, shall eat it in the sacred enclosure of the Tent of Appointed Meeting.

#### A Holy of Holies

The ritual of the guilt offering is a holy of holies. The guilt offering shall be slaughtered at the same spot as the burnt offering. Its blood shall be dashed on all sides of the altar and its fat shall be turned by the priests into smoke as an offering by fire to the Lord. Every male among the priests shall eat of it.

A ritual sacrifice of well-being may be offered to the Lord. There are rules for whether or not you may eat it and exactly how it is to be prepared. If it is offered for thanksgiving, it shall be an offering with unleavened bread, along with loaves of leavened bread.

Meat that touches anything unclean shall not be eaten. It shall be consumed in fire. You shall not eat fat of ox or sheep or goat. Fat from animals that died or were torn by beasts may be put to any use except as food. You must not eat it. You must not eat any blood, of either fowl or animal, in any of your settlements.

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Tell the Israelite people that offerings must be presented by one's own hands. These offerings are to be given to anointed priests who will enact these offerings by fire.

These are the rituals of the burnt offering, the homage offering, the sin offering, the guilt offering, the offering of ordination, and the sacrifices of well-being with which the Lord charged Moses on Mount Sinai, when God commanded that the Israelites present their offerings to the Lord, in the wilderness of Sinai.

Then God told Moses to assemble Aaron and his sons and the whole community at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. Aaron and his sons washed thoroughly then dressed with all the priestly vestments. Moses took the anointed oil and anointed the Tabernacle and all that was within it. He dedicated it to the Lord.

A bull was then sacrificed as a sin offering. A ram was sacrificed as a burnt offering. A second ram, the ram of ordination, was sacrificed as an offering by fire before the Lord. Then Moses consecrated Aaron and his sons and their vestments in order to dedicate them to the service of the Lord.

Then Moses told Aaron and his sons to cook the meat at the entrance of the Tent of Appointed Meeting and eat the bread in the basket of ordination. They should burn whatever flesh and bread is left in the fire. They must not remove themselves from the entrance of the Tent of Appointed Meeting, day or night, for seven days until the ordination is complete.

Aaron and his sons carried out all the utterances that God had commanded through Moses.

#### **Parashat Tzav: Discussion Questions**

- 1) What makes an offering to God holy?
- 2) Why must an offering be presented "by one's own hand?"
- 3) Why do you think there are sacrifices made to God for peace and well-being? What kind of rituals do you do to show God your peace and well-being?

Haftarah for Tzav Ezekeiel 36:16-38

Sacrifices are not enough.



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

Rabbi Hammond can be contacted at - <a href="mailto:Philip@etz-chayim.org">Philip@etz-chayim.org</a>

- King David's life was an intriguing life to say the least, it was full of ups and downs

   great victories, scary moments, stupid decisions, and yet he was described as a
   man after YHVH's own heart. 1 Samuel 13:14 also...
- <sup>21</sup> And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. <sup>22</sup> And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the *son* of Jesse, a man after My *own* heart, who will do all My will.' <sup>23</sup> From this man's seed, according to *the* promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior—Yeshua— <sup>24</sup> after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. Acts 13:22
- Points of interest:
- Ruth 4:17-22. 1<sup>st</sup> time David is mentioned in the bible The New American
   Catholic bible says: The father of Jesse, the father of David: Indicating the place of
   Obed, Jess and David in the line of Judah and the ancestry of Christ, the Messiah

#### What can we learn from David?

- David is mentioned in many genealogies listings for us the lineage of David and the Messiah are of the most interest. Eg:
- Matthew 1:5-6
- Luke 3:31-32
- Another intriguing fact: Outside of Yeshua David is the first name written down in the New Testament @ Matthew 1:1 attests too. David is also the last name [outside of Yeshua] to be written down @ Revelation 22:16 attests too.
- These few facts are to help us establish the special spot David had with YHVH...
- None the less David wasn't always the golden boy, however, his biblical beginnings are worth noting.
- 1 Samuel 16:1-12.
- Why do I say worth noting, well lets have a look and glean some encouragement:

- These verses tell us Samuel didn't know which son was to be chosen. All seven passed before him but none were the chosen.
- Then the question: Are all your sons here? No there is one more, he is shepherding our sheepies. Samuel replies bring him here please.
- We should notice David was not what one in the ANE culture would have chosen to be anointed by YHVH to be KING over Israel. It appears he was not your he-man type, that people looked at with awe. Reminds me of: Isaiah 53:2.
- Samuel has David brought before him and YHVH said: "... anoint him..."
- 1 Samuel 16:13. Take notice of: ...the Spirit of YHVH came upon David from that day forward. Followed by the Spirit of YHVH leaving Saul. David is then chosen to sooth the spirit of Saul... what a turn around.
- David's claim to fame: The Goliath account:

#### What can we learn from David?

- 1 Samuel 17:1-16. The Philistines were confident in their own strength thru their mighty warrior Goliath. Notice the taunting of 40 days and 40 nights in verse 16.
- Then Jesse sent David with some food to the battle site, to see how his brothers were going... when he arrived it appears he was perhaps taken back somewhat as to the lack of faith within the army of Israel.
- Then we have the exchange between Saul and David: <sup>31</sup> Now when the words which David spoke were heard, they reported *them* to Saul; and he sent for him. <sup>32</sup> Then David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine." <sup>33</sup> And Saul said to David, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you *are* a youth, and he a man of war from his youth."
- David then replied with some of his own exploits of battle...

- <sup>34</sup> But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, <sup>35</sup> I went out after it and struck it, and delivered *the lamb* from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught *it* by its beard, and struck and killed it. <sup>36</sup> Your servant has killed both lion and bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God." <sup>37</sup> Moreover David said, "The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine." And Saul said to David, "Go, and the LORD be with you!" 1 Samuel 17:34-37
- Take note: David had some preparation experience to face Mr. Goliath. Armies of the living Elohim, as against armies of dead idols of stone and wood.
- The Living God named YHVH who delivers accordingly... Saul gave David all the usual uniforms of war, but David knew these were not going to defeat Goliath so he chose the uniform he was familiar with and had served him well.

## What can we learn from David?

- David's weapon was total FAITH in YHVH the Living Elohim of Yisrael.
- As we contemplate the scene before us remember the time of David anointing –
  the Spirit of YHVH came upon him, from that day forward... We pick up the scene
  in 1 Samuel 17:43-47.
- The secret and strength of David was in the statement "for the battle is YHVH's...' Now let us go back to the tools David took with him.
- <sup>40</sup>Then he took his staff in his hand; and he chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag, in a pouch which he had, and his sling was in his hand. And he drew near to the Philistine. 1 Samuel 17:40
- Staff used to support, guide, strike...
- Five smooth stones smooth/chalaq = divide, separate, smooth. For me this represents the 5 books of Torah.
- Shepherd's bag The Messiah...

- David was the perfect warrior to fight Mr Goliath Looked insignificant, under resourced, under trained, easy target, full of words, and spoke about victory through YHVH...
- As we draw to a close let us read: <sup>51</sup> Therefore David ran and stood over the Philistine, took his sword and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. And when the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. <sup>52</sup> Now the men of Israel and Judah arose and shouted, and pursued the Philistines as far as the entrance of the valley and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell along the road to Shaaraim, even as far as Gath and Ekron. 1 Samuel 51-52
- Goliath's head was cut off with his own sword after he was felled by Messiah and Torah. Israel joined together and showed courage after David showed the way through faith and faithfulness to YHVH ... so what can we learn from David's account much. Be full of YHVH's Spirit. Don't be afraid of Mr. Goliath. Step up when called to do so, but only when called to do so. Be faithful to our Saviour the Messiah Yeshua and His Torah and the Living God of Israel.
- Truly we serve a wonderful Elohim...

## **Jewish Practices**



## Kabbalah and Mysticism 101

#### Jewish mysticism has taken many forms.

The Jewish mystical tradition is rich and diverse, and Jewish mysticism has taken many forms. Scholar Moshe Idel groups the different expressions of Jewish mysticism into two fundamental types: moderate and intensive. Moderate mysticism is intellectual in nature. It is an attempt to understand God and God's world, and ultimately affect and change the divine realm. This type of mysticism incorporates many aspects of traditional Judaism, including Torah study and the performance of the commandments, infusing these activities with mystical significance. Intensive mysticism, on the other hand, is experiential in nature. Intensive mystics use nontraditional religious activities, including chanting and meditation, in an attempt to commune with God.

#### **Origins**

The first forms of Jewish mysticism emerged in the early centuries of the first millennium. *Merkavah* mysticism was the most common early form. Merkavah mystics aimed at understanding and experiencing the vision of the divine throne discussed in the first chapter of the biblical book of Ezekiel. Another form of early mysticism focused on exploring the mysterious methods that God used to create the world. *Sefer Yetzirah*, the most important work of creation mysticism, describes the creation of the world through the arrangements of letters and numbers.

#### Kabbalah and Hasidism

Kabbalah is the most famous form of Jewish mysticism. It flowered in 13th century Spain with the writing of the Zohar, which was originally attributed to the 2nd century sage Shimon bar Yohai. The Zohar is a commentary on the Torah, concerned primarily with understanding the divine world and its relation to our world. According to kabbalah, God as God — also known as *Ein Sof* or "the Infinite" — cannot be comprehended by humans. However, God can be understood and described as revealed in ten mystical attributes, or *sefirot*.

Much of all future Kabbalah, including the important 16th-century Kabbalah of Isaac Luria—whose intricate theology of creation describes how God contracted to make room for the world — concerns itself with the *sefirot*. Abraham Abulafia was the most important of the medieval intensive mystics. He tried to achieve a state of prophecy through methods of experiential Kabbalah. Hasidism, a religious

movement that emerged in the 18th century, spread mystical thinking and living to the masses of European Jewry by teaching that all people could have an experiential connection with God.

#### The New Age

Traditional mystical concepts permeate mainstream Jewish thought to this day (for example, the notions of *tikkun olam*, or repair of the world, and of *tzimtzum*, God's self-limiting), and texts of mystical origin have penetrated Jewish liturgy (including *Lecha Dodi*, the Friday night hymn welcoming the Sabbath, and other liturgical poetry). In addition, the academic study of Jewish mysticism has flourished in recent decades, due primarily to the work of a single scholar, Gershom Scholem. Scholem discovered and interpreted a wide range of mystical manuscripts and shed light on the origins and development of Jewish mysticism. With the emergence of New Age spirituality, Jewish mysticism has also experienced a popular renaissance. Jewish groups like the Renewal movement teach mysticism to spiritually inclined, nontraditional Jews, while controversial institutions such as the Kabbalah Centre offer a more universal and magical mysticism to Jews and non-Jews alike.



**Suffering & Evil 101** 

#### Why do bad things happen to good people?

Why do bad things happen to good people? If God is so powerful, why doesn't God prevent misfortune? The question of suffering and evil is unique among theological and philosophical problems because it confronts us almost daily and because Jewish history is replete with individual and communal tragedy. Jewish thinkers have always been bothered by the existence of suffering and evil, but in modern times, as a result of the Holocaust, it has taken on a central role in the thought of almost all contemporary Jewish theologians.

#### The Problem

For Jews, the problem of suffering is twofold: There is a universal problem and a particular problem. The universal problem is a philosophical one; it is not just a problem for Jews, but for anyone who conceives of God in a certain way. If God knows everything, then God knows about all evil. If God is all-powerful, then God can prevent all evil. If God is perfectly good, then God *should* prevent all evil. And yet, evil exists. How can this be true?

Historically, Jewish thinkers did not articulate the problem of evil in this way until the Middle Ages. Earlier Jewish literature conceives of God as powerful, good and knowledgeable, but not necessarily *perfectly* so. It was the particular problem of suffering and evil — a problem resulting from the unique relationship between God and the Jews — that occupied early Jewish literature.

According to the Torah, the covenant at Sinai, in which the Israelites agreed to abide by the commandments, established that the Jews would be rewarded if they followed God's ways. And yet, suffering often seems to be meted out randomly. Righteous people suffer, and wicked people prosper. How can this be reconciled with the covenantal relationship between God and the Jews? The problem of justifying God, despite the existence of evil is known as theodicy.

#### Types of Solutions

There are several types of solutions to the problem of suffering and evil.

- The biblical book of Job suggests that it is fruitless for humans to try and figure out why God causes some righteous people to suffer.
- While this approach may subvert the concept of reward and punishment, many rabbinic figures, as well as medieval philosophers and mystics, retained this concept by turning to eschatology; that is, they believed that reward and punishment is meted out in the afterlife, or for those medieval mystics who believed in reincarnation in a future lifetime.
- Other traditional solutions include the idea that suffering is in some way beneficial (and thus
  isn't really bad), and the suffering servant model of the biblical prophet Isaiah, which suggests
  that the Jewish people suffer in order to redeem the wicked of humanity.
- Many post-Holocaust theologians have developed responses to the unique problems raised by the suffering of the Jews during the Shoah. From "God is hiding" to "God is dead," these thinkers have placed modern analyses of God and evil at the center of their thought.

Hebrew - עָבְרִי Word (s) of the Week

בר / Candle

Pronounced: NARE

The plural form of *ner* is *nerot*. A popular Hanukkah song is Hanerot Hallalu, meaning "these candles" and it is commonly sung just after the Hanukkah candles are lit.



## A Taste of Jewish Humor

## **A Healthy Breakfast**

Moshe was talking to his psychiatrist. "I had a weird dream recently," he says. "I saw my mother but then I noticed she had your face. I found this so worrying that I immediately awoke and couldn't get back to sleep. I just stayed there thinking about it until 7am. I got up, made myself a slice of toast and some coffee and came straight here. Can you please help me explain the meaning of my dream?"

The psychiatrist kept silent for some time, then said, "One slice of toast and coffee? Do you call that breakfast?"

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