

Notes: June 18, 2016

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. Jeri - Drash
8. Praise and Worship Songs
9. Message
10. Aaronic Blessing
11. Kiddush
12. 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: Transformation, Not Conversion To Messianic Judaism

We have just concluded Shavuot and the Counting of the Omer.

It was a time of preparation for Israel when they left Egypt, arriving at Sinai where Adonai would establish an everlasting covenant.

Where the people after many miraculous events on the journey from Egypt to Sinai proclaimed -

Exo 19:8 All the people answered as one, "Everything Adonai has said, we will do." Moshe reported the words of the people to Adonai.

And would receive the conditions of the covenant after they had agreed to it.

Having made this journey, arriving at Sinai, I don't believe they were total prepared or understood the impact of what was happening.

Yet today, we have the benefit of these verses, along with Israel's history, good and bad, the appearance of Yeshua to not only redeem the Jewish people, but the nations as well. To where I have identified the Tanakh and Brith Hadoshah as...

Adonai's relationship with Israel and how it impacts the nations.

Likewise this impact towards the nations as a result of Yeshua to where Sha'ul provides many insights in his writings as the world's first Messianic Rabbi, whose commission is to the goyim, provides us with greater clarity. Unfortunately, this clarity is often misunderstood, mistaught and misapplied.

Sha'ul is challenged with many intricate dynamics involving gentiles, where in his writings we see how he responds.

Do we circumcise the goy as they are coming to accept the Jewish Messiah and will ultimately be learning Torah in our synagogues?

Do we make them accountable to the “whole Torah”? Oral and written?

Yet, there is confusion among believers, not to mention those who teach and shepherd, regarding how we are to lead our lives as believers.

Even within Messianic Judaism there are differing views. Technically, we are not all on the same page when it comes to certain things. Within Messianic Judaism you even have extremes from:

Gentiles are not bound by Torah, therefore whatever they do is optional
One law one people – Adonai gave His eternal law to Israel, therefore everyone is bound by all of Torah
Conversion to Messianic Judaism

Yet I find it troubling to hear rumblings within the congregation from various people and about various things in relation to Messianic Judaism. Yet, I don't hear directly from you.

So, seeing as we have just concluded Shavuot and the counting of the Omer, let me clarify our position on a number of aspects within Messianic Judaism, by starting with a passage from Romans regarding gentiles in relation to Israel.

Rom 11:15 For if their casting Yeshua aside means reconciliation for the world, what will their accepting him mean? It will be life from the dead!

Rom 11:16 Now if the hallah offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole loaf. And if the root is holy, so are the branches.

Rom 11:17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you — a wild olive — were grafted in among them and have become equal sharers in the rich root of the olive tree,

Rom 11:18 then don't boast as if you were better than the branches! However, if you do boast, remember that you are not supporting the root, the root is supporting you.

Rom 11:19 So you will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."

Rom 11:20 True, but so what? They were broken off because of their lack of trust. However, you keep your place only because of your trust. So don't be arrogant; on the contrary, be terrified!

Rom 11:21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, he certainly won't spare you!

Rom 11:22 So take a good look at God's kindness and his severity: on the one hand, severity toward those who fell off; but, on the other hand, God's kindness toward you — provided you maintain yourself in that kindness! Otherwise, you too will be cut off!

Rom 11:23 Moreover, the others, if they do not persist in their lack of trust, will be grafted in; because God is able to graft them back in.

Rom 11:24 For if you were cut out of what is by nature a wild olive tree and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree!

Let's talk about conversion first.

No where does this passage in Romans talk about or imply a conversion to Judaism, but rather a transformation through Yeshua.

Notice when Sha'ul says...

Rom 11:17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you — a wild olive — were grafted in among them and have become equal sharers in the rich root of the olive tree,

A wild olive branch has been grafted in. Nowhere does it say that the wild olive branch becomes a natural olive branch. However, the transformation that occurs for the wild olive branch has to do not with the branch, but with the tree it is now part of. It is because of the root that the wild olive branch stops (should stop) producing wild olives and should start producing cultivated olives.

Unfortunately, this isn't always the case.

Conversion to Judaism flies in the face of the New Covenant Scriptures. Not that they have replaced the Tanakh, but that they are to be used in conjunction with it, in order to properly understand the Tanakh in relation to Yeshua.

Three passages that come to mind regarding this matter can be found in:

Acts 15

1 Corinthians 7:18 - 20

Galatians 5:1- 3

Let's look at Acts 15 and what it says about circumcision:

Act 15:1 But some men came down from Y'hudah to Antioch and began teaching the brothers, "You can't be saved unless you undergo b'rit-milah in the manner prescribed by Moshe."

You can't believe in Yeshua unless you are Jewish. This is what is conveyed here in this verse towards gentiles.

Upon going to Jerusalem, they would come to deal with this matter...

Act 15:5 But some of those who had come to trust were from the party of the P'rushim; and they stood up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them and direct them to observe the Torah of Moshe."

Act 15:6 The emissaries and the elders met to look into this matter.

Act 15:7 After lengthy debate, Kefa got up and said to them, "Brothers, you yourselves know that a good while back, God chose me from among you to be the one by whose mouth the Goyim should hear the message of the Good News and come to trust.

Act 15:8 And God, who knows the heart, bore them witness by giving the Ruach HaKodesh to them, just as he did to us;

Act 15:9 that is, he made no distinction between us and them, but cleansed their heart by trust.

Act 15:10 So why are you putting God to the test now by placing a yoke on the neck of the talmidim which neither our fathers nor we have had the strength to bear?

Act 15:11 No, it is through the love and kindness of the Lord Yeshua that we trust and are delivered — and it's the same with them."

This doesn't mean that gentiles are exempt from all matters, but rather the conversion to Judaism is not a requirement of coming to faith in the Jewish Messiah. If Adonai poured out His Ruach on the gentiles as well, who are we to test Him by requiring gentiles to convert.

Previously I talked about a transformation, not a conversion. In this manner, gentiles were not to remain the same or do as they have done prior, but their lifestyles were to be transformed. We see this in the council's verdict:

Act 15:19 "Therefore, my opinion is that we should not put obstacles in the way of the Goyim who are turning to God.

Act 15:20 Instead, we should write them a letter telling them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from fornication, from what is strangled and from blood.

Act 15:21 For from the earliest times, Moshe has had in every city those who proclaim him, with his words being read in the synagogues every Shabbat."

Abstain from these pagan practices so that you can come into the synagogue and learn the ways of Adonai, which are found in Torah and are discussed every Shabbat.

Conversion to Judaism, is recognized through Brit Milah, Circumcision and comes with certain expectations:

Gal 5:1 What the Messiah has freed us for is freedom! Therefore, stand firm, and don't let yourselves be tied up again to a yoke of slavery.

Gal 5:2 Mark my words — I, Sha'ul, tell you that if you undergo b'rit-milah the Messiah will be of no advantage to you at all!

Gal 5:3 Again, I warn you: any man who undergoes b'rit-milah is obligated to observe the entire Torah!

Gal 5:4 You who are trying to be declared righteous by God through legalism have severed yourselves from the Messiah! You have fallen away from God's grace!

Yet, Sha'ul is saying, there is no advantage.

It doesn't draw you closer to God, by having you convert to Judaism.
It doesn't unlock a hidden power that will make you super spiritual

In the eyes of man, you would identify as being Jewish, yet also be responsible to observe the entire Torah.

Again, another misunderstanding by gentiles, when they read this verse, the conclusion is the Law of Moshe, yet from a Jewish perspective it is not just the Law of Moshe, but also the oral law as well. A greater and more onerous burden than Torah itself.

Mat 11:28 "Come to me, all of you who are struggling and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Mat 11:29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Mat 11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The easy yoke consists in a total commitment to godliness through the power of the Holy Spirit. It at once requires both no effort and maximal effort-no effort, in that the necessary moment-to-moment faith can not be worked up from within but is a gift of God ([Eph 2:8-9](#)); and maximal effort, in that there is no predeterminable level of holiness and obedience sufficient to satisfy God and let us rest on our laurels. Yet the standards of holiness and our pursuit of it are documented in Torah.

Furthermore, regarding circumcision, Sha'ul conveys the following to Corinthian believers...

1Co 7:17 Only let each person live the life the Lord has assigned him and live it in the condition he was in when God called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the congregations.

1Co 7:18 Was someone already circumcised when he was called? Then he should not try to remove the marks of his circumcision. Was someone uncircumcised when he was called? He shouldn't undergo b'rit-milah.

1Co 7:19 Being circumcised means nothing, and being uncircumcised means nothing; what does mean something is keeping God's commandments.

1Co 7:20 Each person should remain in the condition he was in when he was called.

Read some of CTOMC - http://www.ctomc.ca/download_files/Messianic_Gerut.pdf

Another matter that is often discussed among those who attend Messianic congregations and I would even venture to say this congregation as well is Kashrut – Kosher.

One of the most controversial mitzvah among gentiles in Messianic congregations, yet in relation to other mitzvot, as deemed by consequences for transgression is rather minor. Typically, you remain unclean for a time.

What is the purpose of Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14?

Lev 11:47 Its purpose is to distinguish between the unclean and the clean, and between the creatures that may be eaten and those that may not be eaten.'

The biggest obstacle believers have are regarding pork products and seafood (especially in Maine).

It was about Adonai, setting the people of Israel apart from the other nations and their practices, not because of who they are...

But because of who Adonai is...further reason, is given just a few verses prior...

Lev 11:44 For I am Adonai your God; therefore, consecrate yourselves and be holy, for I am holy; and do not defile yourselves with any kind of swarming creature that moves along the ground.

Lev 11:45 For I am Adonai, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. Therefore you are to be holy, because I am holy.

Be holy – be set apart, be sanctified

It is a dynamic that is incorporated into Israel's relationship with Adonai.

Yes, given to Israel, in relation to tu'mah (ritual uncleanness), yet is it profitable and advantageous for gentiles.

First, in doing so is not contrary to Scripture.

Unfortunately, such Scriptures are used to justify a position not to do so...

Rom 14:2 One person has the trust that will allow him to eat anything, while another whose trust is weak eats only vegetables.

Mat 15:11 What makes a person unclean is not what goes into his mouth; rather, what comes out of his mouth, that is what makes him unclean!"

In both cases, these verses, in their context have nothing to do with Kashrut. In Romans 14, the issue is about faith.

While in Matthew 15, the issue that prompts Yeshua's response is found at the beginning of the chapter:

Mat 15:1 Then some P'rushim and Torah-teachers from Yerushalayim came to Yeshua and asked him,

Mat 15:2 "Why is it that your talmidim break the Tradition of the Elders? They don't do n'tilat-yadayim before they eat!"

n'tilat-yadayim – the washing of hands before the meal.

In verse 11, Yeshua isn't talking about unclean food in relation to Kashrut, but the issue of unclean hands according to I believe is from the school of Hillel

Yeshua is continuing his discussion of spiritual prioritizing ([Mar 7:11](#)). He teaches that *tohar* (purity) is not primarily ritual or physical, but spiritual ([Mar 7:14-23](#)). On this ground he does not entirely overrule the Pharisaic/rabbinic elaborations of the laws of purity, but he does demote them to subsidiary importance. See [Joh 7:22-23](#) on the halakhic process of assigning ranks to potentially conflicting laws. Yeshua here is making Messianic *halakhah*.

Or Acts 10, which is understood as talking about food, but has nothing to do with what is to be eaten, but is to convey a message to Kefa, regarding gentiles.

So when it comes to keeping Kosher as a Messianic Gentile, I would consider the following:

1. What does it mean to be Messianic?
2. WDYD

Just as with Israel, it was (and is) a component in the relationship.

Regarding other aspects of Torah, there is one teaching, known as “one law, one people” which in essence conveys that there is one law and this law, in its entirety applies to all people.

While there is one law, one Torah, given by Adonai to Israel, whom is responsible for being a light to the nations, how Torah is understood and applied is not that cut and dry.

Are you as a gentile believer in Yeshua bound to Torah in the same manner as Israel is. The initial answer is no you are not.

The covenant you have entered into is the New Covenant whereby Yeshua is the Cohen Ha Gadol.

Does this mean that Torah is not the foundation of the New Covenant, No.

It simply means that the conditions for entering into Covenant with Adonai are different, yet there are many aspects that still remain the same.

For starters, both are still covenants of faith and trust, a primary element regardless of the covenant.

Likewise, circumcision is also a requirement, yet not the same circumcision. As I had discussed previously, the issue of brit milah, was discussed and decided in Jerusalem and recorded in Acts 15. Yet there is a circumcision that is internal and of the heart.

Just because there is a New Covenant, doesn't mean that there are different mitzvot. What matters is our

relationship with Adonai as expressed by our faith in Yeshua as the Messiah of Israel, spoken of throughout Scripture.

So, for starters, I will tell you that Jews are not bound by every aspect of Torah.

What do I mean by this?

I have talked about it before.

It means that not every mitzvah in Torah applies to every person. Therefore if a mitzvah doesn't apply to you, how could you do it. I can tell you now that in some cases, whether physically or geographically it is impossible for anyone to keep all the Mitzvot.

Examples...

Priestly Mitzvot
Niddah

So, when you have heard it taught that it was impossible for anyone to keep the entire law, they are correct in their conclusion but wrong in their premise.

It wasn't because they were unable to do so, or because it was impossible without a savior, which is the common view amongst many believers. Israel was unable to keep Torah, therefore there was a need for a Savior. Yes, the nation fell into transgression many times, yet Adonai didn't set them up to fail with a Torah that was impossible to keep.

Adonai tells us otherwise:

Deu 30:14 On the contrary, the word is very close to you - in your mouth, even in your heart; therefore, you can do it!

Deu 30:15 "Look! I am presenting you today with, on the one hand, life and good; and on the other, death and evil -

Deu 30:16 in that I am ordering you today to love Adonai your God, to follow his ways, and to obey his mitzvot, regulations and rulings ; for if you do, you will live and increase your numbers; and Adonai your God will bless you in the land you are entering in order to take possession of it.

It wasn't Torah itself that was the problem, but rather the heart...

Deu 10:15 Only Adonai took enough pleasure in your ancestors to love them and choose their descendants after them — yourselves — above all peoples, as he still does today.

Deu 10:16 Therefore, circumcise the foreskin of your heart; and don't be stiffnecked any longer!

Deu 10:17 For Adonai your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, mighty and awesome God, who has no favorites and accepts no bribes.

Deu 28:46 These curses will be on you and your descendants as a sign and a wonder forever.

Deu 28:47 Because you didn't serve Adonai your God with joy and gladness in your heart when you had such an abundance of everything;

The issue with Israel was of the heart, not the impossibility of keeping Adonai's mitzvot.

Yet, getting back to the intent here, the premise of Adonai causing Israel to stumble and therefore indicating that

“you” can't do it yourself, keeping the entire Torah and therefore need a savior, a Messiah, is a false narrative. No, it is simply because not everything applies to everyone. They transgressed, not because it was too difficult, but it was an issue of the heart.

It never ceases to amaze me how the minor mitzvot in Scripture tend to garner the most attention among Gentile believers.

This doesn't mean that the major ones are any less scrutinized, just not in the same manner.

You mention Torah in any way shape or form and place it in relation to a non-Jewish believer and you garner push back, resistance, if not sheer defiance.

Yet, getting back to the olive tree, this is the root of the tree:

Rom 7:14 For we know that the Torah is of the Spirit; but as for me, I am bound to the old nature, sold to sin as a slave.

If the Spirit is Adonai, then Torah is Adonai as well.

The purpose of the root of the tree is two fold:

1. provide stability
2. provide nourishment

In both aspects Adonai provides these things for us.

You obtain your stability by being connected with like minded believers in a congregational setting whereby you are afforded the opportunity to be nurtured from a sapling into a mighty oak, solid and immovable in your faith.

You obtain nourishment in this same setting by being fed the Word of Adonai, organic, without any preservatives, fillers or chemicals.

If you submit yourself to the Root, you will be stable and grow. Yet, when you submit yourself to the Root, you should no longer produce wild olives, but natural olives. You should be transformed from your former self as you have become a new creation in Messiah.

It is in this way that I tell everyone who desires to draw closer to Adonai, through Yeshua and the path that He established...

Give me a year. It is in this time that we go through the Parashah, from Genesis 1 to Deuteronomy 34. After a year, you will have been exposed to the ways of Adonai given to Israel, and thus being grafted into the olive tree, have a better understanding of what your responsibilities are.

We don't exclusively cover Torah, but every aspect of Scripture and how it relates to the Message of Messiah.

What should you be doing?

If you truly desire to draw closer to God, invest time, not just in the congregation, but on your own.

Our weekly Torah study should be a time where you have already done your reading, allowing Adonai through His Ruach to open your mind to His Word.

Torah study should be when you bring your questions. Where you pursue answers to those questions.

Chances are if you have questions, it is likely that others have the same questions, but either don't know they have them or won't ask them.

Being grafted into the olive tree, you have everything you need to produce fruit. Now it is up to you to produce that fruit. It is up to you to grow in your faith.

Remember what happens to the branches that don't produce any fruit...

They are pruned (cut off) so that the branches that are producing fruit can produce more fruit.

I certainly don't want to see anyone cut off, because they are not producing fruit.

I encourage discussion among you, but when it comes to questions pertaining to Scripture and Messianic Judaism, I am rather disappointed that many of you have not come to me with your questions. Based on what I have heard, there is certainly misinformation being bantered about.

Are you certain in what you believe that you can confidently answer someone's question as it pertains to Messianic Judaism?

And when I say confident, I mean being able to support any answer supported by Scripture in a correct contextual manner.