



## **TOLMM WEEKLY NEWSLETTER for 9-24-22 - NITZAVIM**

### ***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](mailto: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 an approved Giving Charity by PayPal. To donate go to [etz-chayim.org](http://etz-chayim.org) and click on the PayPal 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.

Marcia Hedrick would like to host a group on the west side of El Paso in her home. She also needs someone to lead the group while she will be the host. If you are interested let me know and I will send her the information.

Gabriel Martinez has a home group in El Paso (different area). If interested let me know and I will send him the information.

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

We thank you for your support.

Blessings in Messiah Yeshua,  
Rabbi Mordecai Silver, Ph. D., and Rabbi Philip Hammond, Ph.D.

## ***General News***

TO SEARCH FOR MY 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.

FOR RABBI HAMMOND'S BOOK GO TO AMAZON.COM AS WELL.

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



***This week this double portion was separated into one portion so next week there will not be another portion from Rabbi Mordecai. He will leave this commentary for next week also. Everything else in the Newsletter will be different.***

## **MESSAGE FOR 9-24-22 and 10-1-22**

*Message originally shared 9/26/97  
Nitsavim-You Are Standing / Vayelech-And He Went  
Deuteronomy 29:9-30:20 / 31:1-30  
Isaiah 66:10-63:9 / 55:6-56:8  
Romans 10:6-10; Luke 4:16-30 / Romans 11:1-11*

### **Deuteronomy 29:9-14**

*You are standing today, all of you, before the Lord, your YHVH: the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers – all the men of Israel; your small children, your women, and your proselyte who is in the midst of your camp, from the hewer of your wood to the drawer of your water, For you to pass into the covenant of the Lord, your YHVH, and into His imprecation that the Lord, your YHVH, seals with you today. In order to establish you today as a people to Him and that He be a YHVH to you, as He spoke to you and as He swore to your forefathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and to Jacob. **Not with you alone do I seal this covenant and this imprecation, but with whoever is here standing with us today before the Lord, our YHVH, and with whoever is not here with us today.***

### **Deuteronomy 30:6**

*The Lord, your YHVH, will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your offspring, to love the Lord, your YHVH, with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.*

**Romans 2:28-29**

*On the contrary, the real Jew is not merely Jewish outwardly: true circumcision is not only external and physical. On the contrary, the real Jew is one inwardly; and true circumcision is of the heart, spiritual not literal; so that his praise comes not from other people but from YHVH.*

**Isaiah 61:10**

*I will rejoice intensely with the Lord, my soul will exult with my YHVH, for He has dressed me in the raiment of salvation, in a robe of righteousness has He cloaked me, like a bridegroom who exalts himself with splendor, like a bride who bedecks herself with her jewelry.*

**Luke 4:18-19**

*The Spirit of Adonai is upon me; therefore, he has anointed me to announce Good News to the poor; He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the imprisoned and renewed sight for the blind, to release those who have been crushed, to proclaim a year of the favor of Adonai.*

**Deuteronomy 31:10-13**

*Moses commanded them, saying, “At the end of seven years at the time of the Sabbatical year, during the Succot festival, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord, your YHVH, in the place that He will choose, you shall read this Torah before all Israel, in their ears, gather together the people – the men, the women, and the small children, and your stranger who is in your cities – so that they will hear and so that they will learn, and they shall fear the Lord, your YHVH, and be careful to perform all the words of this Torah. And their children who do not know – they shall hear and they shall learn to fear the Lord, your YHVH...*

**Deuteronomy 31:19**

*So now, write this song for yourselves, and teach it to the Children of Israel, place it in their mouth, so that this song shall be for Me a witness against the Children of Israel.*

**Isaiah 56:1-2**

*Thus said the Lord: Observe justice and perform righteousness, for My salvation is soon to come and My righteousness to be revealed.*

*Praiseworthy is the man who does this and the person who grasps it tightly: who guards the Sabbath against desecrating it and guards his hand against doing any evil.*

**Isaiah 56:3-5**

*Let not the foreigner, who has joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, ‘The Lord will utterly separate me from His people who observe My Sabbaths and choose what I desire, and grasp My covenant tightly: In My house and within My walls I will give them a place of honor and*

*renown, which is better than sons and daughters; eternal renown will I give them, which will never be terminated.*

**Romans 7, 11**

*What follows is that Israel has not attained the goal for which she is striving. The ones chosen have obtained it, but the rest have been made stonelike.*

*In that case, I say, isn't it that they have stumbled with the result that they have permanently fallen away? Heaven forbid! Quite the contrary, it is by means of their stumbling that the deliverance has come to the Gentiles, in order to provoke them to jealousy.*

**Romans 4:9-12**

*Now is this blessing for the circumcised only? Or is it also for the uncircumcised? For we say that Avraham's trust was credited to his account as righteousness; but what state was he in when it was so credited – circumcision or uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision! In fact, he received circumcision as a sign, as a seal of the righteousness he had been credited with on the ground of the trust he had had while he was still uncircumcised. This happened so that he could be the father of every uncircumcised person who trusts and thus has righteousness credited to him, and at the same time be the father of every circumcised person who not only has had a b'rit-milah, but also follows in the footsteps of the trust which Avraham avinu had when he was still uncircumcised.*

**To Stand before YHVH**

A chicken and a cow were walking down the street when they passed a billboard advertising the daily specials at a local restaurant. In bold type, the sign announced: TWO EGGS ANY STYLE ONLY \$1.99. Beneath this line, in different-colored letters, was the message: STEAK PLUS TWO SIDE DISHES - ONLY \$10.95.

Said the chicken to the cow: "Look at that - isn't that something? There, in two simple lines, is our contribution to civilization. I provide the breakfast; you provide the dinner - what would humanity do without us?"

*Replied the cow: "For you, it's a contribution. For me, it's a total commitment."*

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**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 Nitzavim: Summary Deu. 29:9-30:20**

***Moses describes the Covenant between God and the Israelites, urging the Israelites to uphold the Covenant and honor the Torah so that they may be rewarded with life in the land of Israel.***

Moses continues his last speech before the Israelites. "You are standing before God in order to enter into the Covenant of God and take the oath that God makes with you, so that God may fulfill God's promise to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It is not with you alone, but with those who are here and those who are not here that God makes this Covenant and oath."

Moses continues, "You remember how we dwelt in the land of Egypt as slaves and saw the Egyptians worshipping their idols. If any of you turns your heart away now from our God to serve these foreign gods, there could be among you a root that will someday ripen as a poison. God will not be willing to forgive those who know of this Covenant but follow their own selfish heart. God's anger will rise against those people and God will blot out their name and set them apart as evil.

“Future generations will see the devastation in the land and all the nations will ask, ‘why has God done this to this land?’ It shall then be said that the people forsook the Covenant of God that God established with them when God brought them out from the land of Egypt. They served other gods who did nothing for them. For this reason, did God remove them from the land in great outrage.

“There are secret things that belong only to God. The words of this Teaching, however, are revealed. This Teaching is ours and our children’s forever.

“And it will come to pass when all these words, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, will come upon you and you will take it to heart. In the midst of all the nations to which God has exiled you, you and your children will return to your God and hearken to God’s voice with all your heart and with all your soul. Then God will turn back to seek out your exiles and have compassion upon you and will gather you together from among all the peoples to which God has scattered you. Then God will do good to you and multiply you even more than your fathers.

“God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants to love God so that you may live. Then God will place all these curses upon your enemies and upon those who hate you. Meanwhile you will return to God’s commandments. Then good will be the work of your hands and good will be your livestock and the fruits in your field. For then you will be listening to the voice of God and following what is written in this Book of the Teaching.”

“For this commandment that I command you today,” Moses insists, “is not beyond your understanding, nor is it far away. It is not in heaven, nor in the seas beyond your reach for the Word is very near to you. Carry it out with your mouth and with your heart.

“See, I have set before you today life and good, and also death and evil, inasmuch as I command you today to love God, to walk in God’s ways and to keep God’s commandments, so that you may live and multiply. God will bless you in the land to which you are coming to take possession. But if your heart shall turn in a manner that forsakes God and serve other gods, then I have announced to you this day that you will quickly perish, that you will not last long in the soil of this promised land.

“I have called heaven and earth today as witnesses against you. I have set life and death before you, blessing and curse. Choose life, so that you and your descendants may live to love your God. Cling firmly to God, for that is your life and the length of your days, to dwell upon the soil that God swore to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

## Parashat Nitzavim Discussion Questions

**1) What do you think are “the secret things that belong to God?” What are some questions that you would like God to answer about these secrets? What difference would the answer make to your life?**

2) In this portion it appears that Moses already knows that the people will stray away from God's teachings and will be scattered among the peoples of the earth, but that the Israelites will return to the teachings of God. Why do you think that Moses predicts this rejection and then acceptance? Do you think this has happened? What phase, rejection or acceptance, are the Jewish people in now?

## Haftarah for Nitzavim: Summary Isa. 61:10-63:9

*Isaiah offers a hopeful anticipation of redemption.*

This Haftarah is read on the last Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah, as the seven weeks of consolation after Tisha B'Av come to a close. The text contains a palpable sense of anticipation, and Isaiah's tone is both excited and hopeful.

Isaiah begins by reminding the people that salvation is near, and that all of the nations will see it. He invokes imagery of weddings to symbolize triumph, and seedlings to symbolize growth. The nasty names that Israel has been called in the past— "Forsaken," "Desolate"—will be replaced by terms of affection.

Isaiah describes God's commitment to the city of Jerusalem: "For the sake of Zion I will not be silent, for the sake of Jerusalem I will not be still" (62:1). He details the ways that God will strengthen Jerusalem by appointing watchmen to guard the city day and night.

Then Isaiah describes God as a warrior who has returned victorious from battle but is covered in the blood of his enemies. The prophet reminds the people that when God needed to be defended there was no one to come to His aid, because the people had abandoned Him. Still, God defeated His enemies, even without His people at His side.

At the end of the Haftarah, Isaiah reassures the people that God will always come to their rescue: "In His love and pity He Himself redeemed them, raised them and exalted them all the days of old" (63:9).

Though the Haftarah doesn't contain an explicit connection to the Torah portion, it does point towards a future redemption. As we prepare for Rosh Hashanah, this sentiment is timely and inspiring.

# ***From the Desk of Rabbi Philip Hammond***

## **WORDS OF WISDOM.**

### **Another series from the desk of Rabbi Yochanan Hammond.**

Our world is crying out for “Words of wisdom”! This not a new need, but it has been a constant need throughout the history of the human race. We have always been given “words of wisdom” but on the whole we have ignored them to our peril. Those of us who study the Word of HaShem are well aware of our historical foolishness in rejecting words of wisdom.

*“And HASHEM commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad, you must not eat thereof; for on the day, you eat of it, you shall surely die.’” Genesis 2:16-17 [AST]*

We know the result of Adam and Chava ignoring these words of wisdom. Unfortunately, we don’t seem to have learnt from the mistakes of our “parents”. Time and time again we have had HaShem “speak” to us through various means, and we have ignored or totally rejected His words of wisdom. These words of wisdom are still available today, but as in yesteryear we continue to ignore and reject them and go our own way. We continue to put our faith in the words of man instead of the words or Word of HaShem. Our young people are more inclined to put the “words of wisdom”, spoken by rock “stars”, movie actors, sportsmen and women, humanistic socialists, and secular psychologists into action than any counsel from the Word of HaShem. This brings the same results as the disobedience of our first “parents” brought them.

I can understand those who have no interest in biblical matters of faith ignoring and rejecting the wisdom found in the words and Word of HaShem. I do not understand those who claim to follow and worship the One Who brought us the Word and words of wisdom, ignoring and rejecting His wisdom and commandments.

*“The beginning of wisdom is fear of HASHEM, good understanding to all their practitioners.”* Psalm 11:10 [AST]

*“For HASHEM grants wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.”* Proverbs 2:6

*“The beginning of wisdom is to acquire wisdom....”* Proverbs 4:7a [AST]

*“My child, be attentive to my wisdom, give ear to my understanding, to heed wise designs and let your lips guard wisdom.”* Proverbs 9:1-2 [AST]

*“How much better than fine gold is the acquisition of wisdom, and the acquisition of understanding is choicer than silver.”* Proverbs 16:16 [AST]

*“It [wisdom] is a tree of life to those who grasp it, and its supporters are praiseworthy.”* Proverbs 3:18

There is no doubt that the wisdom of HaShem is to be embraced and applied by the Children of Israel. Without His wisdom as the basis for our lives we can but expect more and more problems and challenges in our lives and communities.

The human race is in the absolute mess it finds itself in because of the rejection of the words and Word of HaShem. Remarkably we have to make the same statement regarding the nation of Israel, the chosen nation. We Children of HaShem have neglected the wisdom and counsel found in the Word of HaShem and thus we need to readjust our focus and re-learn the wisdom found therein. We must give thanks to the mercy and patience of HaShem as He willingly waits for His people to come and sit at His feet seeking His wisdom through learning His Torah.

It is with this hope that we approach this series and I pray that we bring glory to HaShem, the Holy One of Israel, and to His Torah and HaMoshiach. Without HaShem, without HaMoshiach and without Torah we are a doomed people without hope. In this series we hope to bring the building blocks that all can apply to their lives. We are seeking the wisdom of HaShem in our approach, so all can understand and apply if they so wish. We do not want to over complicate the Word of HaShem,

thus making it only for the elite and “educated”. The Word of HaShem is for all His Children, and we need to teach and explain it to all who have ears to listen. The majority of our people do not have the time to spend on countless hours of study and are looking for clear, concise directions that are easily understood and adhered too. It is the opinion of this author that we have overcomplicated the Word and words of HaShem applying so many rules and regulations in an attempt to guard the torah that we can no longer see the Wood for the Trees. Our people are suffering from want of the simplicity that can be found in the Word and words of HaShem.

We presently lack Wisdom in our midst, so let us seek it out with intent and persistence, in an effort to change our direction and build happy, healthy and fruitful communities.

Until we meet next, may we remember the wisdom found in these words, ***“My child, do not forget My Torah, and let your heart guard My commandments, for they add to your length of days and years of life and peace. Kindness and truth will not forsake you. Bind them upon your neck; inscribe them on the tablet of your heart, and you will find favour and goodly wisdom in the eyes of God and man. Trust in HASHEM with all your heart and do not rely upon your own understanding. In all your ways know Him, and He will smooth your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear HASHEM and turn away from evil.”*** Proverbs 3:1-7 [AST]

Shalom berakhah ve-tovah

Rabbi Yochanan Hammond.

## ***This and that ...***



### **Can A Jew Get Body Piercings?**

***While most Jewish authorities believe ear piercing is fine, the matter grows somewhat more complex with other body parts.***

Does Jewish law allow body piercing? While most contemporary Jewish authorities believe that ear piercing is generally fine, the matter grows somewhat more complex when it comes to extensive piercings or piercing other body parts.

- The principal issue of Jewish law raised by body modifications of all types is the traditional prohibition on damaging a human body.
- Some contemporary authorities have also raised concerns that piercing can run afoul of Jewish values of modesty (*tzniut*) and respect for the body as created in the divine image.
- However, most rabbinic authorities give at least some weight to contemporary mores, in particular the fact that body piercing is understood today not as a sign of bodily denigration, but as an act of adornment.

#### **Is piercing discussed in the Bible?**

Yes. In the Book of Exodus, the Torah prescribes that if a Hebrew slave declares that he loves his master and does not want to be set free, the master should pierce the slave's ear with an awl. The association of ear piercing with slavery is sometimes taken as an indication that the Torah does not look favorably upon the practice. However other references make clear that body piercing for aesthetic reasons was practiced in biblical times. In the Book of Genesis, Abraham's servant Eliezer gives a gift of a nose ring to Rebecca, whom he hopes will become Isaac's wife. In Exodus, when the Israelites beseech Aaron to create the golden calf, Aaron responds by instructing them to take "the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me" — an indication that ear piercing was a

practice among Israelite men as well as women. Ornamental ear piercing is also mentioned as a common practice in the Talmud.

### Is body piercing permitted by Jewish law?

The main *halachic* (Jewish law) issue raised by body piercing is the prohibition on wounding, which is derived from the prohibition in [Deuteronomy 25:3](#) that when meting out a punishment of lashes, the guilty party may not be given more than 40 lashes. (On this verse, Maimonides comments that if the Torah was careful not to allow additional lashes for a sinner, how much more so for a righteous person.) Some rabbinic authorities have raised objections to cosmetic surgery on the grounds that it constitutes a violation of this principle, a position that could theoretically be extended to body piercing. (A secondary problem, which could also theoretically be applied to body piercing, is a philosophical objection to cosmetic surgery because it implies dissatisfaction with the way God created the human body.) Other rabbinic authorities, notably Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, a leading American halachic authority of the 20th century, saw no problem with cosmetic surgery, since the intent is not to wound but to beautify. On the whole, the prohibition on damaging the body is not broadly understood to bar the piercing of ears for aesthetic purposes.

### Is there a difference between piercing ears and piercing other parts of the body?

Traditional Jewish law offers no obvious basis for differentiating between various kinds of body piercing. In a 1997 responsum on the question of body piercing, Conservative Rabbi Alan Lucas asserts that it is “hard to argue ...that there is a substantive difference between the nonpermanent piercing of the ear for fashion purposes and the non-permanent piercing of the eyebrow, navel or even nipple.” Lucas goes on to note that health risks are associated with piercing certain sensitive body parts and that only “medically qualified” individuals should perform piercings.

### Are there types of piercing that Judaism frowns upon?

Though there is no explicit blanket prohibition on body piercing, rabbis from all three of the major Jewish denominations have raised a number of concerns about the practice.

One of them is that excessive piercing is inconsistent with Jewish values. “The way we treat our bodies, including the manner in which we ‘adorn’ them, is a statement of our attitude toward our relationship with God and our duties under the covenant,” a Reform responsum from the late 1990s on the matter reads. “Let us consider, therefore, what sort of statement we make about ourselves and our bodies when we inject pigment into our skin, when we pierce our flesh with needles, wire, studs, and spikes. Let us ask ourselves whether this is truly the way that we Jews, commanded to pursue and to practice holiness, should aspire to ‘beautify’ and ‘adorn’ ourselves.”

The Lucas paper raises a similar point: “Body piercing is not prohibited, although legitimate concerns regarding tzniut [modesty] and other traditional Jewish values should be taken into consideration and guide one’s choices.”

Orthodox authorities raise a number of additional issues with body piercing, though none are universally understood to unambiguously prohibit the practice. These include the prohibition loosely defined as “following the ways of the gentiles,” a principle derived from a number of verses in Leviticus understood broadly to forbid imitating the ways of non-Jewish peoples. For this reason, some Orthodox authorities urge those considering a piercing to reflect on their motivations for doing so. There are also concerns specifically about men getting piercings based on the biblical prohibition (in [Deuteronomy 22:5](#)) against men wearing women’s attire. In societies where it’s common for both men and women to be pierced, this would presumably not be a serious concern.

### **Does body piercing preclude burial in a Jewish cemetery?**

No. It is a common misconception that body modification — tattoos in particular — disqualifies one from a traditional Jewish burial. This is not the case. Though some individual Jewish burial societies may decline to bury individuals for any number of reasons, there is nothing in Jewish law that calls for denying a Jewish burial to someone with a tattoo or a piercing.

# Prayer Points



## The Tallit: Spiritual Significance

***The commandment to attach fringes to garments was invested with deep theological meaning.***

The tallit (prayer shawl) was to remind the Jew of the commandments of the Torah. How do the fringes of the *tallit* remind one of the commandments? The Jews' search for a logical correlation between the *tallit* and the commandments of God was rewarded with intriguing discoveries. The numerical value of the word *tzitzit* (fringes) is 600. Each of the fringes contains 8 threads and 5 knots, making a total of 613. This number corresponds to the 613 commandments contained in the Torah.

It was also noted that in making the fringes one winds the long thread around the other threads between the 5 knots 7, 8, 11, and 13 times respectively. The first three numbers equal 26, which is the numerical value of the Tetragrammaton. The remaining number equals the numerical value of the word *ehad* ("one")—the last word in the opening verse of the Shema. The fringes of the *tallit* thus not only remind the Jew of the 613 divine commandments, but also underscore the central doctrine of Judaism, that the Lord is one.

Ethical and theological meanings have also been read into the symbolism of the *tallit*. According to the Midrash, wrapping ourselves in the prayer shawl is to aid us in attaining a proper mood of reverence for God and a prayerful spirit during our worship.

Rabbi Hezekiah also taught: When the children of Israel are wrapped in their prayer-shawls, let them [ feel ] ... as though the glory of the [divine] Presence were upon them, for . . . Scripture does not say: 'That ye may look upon them' [the fringes], but That ye may look upon Him [ Num. 15:391 ], that is, upon the Holy One, blessed be He. ( Midrash Tehillim 2:99 ), transl. William Braude, *The Midrash on Psalms*)

The prayer shawl has remained an inseparable part of Jewish worship. Its importance can be judged from a touching incident that occurred in 1493. In that year the Jews of Sicily were despoiled of all their possessions and expelled from their homes. Before leaving the island, they

petitioned the authorities for the privilege of taking their prayer shawls with them. Their petition was refused.

**Hebrew - עֵבְרִי**  
**Word (s) of the Week**

לַיְלָה טוֹב  
LAI-LA TOV

**Good Night**

**Great One Liners**  
**Puns, Witticisms & Laughs Galore**

***I have to walk early in the morning before my brain figures out what I'm doing.***



## ***This is not your Bubbie's Chicken Soup***



## **How to Make Pretzel Bagels**

*The perfect salty carb combo.*

Bagel dough is deceptively simple to make —with just five ingredients, you can knead, roll, boil and bake bagels at home. But what happens if you mash-up your favorite bagel, with the ultimate comfort carb...the pretzel? I used to enjoy pretzels while walking around my local shopping mall, but now you can enjoy them reimagined as a fun and unique breakfast.

Bagels and pretzels have more in common than you think. Both are made of a relatively dense dough, both require a water bath or dip before baking, both have a distinctive chew, and both are rolled, shaped and baked to a deep golden brown.

To get their distinctive shine and deep brown hue, pretzel dough is dipped in food grade lye (which can be dangerous to do at home), or a combination of baking soda and water. While pretzels are dunked or dipped, bagels are boiled in a water bath made with malt syrup.

This recipe combines both processes, with a water bath made with baking soda and honey, to get an addictive shine and crust. My secret to making deli-worthy bagels? Bread flour. Unlike all-purpose flour, bread flour has a higher protein content, meaning a stronger structure for a chewy bagel.



Topped with pretzel salt (a course, large grain salt), these bagels are perfect dipped or slathered with Dijon mustard. Can't find pretzel salt? Top these bagels with large flake salt, everything bagel seasoning or sesame seeds for an equally delicious treat.

## Ingredients

- 1 package instant yeast
- 1 ½ cups warm water
- 1 Tbsp honey
- 4 cups bread flour
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- vegetable oil, to coat the bowl

For water bath:

- 9-10 cups water
- 1/3 cup baking soda
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 1 large egg, whisked
- 1 Tbsp water
- 2 Tbsp Pretzel salt, or large flake salt

For egg wash:

1 large egg, whisked

1 Tbsp water

2 Tbsp pretzel salt, or large flake salt

## Directions

1. Combine the yeast, water, and honey in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook. Cover, and let sit for 5 minutes. If the yeast mixture is slightly foamy, bubbly, and/or fragrant, your yeast is active. If not, you may need to get fresher yeast.
2. Add the bread flour and salt. Beat on medium for 2 minutes and continue kneading for 4-5 minutes on medium-low speed. If your mixer is struggling, knead it on a lightly floured surface for 6-7 minutes, or until elastic.

3. Grease a large bowl with oil. Add the dough to the bowl, and cover with a clean kitchen towel or plastic wrap. Let rise for 45-90 minutes at room temperature, or until doubled. To test if the dough has proofed, poke the dough with your finger. If it springs back immediately, it needs more time. If it slowly returns to its shape, with a slight indentation, it is ready to go!
4. Divide the dough into 8 equal pieces. Cupping your hand over each dough, Roll each piece into a ball, and place onto a lined baking sheet. Let rest for 5 minutes.
5. While resting, prepare the water bath and preheat the oven to 425°F. Add the water, baking soda, and honey to a large pot. Bring to a gentle boil.
6. Use your index and middle finger to poke a hole in the center of each dough ball, stretching until it is 1-2 inches in diameter. Return to the baking sheet.
7. Add 2-3 bagels into the simmer water bath, cooking for 1 minute on each side.
8. Remove from the bath and return to the baking sheet.
9. Repeat with remaining bagels.
10. Brush each bagel with the egg wash, and sprinkle with salt.
11. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until deep brown, turning the tray halfway through.
12. Let cool before serving.

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*Philip Hammond  
 Phone: 0416087400 or  
 61 + 416087400  
 Philip@etz-chayim.org*

