

# Beth Tephila Messianic Jewish Congregation

(Under same management for over 5780 years)

## SHABBAT SERVICE

September 12th – 10:30 AM Lolo Community "Synagogue"

12:30 PM Oneg Shabbat



"Take this book of the law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may remain there as a witness against you."

### Parsha Va Yelech "And he went..." Deuteronomy 31: 1-29

וַיֵּלֶךְ מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר אֶת-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֶל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Va-yelech Moshe va-y'daber et-ha-d'varim ha'eleh el-kol-Yisra'el.

(verse1) And Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel.....

חֲזִקוּ וְאַמְצוּ אֶל-תִּירְאוֹ וְאֶל-תַּעֲרָצוֹ מִפְּנֵיהֶם כִּי

Chizku v'imtsu al-tir'u v'al-ta'artsu mipneyhem ki

(verse 6) Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הוּא הַהֹלֵךְ עִמָּךְ לֹא יִרְפֶּךָ וְלֹא יַעֲזֹבֶךָ:

Adonai Eloheycha hu ha-holech imach lo yarpecha v'lo ya'azveka.

the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.

### The Last Will & Testament of Moses, the Man of God...the servant of the Lord

As many of us, who are at death's door, summon our family members to be at our side, so Moses summons those close to him to hear his last words. In **Chapter 31**, Moses speaks to "all Israel," to Joshua, and to the priests, giving all of them his words of encouragement. Moses publicly transfers his leadership to Joshua. Then God gives Moses the discouraging news that a future generation will abandon Him and directs Moses to write a song of witness against the people. In the last chapters of Deuteronomy, Moses will read his song to the people, bless them by tribes, and ascend Mt. Nebo to

see the "promised land" and then die. If we knew we were going to die soon, we would want our last words to our loved ones to be memorable and for their benefit. We would want our children to know we loved them. We might say, "Remember to take care of your mother (father)." Followers of Messiah, Yeshua would have the certitude to tell our loved ones, "Live a godly life & I'll see you again in heaven." Moses begins Chapter 31 with his last exhortation to the people and to Joshua to remain strong and to trust in God's leadership and ability to defeat their enemies.

### **The "Passing of the Torch" of Leadership**

"And Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel, and he said to them, ' I am a hundred and twenty years old today; I am no longer able to come and go, and the Lord has said to me, ' You shall not cross this Jordan.'" Moses gives two reasons why he cannot continue to lead the people, as he has done since he lead them out of Egypt. Although ... "his eye was not dim, nor his vigor abated" (34:7), Moses was no longer physically able to go out to battle with the people. In the battle with Og and Sihon (Numbers 21), Moses sent messengers and sent spies, but it is not stated that Moses led the battle. In the battle against the Midianites (Numbers 31), Moses sent Pinehas instead of going himself. "**Ki tetse l'milchamah al-oyveycha...**" "When you go out to war against your enemies..." (Deuteronomy 21:10) indicates that Moses did not include himself in future battles. "**V'ha-yah ki-tavo el-ha'arets asher Adonai Eloheycha noten l'cha na-chalah...**" "And it shall be when you enter into the land which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance..." (Deuteronomy 26:1) also indicates that Moses did not include himself leading the people into the "promised land."

The second reason Moses gives the people for the necessity to "pass the torch" was in reality the only reason that counted. As punishment for his public sin of disbelief and failure to treat God as holy (Numbers 20:1-13), God would not allow Moses to lead His people into the land He promised to give them. God reiterated His decree against Moses entering the land in Deuteronomy 1:32-38 and 3:23-28. Therefore Moses understood the necessity of "passing the torch" of leadership to Joshua. Joshua was God's choice to replace Moses (Numbers 27:18 & Deuteronomy 3:28). From the example of Moses "passing the torch" we learn that **God's determinative will is not dependent on any man's will or availability**. All of God's servants should remain His humble servants because if God found it necessary to replace Moses, why should we think God could not accomplish His will by replacing us, if He deemed it necessary? Even though it was the intense desire of his heart to "finish what he had started," and lead the people into the land of their inheritance, Moses agreeably acquiesced and submitted his will to God's will. How many times in our lives do we find ourselves "digging in our heels," when things don't go the way we expected; when we're stopped in the middle of a task? We become disappointed and depressed. We may even become combative, blaming others. How much better for our peace of mind would it be for us to follow the example of Moses and agreeably submit our will to God's will? God could very well be saying to Moses, "Congratulations & happy birthday! You have reached the number of years I have allotted you, and today you will be in my presence, saving you from further frustration with My people, when they continue to forsake Me and ...."break My covenant, which I have made with them" (31:16). Thus the "passing of the torch" may also illustrate **Romans 8:28**, "And 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."



### **The Exhortation: Be Strong & Courageous....God Fights For You!**

Moses' exhortation to be strong and courageous and not to fear their enemies was made first to all the people. They were told 1) that God, Himself, would cross the Jordan River ahead of them and destroy their enemies, allowing them to dispossess the Canaanite inhabitants and 2) that Joshua would lead them to victory. His exhortation to strength and courage was based upon the fact that

God would not fail nor forsake them. Next Moses turns to Joshua to give him the same exhortation: "**chazak v'emats**," "be strong and courageous!" Joshua would be their leader, who would take them across the Jordan River into battle and give them the land of their inheritance. The basis of Moses' exhortation to Joshua for strength and courage was the same as that for the people: God would not fail them nor forsake them. As we approach Yom Kippur, we, too can be assured that God has not and will not forsake us. "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32). **Our apprehension of the blood atonement of the Messiah, Yeshua, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, forever places us under God's "covenant umbrella."** **Now we have full assurance that God can never fail nor forsake us.** **We have grasped hold of the proof, Yeshua!**

Moses presented the scroll of the law (probably the scroll Devarim - Deuteronomy) to the priests and commanded them to place it beside the ark of the covenant (verse 26) and to publicly read it every sabbatical year (every 7th year) on the day that financial debts were forgiven at Sukkot, a pilgrimage holiday, when ... "all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God..." Part of the charge of Moses to the people was that they should teach God's law to everyone in their towns, so that the people would ... "hear, and learn and fear the Lord your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law" (verses 11,12).



### **God's Commissioning of Joshua and Prophecy**

God called Moses to bring Joshua and privately meet him "**be'ohel mo'ed**" "in the communion tent" the tent of meeting, (not the tabernacle, "**mishkan**," a public place) where God had previously met with Moses before the existence of the tabernacle. There the Shekinah Glory of the Lord appeared in a pillar of cloud at the doorway of the tent to privately commission Joshua as His new leader. Before the installation of Joshua, God informed Moses about all the "**tsuris**" (troubles) the people would bring upon themselves by forsaking God and His covenant with them, worshipping other gods instead. God's bilateral covenant with His people provided peace, prosperity, and security in the land if they kept His law and worshipped God alone. The consequences of breaking their covenant with God was the opposite of the benefits of their keeping the covenant. God would forsake them and hide His face from them, allowing many evils and troubles to come upon them. When that time of "**tsuris**" came, God wanted the people to have a "witness against them." God instructed, "Now therefore, write this song for yourselves ("**lachem**" 2nd person plural) and teach it to the sons of Israel; put it on their lips that this song may be a witness for Me against the sons of Israel" (verse 19). Since there were only two people in the tent of meeting, Moses and Joshua, one may correctly conclude that both Moses and Joshua wrote "the Song of Moses" in Chapter 32, even though verse 22 states that Moses wrote the song. [ Trivia: Who wrote the "Song of Moses?"]

Then God, Himself, commissioned Joshua, telling him, "**Be strong and courageous**, for you shall bring the sons of Israel into the land which I swore to them, and I will be with you" (verse 23). What an uplifting experience for Joshua, who had just heard that the people would forsake their covenant with God! God spoke directly to Joshua, giving him the job of leading the people into the "promised

land" and telling him that He, Himself, will be with him, making him successful. Hebrews 13:5 tells Messianic Jews that they can also be content with the life God has given them for the same reason: God will never desert them nor forsake them.

After the formal commissioning of Joshua by God, Moses leaves the tent of meeting and takes the scroll of the law to place it beside the ark of the covenant. He addresses the people with anger, telling them that he knows that after his death they will act corruptly and do that which is evil in the sight of the Lord, causing evil to befall them "in the latter days" "b'acharit ha-yamim," in the distant, prophetic future. Certainly Moses had first-hand knowledge of God's people failing to follow Him, and so do we. We can look both at our country and at Israel. Both countries have failed to follow God's law, and evil times have repeatedly occurred. While Israel continually tries to fight against their enemies, they obviously do not have God fighting for them. And as we approach Yom Kippur, Israel can only hope in themselves that they will be inscribed in God's book of life for another year.

But believers in the sin atonement of Messiah have the total assurance of eternity with God based upon the evidence of God, Himself, offering up His own Son for our sin, truly showing once and for all that God will never leave us nor forsake us!

# Shabbat Shalom

## Yom Kippur Service Kol Nidre



**September 27th, 6:30PM**