

Notes: October 13, 2012

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

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|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Meet and Greet | Hebrew classes – sign up sheet |
| 2. Introduction (if new people) | |
| 3. Ma Tovv | |
| 4. Open in Prayer for service | Torah Scroll |
| 5. Announcements | Oneg sign up |
| 6. Jeri - Drash | Visitor cards – fold and put in Tzadakah box |
| 7. Liturgy – Sh'ma + | Sukkah |
| 8. Praise and Worship Songs | |
| 9. Message | |
| 10. Kaddash - Time of Prayer | |
| 11. Aaronic Blessing | |
| 12. Kiddush | |
| 13. Oneg | |

Introduction: “No Person is an Island” Maturity of Believers:

During our first year, as a congregation, our aspirations were to establish and nurture a core group of people, a foundation, in order to build upon.

As with any structure, a strong foundation is important for the subsequent building required for the remaining parts of the structure. A weak foundation or shoddy construction could lead to its collapse.

This is no different with the development and growth of a congregation. A strong foundation of people is required to move the vision forward.

- People must be strong in what they believe, especially regarding the vision of the congregation. A few weeks ago, I went into detail about our vision for the Jewish community of Maine. This vision wasn't exclusive to the Jewish community but that it was our primary focus.

In order to know your destination, you must first know your path. The vision of the congregation is the path, with the destination being reaching the Jewish community regarding Messiah.

Along the way, on our journey, we will run into many people who are not part of our destination, but that is the unique dynamic of the Messianic community – if you are headed my way, you are welcome to come along on our journey, just so long as you don't point us in a different direction, ultimately leading us off of our intended course.

We have learned in Torah, and will learn again this year that no person is an island. One's actions, ultimately one's existence affects others in the community.

Kayin's actions not only affected his life but the lives of Abel and his parent's life. His actions affect Adonai.

Kayin speaking directly to Adonai...

Gen 4:13 Kayin said to Adonai, "My punishment is greater than I can bear.

Gen 4:14 You are banning me today from the land and from your presence. I will be a fugitive wandering the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."

Adonai speaking directly to Kayin...

Gen 4:15 Adonai answered him, "Therefore, whoever kills Kayin will receive vengeance sevenfold," and Adonai put a sign on Kayin, so that no one who found him would kill him.

I make mention of this specifically, Adonai speaking directly to Kayin because Adonai doesn't speak to us in the same manner.

As believers, we have His Ruach living within us, to guide and direct us in our actions, ultimately walking with us on our path of life, yet, in many cases, believers make bad decisions and not just once, but repeatedly. How can this be?

As believers, we are supposed to grow in maturity, regarding the things of Adonai.

Sha'ul, in 1 Corinthians 3 reprimands this congregation for not being further along as believers, but still being in infancy.

1Co 3:1 As for me, brothers, I couldn't talk to you as spiritual people but as worldly people, as babies, so far as experience with the Messiah is concerned.

1Co 3:2 I gave you milk, not solid food, because you were not yet ready for it. But you aren't ready for it now either!

There is an expectation of growth from infancy to maturity for us as Adonai's creation whether we are believers or not, yet there is also this same expectancy regarding our maturity level as believers.

We are not meant to be talmadim (students), whereby we are constantly in learning mode only forever. Even Messiah sent out His talmadim to act upon what He had taught them.

- We are to grow in maturity as believers.

This doesn't mean that we are to stop learning either. The point being is that you are to apply the truth of what you have learned to your lives, so that they will impact the lives of others. "No person is an island."

We also have learned in Torah about the aspect of leadership and decision making.

Leaders are appointed to:

- Guide our path
- Arbitrate and rule on disputes

Whether someone is a leader or not, as believers we should be listening to Adonai. We don't hear Him in the same manner as Adam, Eve, Kayin or even Moshe, but we have His Spirit residing in us, speaking to us.

Yet as I mentioned earlier, that even with His Spirit in us, believers make bad decisions. Why is this?

One aspect is in one's maturity level as a believer:

Some teach that when they hear the voice of Adonai, you are to ask no man. Meaning, you are to obediently do what you have "heard".

To follow such a position requires a level of maturity as a believer. Even the most mature of believers can miss, or incorrectly interpret what they believe they have heard.

Dan Juster wrote:

God speaks with those who are solid in their fellowship and responsibility toward Him and others. Spiritual and mature people do hear from God with significant accuracy."

How do we identify maturity?

- Even the most mature of believers will still seek counseling from a leader, regardless...
- Be accountable
- Seek confirmation

Our experience leading up to our move and starting the congregation.

- How do they speak?

One sign of the maturity level of believers is in how they speak. Mature believers should not use "God told me" language. This manner of speak can be manipulative in which others use it to have input in decisions without seeking counsel or receiving confirmation and also to influence others as part of an agenda.

When you hear people speaking in this manner, you should be cautious. Do not just take what they say, but seek confirmation regarding what they have said.

Why don't people, as believers seek counsel?

The primary reasons are:

1. Pride. They ultimately believe as a mature believer they are past this phase of needing counseling
2. Fear – That they may be told no, they are wrong or others will disagree with them.

Without spiritual counseling, the potential to make bad decisions increases significantly.

I say all of this because the next phase of the congregation's development is to build upon its foundation, people who are capable and willing to lead. In order to lead, there must be a level of maturity to do so.

Sha'ul writing to Timothy,

1Ti 3:1 Here is a statement you can trust: anyone aspiring to be a congregation leader is seeking worthwhile work.

1Ti 3:2 A congregation leader must be above reproach, he must be faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, orderly, hospitable and able to teach.

1Ti 3:3 He must not drink excessively or get into fights; rather, he must be kind and gentle. He must not be a lover of money.

1Ti 3:4 He must manage his own household well, having children who obey him with all proper respect;

1Ti 3:5 for if a man can't manage his own household, how will he be able to care for God's Messianic Community?

1Ti 3:6 He must not be a new believer, because he might become puffed up with pride and thus fall under the same judgment as did the Adversary.

1Ti 3:7 Furthermore, he must be well regarded by outsiders, so that he won't fall into disgrace and into the Adversary's trap.

1Ti 3:8 Likewise, the shammashim must be of good character, people whose word can be trusted. They must not give themselves to excessive drinking or be greedy for dishonest gain.

Shammashim – attendant, caretaker, deacon, servant

1Ti 3:9 They must possess the formerly hidden truth of the faith with a clean conscience.

1Ti 3:10 And first, let them be tested; then, if they prove themselves blameless, let them be appointed shammashim.

1Ti 3:11 Similarly, the wives must be of good character, not gossips, but temperate, faithful in everything.

1Ti 3:12 Let the shammashim each be faithful to his wife, managing his children and household well.

1Ti 3:13 For those who serve well as shammashim gain good standing for themselves and much boldness in the trust that comes through Yeshua the Messiah.

A Leader's ultimate position is to serve those they are to lead. So, you have to be a good servant to lead.

Joe's example – I was told of an incident that occurred during a Home group Bible study, whereby the Pastor wasn't able to attend, so he had designated a representative to take his place and lead the study. Keeping in mind that this representative was a leader chosen by the Pastor to fill in. An incident occurred whereby the leader and others attempted to provoke people because of a belief they had that was contrary to the church they were attending.

But you must also be mature.

There are many aspects of leadership that the congregation will require as we grow.

The first thing that is required of you is maturity as a believer. This continues to be our focus, developing talmadim. For many of you, this is a whole new experience. Many of you have come from the church, yet are seeing and experiencing scripture in an entirely new light. This new light has shown a new perspective upon the scriptures you have known.

For us to put people in positions that they are not ready for, would be irresponsible leadership.