

Notes: Shabbat – April 2, 2022

Start: 10 am

Order of Service:

Meet and Greet
Introduction (if new people)
Announcements
Open in Prayer for service
Liturgy – Shema
Praise and Worship Songs
Message
Time of Prayer
Aaronic Blessing
Kiddush
Oneg

Introduction: The Traditions of Man vs. the Mitzvot of Adonai

I have been asked many times over the years,

“How do we respond when someone asks / confronts us about attending a Messianic Jewish Synagogue and we are not Jewish”

Or

“How do I respond to (fill in the blank) when someone asks me why I do it.”

Over the next several weeks we are going to be taking a journey as I establish a foundation around Messianic Judaism and how to respond to the questions and comments you may receive from other believers. It will not be exhaustive in the sense that I will not be able to provide you with a response for every possible question that comes up, but it will address many of the most common questions asked by others.

This journey will include our Passover Seder in two weeks because as we present Yeshua's Death, Burial and Resurrection in a manner that is even unique to the Messianic Jewish Community, our Seder and Haggadah will provide you with a deeper understanding and therefore a source for you to glean from as you respond to others.

The Passover and Yeshua align perfectly with Scripture, therefore you would think there would be no such issue.

Unfortunately there is.

As I have shared with you in the past, Passover is referenced in the four Gospels 29 times.

Even with the translation error of Acts 12:4 in the KJV, it is still 28 times to one time where Easter is referenced yet it is the same word Pascal, translated the other 28 times as Passover.

Today, I want to share a more about a practice within the Church (a specific denomination) that is viewed as a foundational element, yet is not supported by Scripture. This is not an attack but rather a starting point in order to understand the premise by which the people who confront you about your faith and practices are approaching you. I believe it is important to know and thus understand the intentions of the person and their belief before you even utter a word in response.

Jas 1:19 Therefore, my dear brothers, let every person be quick to listen but slow to speak, slow to get angry;

Jas 1:20 for a person's anger does not accomplish God's righteousness!

Listen first, process second, contemplate and meditate third, speak last.

Listen to their words, observe their body language and facial expressions. Truly understand every aspect.

As I have shared with you, not all tradition is bad. Hanukkah and Purim are traditions, not found in Torah, but came later and are not opposed in any way by Adonai. Yet, some things have crept into our remembrance of these moments that do detract and in some ways infuse an element of Humanism.

An example would be the egg and Passover. I have included a link that attempts to rationalize and therefore justify its purpose, nowhere in Exodus 12 & 13 is there ANY mention and therefore use of an egg as part of Adonai's instructions for the Passover.

https://www.chabad.org/holidays/passover/pesach_cdo/aid/3295864/jewish/Why-the-Egg-Beitza-on-the-Passover-Seder-Plate.htm

So when I am talking about Traditions, it is from both sides that I speak. Yeshua was rather vocal about some traditions. Take Mark 7 for instance.

Mar 7:5 The P'rushim and the Torah-teachers asked him, "Why don't your talmidim live in accordance with the Tradition of the Elders, but instead eat with ritually unclean hands?"

Mar 7:6 Yeshua answered them, "Yesha`yahu was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites—as it is written, 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far away from me.

*Many Christians think Yeshua's answer to the question of [Mar 7:5](#) condemns all of Pharisaic tradition. In fact, he objects only to those practices of the P'rushim that place **human tradition** above **God's command** ([Mar 7:8](#)). He is not opposed to tradition as such, but to **your tradition** ([Mar 7:9](#), [Mar 7:13](#))-the operative word is "your," as shown by his example ([Mar 7:10-12](#)), where a "tradition" is allowed to nullify the fifth Commandment, "**Honor your father and your mother**," by letting people devote to Temple worship money which they should use to support their own parents.*

Mar 7:7 Their worship of me is useless, because they teach man-made rules as if they were doctrines.'

Mar 7:8 "You depart from God's command and hold onto human tradition.

On the contrary, Yeshua could not be opposing tradition as such because the New Covenant itself speaks favorably of its own traditions ([1Co 11:2](#), [2Th 2:15](#)).

1Co 11:2 Now I praise you because you have remembered everything I told you and observe the traditions just the way I passed them on to you.

Sha'ul is addressing a matter that has become an issue for believers in Corinth, that of head coverings. He first speaks of the traditions that he has taught and passed on, yet does not offer any specific details. This is also the case when in his letter to believers at Thessolonica he wrote.

2Th 2:13 But we have to keep thanking God for you always, brothers whom the Lord loves, because God chose you as firstfruits for deliverance by giving you the holiness that has its origin in the Spirit and the faithfulness that has its origin in the truth.

2Th 2:14 He called you to this through our Good News, so that you could have the glory of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah.

2Th 2:15 Therefore, brothers, stand firm; and hold to the traditions you were taught by us, whether we spoke them or wrote them in a letter.

He speaks of traditions yet does not elaborate on them. I would see this as traditions that are of the Judaism of his time which is foundational to believers in Messiah and foreign to the nations.

Sha'ul's response to the Corinthians regarding the question of head coverings...

1Co 11:16 However, if anyone wants to argue about it, the fact remains that we have no such custom, nor do the Messianic communities of God.

There is no such custom or tradition as it pertains to head coverings in Judaism. Who is the we Sha'ul is pertaining to. I believe the we is Judaism and thus identifies the Messianic communities specifically. Thus, Sha'ul and what are identified as traditions are founded based on Scripture.

And at [Joh 7:37](#) we have an example of Yeshua honoring a tradition spoken of in the Mishna but nowhere in the Tanakh.

Joh 7:37 Now on the last day of the festival, Hoshana Rabbah, Yeshua stood and cried out, "If anyone is thirsty, let him keep coming to me and drinking!"

From this passage we also learn that Yeshua and his talmidim, like other Jews, observed at least portions of the Oral Torah and did not utterly reject it as "traditions of men" (see [Mar 7:5-13](#))-since the water-drawing ceremony is specified not in the Tanakh but in the Mishna.

In fact, traditions are necessary in life. A state cannot be run by a constitution without legislation. Likewise the Jewish nation could not be run by the Written Torah alone, without the orderly application of it and addition to it implied in the concept of tradition. But just as a country's legislation cannot contradict or supplant its constitution, so too tradition (Jewish, Messianic, Christian, or whatever) cannot violate or alter God's word (see [Mat 12:2-11](#), [Mat 18:18-20](#)). The Oral Torah comes very close to implying that it can (Bava Metzia 59a, quoted at [Act 9:4](#)); but according to the present passage this position is inconsistent with Messianic Judaism. Jewish New Testament Commentary – David Stern

So as I speak of practices that have originated not from Tanakh. One needs to understand again that not all traditions are bad, only those that draw you away from the true path of Adonai. Consider an excerpt from Matthew 23 and Yeshua's response to the P'rushim...

Mat 23:13 "But woe to you hypocritical Torah-teachers and P'rushim! For you are shutting the Kingdom of Heaven in people's faces, neither entering yourselves nor allowing those who wish to enter to do so.

Mat 23:14 [*Woe to you hypocritical Torah-teachers and P'rushim! For you swallow up widow's houses while making a show of davvening at great length. Because of this your punishment will be all the worse!*]

Mat 23:15 "Woe to you hypocritical Torah-teachers and P'rushim! You go about over land and sea to make one proselyte; and when you succeed, you make him twice as fit for Gei-Hinnom as you are!

Mat 23:16 "Woe to you, you blind guides! You say, 'If someone swears by the Temple, he is not bound by his oath; but if he swears by the gold in the Temple, he is bound.'

Mat 23:17 You blind fools! Which is more important? the gold? or the Temple which makes the gold holy?

What does Yeshua say...

Joh 14:6 Yeshua said, "I AM the Way—and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me.

Mat 7:13 "Go in through the narrow gate; for the gate that leads to destruction is wide and the road broad, and many travel it;

Mat 7:14 but it is a narrow gate and a hard road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

And this is the gate that He is directing us towards...

Mat 5:17 "Don't think that I have come to abolish the Torah or the Prophets. I have come not to abolish but to complete.

Mat 5:18 Yes indeed! I tell you that until heaven and earth pass away, not so much as a yud (ך) or a stroke will pass from the Torah—not until everything that must happen has happened.

Mat 5:19 So whoever disobeys the least of these mitzvot and teaches others to do so will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But whoever obeys them and so teaches will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Mat 5:20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness is far greater than that of the Torah-teachers and P'rushim, you will certainly not enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

Thus my goal is not to tear down anyone, criticize or even judge for what they do, but to build you up, edifying you, revealing to you that if anything, discernment is so vitally important. Sha'ul conveys the following to Titus...

Tit 3:8 You can trust what I have just said, and I want you to speak with confidence about these things, so that those who have put their trust in God may apply themselves to doing good deeds. These are both good in themselves and valuable to the community.

Tit 3:9 But avoid stupid controversies, genealogies, quarrels and fights about the Torah; because they are worthless and futile.

Tit 3:10 Warn a divisive person once, then a second time; and after that, have nothing more to do with him.

Tit 3:11 You may be sure that such a person has been perverted and is sinning: he stands self-condemned.

So, now, I want to share more about a tradition that is not of Scripture, yet ask, does it align with Scripture. Does it align with the teachings of Yeshua as revealed and thus captured for us in the Gospels?

Does it draw us closer to God or further away because it does not align with what God has revealed to us?

Rosary Beads vs. Tzitzit

The origins of the rosary are "sketchy" at best. The use of "prayer beads" and the repeated recitation of prayers to aid in meditation stem from the earliest days of the Church and has roots in pre-Christian times. Evidence exists from the Middle Ages that strings of beads were used to count Our Fathers and Hail Marys. Actually, these strings of beads became known as "Paternosters," the Latin for "Our Father."

The structure of the rosary gradually evolved between the 12th and 15th centuries. Eventually 50 Hail Marys were recited and linked with verses of psalms or other phrases evoking the lives of Jesus and Mary. During this time, this prayer form became known as the rosarium ("rose garden"), actually a common term to designate a collection of similar material, such as an anthology of stories on the same subject or theme. During the 16th century, the structure of the five-decade rosary based on the three sets of mysteries prevailed.

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/franciscan-spirit-blog/the-origins-of-the-rosary>

According to one tradition, the rosary's defining moment came during an apparition of Mary to Saint Dominic

around the year 1221. Dominic was combating a popular heresy in France called Albigensianism. Mary gave him the rosary, told him to teach people this devotion, and promised that his apostolic efforts would be blessed with much success if he did. We know the religious order Dominic founded (the Dominicans) clearly played a major role in promoting the rosary throughout the world in the early years of this devotion.

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/franciscan-spirit-blog/the-origins-of-the-rosary>

My concern isn't as much for the beads as it is for the prayers. Prayers to Mary are greatly associated with this tangible element used by many believers in Messiah who adhere to the teachings of the Catholic church. Yet, even Yeshua did not convey this about His own earthly mother. He never said "pray to my mother Mary" What did He say?

Mat 6:6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. Your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Mat 6:9 You, therefore, pray like this: 'Our Father in heaven! May your Name be kept holy.

Yet, there is another tangible element found in scripture that as I was thinking about this sermon several weeks ago immediately came to mind.

Num 15:37 Adonai said to Moshe,

Num 15:38 "Speak to the people of Isra'el, instructing them to make, through all their generations, tzitziyot on the corners of their garments, and to put with the tzitzit on each corner a blue thread.

Num 15:39 It is to be a tzitzit for you to look at and thereby remember all of Adonai's mitzvot and obey them, so that you won't go around wherever your own heart and eyes lead you to prostitute yourselves;

Num 15:40 but it will help you remember and obey all my mitzvot and be holy for your God.

Num 15:41 I am Adonai your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt in order to be your God. I am Adonai your God."

It is to be worn as part of your garments to remind you about Adonai and His mitzvot.

There is significance behind these knotted threads because their origin is of Adonai. He instructs and thus it is not of human origin, but of God. We see the significance in a way that it is representative of Adonai and His power and authority.

Zec 8:23 Adonai-Tzva'ot says, 'When that time comes, ten men will take hold—speaking all the languages of the nations—will grab hold of the cloak of a Jew and say, "We want to go with you, because we have heard that God is with you." ' "

The tzitzit are representative of the Mitzvot of Adonai and His authority in that to follow God you must know God. In order to know God, you must know His Word.

"Well I know God through His Spirit"

True, yet the Spirit of God will not contradict the Word of God. So, what better way to know God than to immerse yourself in HIS WORDS.

Psa 1:1 How blessed are those who reject the advice of the wicked, don't stand on the way of sinners or sit where scoffers sit!

Psa 1:2 Their delight is in Adonai's Torah; on his Torah they meditate day and night.

Then there is the power of Adonai through His Word that is seen in the tzizit...

Mat 9:20 A woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years approached him from behind and touched the tzizit on his robe.

Mat 9:21 For she said to herself, "If I can only touch his robe, I will be healed."

Mat 9:22 Yeshua turned, saw her and said, "Courage, daughter! Your trust has healed you." And she was instantly healed.

With the authority of Adonai came the trust in Him through His Word and ultimately the power of Adonai was revealed.

The tzizit were a visual representation of Adonai and his commands. For I believe the woman expressed her faith for which Yeshua said she was healed by and is amplified by these verse.

Joh 14:12 Yes, indeed! I tell you that whoever trusts in me will also do the works I do! Indeed, he will do greater ones, because I am going to the Father.

Joh 14:13 In fact, whatever you ask for in my name, I will do; so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

Joh 14:14 If you ask me for something in my name, I will do it.

Joh 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commands;

Joh 14:16 and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another comforting Counselor like me, the Spirit of Truth, to be with you forever.

Yet, where does this thinking of the rosary and prayers to Mary originate? A simple yet unassuming verse that concludes Yochanan's Gospel.

Joh 21:25 But there are also many other things Yeshua did; and if they were all to be recorded, I don't think the whole world could contain the books that would have to be written!

As I have shared with you in the past and therefore reemphasize today...

Scripture is your foundation. It is the foundation by which the chief cornerstone Yeshua is laid. And it is upon that foundation that the Kingdom of believers is built.

Next Shabbat I will continue addressing some other traditions that have crept their way into the body of Messiah, though attempted to be supported by Scripture are not. This is where theology comes into play and I will share more about that as well.