

Beth Tephila Messianic Jewish Congregation
(Under same management for over 5779 years)

SHABBAT SERVICE

February 9th – 10:30 AM Lolo Community "Synagogue"
12:30 PM Oneg Shabbat



"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 spoke the Lord to Moses to say
And the Lord spoke to Moses saying,

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

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

Speak to the sons of Israel, and they will take for me an **offering** from every man
Speak to the sons of Israel to raise a offering for me from every man

אֲשֶׁר יִדְבְּנוּ לִבּוֹ תִקְחוּ אֶת-תְּרוּמָתִי:

asher yid'venu libo tik'chu et-t'rumati
that prompts him heart-his you will take **offering**-my
whose heart moves him, you will raise my offering.



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 His people today a unique people because our God is unique among all other gods.

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. 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. God was Holy and unapproachable. Yet **by obeying God's rules and having the appropriate sacrifice for atonement from 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 dictates that they accept 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**).

***** **Study 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 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. **The "contribution" that Moses asked the people to bring was "from every man, whose heart moves him..."** (25:1). Russ Resnik, from the UMJC, says that the word **"t'rumah,"** from which we derive the name of the 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 "t'rumah" 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 are 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," "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**, it 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. So **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 allows 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" would be constructed, upon which twelve loaves of bread, representing the twelve tribes of Israel would constantly be before God's presence. 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 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. Josephus said that this veil was four inches thick, and that horses tied to each side could not pull it apart. Only the High Priest could 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?

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 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.

One may notice that the tabernacle contained a number of points of entrance beyond which some were not allowed to enter. Who is allowed beyond each of these points of access, and who is excluded? How many of these "walls of partition" can you find? Read **Ephesians 2:14** and decide 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 symbols to remind of of our temple/tabernacle worship. However, there is never a symbol for the **mizbe'ach**, the altar of sacrifice. 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 for the sacrifice of Jesus?

Shabbat Shalom



In light of today's snow & arctic temperatures,
a Winter Shabbat picture is appropriate.
Congrats to all who braved this weather to attend services!