

Beth Tephila Messianic Jewish Congregation  
(Under same management for over 5785 years)

# SHABBAT SERVICE

March 1st – 10:30 AM

12:30PM Oneg Shabbat & Torah Discussion



Blessed are those whose way of life is blameless;  
who live by the Torah of Adonai.

Blessed are those who observe His instruction;  
who seek Him with all their heart. Psalm 119

**T'RUMAH (OFFERINGS) -- Exodus 25 - 27:19**

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

va-y'daber Adonai el-Mosheh lemor

And the Lord spoke to Moses saying,

דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיְקַחְדוּ לִי תְרוּמָה מֵאֵת כָּל-אִישׁ

daber el-b'nei Yisra'el v'yik'chu-li t'rumah m'kol-eesh

Speak to the sons of Israel:

raise up a offering for me from every man

אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לִבּוֹ תִקְחוּ אֹתוֹ תְרוּמָתִי:

asher yid'venu libo tik'chu et-t'rumati

whose heart moves him, you will raise my offering.

**Haftarah – I Kings 6:1,11-14**

Now it came about in the four hundred and eightieth year after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord. Now the word of the Lord came to Solomon saying, "Concerning this

house which you are building, if you will walk in My statutes and execute My ordinances and keep all My commandments by walking in them, then I will carry out My word with you which I spoke to David your father.  
'And I will dwell among the sons of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.'"

### **B'rit Chadasha – 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 9:7**

Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

### **Acts 7:44**

Our fathers had the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it, according to the (heavenly) pattern which he had seen.



### **The Construction of a Sanctuary**

**"And let them construct a sanctuary for me that I might dwell among them"**

It was and is God's desire to "dwell" among His people. There were and are no other peoples on earth whose gods "dwell" among them. Yes, there are idolatrous representations of their gods in their midst but nowhere is there a living god among any other people group. Our God "dwelling" among His people made **ancient Israel and also all His people today a unique people because our God is unique among all other gods, dwelling among us.**

Studying the Hebrew usage of the word "dwell" allows us to better understand how God desires to live among His people. It is the same Hebrew word that we translate "**shekinah**," **the visible manifestation of God's presence.** **God's desire was that His visible presence live ("dwell" or "tabernacle") among His people. That is still His desire today!** But **God's presence is not limited only to a physical structure,** a tabernacle or a synagogue, under **God's renewed covenant with His people,** His presence "**dwells**" **within us.** "And the Word became flesh, and "dwelt" (tabernacled) among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" (**John 1:14**). **We must choose to accept God on His terms and then to build a dwelling place within our hearts for Him. One of the elements that**

**enables God's people to live an abundant life in today's world is His presence living within us.** Today, if you are reading this Torah portion and have never experienced the presence of God, please contact me....for it remains God's desire to live (dwell or tabernacle) among all His people.

So why did God want Israel to build a sanctuary to enclose Him, as He dwelt among His people? God had just made a covenant with His people that included a "constitution" (the Ten Commandments) and a "bill of rights" (the next 53 mitzvot - commandments). God declared He would bless His people: "...if you will truly obey His voice and do all that I say...." (23:22). God's visible presence among His people showed them that it was possible for them to have a relationship with Him. **Today, God's presence within us** testifies that we can maintain a spiritual relationship with God. God is Holy and unapproachable to sinners because sin cannot enter into the presence of our holy God. Yet **by obeying God's rules and having the appropriate sacrifice for the removal of our sin, God's people would see God fighting for them and receive His blessings of physical and spiritual prosperity.**

**God's law** defines what God considers necessary to live a moral, ethical, and observant way of life; a life that will distinguish God's people from all the surrounding people groups. God's people then entered into a covenant with God that **if (since) the people would obey God and keep His covenant, THEN they would be "....My own possession among all the peoples..... a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex.19:5-6).** The people ratified their covenant with God: "All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do!" (Ex.19:8, 24:3). One should note that the formal, covenantal relationship of God with His people dictated that they had accepted it. **Even today, having a personal relationship with God begins with our accepting the finished, sacrificial work of our Messiah, Yeshua.** Then realizing that we have been released from the letter of the law, (The Stern Jewish Commentary states that Jews are still subject to "some aspects" of the Torah.) we are free to serve in the newness of the Spirit (Romans 7:6).

**Discussion Question:** What is "the newness of the Spirit?" How does the **newness of the Spirit** relate to **our motivation** for serving God? Are we only to do **mitvot** (God's commandments) to show others how close to God we are?

The Torah portion for this week concerns the manufacturing plans for **the physical structure of the tabernacle, where God would take up permanent residence among His people, and God's people would come to sacrifice and worship Him.** God showed Moses the heavenly tabernacle (**Acts 7:44**) from which Moses would pattern the earthly tabernacle. **Rabbi Jonathan Sacks** reminded us that up until this time, "the Israelites had been recipients. Virtually everything they had experienced had been God-given. He had redeemed them from Egypt, liberated them from slavery, led them through the wilderness, and created a path for them through the sea. When they were hungry, He gave them food. When they were thirsty, He gave them water. Apart from the battle against the Amalekites, they had done almost nothing for themselves.... The Israelites became dependent, expectant, irresponsible and immature. The Torah chronicles their repeated complaints. Reading them, we feel that they were an

ungrateful, querulous, petulant people. What produced results was complaining. The people complained to Moshe. Moshe turned to God. God performed a miracle. The result was that, from the people's perspective, complaining worked." Would this be a formula that God would want perpetuated forever? How would His people have any dignity or self worth to accomplish the retaking of the promised land, if they were only recipients?

**Discussion Question:** Can you see a parallel in today's system of government programs that allow recipients to become dependent on government and produce ungrateful, querulous, and petulant behavior?

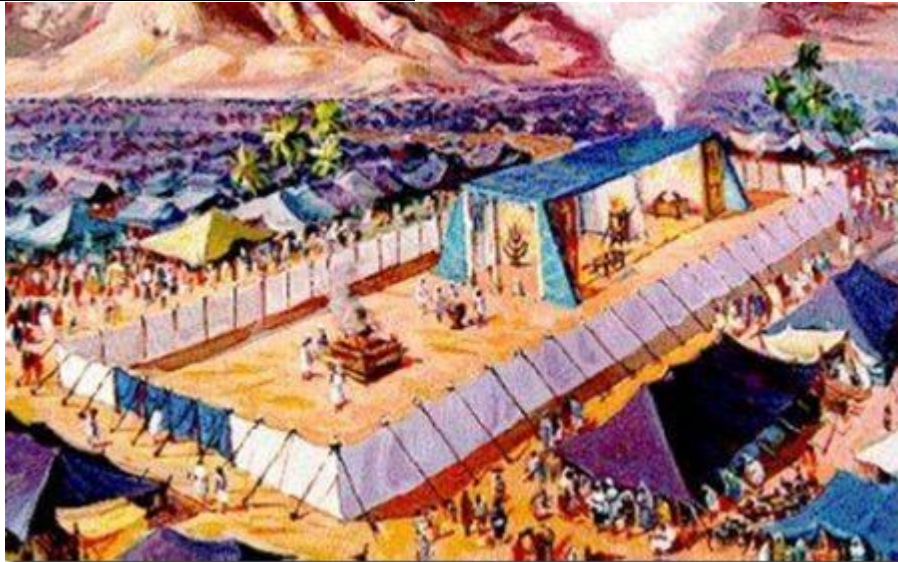
**God wants His people to have dignity; to be able to show their self-worth through their actions.** The concept of **Tzedakah** allows one to elevate themselves in their own eyes by contributing to another person or worthy cause. **Tzedakah** is not just providing charity but **is seen as an ethical obligation from the person to whom much has been given by God.** We remember that it was God who put the thought into the minds of the Egyptians to give their gold, silver, and clothing (**Exodus 12:35**) to the departing Hebrews from which the Hebrews could give back a portion as a contribution to build the tabernacle of God.

**Discussion Question:** As believers and recipients in the finished, atoning work of Messiah, should we feel the obligation to contribute to God's ongoing work to show to everyone (to the Jew first, **Romans 1:16**) the atonement that only Messiah can provide?

The "**contribution**" that Moses asked the people to bring was "from **every** man, **whose heart moves him...**" (25:1). **Russ Resnik**, UMJC Rabbi, says that the word "**t'rumah**," from which we derive the name of this parsha, appears in the instructions that the Lord gives Moses for building the **Mishkan**, the tabernacle. "**T'rumah**" has been translated in several ways: "Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring me **an offering . . .**" (NKJV), or "Speak to the Israelites, that they take Me **a donation . . .**" (**Robert Alter**). **Rashi** translates **t'rumah** here as "**portion**," "**something set aside**." The root of **t'rumah** is "**rum**," meaning "**to be high, elevated; to rise up**." It signifies the portion that we raise up as a donation or offering to God. At the same time, **the trumah also raises up the one who offers it.** God can supply his own needs without us, but he allows us **to elevate ourselves spiritually by contributing to Him.** The wording of the Hebrew text underlines this lesson. Jewish commentators over the centuries have noted "**that by contributing to God's causes, what a Jew truly takes for himself, for personal benefit of generosity is far greater than its cost**" (**Stone Chumash**). **The first recipient of giving is . . . the giver. Giving has the potential to elevate us spiritually.** "And they shall take to Me the offering," says the Lord. In the next verse, God calls the offering "my **t'rumah**." God receives our gifts, even though he doesn't really need them, so that **giving becomes an expression of our devotion to Him.** Some gifts that were wholly given to God, like the "**olah**," or "whole burnt offering," totally disappearing from our sight, are consumed upon the altar of

sacrifice. But the **"t'rumah"** stays with Israel. It will be used to build the tabernacle and to clothe the priests. Giving an offering is our response to God for all He has done for us!

Each offering depends on the attitude of the giver, a response from his (her) heart: "Speak to the Israelites, that they take Me a donation from every man, as his heart may urge him you shall take My donation." The root of the verb translated as "urged" is **"nadav,"** translated "noble" or "prince." A nobleman is one who is free to act according to the **urging of his heart**, not as he might be forced to act by others. **When we act upon the urging by God from our hearts, it ennobles us.** Just as giving **elevates us, giving ennobles us** as well, lifting us above the smallness of the daily grind. The protocol was that **God has given to "every man", so that "every man" should have something to contribute.** You will remember from **Ex. 11:2** and **12:35** that God told Moses to have the people ask of the Egyptians (in fulfillment of **Gen.15:14**) ..."articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing." These would be the materials, given to each of God's people, from which God's people would make their **contribution** for the building of the tabernacle. Therefore **everyone made a contribution**, and **everyone had a part in** the construction of the place **where and how God would be worshipped.** **Today** the same protocol **mandates everyone** of God's people to elevate themselves by having a physical part in His worship through their contributions, "as their hearts move them."



**Chapters 25 - 27** give the **construction plans for the Tabernacle.** The actual construction of the tabernacle will be accomplished in **Chapters 35 - 40.** The **acacia wood** used for the construction frames would be **overlaid with gold**, and **rings** would be fastened to it, so that **poles** could hold the upright, rectangular structure together. **Skins** dyed red, as well as blue, purple, and scarlet material would be used for the coverings. A water resistant skin would cover the place where God dwelt and the priests would minister. An **ark** would be made, the top of which would be the **mercy seat**, where God's shekinah glory would dwell between **two gold, upright cherubim**, whose wings would spread upward and cover the mercy seat. This visible manifestation of God's presence was the only light source in the Holy of Holies. Rings would be fastened to the ark, so that poles could be inserted to carry the ark. A **table for the**

"bread of the presence" (**lechem hapanim**) would be constructed, upon which **twelve loaves of bread**, representing the twelve tribes of Israel would constantly be before God's presence. **Lechem hapanim** literally translates, "**bread of the faces (plural)**," but is described as "showbread" or "bread of the presence (verse 30)."

**Discussion Question:** Why would God use the plural "faces?" (hint: there are some Hebrew nouns that are spelled in the plural but understood to be singular: **Mayim**, water; **hayim**, life; **shamayim**, heaven; **panim**, face.) ("face": a word used to designate "presence" for royal or divine figures). A **lampstand** with three lamps on each side and one in the middle was to be made from pure gold to provide light for the ministering priests. It provided the only light inside the Holy Place.



In **Chapter 26**, we are told that **two sets of five colored curtains** of blue, purple, and scarlet with cherubim woven into them, each measuring about forty-two feet by six feet would be joined together to cover the top of the Tabernacle. Covering them would be another set of **eleven weather resistant curtains** made of goat hair. The top layer consisted of ram skins dyed red and the water-resistant skins of sea cows. As mentioned above, **upright boards covered by gold** about fifteen feet high, were joined to make a rectangle about fifteen feet wide by thirty feet long with four sets of rings per board, through which poles were inserted. One pole was also inserted through a hole in the middle of each board, which may have served to line up all the boards. Suspended by clasps between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, is a **veil of curtains** made with the same colors as the inner curtains over the tabernacle with cherubim woven into the fabric. "...and the veil shall serve for you as a partition between the holy place and the holy of holies (verse 33)." **Josephus** said that this veil was **four inches thick**, and that horses tied to each side could not pull it apart.

**Discussion Question:** Only the High Priest was allowed to enter the Holy of Holies through this thick, heavy veil. Since the High Priest could only enter the Holy of Holies carrying a bowl of blood and hot incense, and since there was no doorway into the Holy of Holies, how do you think he might have gotten through the heavy curtain separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies? Carefully....?

In **Chapter 27** a bronze altar seven and a half feet square and four and a half feet high was to be constructed with horns at the corners, along with a bronze grating and bronze utensils for attending the fire upon the altar. Rings were fitted into the bronze-covered

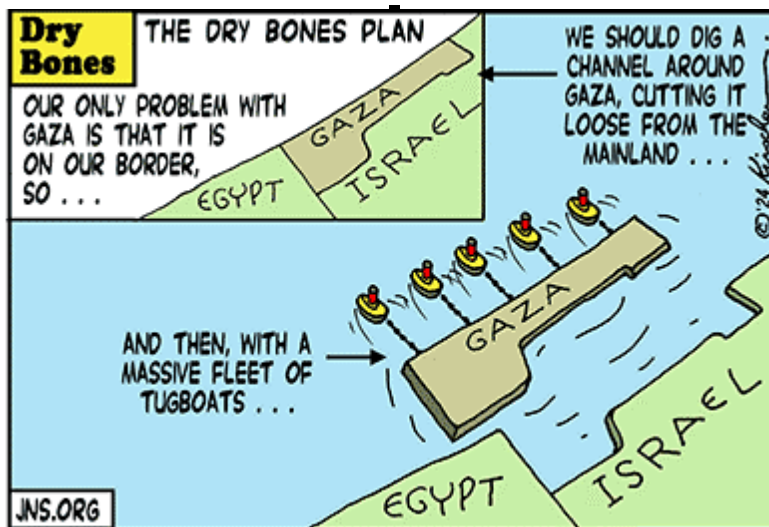
acacia wood, so that poles could be used to carry the altar. This altar of burnt offerings would be found in the courtyard in front of the tabernacle.

The courtyard measured about seventy-five feet by one hundred fifty feet. It was to be screened by curtains ("hangings") suspended between pillars about seven and a half feet high, which were held in place through a network of ropes and bronze pegs. One entered the courtyard by passing through a thirty foot screened gate.

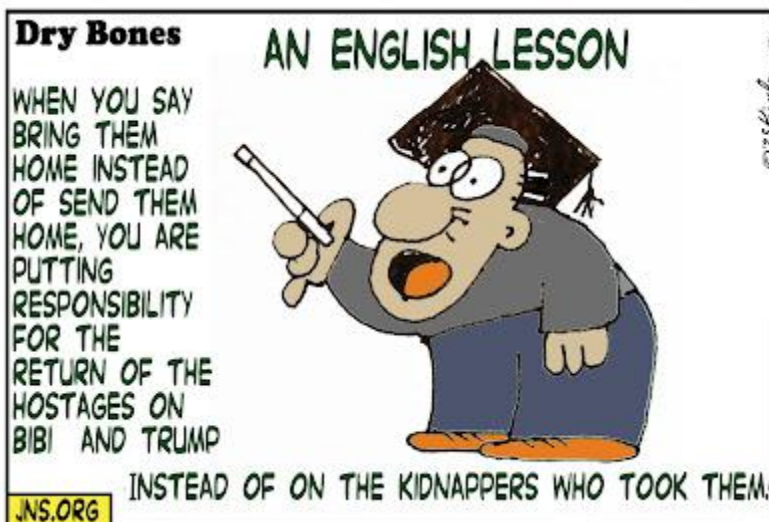
**Discussion Questions:** One may notice that the tabernacle area contained a number of points of entrance beyond which some were not allowed to enter. **1) How many of these "walls of partition" can you find?** **2) Who is allowed beyond each of these points of access, and who is excluded?** Read **Ephesians 2:11-14** ("Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called 'uncircumcision' by the so-called circumcision..." "For He Himself is our peace, **who made both groups into one** and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall.") and decide **3) who are the two groups, who are made into one,** when the wall of partition between them was broken?

You may also realize that our modern synagogues have tabernacle symbols to remind us of our temple/tabernacle worship. However, **there is never a symbol for the mizbe'ach, the altar of sacrifice.** **4) Why do you think there is no symbol for the altar? Why would Messianic Synagogues not require a visible symbol for the altar like churches that display a symbol (the cross) for the sacrifice of Jesus? (hint: commandment about images) Could it be that the symbol becomes the entity that is worshipped,** rather than what the symbol represents? We should never worship images! **Let us resolve to worship God and God alone!**

# Shabbat Shalom



"From the border to the sea, get that thing away from me."



## Announcements:

**Purim - We will celebrate on March 15th**

**Passover 1<sup>st</sup> night - April 12<sup>th</sup> evening**

**UMJC Summer Conference, Boston, July 16-19**

