



TOLMM WEEKLY NEWSLETTER for 11-19-22 CHAYEI SARAH

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 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 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. Gabriel is an Elder affiliated with TOLMM as is his Home Group, Ohr Ha'Brit Messianic Assembly.

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. 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/>.

Elder Shawn Warren is an Elder affiliated with TOLMM and helps with one-on-one correspondence with inmates in our Prison Ministry Outreach. He also encourages people to contact us about affiliating with TOLMM through Home Groups and our help to group leaders.

We thank you for your support.

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

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...



MESSAGE FOR 11-19-22 CHAYEI SARAH

Chayei Sarah – Life of Sarah
Genesis 23:1-25:18
1 Kings 1:1-31
Matthew 1:1-17

The Legacy

Genesis 25:7-11

Now these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived: a hundred years, seventy years, and five years. And Abraham expired and died at a good old age, mature and content, and he was gathered to his people. His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, facing Mamre. The field that Abraham had bought from the children of Heth, there Abraham was buried, and Sarah his wife. And it was after the death of Abraham that God blessed Isaac his son, and Isaac settled near Beer-lahai-roi.

Means "Well of the Living One seeing me"

Genesis 24:63

Isaac went out to supplicate in the field towards evening...

Supplicate: To ask humbly or earnestly by praying.

Genesis 24:51-52

Here, Rebecca is before you; take her and go, and let her be a wife to your master's son as the Lord has spoken. And it was, when Abraham's servant heard their words, he prostrated himself to the the ground unto the Lord.

1Kings 1:24

Nathan said, "my lord the king, have you said, "Adonijah will reign after me and he will sit on my throne"?

1Kings 28-30

Then King David answered and said, "Summon Bath-sheba to me." She came before the king and stood before the king. The king swore and said, "As the Lord lives, Who has redeemed my life from every trouble," "I swear that as I have sworn to you by the Lord, the God of Israel, saying, 'Solomon your son will reign after me and he will sit on my throne in my place,' so shall I fulfill it this very day."

*reference the similarities and differences how the heir was chosen and how man tried to interfere in God's plan.

Matthew 3:8-9

If you have really turned from your sins to God, produce fruit that will prove it! And don't suppose you can comfort yourselves by saying, "Avraham is our father"! For I tell you that God can raise up for Avraham sons from these stones!

Matthew 3:13-17

Then Y'shua came from the Galil to the Yarden to be immersed by Yochanan. But Yochanan tried to stop him. "You are coming to me? I ought to be immersed by you!" However, Y'shua answered him, "Let it be this way now, because we should do everything righteousness requires." Then Yochanan let him. As soon as Y'shua had been immersed, he came up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, he saw the Spirit of God coming down upon him like a dove,

And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; I am well pleased with him."

Luke 2:29-32

Now, Adonai, according to your word, your servant is at peace as you let him go. For I have seen with my own eyes your Yeshu'ah, Which you prepared in the presence of all people –

A light that will bring revelation to the Goyim and glory to your people Israel."

"Our Rabbis teach us that tzaddikim-righteous ones are described as being 'alive' even after they pass away. Let's try to understand what this means."

Chani raised her hand. "Teacher, I'm not sure if this is a good example, but I think I understand. You see, my mother's grandmother was a very special woman. My mother says she was a real tzadeikes-righteous person. I never met her; she died before I was born. But somehow, I feel like I know her.

"My mother always talks about her. She always says - 'Bubbe used to do this,' 'Bubbe used to say that' 'Bubbe would do it this way.' In our family, we do a lot of things the way Bubbe used to do them. It's as if everything about her is still with us today."

***reference back to last verse in Luke and speak about tie it all together about the legacy.**

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 Chayei Sara: Summary **Gen: 23:1-25:18**

Following the death of Sara, Abraham purchases a burial plot and sends his servant to find a wife for Isaac.

Sara dies at 127 years of age in Hebron in the land of Canaan. Abraham mourns her, then asks property owners there to grant him burial space so that he may bury his dead out of his sight. Knowing that Abraham is ennobled by God, they are willing to give Abraham the choicest land, but Abraham insists on paying for it. Only then does Abraham bury his wife in the cave of Machpelah in the land of Canaan.

Feeling old, Abraham decides to find a wife for his son Isaac. He says to his eldest servant, "Swear by God, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not take a wife from among the Canaanites, but that you shall go to my homeland and take a wife from among my kindred."

The servant says, "What if the woman will not want to follow me into this land? Shall I have your son go there?"

Abraham responds, "Take heed that you do not bring my son back there! God, Who took me from my father's house, will send an angel before you. If the woman should not want to go with you, then you will be free from this oath."

The servant swore to Abraham this oath and took 10 camels and some of his master's finest things and journeyed to the city of Nahor. He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the water well at the time of evening when the women come to draw water.

Feed My Camels!

And the servant said, "Let it come to pass that the girl to whom I say, 'Please tilt your pitcher so that I may drink,' will respond with, 'Drink and I will give your camels water too.'"

The servant had hardly finished speaking when Rebecca, a descendant of Abraham's brother, came down to the well and filled her pitcher. Abraham's servant ran to meet her, saying, "Let me please sip a little water from your pitcher."

"Drink," she said. "Then I will draw water for your camels too."

As she did so, the servant kept on gazing upon her in wonderment, holding his peace to know whether God had caused his journey to prosper or not.

Only after the camels had finished drinking did the servant take a valuable ring of gold and two golden bracelets and ask, "Whose daughter are you and is there room in your father's house for us to stay overnight?"

"Yes, come stay," Rebecca said after she explained her lineage.

The servant bowed his head and prostrated himself before God, saying, "Blessed be God, the God of my master Abraham."

Rebecca then ran and told her mother what had happened by the well. Now, Rebecca had a brother, Laban, and Laban, seeing the gifts of gold on his sister, went to greet the man and invited him to come into the house.

The servant of Abraham came in and explained his mission. "I am a servant of Abraham. God has blessed my master exceedingly so that he has become great. He is rich with animals and money and servants. Sara, my master's wife, bore him a son, and to this son Abraham will give everything. He asked me to leave Canaan to find a wife from among his kinsman. Abraham told me that the God to Whom he is a servant will send an angel and help me find the proper wife for his son.

"So, I came to the well and waited to see if a woman might give me water and offer my camels water too. Rebecca came immediately and graciously did so. I blessed God for sending Rebecca to me and my master. Now, tell me if you wish to deal in loving-kindness and truth with my master so that I may know what to do."

Permission From Father

Laban and his father, Bethuel, said, "The matter has come forth from God. Take Rebecca and go as God has spoken."

When the servant of Abraham heard their words, he bowed low before God and brought forth articles of gold and silver for Rebecca and delicious fruits for her family. He stayed with the family overnight. The next morning the family asked that Rebecca stay with

them for a while, but Abraham's servant said to them, "Do not delay me, since God has caused my journey to prosper."

They then called for Rebecca and asked her if she would go with this man. "I will go," she said. Then they sent Rebekah away with a blessing, "Become the mother of thousands of ten thousand and may your offspring seize the gate of your enemies."

Now Isaac was meditating in the field when he saw camels coming. Rebecca took her veil and covered herself. The servant told Isaac all that had occurred. Then Isaac brought her into the tent of his mother, Sara. He married Rebecca and he loved her, and only then was Isaac comforted by the loss of his mother.

Abraham took another wife, Keturah. She bore him six sons, and those sons begot more sons, but all that Abraham had, he gave to Isaac.

To the new wife's children, he gave them gifts and sent them away. Later, Abraham died satisfied at the age of 175. His sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Makhpelah where his wife Sara was buried.

It came to pass that after Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac. Isaac dwelt near the well of "The-Living-One-Who-Sees-Me."

The descendants of Hagar, who bore Abraham's son Ishmael, are listed. Ishmael had 12 princes, listed according to their tribes. Ishmael died at 137 years. His people lived near Egypt.

Parashat Chayei Sara Discussion Questions

- 1. Why did Abraham want to bury Sara "out of his sight?" Why do traditional Jews still bury people in graveyards today rather than "within our sight?"**
- 2. The servant of Abraham comes up with a test at the well to find the wife for Isaac. Do you ever come up with tests for people to pass? Give an example. What do your tests reveal about yourself and about them?**
- 3. Why was it so important for Abraham to find a wife for Isaac from his kinsmen in his father's land rather than from the land of Canaan? Is it still important to marry someone from the same tribe or religion? Why or why not?**

Haftarah for Chayei Sara 1Kings 1:1-31

In David's weakest moment, his throne becomes vulnerable.

In Parashat Lech-Lecha, God promises Abraham that he will be the father of a great nation. Abraham's hope for the future was embodied in his son Isaac, but in this week's portion, Chayei Sara, as the patriarch nears death, the prospects for a dynastic family seem dim. Isaac and his wife Rebecca have yet to even conceive a child.

Similarly, in Haftarah Chayei Sara, King David must deal with the future of his own dynasty. When the book of Kings I opens, David is ill, and the infirmity of old age is setting in: “Even though they covered him with bedclothes, he never felt warm” (Kings 1:1). His servants’ idea for a cure? To find a young woman to “be his nurse [and] to lie close to him and keep him warm” (1:2). They search for a suitable candidate and find a Shunammite woman named Abishag.

Meanwhile, King David’s son Adonijah makes a play for the throne, and declares himself king, backed by an army of 50 men. Adonijah was not the oldest of David’s sons (Absalom was), but he was cunning. He carried out his coup with the aid of some of the priests—though, the text notes, not all of them—and offered sacrifices as a way to solidify his position. Adonijah invites three of his brothers to witness this ceremony — all except Solomon, who is kept ignorant of his ascension.

Nathan the prophet, who is listed among those who did not support Adonijah, came to Batsheva, Solomon’s mother, to warn her. “Let me give you advice that will save your life, and the life of your son Solomon,” he says, instructing her to inform King David of his son’s preemptive power play (1:13).

Bathsheva obeys. She approaches David while Abishag is attending to him and relates exactly what Nathan told her to say. Then she adds of her own accord: “Now, my lord king, the eyes of all Israel are upon you to tell them who shall sit on your throne when you are gone. If you do not,” she concludes, “then as soon as you are lying with your ancestors, my son Solomon and I will be regarded as traitors” (1:20-21).

As soon as she finishes, Nathan comes to the king. “Could it be that the lord my king ordered this, without telling your servant who will sit on the throne after you?” he asks rhetorically (1:27).

David orders Bathsheva to return. In front of them both, he swears an oath that “Solomon would rule after me...I will carry it out this very day!” (1:30). To this, Bathsheva bows low and replies: “Let my lord king David live forever” (1:31).

Like the Torah portion, the haftarah is concerned with succession, both on a personal level and on a national one. By seizing power and attempting to take over the kingdom for his own purposes, Adonijah showed himself to be an unfit candidate to be king. Like Isaac, Solomon received his father’s birthright despite not being the oldest son. And, just like Isaac, Solomon inherited a destiny that was only beginning to take shape. Before David took his post, Israel had only had one other king. The duties of a king and the path of a young nation, still without a Temple, were still being determined.



From the Desk of Rabbi Philip Hammond

WORDS OF WISDOM.

Catherine of Siena said, “**Lose yourself wholly; and the more you lose, the more you will find**”. I find this an intriguing statement, especially if we relate it to our relationship with HaShem, HaMoshiach and Torah.

If a relationship is fractured, then you can be sure there has been an event or events that have contributed to this. Our nation Israel is to be a nation that has a very close relationship with the God of Israel. Yet history shows us that this has not always been the case, in fact seldom has this been the case. Unfortunately, it is no different today. There have been countless events that have contributed to this. The “Golden Calf” episode was just one. Numerous Kings, prophets and priests of Israel have been corrupted and failed to follow the Torah. These corrupt leaders of Israel caused division and were a major cause of a fractured relationship between HaShem and our nation.

The one thing we can be absolutely sure of is the fact that this fracture was **not** due to the corrupt unrighteous behaviour of HaShem. We Children of Israel have been the sole cause of any fractured relationship with HaShem. Over and over, we have failed to love and trust HaShem, preferring to love ourselves and to trust in our own polluted wisdom. Down through the ages we have been very good at talking the talk of Torah but rather poor at walking the walk of Torah. I am not speaking of trying to keep all the Halakah of strict Orthodox Rabbinic Judaism; but just trying to be “observant” in our faith, to the best of our ability. We have replaced so many instructions and guidelines from HaShem with our own “manmade” instructions and guidelines. We have become unrecognisable as a nation devoted to HaShem. Sadly,

we are a nation devoted to self and manmade institutions. Somehow this must change and change it will.

As a nation we must begin the task of “finding ourselves”. We must attach this task to our relationship with HaShem. Within this important task it is also vital that we remember Israel is the chosen nation of HaShem.

“For you are a people consecrated to HASHEM your God; of all peoples on earth, you have been chosen by HASHEM your God to be His own people.” Deuteronomy 7:6 [NJB]

“But you are a chosen race, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a people to be a personal possession to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into His wonderful light. Once you were a non-people and now you are the People of God; once you were outside His pity; now you have received pity.” 1Peter 2:9-10 [NJB]

Israel is a nation that should be sheltering under the “wings” of HaShem, HaMoshiach and Torah. Yeshua Himself touched on this point.

“Yerushalayim! Yerushalayim! You kill the prophets! You stone those who are sent to you! How often I wanted to gather your children, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you refused! Look! God is abandoning your house to you, leaving it desolate. For I tell you, from now on, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of ADONAI’”. Matthew 23:37-39 [CJB]

Sadly, we have a history of refusing to listen to our Father in heaven, HaMoshiach and Torah. This has caused us to have a distorted view of ourselves and when we view ourselves in the mirror, we are failing to see ourselves for who we are. Dare I say it, but this reminds me of a story that had the question, “Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?”

This is why I have highlighted the words of Catherine of Siena. Until we have lost the damaging and inhibiting factor of “self”, we will struggle to have an intimate relationship with HaShem. In order to find our rightful place before HaShem we must “lose ourselves”. As a nation we must find ourselves crying out to HaShem with words that reflect the following:

“We beg you, HaShem, save us, we beg you, HaShem, give us victory! Blessed in the name of HaShem is he who is coming! We bless you from the house of HaShem. HaShem is God, he gives us light. Link your processions, branches in hand, up to the horns of the altar. You are my God, I thank you, all praise to you, my God. I thank

you for hearing me and making yourself my Saviour. Give thanks to HaShem for he is good, for his faithful love endures forever.” Psalm 118:25-29 [NJB]

It is only when we come to the point of calling on HaShem as a nation that we will begin the journey of “finding ourselves”. How we should rejoice that the faithful love of HaShem, for His nation, for us, endures forever.

As a Rabbi, I try and call people to seek HaShem and experience His faithful love. Unfortunately, I have to admit that the success rate is very low. However, when I witness the success rate of HaShem thus far, I realise just how hard hearted we are. If HaShem, HaMoshiach and Torah have had limited success in bringing the Children of Israel to shed the pride of self, what chance have I? None the less this should not stop one from trying and importantly stop one from improving ones individual position before HaShem through self-examination via the lens of Torah.

“For the time has come for the judgment to begin. It begins with the household of God; and if it starts with us, what will the outcome be for those who are disobeying God’s Good News?” 1Peter 4:17 [CJB]

It would be wise for us to understand that HaShem expects us to take responsibility for our behaviour and actions. I am not sure if we fully realise that HaShem continually judges our behaviour as a nation. Thus, we find ourselves in the position we currently hold. This position is not one HaShem is pleased with. A question is asked in the above scripture; “*What will the outcome be for those who are disobeying God’s Good News?*” To answer this question, we must ask what the “Good News” is. May I suggest the “Good News” involves the whole “package” that HaShem has for His people. It is not enough to just embrace HaMoshiach without Torah and it is not enough to embrace Torah without HaMoshiach.

Put simply the “Good News” is both HaMoshiach and Torah and to make room for both in our lives we have to be prepared to wholly lose ourselves. Let us begin or continue the difficult task of losing ourselves so we can repair our fractured relationship with HaShem and shelter under the His wings of love.

May the grace, love, and wisdom of HaShem and Yeshua HaMoshiach be with you!

This, that and the other ...



Why Jews Read Torah on a Yearly Cycle

The history of the weekly portion — and the different schedules on which it's done.

Every week, one section of the Torah, known as the Torah portion or “parsha,” is designated as a focus of Jewish study and is read aloud in synagogue that Shabbat.

The first mention of a scheduled Torah-reading cycle appears in the Bible, in Deuteronomy, where Moses instructs the tribe of Levi and the elders of Israel to gather all the people for a public reading from portions of the Torah once every seven years. The need to read the Torah publicly intensified after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE; Jews were dispersed into other parts of the Middle East, into North Africa, and into Europe; and their earlier religious and cultural world became decentralized. While most Jews in the Diaspora now follow one Torah-reading cycle, some communities are on a triennial cycle.

Because a reference in the Mishnah (the first effort to permanently record Jewish custom and law, compiled in the 3rd century C.E.) supported Deuteronomy’s prescription, we understand that Jews were continuing to read the Torah publicly; and we also know that there were Torah readings for festivals, special Shabbatot (plural of Shabbat) and fast days.

But it was not until the Talmudic era, about the 6th century C.E., that the Jews in the Land of Israel began to read the entire Torah in public and do so until all the Five Books of Moses were completed. At that time, the cycle took three years in a pattern called the Palestinian triennial, beginning the first year with the first book, Genesis, and finishing, at the end of the third year, with the fifth book, Deuteronomy.

The Jews of Babylon, however, followed a different custom, established by the beginning of the 7th century CE, and completed the entire cycle each year, which

they did by dividing the Torah into 54 weekly portions. (Because the number of portions exceeds the number of weeks in a given year, more than one portion is read during certain weeks.) In Hebrew, the word for portion is parsha (plural, parshiyot).

In the 19th century, a reintroduction of the Palestinian triennial cycle was attempted at the West End Congregation in London but was unsuccessful. In the middle of the 20th century, various congregations in the United States (primarily Conservative ones) were seeking ways to modernize the service and also to spend more time on Shabbat on Torah study. They too attempted to revive the Palestinian cycles with the argument that reading only a section of the weekly Torah portion would make Torah study more concentrated and thus enhanced.

The reintroduction failed for two reasons. First, in the pattern of the Palestinian triennial cycle, the weekly reading would have differed from what the rest of the Jewish world was reading. Second, Simchat Torah (the holiday in which Jews celebrate the conclusion of one Torah-reading cycle and the beginning of the next) celebrations would occur only one out of every three years, instead of annually.

Finally, in 1988, the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Conservative Movement passed a legal responsum that put into practice a new American triennial cycle. This new triennial cycle, rather than dividing the entire Torah into thirds, as was done in the Palestinian cycle, divides each of the individual 54 portions into thirds. Therefore, a congregation can be reading within the same portion as those who follow the annual cycle but will only read one-third of each portion per year. In addition, this pattern enables the congregation to read from Genesis through Deuteronomy each year, providing for an annual celebration of Simchat Torah.

There is an obvious drawback to this system: Only one-third of each conventional Torah portion is actually read per year; and the readings, because incomplete, do not flow smoothly into the portion of the following week. Nonetheless, the vast majority of American Conservative and Reform congregations prefer this new cycle. All Jews in Israel, however, and Orthodox Jews in America continue to follow the annual cycle with the full portion read each week.

Prayer Points



Blessings and Curses

Why we should pray that the best things in our life continue to benefit us and others.

On Yom Kippur, the people of Sharon, a region subject to earthquakes, pleaded with God that their houses would not become their graves. One way to understand this prayer is that we pray for our blessings not to become our curses.

Wealth is a great blessing. When it brings with it ostentation, rapacious competition, empty acquisition, we have allowed a blessing to become a curse.

Freedom is a blessing. When we allow that freedom to lead to the unmooring of our values and character, it has become a curse.

Passion for the causes of the world is vital. When that passion for the causes outside our door leads us to neglect those in our home, to express love to strangers and treat those closest to us indifferently or cruelly, a blessing has become a curse.

We are approaching the New Year. It is a time for renewal. This is a good time for a prayer: We who have so many blessings should pray, in the tradition of the people of Sharon: ***Dear God, may our blessings not become our curses, and may we continue to be blessed.***

Hebrew - עִבְרִי

Word (s) of the Week

הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל

Ha-El Ha-Gah-dohl

The Great God

A Laugh a Day-Keeps the....? 🤔

“Doctor! Doctor! I feel like a bridge!”

“What’s come over you?” 😁

This is not your Bubbie's Chicken Soup



Falafel Sliders Recipe

The key to really pulling this off is making sure that your falafel is crispy on the outside, and light and fluffy on the inside.

Every year, my husband and I switch between hosting New Year's Eve, and the Super Bowl. This year, we got the Super Bowl.

Whether you like football or not, it's an excuse to get together with friends and food. Other than watching the commercials, I don't get too enthusiastic about football. Food, however, is a different story.

I played around with the idea of making traditional falafel and making them into smaller "sliders" or even just setting everything out on to platters and making a fun falafel bar. This way, your guests can help themselves. I served them here with traditional tahini, Israeli salad, and cabbage salad. They are served on pita bread that I charred on the stove top and cut down to the size of the falafel balls. You can get creative and have a whole spread. Think Israeli pickles, pickled turnips, carrot salad, baba ganoush and tabbouleh.



The key to really pulling this off is making sure that your falafel taste authentic—crispy on the outside, and light and fluffy on the inside. Before doing some research, I believed that this could be achieved by using canned chickpeas. I realized that the correct way to do this was to actually soak the *dry* chickpeas overnight and grind them raw!

If you think about it, it makes sense because you will be cooking them by frying them in hot oil. If you use canned beans, it would be a double cooking process which would result in a dense falafel ball. By using the dry beans, you actually eliminate the need for a binder, while keeping them light and fluffy. Another key step is to allow the mixture to set in the fridge for about 15-20 minutes before making the balls. Just like matzah balls, resting allows the starch to be released from the beans, helping the falafel stick together.

Mix them with some fresh herbs (I used cilantro, flat leaf parsley and mint), which gives the falafel balls their unique herby flavor and vibrant green color.

If you plan on making a “falafel bar” for your Super Bowl party, you can make all the salads and accompaniments ahead of time, and just fry the falafel balls at the last moment.

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cup dry chickpeas (soaked overnight)
- ½ cup fresh flat leaf parsley leaves
- ½ cup fresh cilantro leaves
- ½ cup fresh mint leaves
- ½ cup scallions, sliced (white and light green parts only)

2 tsp garlic, minced
2 tsp kosher salt
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
3 cups vegetable oil (I used grapeseed oil) for frying

Directions

The night before, soak the dry chickpeas in a bowl with at least 3 inches of water covering them.

When you are ready to start making the falafel, drain the chickpeas from the water and ensure they are very dry. (salad spinner or clean kitchen towels work great)

Pulse them in the food processor with the herbs, scallions, garlic and seasoning and pulse until they all start to bind. At this point, I recommend frying a piece of the mixture – just to make sure the seasoning is on point (otherwise, you cannot go back and fix the whole batch).



Allow them to sit in the refrigerator for approximately 15 minutes to allow the starches come out (this will help you form them easier).

Begin to heat your oil on low heat while you form the balls. You can measure them (approximately a Tbsp) or eyeball them, as long as they are approximately the same size, so the cook evenly.

Shallow fry them in the oil and flip them when you see the bottoms start to turn golden brown.

When they all golden brown on all sides, drain them onto paper towels and season with salt. Serve immediately.

**You may be able to prepare the falafel balls ahead of time and freeze them prior to frying, but I cannot speak on the impairment of quality. If you try it, let us know how it turned out!*



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