



TOLMM WEEKLY NEWSLETTER for 3-29-25 PEKUDEI

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 3-29-25

***P'kudei - Accounts of
Shemoth 38:21- 40:38***

1 Kings 7:51-8:21

2 Corinthians 3:7-18

Shemoth-Exodus 40:34-35: *And the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the esteem of Adonai filled the Dwelling Place. And Mosheh was not able to come into the Tent of Meeting, because the cloud dwelt on it, and the esteem of Adonai filled the Dwelling Place.*

Esteem in the Hebrew is Khvod-Glory.

Exodus 40:36-38: *And when the cloud was taken up from above the Dwelling Place, the children of Yisrael went onward in all their journeys. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of Adonai was on the Dwelling Place by day, and fire was on it by night, before the eyes of all the house of Yisrael, in all their journeys.*

Exodus 39:29: *And a girdle of fine woven linen with blue and purple and scarlet material....*

Comment about the colors and their being brought together on the person of the High Priest.

Before Aaron and his sons could set upon the work that God had called them to do Moses had to dedicate them. He anointed them with oil and blood, and they were cleansed in water.

Moses was the one to dedicate the tabernacle.

1 Kings 18:10-12: And it came to be, when the priests came out of the Set-apart Place, that the cloud filled the House of Adonai, so that the priests were unable to stand and perform the service because of the cloud, for the esteem of Adonai filled the House of Adonai. And Shelomoh said, "Adonai has said He would dwell in the dark cloud.

*****1 Corinthians 13:12: For now, we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know, as I also have been known. *****

Read 2 Corinthians 3:7-18

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 stepped 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 Pekudei: Summary

The work of constructing the Tabernacle is completed; Moses receives the command to anoint its vessels and to anoint Aaron and the priests.

Exodus 38:21-40:38, 12:1-20

All that the Lord commanded Moses was created for the sanctuary under the direction of Ithamar, son of Aaron the priest, Bezalel of the tribe of Judah, and Oholiab of the tribe of Dan.

They made garments of distinction for those officiating in the Sanctuary and sacral vestments for Aaron, the High Priest. Aaron's breastplate had 12 stones corresponding to the names of the sons of Israel. His robe was woven with the color of pure blue and had bells of pure gold.

They made tunics and headdresses and decorated turbans of embroidered fine linen for Aaron and his sons. They made the head-plate of pure gold and inscribed upon it: "Holy to God."

The Completion of the Tabernacle

Thus, all the work of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting was completed. Then the Israelites brought the Tabernacle and all that was within it to Moses. When Moses saw that they had performed all the tasks as the Lord had commanded, Moses blessed them.

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: On the first day of the month, you shall set up the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting, and all that is within it. You shall take the anointing oil and anoint the Tabernacle and all its contents so that it shall be holy.

You shall bring Aaron and his sons forward to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and wash them with water. Put the sacral vestments on Aaron and anoint him so that he may serve Me as priest. Then anoint his sons so that they may serve Me as priests. This anointing shall serve them in their everlasting priesthood throughout the generations. This Moses did, just as the Lord had commanded him.

When Moses finished, the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the Presence of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled upon it and the Presence of the Lord filled the Tabernacle.

When the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle, the Israelites would set out on their journeys. If the cloud did not lift, they would not set out. For over the Tabernacle a cloud of the Lord rested by day and fire would appear in it by night, before the eyes of all the House of Israel throughout their journeys.

Parashat Pekudei Discussion Questions

- 1) The Israelites perform all the work for building the Sanctuary as the Lord commanded Moses. What kind of work does the Lord command of you in building today's Sanctuaries?
- 2) A cloud covers the Tent of Appointed Meeting and the Presence of the Lord filled the Tabernacle. How do you know when the Presence of the Lord fills a Sanctuary?
- 3) When you look at clouds does it remind you of God? Why or why not?

Haftarah for Pekudei

The Temple construction is completed.

Ezekiel 45:16-46:18

Parashat Pekudei marks the end of the cluster of Torah portions pertaining to the construction of the Mishkan—the temporary Temple the Israelites used for worship in the desert. After all the pieces of the Mishkan are in place, and Moses' work is completed, we read about God's powerful presence taking over the space: "Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because the cloud had settled upon it and the Presence of the Lord filled the Tabernacle" (Exodus 40:35).

The Haftarah for Pekudei, according to the Ashkenazic custom, describes the completion of construction for the first Temple, under Solomon's rule. Having brought in all the treasures and donations for the Temple, Solomon gathers the elders of Israel to install the Ark in the Temple.

The Ark contained the two tablets Moses had received from God, and it was shielded by two cherubim—statues of winged creatures. After the priests placed the Ark in the Holy of Holies, the Temple was complete.

Here too, God’s presence is described in physical, overwhelming terms: “A cloud filled the House of the Lord, and the priests were not able to remain and perform the service because of the cloud, for the Presence of the Lord filled the House” (8:10-11).

Solomon delivers a speech to consecrate the Temple. First, he addresses God: “I have now built for You a stately House, a place where You may dwell forever” (8:13). Then he addresses the people of Israel and recounts the history that led up to the Temple’s construction.

His father David, Solomon says, had intended to build the Temple. But God denied David this right and told him that instead his son would build it.

Solomon declares that now God’s promise has been fulfilled: “I have succeeded my father David and have ascended the throne of Israel. I have built the House for the Lord, and I have set a place there for the Ark, containing the covenant which the Lord made with our fathers when He brought them out from the land of Egypt” (8:20-21).

The Sephardic Custom

The Sephardic custom is to read a selection that lists all the pieces that Hiram King of Tyre, a talented bronze worker, created for the Temple. This includes two columns with two globes, 400 pomegranates, pails, scrapers, and sprinkling bowls. This selection is also the Ashkenazic reading for Parashat Vayakhel, and more information about it can be found [here](#).



***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 32-37](#)



GALATIANS STUDY

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:7-10

- Gal 2:7 Paul continues his testimony regarding his change – his re-birth and his acceptance of those whom were trusted leaders – Namely James, Peter and John.
- Having been accepted by James, Peter and John and having been given the role of taking the gospel to the nations or as described here the uncircumcised - Paul is once again claiming authority from above.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:7-10

- He concludes regards this exchange that the only directive received was to remember the poor – a Torah instruction Deut 15:7-11
- This instruction is one all “sides” readily accept!
- Why the importance of bringing this instruction out?
- Poor/Ptochos: One who needs elevating; One who is bereft of all. One who has crashed down from a greater position.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:7-10

- Poor/Ptochos: One who needs elevating; One who is bereft of all. One who has crashed down from a greater position.
- Matthew 5:3; Matthew 11:5; Matthew 26:11; Luke 4:18; James 2:5-6:
- 2 Corinthians 8:9
- Why are these scriptures important to our study?

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:11-12.

- After this Paul returns to the topic at hand and begins by telling the Galatians about his encounter with Peter regards the choices he made.
- We witness Paul using some strong words in this letter – As with Yeshua, Paul was not afraid to tell it as it was.
- Because of Peter's behavior Paul stated he stood condemned. [kataginosko] Vine says – To know something against, to know by experience, hence to think ill of. Of Peter's conduct – he being self condemned as the result of an exercised and enlightened conscience, and condemned in the sight of others; so of self condemnation due to an exercise of heart.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:11-12

- So what did Peter engage in that put him in this position, and why was it something Paul needed to share with the Galatians?
- Firstly it was a matter that deserved [Gk Anthistemi] “oppose/rebuke/withstand/come against” @ Eph 6:13 & 2Tim 3:8
- Paul knew this had to be done because of his knowledge of Torah and what is written in Lev 19:17-18.

GALATIANS CHAPTER 2:11-12

- The issue was that before the coming of “certain” men from James – Peter ate with the none Jews – most likely new believers in Yeshua.
- However with the arrival of these certain ones Peter withdrew [Gk hupostello – conceal, shun @ Acts 20:20 & 27 – Heb 10:38
- Peter SEPERATED [Gk – aphorizo-divide, sever, Vine says “to mark off by bounds”].

Hebraic Life



History of the Reform Movement

America's largest Jewish denomination, Reform began in 19th-century Germany.

Reform Judaism is the largest of the three main American Jewish denominations.

The movement's principal North American organization, the Union for Reform Judaism, has roughly 900 member congregations and 1.5 million adherents, and is an affiliate of the international arm of Reform Judaism, the World Union for Progressive Judaism, based in Jerusalem. The URJ operates rabbinical seminaries in four cities (three in the U.S. and Jerusalem), a network of 16 North American summer camps, an advocacy arm in Washington, D.C., and a national youth group.

Internationally, the movement is much smaller, encompassing only about 40 communities in Israel and about twice that number in England. Smaller numbers of Reform communities are found in a handful of other European countries.

The movement, which was established in Germany in the mid-19th century, was born of an attempt to reconcile Judaism with contemporary life and harmonize it with emerging currents in Western thought. The movement is politically liberal, egalitarian on gender issues, active in interfaith efforts and religiously progressive — accepting patrilineal descent and ordaining women and gays as rabbis, among other innovations. Historically, it has emphasized the ethical aspects of Jewish tradition over its ritual requirements, though in recent decades it has begun to re-embrace some of the religious practices it once dismissed.

Origins in Germany

The backdrop to the movement's emergence was the Emancipation, the process begun in late 18th century to grant European Jews equal rights and eliminate the legal barriers that had impeded their social and economic progress for centuries. The emergence from the European

ghetto had an enormous impact on the practice of Judaism, leading some Jews to abandon long-observed religious practices in an effort to assimilate more easily into the broader culture.

“Eager to participate and demonstrate to their neighbors what loyal and productive citizens they could be, many Jews decided to jettison kashrut [Jewish dietary laws] and other traditional laws and practices which prohibited them from eating at the homes of their gentile friends or attending social gatherings at cafés,” the Reform Rabbi Lawrence Englander has written in an essay on the movement’s origins. “They were embarrassed, too, should neighbors accustomed to the decorum of the Protestant or Catholic church visit the synagogue and witness a spectacle of men wrapped in strange prayer shawls noisily davening [praying] a repetitive liturgy while children tore up and down the aisles.”

The early Jewish reformers sought to fashion a Judaism more consonant with European life. Rabbis led services in black clerical robes similar to those worn by Christian clergy and employed professional choirs and organ players. Men and women sat together, rather than in separate sections of the synagogue, and male worshippers prayed bareheaded, without the traditional kippah (head covering). For a time, the main Shabbat service — conducted in the vernacular, rather than Hebrew — was held on Friday night (or Sunday) so as not to interfere with activities on Saturday, which was generally a workday. (The two-day weekend wasn’t introduced until the early 20th century.) And the vast body of ritual practice that had served to set Jews apart from the wider culture was de-emphasized in favor of universal ethics and the prophetic vision of justice and peace.

The first permanent Reform temple was founded in 1818 in Hamburg, Germany. Early Reform leaders preferred to call their houses of worship temples rather than synagogues, partly to distinguish them from traditional synagogues and partly to signify that they had abandoned the Jewish longing to rebuild the ancient temple in Jerusalem. A number of other Reform congregations were established in Germany and elsewhere in Europe in the early 1800s, but the movement really began to flourish in the United States, where it was embraced by the German Jews who were then the dominant force in American Jewish life.

Flourishing in the United States

In 1846, the man credited as the Reform movement’s founder — Isaac Mayer Wise— arrived in the United States. Wise took a pulpit in Albany, New York and set about instituting a series of reforms there. He was the chief author of the first American Reform prayer book, *Minhag America*, published in 1857. After a split from the Albany temple, Wise relocated to Cincinnati, Ohio, where the Union of American Hebrew Congregations was formed in 1873 and, by 1903, claimed 115 member congregations. In 1875, the first Reform seminary, Hebrew Union College, opened its doors. The movement’s rabbinical association, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, was founded in 1889.

In 1883, at a dinner for the first graduates of HUC, shellfish, frog’s legs and other non-kosher foods were served — while it is unclear whether the blatantly treyf menu was an intentional provocation or an oversight, it was widely seen as a reflection of the movement’s disavowal of

Jewish dietary practices. The event came to be known as the Trefa Banquet and was a major factor leading to a split in the movement that ultimately birthed the more traditionally minded Conservative movement.

The split was effectively sealed by the adoption in 1885 of the Pittsburgh Platform, a formal statement of the tenets of Reform Judaism. The document declared that only Judaism's "moral laws" are binding and rejected all those "such as are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization." Jewish laws regulating diet are "foreign" to the modern mind and as such are "apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation." The document further declared that Jews are no longer a nation "but a religious community" and formally renounced the wish for a return to Israel and the doctrines of bodily resurrection and heaven and hell.

From Anti-Zionist to Zionist

Reform's antagonism toward Zionism, the movement to create a Jewish state, was evident long before Zionism's emergence as a modern political movement in the years immediately following the Pittsburgh Platform. Prayers for the restoration of Jewish sovereignty in Palestine had been eliminated by Reform congregations as early as 1845, and the movement's 1869 conference in Philadelphia declared that Judaism's goal is "not the restoration of the old Jewish state under a descendant of David, involving a second separation from the nations of the earth, but the union of all the children of G-d in the confession of the unity of G-d." Wise and other early leaders of the movement opposed Zionism in part because they considered it counter to their efforts to forge a Judaism fully consistent with their European identity. In an 1897 resolution sponsored by Wise, the CCAR declared: "We totally disapprove of any attempt for the establishment of a Jewish state."

This opposition would not survive Hitler's rise to power in Germany in the 1930s and the mounting threats to European Jewish life. The Columbus Platform of 1937, an effort to update the earlier statement of Reform ideology, endorsed the quest to build a Jewish state in Palestine, though it passed by a single vote. In the wake of the Holocaust, Reform support for Israel accelerated, pushed along by two prominent Zionist Reform rabbis — Stephen Wise and Abba Hillel Silver.

Today, support for Israel is considered a relatively uncontroversial tenet of Reform Judaism, although the movement has at times been severely critical of Israeli policy toward the Palestinians and the lack of equality granted by the government to the Reform movement and other non-Orthodox religious denominations.

Innovations and Tradition

After World War II, the Reform movement continued to grow as American Jews increasingly assimilated into American culture and left the dense inner cities for the suburbs. However, it trailed the Conservative movement in size until the 1980s. In 1961, the movement established the Religious Action Center, a liberal advocacy arm in Washington, D.C. In 1963, its seminary,

Hebrew Union College, opened its fourth campus in Jerusalem to complement its three U.S. locations — in Cincinnati, New York and Los Angeles.

The movement also continued its legacy of innovation even as it continued to reconsider traditional practices it once derided as inconsistent with its rationalist modern ethos. In 1972, the Reform movement was the first American movement to ordain a female rabbi, Sally Priesand. In the 1980s, the seminary began admitting gay and lesbian rabbinical students, and in 2003 it admitted its first transgender student. In 1983, the movement officially accepted patrilineal descent — recognizing as Jewish the child of a Jewish father provided the child is raised Jewish (traditional Jewish law recognizes Jewish lineage only through the mother). The movement has welcomed interfaith couples into its synagogues. According to Pew, half of married Reform Jews have a non-Jewish spouse, and many Reform rabbis officiate at interfaith weddings.

At the same time, it has innovated, the movement has dropped its opposition to traditional items like the yarmulke and tallit prayer shawl it once renounced. Hebrew is commonly found in religious services that were once conducted entirely in the vernacular; many services are conducted in a mix of Hebrew and English. *Mishkan T'filah*, the movement's newest prayer book, published in 2007, offers multiple liturgical options to reflect the range of beliefs and practices within the movement. It also reintroduced the blessing for the resurrection of the dead — a concept explicitly rejected as un-Jewish in the Pittsburgh Platform. And Rabbi Eric Yoffie, who led the Union for Reform Judaism (the UAHC's successor organization) until 2012, has encouraged Torah study among Reform Jews and called for a return to Shabbat observance — albeit not “the Shabbat of eighteenth century Europe,” but one that reflects “the creativity that has always distinguished Reform Judaism.” The movement's 1999 statement of principles affirmed the importance of Hebrew, called for the observance of mitzvot “that address us as individuals and as a community, and encouraged “some form” of Shabbat observance.

עֵבְרִי - Hebrew

Word (s) of the Week

Lulav / לולב

Pronounced: LOO-lav

On Sukkot, the *lulav*, which is comprised of three kinds of branches (palm, willow, and myrtle) is waved together with

the *etrog*. Together, these comprise the *arba minim*, the "four species."



A Taste of Jewish Humor

A Responsible Employee

Chaim Yankel was interviewing for a job. The interviewer said, "In this job we need someone who is responsible."

"I'm the one you want," Chaim Yankel replied. "At my last job every time anything went wrong, they said I was responsible."

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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.



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Shabbat Service
 Saturday 11am
 [AEST]
 Zoom

Bible Study
 Wednesday
 7:00pm [AEST]

Men's Group
 Sun: 7:30pm

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