

Notes: February 16, 2019

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: *The Kingdom Exodus*

There is an Exodus occurring within Adonai's Kingdom.

Church congregations in general are on the decline, whereby the narrative is typically “how to stop the bleeding”. There are exceptions in that there are some congregations growing substantially. So, is this really a problem or is this just what they call “transfer growth”?

From our perspective, the Messianic Jewish point of view, given our relatively young status (roughly 50 years) we have been a growing movement of new congregations. This is contrary to the narrative I just conveyed. Just this morning I read about a new congregation in Idaho. We may be small in nature, yet keep in mind what Adonai said about Israel...

Deu 7:7 Adonai didn't set his heart on you or choose you because you numbered more than any other people - on the contrary, you were the fewest of all peoples.

Deu 7:8 Rather, it was because Adonai loved you, and because he wanted to keep the oath which he had sworn to your ancestors, that Adonai brought you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from a life of slavery under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

We are seeing people come in from the church, so we are in essence experiencing a “transfer growth”. Yet, this is not our true focus. Our true focus is to plant seed in the truly rocky ground of the Jewish community and to harvest and bear its fruit. You are intended to reflect the light back on the people who were instructed to be a light to the nations...

Isa 49:5 So now Adonai says — he formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Ya`akov back to him, to have Isra'el gathered to him, so that I will be honored in the sight of Adonai, my God having become my strength —

Isa 49:6 he has said, "It is not enough that you are merely my servant to raise up the tribes of Ya`akov and restore the offspring of Isra'el. I will also make you a light to the nations, so my salvation can spread to the ends of the earth."

Yet I digress.

Why is this happening?

Why are people leaving, not just a congregation but the actual body of Messiah – that is leaving their faith.

Know that you are living in one of the “least churched” states. Last I remember 34% of Mainers actually attend a congregation.

When you hear such Scripture as...

Joh 10:27 My sheep listen to my voice, I recognize them, they follow me,

Joh 10:28 and I give them eternal life. They will absolutely never be destroyed, and no one will snatch them from my hands.

And...

Rom 8:28 Furthermore, we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called in accordance with his purpose;

Rom 8:29 because those whom he knew in advance, he also determined in advance would be conformed to the pattern of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers;

Rom 8:30 and those whom he thus determined in advance, he also called; and those whom he called, he also caused to be considered righteous; and those whom he caused to be considered righteous he also glorified!

Rom 8:31 What, then, are we to say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

These verses are the framework for what is known as “once saved always saved” Whereby once you have accepted Yeshua, nothing you do or what anyone else does will endanger your salvation. In other words, you have given up total control of thought and deed. This is also identified as “eternal security”. The emphasis is placed on you rather than what these Scriptures are emphasizing- others. No one can separate you. No one can come between you and Yeshua with the exception of you.

Then there are the verses many of us have been taught to believe without questioning, let alone truly understanding. Such a verses are Mattityahu 7:7 and Ya'akov 4:2...

Mat 7:7 "Keep asking, and it will be given to you; keep seeking, and you will find; keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you.

Jas 4:2 You desire things and don't have them. You kill, and you are jealous, and you still can't get them. So you fight and quarrel. The reason you don't have is that you don't pray!

There is an element in the body of Messiah known as “the name it claim it”

Name it in your prayer and claim it as already being done, yet Mattityahu talks about perseverance while Ya'akov 4:3 provides further clarification...

Jas 4:3 Or you pray and don't receive, because you pray with the wrong motive, that of wanting to indulge your own desires.

The wrong motive...where can that be found? The very place Adonai looks at people.

1Sa 16:7 But Adonai said to Sh'mu'el, "Don't pay attention to how he looks or how tall he is, because I have rejected him. Adonai doesn't see the way humans see — humans look at the outward appearance, but Adonai looks at the heart."

Yet, are these verses truly taught in their intended Adonai given context?

So if what is being promoted and sold is eternal security, why is there a mass exodus of believers from the body of Messiah.

Some would say, even though they are leaving, they are still “saved”. Yet this very perspective flies in the face of Scripture.

Mat 24:13 But whoever holds out till the end will be delivered.

And...

Heb 10:37 For "There is so, so little time! The One coming will indeed come, he will not delay.

Heb 10:38 But the person who is righteous will live his life by trusting, and if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him."

Heb 10:39 However, we are not the kind who shrink back and are destroyed; on the contrary, we keep trusting and thus preserve our lives!

You would think that the Jewish people would have an inside track to Adonai's Salvation, yet this is not the case. Consider Yochanan the Immerser's interaction with the P'rushim...

Mat 3:7 But when Yochanan saw many of the P'rushim and Tz'dukim coming to be immersed by him, he said to them, "You snakes! Who warned you to escape the coming punishment?"

Mat 3:8 If you have really turned from your sins to God, produce fruit that will prove it!

Mat 3:9 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!

Mat 3:10 Already the axe is at the root of the trees, ready to strike; every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown in the fire!

Or Yeshua's interaction during the time of Sukkot...

Joh 8:31 So Yeshua said to the Judeans who had trusted him, "If you obey what I say, then you are really my talmidim,

Joh 8:32 you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Joh 8:33 They answered, "We are the seed of Avraham and have never been slaves to anyone; so what do you mean by saying, 'You will be set free'?"

Joh 8:34 Yeshua answered them, "Yes, indeed! I tell you that everyone who practices sin is a slave of sin.

Joh 8:35 Now a slave does not remain with a family forever, but a son does remain with it forever.

Joh 8:36 So if the Son frees you, you will really be free!

Joh 8:37 I know you are the seed of Avraham. Yet you are out to kill me, because what I am saying makes no headway in you.

Joh 8:38 I say what my Father has shown me; you do what your father has told you!"

Joh 8:39 They answered him, "Our father is Avraham." Yeshua replied, "If you are children of Avraham, then do the things Avraham did!

Joh 8:40 As it is, you are out to kill me, a man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Avraham did nothing like that!

Joh 8:41 You are doing the things your father does." "We're not illegitimate children!" they said to him. "We have only one Father — God!"

Just because you are someone's heir does not ensure you to the promise that was given to them and passed down to you. The assurance comes from the One who initially made the Promise. Further, if you are not following the conditions of the Promise, then you will forgo the Promise, because the Promise is based on conditions directly from the Promise Maker.

In these two passages, the people are resting on the assurances of the Promise, yet not the conditions of the Promise.

Provisions within the Promise have always taken into account those with whom the Promise is made with directly

and those who have come into the Promise indirectly. Throughout Torah you will find the following:

Exo 20:9 You have six days to labor and do all your work,

Exo 20:10 but the seventh day is a Shabbat for Adonai your God. On it, you are not to do any kind of work — not you, your son or your daughter, not your male or female slave, not your livestock, and not **the foreigner staying with you** inside the gates to your property.

Exo 20:11 For in six days, Adonai made heaven and earth, the sea and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. This is why Adonai blessed the day, Shabbat, and separated it for himself.

The foreigner staying with you is one who resides in the land but is not a direct descendant by blood. Yet, they have been brought near by their decision to follow Adonai...

Rth 1:16 But Rut said, "Don't press me to leave you and stop following you; for wherever you go, I will go; and wherever you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God will be my God.

Rth 1:17 Where you die, I will die; and there I will be buried. May Adonai bring terrible curses on me, and worse ones as well, if anything but death separates you and me."

And yet, with all this substantiation, confirmation, affirmation, there is still an exodus from the Kingdom...

It's true that people, especially the younger generations, are leaving [religion](#) in droves. The recent Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life shows that in the U.S., just about 60 percent of people ages 18 to 29 with a Christian background have [stopped going to church](#), more than one-third seldom or never attend religious services, and only two in 10 believe attending church is important or worthwhile.

<https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/if-churches-want-to-get-millennials-to-enter-their-doors-they-need-to-do-this>

A new, 2018 Pew Research Center Report polled a growing group in America: "religious nones." (those who are unaffiliated with any specific religion) This group describes themselves as "nothing in particular" when asked if they identify with a specific religious group. The vast majority are ex-Christians, and most are under the age of 35. Pew asked a representative sample of these "religious nones" why they now reject any religious affiliation and provided respondents with six possible responses.

According to the Pew report:

- most "religious nones" left because they "question a lot of religious teaching" (51 percent agreed with this statement)
- because they "don't like the positions churches take on social/political issues" (46 percent agreed with this statement).
- To a lesser extent, "nones" agreed with the statements, "I don't like religious organizations" (34 percent),
- "I don't like religious leaders" (31 percent),
- "Religion is irrelevant to me" (26 percent).

<https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/young-christians-are-leaving-the-church-heres-why>

The ones who leave will likely say "it is only church, but I am still a believer." I don't need to go to church to believe. While technically true, what most don't realise, is that this is the tactic of the Adversary. What is that tactic but separation.

Talking about the predator to His Sheep, Yeshua conveys the tactics of the Adversary...

Joh 10:10 The thief comes only in order to steal, kill and destroy; I have come so that they may have life, life in its fullest measure.

Predators will first identify the weakest of the heard. Then they will separate them from the heard. Once separated they are now vulnerable to attack and ultimate destruction.

Truly separated from the body of Messiah, people become vulnerable to one of the Adversary's most used and effective tactics in his tool box – deception.

We see it right from the beginning where the Adversary deceived Havah...

1Ti 2:13 For Adam was formed first, then Havah.

1Ti 2:14 Also it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman who, on being deceived, became involved in the transgression.

Let's look further into some of these reasons listed:

- **they “question a lot of religious teaching”**

They question but do they seek understanding or do they just leave. Do they take the answer on its surface, use their own understanding of Scripture. Do they try to reconcile contradictions or do they take on the position that all Scripture is, is a book of contradictions?

Have they been taught foundational truths such as If you truly believe Scripture to be the very Word of God, which conveys that Adonai is not a liar, have they come to the reality the Written Word of God cannot contradict who Adonai is.

I met with someone this week and as we were talking shared with them the path you are heading down is not the right path, I told them you are heading down a path the supports Two House Theology. I just didn't leave it there, but pursued further what was available to them. Two House Theology typically uses only one aspect when understanding Scripture – p'shat – the plain and simple understanding, in other words “what it says is what it means”.

I had conveyed you are not utilizing the many tools available to you when studying Scripture. Beyond p'shat I have shared with you the aspects of drash, remes and sod. It is easy to see why many have questions. Ultimately it is because the majority of believers dwell in the p'shat of Scripture. There is so much more yet those who are teaching are not utilizing all the tools available to them.

- **“don't like the positions churches take on social/political issues”**

Here we need to truly pursue a full understanding of what congregations believe. Believe it or not, there are some churches who take positions that are contrary to Scripture. Yet, I don't believe these are the people we are talking about here. I believe these people, the people who left because of a position did not agree with the Scripture supported position. There are many social and political positions that are not supported by Scripture and church doctrine.

Ultimately, the issue is their understanding of Scripture.

Have they been taught correctly or like what many of you have experienced, have dealt with many contradictions. Shabbat is one contradiction.

You will hear or have already heard, there is not one verse supporting the changing of Shabbat from the seventh day of the week (Saturday) to the first day of the week. Yet what has resulted is erroneous teaching, using Scripture, outside of its context to support this contrary position. Such verses as Hebrews 4:10 and Acts 20:7 are used to not only support but to justify a position that is truly not supported. Why? Because context is ignored.

Many are experiencing the outcome of ignorance, a lack of knowledge. I can't provide you with a number, but I would say there is a significant number of believers who have been shepherded, not to mention the ones who are shepherds, lack the very contextual knowledge and more importantly understanding of the very Scripture they teach.

Here is an example of lack of knowledge...

Nancy Pelosi [*addressed*](#) a gathering of presidents of Christian colleges this past week in Washington, where she thanked the evangelical community for its leadership on immigration and refugee policy reform. To this end, the speaker of the House quoted a favorite bit of biblical wisdom in her opening statement: "To minister to the needs of God's creation is an act of worship. To ignore those needs is to dishonor the God who made us."

<https://slate.com/human-interest/2019/02/nancy-pelosi-bible-quote-minister-needs.html>

OK, actually, she said, it might not technically be from the Bible. "I can't find it in the Bible, but I quote it all the time," Pelosi said as she introduced the quote. "I keep reading and reading the Bible—I know it's there someplace. It's supposed to be in Isaiah. I heard a bishop say, 'To minister to the needs of God's creation ...'"

Pro 14:31 The oppressor of the poor insults his maker, but he who is kind to the needy honors him.

Will Kynes, an associate professor of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament at Whitworth University, told me by email. The closest analog he could find was Proverbs 14:31, which switches the order of the two main ideas and focuses specifically on the poor:

When people focus on such promises as...

Psa 20:4 May he grant you your heart's desire and bring all your plans to success.

Psa 37:4 Then you will delight yourself in Adonai, and he will give you your heart's desire.

Are they missing the work that is to be done in order to receive these promises?

Consider the verses prior...

Psa 20:1 [For the leader. A psalm of David:] May Adonai answer you in times of distress, may the name of the God of Ya`akov protect you.

Psa 20:2 May he send you help from the sanctuary and give you support from Tziyon.

Psa 20:3 May he be reminded by all your grain offerings and accept the fat of your burnt offerings. (Selah)

In other words...may He be reminded of your dedication and commitment to Him.

Psa 37:1 [By David:] Don't be upset by evildoers or envious of those who do wrong,

Psa 37:2 for soon they will wither like grass and fade like the green in the fields.

Psa 37:3 Trust in Adonai, and do good; settle in the land, and feed on faithfulness.

In other words...Trust in Him, for which the best example we have in applying all these things is Proverbs 3...

Pro 3:1 My son, don't forget my teaching, keep my commands in your heart;

Pro 3:2 for they will add to you many days, years of life and peace.

Pro 3:3 Do not let grace and truth leave you — bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart.

The mercy of God and the Truth that is His Word.

Pro 3:4 Then you will win favor and esteem in the sight of God and of people.

Pro 3:5 Trust in Adonai with all your heart; do not rely on your own understanding.

Do not rely on your own understanding. There are many who lead and teach but we must rely on His Ruach HaKodesh for one who will truly shepherd us by His Word...

Eph 4:11 Furthermore, he gave some people as emissaries, some as prophets, some as proclaimers of the

Good News, and some as shepherds and teachers.

Eph 4:12 Their task is to equip God's people for the work of service that builds the body of the Messiah,
Eph 4:13 until we all arrive at the unity implied by trusting and knowing the Son of God, at full manhood, at the standard of maturity set by the Messiah's perfection.

Eph 4:14 We will then no longer be infants tossed about by the waves and blown along by every wind of teaching, at the mercy of people clever in devising ways to deceive.

Eph 4:15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in every respect grow up into him who is the head, the Messiah.

Because not all who shepherd and teach are truly called...

2Pe 2:1 But among the people there were also false prophets, just as there will be false teachers among you. Under false pretenses they will introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, and thus bring on themselves swift destruction.

2Pe 2:2 Many will follow their debaucheries; and because of them, the true Way will be maligned.

2Pe 2:3 In their greed they will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their punishment, decreed long ago, is not idle; their destruction is not asleep!

Pro 3:6 In all your ways acknowledge him; then he will level your paths.

Pro 3:7 Don't be conceited about your own wisdom; but fear Adonai, and turn from evil.

Pro 3:8 This will bring health to your body and give strength to your bones.

This is the result of being faithful to the one who made the Promise.

Pro 3:9 Honor Adonai with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your income.

If...then,

Pro 3:10 Then your granaries will be filled and your vats overflow with new wine.

Pro 3:11 My son, don't despise Adonai's discipline or resent his reproof;

Pro 3:12 for Adonai corrects those he loves like a father who delights in his son.

I have been corrected many times and to this day continue to be corrected as I continue to study and serve, in order to draw closer to Him.

Pro 3:13 Happy the person who finds wisdom, the person who acquires understanding;

Pro 3:14 for her profit exceeds that of silver, gaining her is better than gold,

Pro 3:15 she is more precious than pearls — nothing you want can compare with her.

Notice the rewards that reside in the Kingdom economy.

Pro 3:16 Long life is in her right hand, riches and honor in her left.

And finally, notice what is promised when following the one who makes this Promise...

Pro 3:17 Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace.

Pro 3:18 She is a tree of life to those who grasp her; whoever holds fast to her will be made happy.

Notice what is required...we are to take hold of it, in other words we are to take possession of this. I am reminded of Ya'akov...

Gen 32:23 (32:24) He took them and sent them across the stream, then sent his possessions across;

Gen 32:24 (32:25) and Ya`akov was left alone. Then some man wrestled with him until daybreak.
Gen 32:25 (32:26) When he saw that he did not defeat Ya`akov, he struck Ya`akov's hip socket, so that his hip was dislocated while wrestling with him.
Gen 32:26 (32:27) The man said, "Let me go, because it's daybreak." But Ya`akov replied, "I won't let you go unless you bless me."

Is there any wonder why so many millenials are turning away, leaving. The very tactic of the Adversary is the result – confusion.

Yet what is the focus, attempting to make God relevant in this fast paced technology driven world. Yet what actually happens...

This may be how you attract them, but the second part of this equation is the most challenging and the reason for many leaving. The challenge is in keeping them. We as shepherds are instructed by the Chief Shepherd...

Joh 21:17 The third time he said to him, "Shim`on Bar-Yochanan, are you my friend?" Shim`on was hurt that he questioned him a third time: "Are you my friend?" So he replied, "Lord, you know everything! You know I'm your friend!" Yeshua said to him, "Feed my sheep!"

And consider this warning from Adonai...

Eze 34:8 "As I live," Adonai Elohim swears, "because my sheep have become prey, my sheep have become food for every wild animal, since there was no shepherd, since my shepherds didn't look for my sheep, and instead my shepherds fed themselves but not my sheep,"

Eze 34:9 therefore, shepherds, hear the word of Adonai!

Eze 34:10 Adonai Elohim says, "I am against the shepherds. I demand that they hand my sheep back to me. I will not allow them to feed the sheep, and they won't feed themselves either. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths; they will be food for them no longer."

Eze 34:11 " 'For here is what Adonai Elohim says: "I am taking over! I will search for my sheep and look after them, myself.

Eze 34:12 Just as a shepherd looks after his flock when he finds himself among his scattered sheep, so I will look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered when it was cloudy and dark.

Eze 34:13 I will bring them back from those peoples, gather them from those countries and return them to their own land. Then I will let them feed on the mountains of Isra'el, by the streams and in all the livable places of the land.

Eze 34:14 I will have them feed in good pastures; their grazing ground will be on the high mountains of Isra'el. They will rest in good grazing grounds and feed in rich pastures on Isra'el's mountains.

Eze 34:15 Yes, I will pasture my sheep; and I will let them rest" says Adonai Elohim.

Through the power of the Ruach HaKodesh our eyes are opened

Through the power of the Ruach HaKodesh we are led.

Through the power of the Ruach HaKodesh we follow

Through the power of the Ruach HaKodesh we are taught

Through the power of the Ruach HaKodesh we grow in understanding

Through the power of the Ruach HaKodesh we will endure till the end.