

**Beth Tephila Messianic Jewish Congregation**  
(Under same management for over 5778 years)

# SHABBAT SERVICE

July 28th – 10:30 AM -- Lolo Community "Synagogue"

## Lewis & Clark's Ft. Fizzel

12:30PM Oneg Shabbat & Integrative Torah Discussion

"Oh God, do not remain quiet...for behold Thine enemies make an uproar....and conspire against Thy treasured ones. They have said, 'Come, and let us wipe them out as a nation, that the name of Israel be remembered no more.'" Psalm 83:1-4



### Deuteronomy 3:23

וַאֲתַחֲנַן אֶל־יְהוָה בְּעַת הַהוּא לֵאמֹר:

וַאֲתַחֲנַן אֶל יְהוָה בְּעַת הַהוּא לֵאמֹר

Va-et'chanan el-Adonai ba-'et ha-hee lemor,

And I pleaded to the Lord at that time saying,

אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה אַתָּה הַחֲלוֹתָ לְהַרְאוֹת אֶת־עֲבֹדְךָ אֶת־אֲדֹנֶיךָ וְאֶת־יָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה

אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה אַתָּה הַחֲלוֹתָ לְהַרְאוֹת אֶת עֲבֹדְךָ אֶת גְּדֹלְךָ וְאֶת יָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה

Adonai Elohim Atah hachilota l'har'ot et-av'd'cha et-gohd'l'cha v'et-yad'cha ha-chazkah...

Oh Lord God, You have begun to show your servant your greatness and your strong hand....

## Deuteronomy 4:1

וַעֲתָה יִשְׂרָאֵל שִׁמְעוּ אֶל-הַחֻקִּים וְאֶל-הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְלַמֵּד אֶתְכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת  
וַעֲתָה יִשְׂרָאֵל שִׁמְעוּ אֶל הַחֻקִּים וְאֶל הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְלַמֵּד אֶתְכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת

V'atah Yisra'el sh'ma el-hachukim v'el-hamishpatim asher anochi m'lamed etchem  
la'asot

And now, Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments, which I am teaching you to do

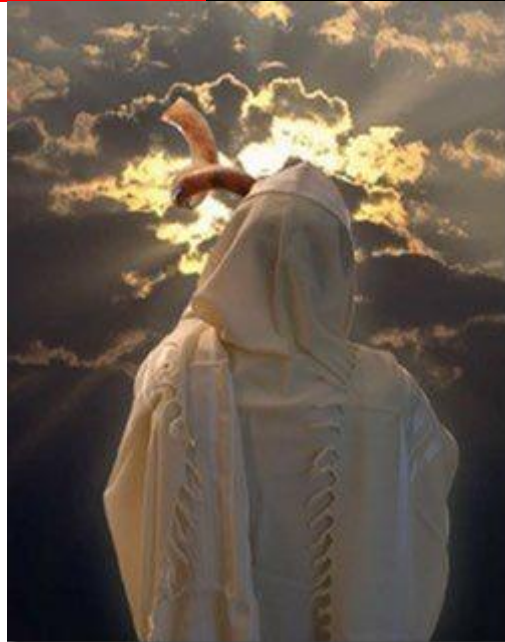
לְמַעַן תֵּיחֲזוּ וּבִאתֶם וִירִשְׁתֶּם אֶת-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם נָתַן לָכֶם:

לְמַעַן תֵּיחֲזוּ וּבִאתֶם וִירִשְׁתֶּם אֶת הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם נָתַן לָכֶם

I'ma'an tichyu uvatem virishtem et-ha'arets asher Adonai Elohey avoteychem noten  
lachem.

in order that you may go in and take possession of the land,  
which the Lord, the God of your fathers is giving you.

## "Sh'ma Yisrael" .....Hear, Oh Israel



As was said last week, Moses was making his parting shot at providing for his people instruction that would give them peace and prosperity in their "promised land." He began with a rebuke for their former way of life that included immorality and idolatry. In this Torah portion, Moses calls his people to obedience. God has given His people commandments, statutes, and ordinances. Moses tried to impress upon the people their need to obey God's laws, if they want to prosper, as they cross the Jordan River and enter into a new life in the land He promised to Abraham and his descendants. Moses taught the Jewish people (and by extension, us today) how it is possible to keep God's laws: Moses called upon the people to love God; to make God the focus of their lives, so that there would be ample evidence of the out-working of their love for God in their daily lives.

## **Why Aren't Our Prayers Answered?**

Our Torah portion begins with Moses' cry to God, "va-et'chanan el-Adonai.." "and I pleaded to the Lord..." God allowed Moses to lead the people to victory against Sihon, King of Heshbon and Og, King of Bashan. So Moses begged God to allow him to ..."cross over and see the fair land that is

beyond the Jordan, that good hill country and Lebanon" (3:25). In response, God became "furious" ("**Yitaber**") with Moses and admonished him never to speak about this again. God would allow Moses to view the land from the top of Pisgah (overlooking the Dead Sea), but that was as close to the land as Moses would come. Joshua would lead the people into the land and divide it between the tribes of Israel, as their inheritance.

Much in Rabbinic literature is made over the fact that Moses, who was Israel's first...and perhaps greatest... prophet, was kept from leading the people across the Jordan, continuing to defeat God's enemies, and continuing to provide the Jewish people with God's words. Didn't God choose Moses, and didn't Moses give God his whole life? Surely Moses made mistakes, but don't we all make mistakes? If Moses could not get his prayer answered, what hope is there for us today? Certainly there are times when many of us have wondered why God has not heard our voices and not answered our prayers. Have we not been "good enough" or worked hard enough? Has there been some time in the past when our life did not measure up, and now we're "paying the price?" Since..."we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose..." (Romans 8:28), why is it that sometimes God does not seem to answer our prayers?

Moses, himself, answers this question in Chapter 4:7, "For ("**Ki mi-goy**") what great (gentile) nation" is there that has a god so near to it as is the Lord our God, whenever we call on Him? God did hear Moses' pleading and did answer him. And God does hear our prayers and does answer us. Moses was listening and understood God's answer. He was not happy with God's answer, but he accepted it...and it did "work together for good..." "...according to God's purpose." While God did not allow Moses to "cross over," he did allow Moses to supernaturally "see" the land of Abraham's inheritance. Had Moses not prayed or had Moses been so upset with God's answer that he quit following God, Moses would have not been allowed the privilege of seeing the land. **Many times we think that God has not answered our prayers, when we have not taken the time to listen for His answer.** Perhaps we have gone ahead with what we thought was best, asking God to bless our plans. Perhaps, like Moses, we did not like God's answer, but we became so upset that we could not follow God's plans and therefore missed the blessing God gives to everyone who entrusts himself to God's purposes. We should take the example of Moses to heart. We must trust that God's answer to our prayer is for our own good and is consistent with His plans for our life. For Moses the consequence of disbelief (**Num. 20:12**) was to die outside the "promised land." The application for us is to understand that God holds leaders to a higher standard of obedience than others. One public indiscretion was sufficient to keep Moses out of the land. **Yet God still uses those who repent of their misdeeds,** as He used Moses right to the end of his life, publicly turning over the duties of leadership to Joshua and exhorting Joshua to be strong and courageous; the Lord would not fail him nor forsake him (**Deut.31:3,7-8**). **Moses trusted God even in disappointment, so should we!**

## A Prescription from the Great Physician

When one goes to the doctor, one entrusts himself to his protective care. The doctor may send with you a prescription to make and keep you healthy. In Chapter 4, God through Moses gives His people a prescription for peace and prosperity in the land of their inheritance: "And now, Oh Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land, which the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you."

Five times in **Chapter 4** and nine times in this Parsha, Moses tells the people that they must keep God's "statutes and ordinances" (judgments) because obeying God by keeping His "**chukim umishpatim**" is God's prescription for having abundance in their land along with peace and security. Hearing (listening to) God's words means more than mere ritual assent to the words, themselves. Really "hearing" God's words implies an inward hearing that results in performing them..."for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people'" (vs.5). **The daily living of God's law is both a prescription for success in their inherited land and a "light to the gentiles," revealing the God of Israel to them.** Keeping God's law is so very important that

Moses reiterates this fact five times in the first 23 verses, using phrases like "remember," "beware lest you forget," and "watch yourselves lest you forget." Moses knew the history of his people and their tendency to become involved with immorality and idolatry and warned them against doing so. Moses reminded the people that his own disobedient behavior brought the judgment of God, keeping him from entering the land. Then Moses "changed gear" from fatherly warnings to prophetic utterance. Moses predicted that after the people had lived in the land for a long time, they would forget his warnings and make idols for themselves. They would be expelled from the land, persecuted until they are few in number, and be scattered among the Gentile nations, where they would remain among their foreign gods (Assyrian & Babylonian captivities and Roman dispersion). Then, "in the latter days" (vs.30) there would be a national repentance. When they were in distress, they would again seek the Lord with all their heart and all their soul. Then they would again return to the Lord and "listen to His voice." And the Lord would have compassion on His people because of the covenant promises He made with their fathers.

**Personal Note:** While Israel is in distress today, the nation looks to their army for their salvation from their enemies. I believe that there will come a time, perhaps in my lifetime, when the enemies of Israel will overwhelm their army, leaving them only their God to protect them. I believe that only when they "come to the end of their rope" will they repent as a nation and turn to God. Isn't this the same with many of us?

## Promises....Promises

It might be noted here that **some promises made to the Jewish people are apparently just the opposite of those promises made to the church**. **For Jews**, obedience to God means prosperity, peace and security, while disobedience brings persecution. **For the church**, obedience to God produces abundant life but also brings persecution: "And indeed, all who desire to live godly in Messiah, Yeshua will be persecuted" (**2nd Timothy 3:12**). The point made here is that **God's promises to the nation of Israel have not become promises made to the church**. God will keep His covenant promises to Israel! "Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them" (vs.37). One of God's best promises is found in the familiar **John 3:16**: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever (Jew or Gentile) believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

## The Ten Commandments: A Bilateral Covenant

In **Chapter 5:1**, "Moses summoned all Israel, and said to them, 'Hear O Israel'" (**Sh'ma Yisrael**).  
Moses

reminded the people that their bilateral covenant with God made at Sinai that promised peaceful enjoyment of the "promised land," if they obeyed God's law, was unlike the previous, unilateral deed to the land given by God to the patriarchs. God gave this bilateral covenant to the people via direct communication with Moses (literally, "face to face") on Mt Sinai and required them to obey the Ten Commandments (which Moses reiterated here), so "...that it may be well with them and with their sons forever;.... that you may live, and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess" (5:29,33).

In **Hebrews 8:6-12**, followers of Messiah are promised a better covenant enacted upon better promises: **a covenant that can be kept because it will be written in their hearts.**

# Keeping the Commandments by Loving God



"For I will not trust in my bow, nor will my sword save me. But Thou hast saved us from our adversaries, and Thou hast put to shame those who hate us." (Psalm 44: 7-8)

**Chapter 6** contains the famous "watch-words" of our Jewish faith that are said at every Shabbat service in every Jewish congregation in every country in the world:



שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד:

"Sh'ma Yisra'el Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad."

"Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is one!" (6:4)

וְאַהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשֶׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדֶךָ:

"Ve'ahavta et-Adonay Eloheycha bechol-levavcha uvechol-nafshecha uvechol-me'odecha."

And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

Verses 6-9: "And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; (We should internalize them.) And you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up (at all times). And you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead (keeping God's law within you...symbolized by wearing tephilin).



And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates (keeping God's law in your home and as a witness to those who pass by.....symbolized by fixing a Mezuzah to one's doorpost).



Loving God with our total being keeps the focus of our lives on Him which enables us to obey Him! God considers our obedience to Him as righteousness (verse 25)!

## Loving God by Being Ruthless with Sin

**Chapter 7** reiterated that God's people must not worship other gods. When Israel entered the land, where heathen Canaanite tribes worshiped their pagan gods, God would fight for His people and defeat those tribes. God's people were told to "utterly destroy them" (7:2). This is what has been called the "**cherem**" judgment....."totally devoted to destruction," making no covenant of protection with them, showing them no favor, nor allowing any intermarriage with them. They were to separate themselves from pagan nations.

The application for us today is that **God's people are to be totally ruthless with sin in our lives from any source. We are to totally remove it, so that it does not serve to separate us from worship and obedience to God.** We are a Holy people to God because He chose us to be His people, as fulfillment of His promise to the Patriarchs. God's people must know that God is faithful in keeping His covenantal promises by showing covenantal kindness ("**chesed**") to ..."those who love Him and keep His commandments; but repays those who hate Him to their faces, to destroy them..." (vs. 9,10). So today, let us "covenant" together that we will obey God's words and daily live in fellowship with Him!

# Shabbat Shalom