



TOLMM WEEKLY NEWSLETTER for 3-22-25 VAYAKHEL

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 a 501 C-3 non-profit. 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. 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.

Rabbi Gabriel Martinez has a home group in El Paso. If interested let me know and I will send him the information. Gabriel is a Rabbi affiliated with TOLMM as is his Home Group, Ohr Ha'Brit Messianic Torah Assembly.

There is a Home Group in Las Cruces. For more information email tolmm@etz-chayim.org.

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/>.

Ba-Peretz is located in Wheaton, IL. under the leadership of Kelly and Rich Perez. When we have more information, we will let you know. Rich is now the Senior Elder in this group. They have several ministry outreaches. They are affiliated with TOLMM.

#MessianicReads is a ministry of many things. Check out the website at MessianicReads.com. The contact person is Rabbi/Professor Michelle Johns. They are located in Shreveport, LA.

Chesed Ministry “#MessianicReads” is an independently owned book and poetry ministry committed to educating and edifying the body of Messiah Yeshua through publishing books and poetic works that contain wisdom, knowledge, and encouragement given by the Ruach HaKodesh. These writings serve as aids to the Messianic Community, Christians who are curious about the Jewish component of their Christian faith, and those who are curious about Messianic Judaism. The goal of this ministry is to promote Messianic literature and a safe place for those who wish to discuss it. They are affiliated with TOLMM.

YCMC: Yeshua’s Chesed Messianic Congregation

We meet in Sun Valley (Reno Metro) Nevada, on Shabbos morning.

They can contact Elder Djan Fermaint at 775-462-5539, 6460 Eskimo Drive, Sun Valley, NV 89433. They are affiliated with TOLMM.

The Judaic Studies Institute is a post-secondary Messianic Yeshiva that is authorized to issue all college level degrees for ministerial purposes. The mission of this institution is to restore the original belief system followed by Yeshua and his talmidim (disciples) by providing a Torah-based, academically sound, and spiritually vibrant education for those seeking a new or in-depth understanding of YHVH and His ways. Web address: www.jsiyeshiva.com. Email address: jsiyeshiva@gmail.com. Rabbi Silver is the President of JSI. Rabbi Michelle Johns is the Chief Administrative Officer and the Academic Lead Instructor.

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 RABBI SILVER 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. TO SEE MORDECAI’S BOOKS, GO TO: [HTTPS://WWW.ETZ-CHAYIM.ORG/SHOP-OUR-STORE/PRINT-AND-KINDLE-BOOKS/](https://www.etz-chayim.org/shop-our-store/print-and-kindle-books/)

RABBI MORDECAI HAS A NEW BOOK AVAILABLE. IT IS A SPANISH TRANSLATION OF THE TORAH IS VALID: THE COVENANT OF ISRAEL. IT’S AVAILABLE ON AMAZON.

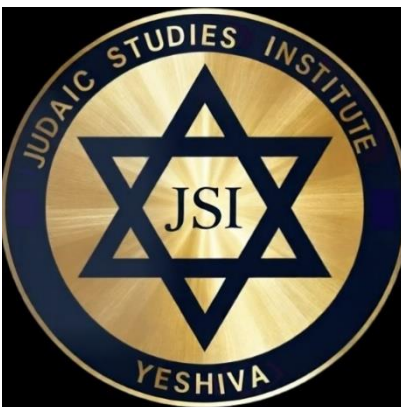
FOR RABBI HAMMOND’S BOOK, **HIS PERFECT GRACE**, GO TO AMAZON.COM AS WELL.

CHECK OUT RABBI MICHELLE JOHNS BOOKS ON AMAZON.

CHECK OUT RABBI MORDECAI SILVER’S 3 YEARS OF VIDEO TEACHINGS ON THE TORAH PORTIONS AND FESTIVALS ON YOUTUBE.

RABBI PHILIP HAMMOND HAS VIDEO TEACHINGS ON YOU TUBE AT [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/@EMUNAHCENTER-CY9TQ](https://www.youtube.com/@emunahcenter-cy9tq)

WE HAVE 10 PRISON AFFILIATES THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES AND OVER 2,000 INMATES ON OUR MAILING LIST. ONE OF OUR PRISON GROUPS HAS 32 MEMBERS.



THE JUDAIC STUDIES INSTITUTE IS A POST-SECONDARY MESSIANIC YESHIVA THAT IS AUTHORIZED TO ISSUE ALL COLLEGE LEVEL DEGREES FOR MINISTERIAL PURPOSES. THE MISSION OF THIS INSTITUTION IS TO RESTORE THE ORIGINAL BELIEF SYSTEM FOLLOWED BY YESHUA AND HIS TALMIDIM (DISCIPLES) BY PROVIDING A TORAH-BASED, ACADEMICALLY SOUND, AND SPIRITUALLY VIBRANT EDUCATION FOR THOSE SEEKING A NEW OR IN-DEPTH UNDERSTANDING OF YHVH AND HIS WAYS. CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.JSIYESHIVA.COM. OUR EMAIL ADDRESS IS JSIYESHIVA@GMAIL.COM.

OUR CLASSES ARE SELF-PACED, AND MOST ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH SELF-STUDY. ALL HEBREW CLASSES ARE TAUGHT LIVE VIA ZOOM. THERE ARE OTHER LIVE CLASSES, BUT THEY ARE DEPENDENT ON STUDENT ENROLLMENT. WE TRY TO OFFER TWO TO FOUR LIVE CLASSES PER SEMESTER. THEY LAST FOUR TO EIGHT WEEKS.

WE ARE A NON-TRADITIONAL INSTITUTION AND DO NOT REQUIRE A STANDARD NUMBER OF CLASSES PER SEMESTER. STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED TO PAY PER CLASS. MOST CLASSES REQUIRE A 10–12-PAGE PAPER, BUT THERE ARE SOME THAT REQUIRE QUIZZES, AND WEEKLY HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS. MOST CLASSES HAVE AN ASSIGNED BOOK THAT IS ACCOMPANIED BY AUDIO TEACHINGS. CLASSES GENERALLY TAKE A MONTH BUT CAN TAKE LONGER DEPENDING ON THE STUDENT.

JSI YESHIVA DOES ACCEPT CREDITS FROM OTHER UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES, AND YESHIVA'S. WHEN YOU SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION PLEASE SUBMIT UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS.

PASS ALONG THE INFORMATION. CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND CLASSES.

IN HIM,
*RABBI MORDECAI SILVER, PH.D. AND RABBI MICHELLE JOHNS,
PH.D.*

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



Rabbi Mordecai Silver tolmm@etz-chayim.org

MESSAGE FOR 3-22-25

VAYAKHEL - AND HE ASSEMBLED

Shemoth 35:1-38:20

I Kings 7:13-26, 40-50

2 Corinthians 9:6-11

Shemoth 35:4-5: *And Mosheh spoke to all the congregation of the children of Yisrael, saying "This is the word which Adonai commanded, saying 'Take from among you a contribution to Adonai. Everyone whose heart so moves him, let him bring as a contribution to Adonai.'"*

Shemoth 35:20: *And all the congregation of the children of Yisrael withdrew from the presence of Mosheh. 21: And everyone whose heart lifted him up and everyone whose spirit moved him came, and they contributed to Adonai for the work of the Tent of Meeting, and for all its service, and for the set-apart garments. 29: The children of Yisrael brought a voluntary offering to Adonai, all the men and women whose hearts moved them to bring all kinds of work which Adonai, by the hand of Mosheh, had commanded to be done. 36:3-7: And they received from Mosheh all the contribution which the children of Yisrael had brought for the work of the service of making the set-apart place. But they still brought to him voluntary offerings every morning. So, all the craftsmen who were doing all the work of the set-apart place came, each from the work he was doing. And they spoke to Mosheh, saying, "The*

people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which Adonai commanded us to do.” Then Mosheh commanded and they sent this word throughout the camp, saying, “Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the contribution of the set-apart place.” And the people were withheld from bringing. For what they had was enough for all the work to be done, more than enough.

2 Cor 6-14: *And this: He who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he who sows on blessing shall also reap on blessing. Let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not of grief or of necessity, for Elohim loves a joyous giver. And Elohim is able to make all favor overflow toward you, that you, always having all you need in every way, have plenty for every good work. As it has been written, “He scattered abroad, He gave to the poor, His righteousness remains forever.” And He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, shall supply and increase the seed you have sown and increase the fruit of your righteousness, being enriched in every way for all simplicity, which works out thanksgiving to Elohim through us. Because the rendering of this service not only supplies the needs of the set-apart ones, but also is overflowing through many thanksgivings to Elohim. Through the proof of this service, they esteem Elohim on the submission of your confession to the Good News of Messiah, and generosity in sharing with them and all men, And by their prayer for you, who long for you because of the exceeding favor of Elohim in you.*

NRS Mal 3:10 *Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.*

NRS Luk 11:42 *“But woe to you Pharisees! For you **tithe** mint and rue and herbs of all kinds, and neglect justice and the love of God; it is these you ought to have practiced, without neglecting the others.*

So, what is the meaning behind all of what I have shared with you today? Am I ordering you to give more to this congregation? No! What you give to this congregation is between you and God. Why do I say that? Because God is the one who gave everything to us, not this congregation. When you give you honor Him.

The lesson I believe that we learn from these Scriptures is God gave His all for us and He only asks for a small portion back. What did He give us? Y'shua. The best blessing of all.

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 Chavahn 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 Believers in Yeshua. We have been Believers 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 Vayakhel: Summary

The Israelites bring so many materials for the construction of the Tabernacle that Moses tells them to stop; Bezalel and Oholiab, gifted craftspeople, construct the elements of the Tabernacle.

Exodus 34:36—35:1-38:20

Moses gathers the Israelite community to share all that the Lord commanded on Mount Sinai. Moses says to the people: “These are the objects which God commanded to be made. On six days work may be done, but the seventh day, they should observe a Sabbath for God by refraining from work; whoever does work on the Sabbath shall be put to death. You shall kindle no fire throughout your settlements on the Sabbath day.

“Everyone whose heart so moves him shall bring gifts for the Lord—gold, or silver, wool or linen, wood or oil, spices or stones, anything to make the Sanctuary more glorious for God,” said Moses.

“And let all among you who are skilled come and make all that the Lord has commanded for the Sanctuary: the Tabernacle, its tent and its covering, the Ark and its poles and utensils, the lamp stand and the oil for lighting, the oils for anointing, the altar for burnt offerings, and the sacred garments for Aaron the High Priest and his sons who are to officiate in the Sanctuary.”

Finding Gifts for God

The whole community of Israelites left Moses’ presence to find gifts for the Lord. Everyone whose spirit was moved brought offerings for the Dwelling Place of the Lord. Men and women, moved by their hearts, brought all kinds of golden objects, colorful wools, silver, copper, and acacia wood for the Lord. Men and women worked together using their skills to make the sacred Sanctuary for God.

Moses then says to the Israelites, “See the Lord has called Bezalel. God has filled Bezalel and Oholiab with the spirit of God, with wisdom, insight, knowledge and talent for all manner of craftsmanship and the ability to teach.” Moses then gives Bezalel and Oholiab the gifts of the Israelites so they could begin to lovingly craft the holy Sanctuary.

Still, the Israelites continued to bring more offerings. Finally, Moses proclaims, “Bring no more gifts for the Sanctuary.” But the gifts had been enough for all the work, and there was extra.

Then, with precise instructions given to Moses by God, the Tabernacle was built. Bezalel made the Ark of acacia wood and overlaid it with pure gold, inside and out. He made a cover for the Ark of pure gold. He made two cherubim of gold with wings spread out above the Ark, shielding the cover with their wings. The faces of the cherubim faced each other and turned toward the cover.

He made the table of acacia wood with rings of gold and poles of wood, overlaid with gold, to carry the table. The utensils to be upon the table—its bowls, ladles, jugs, and jars with which to offer libation—he made of pure gold.

He made the lamp stand of pure gold with seven lamps also of pure gold. He made the incense altar and its poles of acacia wood and overlaid it with pure gold. Bezalel then expertly prepared the sacred anointing oil and the pure aromatic incense.

Bezalel made the altar for burnt offerings of acacia wood with horns for the four corners and overlaid the altar and the wooden poles with copper. He made all the utensils of the burnt offering altar—the pails, basins, flesh hooks and fire pans—also of copper. Bezalel made the basins of copper from the mirrors of the women who had gathered at the entrance of the Tent of Appointed Meeting.

Bezalel made an enclosure for the Tent of Appointed Meeting with specific hangings on each side of fine, twisted linen of blue and purple and crimson, with silver hooks and copper posts.

Parashat Vayakhel Discussion Questions

1) At the beginning of this portion, Moses specifically says that working on the Sanctuary for God may not be done on the Sabbath. If this work is done on the Sabbath, it is punishable by death. Do you think death is a just or unjust punishment? Why?

2) The Israelite people brought so many gifts for the making of God's Sanctuary that they had to be restrained from bringing more. As a giver of gifts to God, what do you do: give extra, give the exact amount, give just enough, or try to get away with giving a little less?

3) "God has filled Bezalel and Oholiab with the spirit of God, with wisdom, insight, knowledge and talent for all manner of craftsmanship and the ability to teach." What has God filled you with? How do you use it?

Haftarah for Vayakhel

Details of the Temple's construction.

Ashkenazic Custom: I Kings 7:40-50

Sephardic Custom: I Kings 7:13-26

Ezekiel 36:16-38

This Haftarah is also read on the second Shabbat of Hanukkah.

Parashat Vayakhel describes the construction of the Mishkan—the temporary Temple that the Israelites used for worship in the desert. The laws for the Mishkan's construction were outlined

previously, in Parashat Terumah. Now, three portions later, we read about their implementation by the artisans Bezalel and Oholiab.

The Haftarah for Parashat Vayakhel continues in the construction theme. The Ashkenazic custom is to read verses that list all the pieces that Hiram King of Tyre, a talented bronze worker, created for the Temple. This list includes two columns with two globes, 400 pomegranates, pails, scrapers, and sprinkling bowls. We learn that Hiram's bronze contributions were so heavy that King Solomon could not weigh them. Following the list of bronze pieces from Hiram, we read about the gold furnishings that Solomon made for the Temple: altar, candelabra, basins, ladles, and doors.

The Sephardic haftarah for Vayakhel begins earlier in the same chapter and offers an explanation of who Hiram was: "His father had been a Tyrian, a coppersmith. He was endowed with skill, ability, and talent for executing all work in bronze" (7:14). The verses that follow detail the large pieces of the Temple which Hiram cast in bronze: two tall columns and two capitals to be placed on top of these columns—all decorated with rows of pomegranates and lily designs. These columns, which were set up at the Great Hall of the Temple, were named Jachin and Boaz.

The meaning of these names is unclear, and their symbolism has been a point of exploration for mystics. A prominent 19th century Mishnah commentary, Tifereth Yisrael by Rabbi Israel Lipschutz, is subdivided into two parts, one more general and the other more analytical, titled Jachin and Boaz respectively.



***From the Desk of
Rabbi Philip Hammond. Ph.D.***

Rabbi Hammond can be contacted at – Philip@etz-chayim.org

[GALATIANS STUDY-LONG TERM STUDY SLIDES 26-31](#)



GALATIANS STUDY

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:1-5

- One of the “laws” they insisted on was that before a person could be saved they had to be circumcised @ Acts 15:1 & 5 tells us.
- Sha’ul after his encounter from Yeshua knew this was a false doctrine, spread about by false brethren.
- “But instead, we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Yeshua, in the same way as they were.” Quote from Peter @ the Jerusalem council Acts 15:11
- Once again this is not an argument against following torah but an argument on the difference between the requirements of YHVH and manmade religion.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:1-5

- The liberty believers have in Messiah is not a “liberty” that allows one to do what one pleases thus becoming those that are talked about in Judges 21:25
- A King has rules, and these rules are to be followed, if we do not follow the rules of the King, then we can conclude one doesn’t see that King as their King.
- Yeshua is King over the citizens of Israel, so His people should follow His instructions.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:1-5

- **If one chooses to follow another set of instructions– then they are admitting that Yeshua is really not their King but in fact they are in bondage to another king and in this case another Gospel.**
- **No our LIBERTY is found in the fact that we are no longer under the penalty of sin.**
- **We have been liberated from such a penalty = YESHUA!!**

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:1-5

- **In Gal2:5 Paul continues on making an important point.**
- **Not for a moment did he or the other believers consider subjecting themselves to this other Gospel –This requirement of circumcision to be saved.**
- **Why??? So the true Gospel would stay unpolluted.**
- **Paul is making the point one needs to come to Yeshua – learn about Torah, become stable in your own faith, then begin the walk of FAITHFULNESS by following and adhering to Torah.**
- **This obedience to our Father’s instructions is not for salvation purposes – but due to our salvation!**

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:6

- Gal 2:6 - interesting remarks considering Sha'ul's background.
- This verse [6] comes off the statement made by Paul that his focus was on the purity of the gospel.
- Sha'ul was protecting what he knew to be the will of YHVH – freedom from the penalty of sin through the gospel founded in Yeshua as HaMashiach .
- Paul didn't seem to be impressed with those of high reputation – As He had come to grasp the reality that God Himself was not impressed either.
- Paul knew the influence those of HIGH REPUTATION could have on the people.

GALATIANS 2:6

- The same goes today. Those of high reputation are the most influential amongst the people.
- The world's view of what makes one of high reputation has no influence with YHVH.
- The difference is well told in passages:
- Luke 21:1-4, Matthew 23:23-33, Matthew 5:19 and of course Matthew 20:25-26

Hebraic Life



A Jewish Guide to Dealing With Loneliness

Human loneliness is baked into the fabric of creation, but we do have tools to lessen its sting.

Loneliness has been a feature of the human condition since the dawn of creation. In Genesis, we learn that after creating everything we see around us and calling each “good,” God looked at Adam, alone and without a companion, and labeled loneliness the first human problem. “It is not good for humanity to be alone,” God declares. Genesis 2:18

From those first moments, humans have struggled with this perennial problem. For some, loneliness is situational — we move to a new place, leave a relationship, face job loss or death and feel alienation and isolation. For others, loneliness is more chronic. We face a perpetual absence of companionship, a constant state of feeling unseen and unknown.

But what exactly causes loneliness? It is not necessarily the absence of people, since some of us feel whole in solitude. Rebbe Nachman of Breslov, the 18th-century Hasidic master, used to escape into the forest to commune with God in a process he called *hitbodedut* and felt totally content. Conversely, the presence of others is not always the answer, since so many of us feel lonely in the most crowded of places.

To address loneliness, it’s important to understand where it comes from. Loneliness is found in the space between the person you know yourself to be and the people in your life who can see you that way. Imagine you are getting divorced and few people in your life know it. They continue to relate to you as normal, but you carry around a secret. No one sees you as you really are, broken and suffering over the loss of your relationship. This can create distance between you and others. Alone in the knowledge of your upended life, you are an island of pain. Loneliness inevitably follows.

Loneliness is found in many of our most profound struggles. When we are single, we know ourselves to be worthy of love but don’t have someone who sees us this way. When we lose a loved one, we are shattered, but society assumes we will quickly bind our wounds. Even leaders

feel loneliness. People place their expectations on them without seeing them as the person who bears their burden.

Loneliness may never fully go away, but there are ways to alleviate it.

First, we can look back. A person facing loneliness may feel that others do not understand their struggles, but others have walked this same path before us. Some of us may question whether it's normal to feel the pain of the loss of a loved one years after their death. But even three years after the death of his mother Sarah, our ancestor Isaac could still be found wandering in the fields, lost in his thoughts and still in need of comfort (see Rashi on Genesis 24:63). Looking back to the story of Isaac can help us feel like we have a companion who understands us and can walk beside us in our pain. Brokenness seems more normal when it is reflected back to us in the experiences of others.

Second, we can reach out. Seeking out another in our loneliness is not easy. It requires that we make ourselves vulnerable, acknowledge our need, and face possible rejection. Yet we cannot wait for another to find us. There is a story in the Talmud about a famous healer, Rabbi Yochanan, who is one day healed by his friend Rabbi Chanina. Hearing the story, the anonymous voice of the Talmud asks why Yochanan couldn't just heal himself. Berakhot 5a Responding to its own question, the Talmud answers, "A captive cannot release himself from prison." So too, we cannot cure our own loneliness. To truly help ourselves, we must provide others with an avenue to see us and a pathway to show us their love. Some will fail us, but we must have the tenacity to keep searching. As our rabbis teach, "the cow wants to nurse more than the calf wants to suckle." Pesachim 112a

Third, we can begin to develop a relationship with the Divine. Each of us has our own conception of God. For some, God hears and answers our prayers. For others, God is impersonal, lacking the capacity to know or love us. For those who believe in a personal God — the one who "knows the secrets of the heart," in the words of the psalmist — God can be the one that sees you in your fullness, without the masks and facades. For those who don't believe in this sort of God, religious ritual can still be a powerful tool to cope with loneliness. One can pray to nothing and still feel heard. Prayer is as much about you as it is about God. Pray with enough heart, and you will be changed by the process.

Finally, we can build a scaffolding around loneliness to hold us up when people fail us. For some, this is accomplished by nurturing a sense of purpose. For many of us, our need to engage with people can be superseded by a desire to feed the hungry, take care of our natural world, or spread wisdom. "He who has a way to live for can bear almost any how," the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche famously wrote. When people fail us, our missions can carry us through.

As much as these tools matter, perhaps the greatest way to combat loneliness is to learn to be alone. Many of us don't want to be without others because we don't like ourselves enough to be by ourselves. Learning to judge ourselves less and love ourselves more means that when we do find ourselves alone, we will be happy with our companion. Rabbi Joshua Ben Levi famously

said that each of us has a choir of angels that process before us proclaiming, "Make way for the image of God!" Deuteronomy Rabbah 4:4. Imagine if we actually believed this.

Loneliness is real and it is inescapable. We may not be able to avoid it, but we do have the tools to lessen its sting when it comes. Loneliness cannot be solved by simply surrounding ourselves with people and hoping we find comfort through proximity. Instead, we have to take deliberate, careful steps toward companionship and love. Every one of us matters and there are a sea of people ready to tell us this, we just have to be brave enough to let them in.

עֲבָרִי - Hebrew

Word (s) of the Week

Guests / אוֹשְׁפִיזִין

Pronounced: oosh-pee-ZEEN

It is traditional to invite seven Jewish ancestors into the sukkah as *ushpizin*, or honored guests. The word is not Hebrew, but Aramaic, another ancient Jewish language.



A Taste of Jewish Humor **A Reasonable Doubt**

Jack Feinstein was a top defense attorney known for coming up with creative defenses for his clients. But on this day, Feinstein had an uphill battle. His client was on trial for murder. There was strong evidence indicating guilt, but there was no corpse. So, In his closing statement, knowing that his client would probably get convicted, Feinstein came up with a trick.

"Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I have a surprise for you all," Feinstein said as he looked at his watch. "Within one minute, the person presumed dead in this case will walk into this courtroom." He looked toward the courtroom door. The jurors, somewhat stunned, all looked on eagerly. A minute passed. Nothing happened.

Finally, Feinstein said, "Actually, I made up the previous statement. But, you all looked on with anticipation. I therefore put to you that you have a reasonable doubt in this case as to whether anyone was killed and insist that you return a verdict of not guilty."

The jury, clearly confused, retired to deliberate. A few minutes later, the jury returned and pronounced a verdict of guilty.

"But how?" inquired Feinstein. "You must have had some doubt; I saw all of you stare at the door."

The jury foreman replied, "Oh, we looked, but your client didn't."

Donate



Tree of Life Messianic Ministries is a tax exempt 501 (C) 3 non-profit. To donate go to etz-chayim.org and click on the PayPal Link.



Ministry Outreaches
*Prison Outreach
*Weekly Newsletter + more-subscribe (free)
*Become an Affiliate
*Bible Studies and Home groups
*Erev Shabbat and Shabbat Zoom group

Contact us for more info -
tolmm@etz-chayim.org



*Tree of Life Messianic Ministries
Australia Affiliate*

Shabbat Service
Saturday 11am
[AEST]
Zoom

Bible Study
Wednesday
7:00pm [AEST]

Men's Group
Sun: 7:30pm

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

