



## **Parasha Tzav**

March 30, 2024

*Torah:* Leviticus 6:1-8:36

*Haftarah:* Jeremiah 7:31-8:3; 9:22

*Ketuwim Sh'lichim:* Hebrews 5:1-6

*Shabbat shalom Mishpacha!* Our *parasha* today is *Tzav* which means “command.” It begins: *1 Adonai spoke to Moses, saying: 2 “Command Aaron and his sons, saying: This is the Torah of the burnt offering. The burnt offering shall remain on the hearth atop the altar all night until the morning, while the fire of the altar is kept burning on it.”* (Leviticus 6:1-2 TLV). *Parasha Tzav* begins with the continuation of the sacrifices and offerings ADONAI commanded to be offered in the Tabernacle in the wilderness which we discussed last *Shabbat*.

A second subject in this *parasha* is the ordination of Aaron and his sons as priests to ADONAI. Even though we no longer have a Temple and a Levitical priesthood with a *Kohen Gadol*, a High Priest, from the descendants of Aaron, it is an important event for us because it was a picture of the future anointing of ADONAI’s Son, Yeshua. Regarding Him, the Book of Matthew begins: *1 The book of the genealogy of Yeshua ha-Mashiach, Ben-David, Ben-Avraham:* and continues with verses 6a and 16: *6 and Jesse fathered David the king.; 16 and Jacob fathered Joseph the husband of Miriam, from whom was born Yeshua who is called the Messiah.* (Matthew 1:1; 6a; 16 TLV). *Yeshua Ben Yosef Ben David*, our Messiah, is now the anointed High Priest. He is not from the Tribe of *Levi*, the tribe from which the priests initially came, but from the Tribe of *Yehudah*, King David’s tribe. The Book of Hebrews (8:4) tells us that if Yeshua was on the earth, He could not be a priest. But, He is not on the earth. He is currently in heaven where ADONAI has different rules. Before He departed the earth, Yeshua said: *18 ... , “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me.”* (Matthew 28:18b TLV). He is King and is currently reigning in heaven, sitting at the right hand of ADONAI, the Father: *19 Then the Lord Yeshua, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.* (Mark 16:19 TLV). Fulfilled by Yeshua, this is His ancestor David’s prophecy to Israel: *1 ... Adonai declares to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”* (Psalm 110:1b TLV). Sitting at His right hand, Yeshua waits for the Father to tell Him it is time to return. (Matthew 24:36).

The Book of Hebrews also tells us that Yeshua was anointed as High Priest after the order of *Melechitzedek*, a man whom Abraham encountered when his name was still Abram. This man was King of Salem, the city in the Land of Canaan which later became Jerusalem. Translated, *Melechitzedek* means “King of Peace,” a title which figures prominently in his relationship with our Messiah Yeshua. *Melechitzedek* was a priest of *El Elyon*, G-d Most High, ADONAI. *Avram* had just returned from defeating *Chedolaomer*, a king who had carried off Sodom and Gemorrah’s possessions and also his nephew Lot. *Melechitzedek* brought out bread and wine and blessed *Avram*, followed by *Avram*’s paying a tithe to him (Genesis 14:18-20), a foreshadowing of the relationship between ADONAI and Abraham’s descendants far in the future.

King David wrote about his descendant Yeshua hundreds of years before He was born on the earth: *4 Adonai has sworn, and will not change His mind: "You are a Kohen forever according to the order of Melechizedek"* (Psalm 110:4 TLV). This verse also tells us who anointed Yeshua as a Priest after the order of *Malchitzedek*. It was His Father, ADONAI. This statement is quoted by the author of Hebrews who wrote: *6 ... , "You are a kohen forever, according to the order of Melechizedek"* (Hebrews 5:6b TLV). What does it mean to be a *kohen* forever? This describes Yeshua's relationship with ADONAI, *El Elyon*, the Most High G-d. He, Yeshua, holds an eternal priesthood, High Priest forever, not a limited priesthood like that held by the sons of Aaron whose priesthood is currently not possible. Without a Temple in which to officiate, their status as priests is inactive. The name translated by the TLV scholars as *Melechizedek* is actually written in Hebrew as two words, מַלְכִּי־צְדֵק, *malki* and *tzedek*, together meaning "King of Righteousness," an apt description for Yeshua, righteous in all His ways. After the order of *Melechitzedek*, Yeshua is also King of *Shalem*, שָׁלֵם, peace.

The times in which we find ourselves today are frightening times, times which affirm many end time Bible passages. The time in which we are living is described by the rabbis of *Chabad* as *Ikvot Mashiach*, the footsteps of Messiah and referring to this time as "the very dawn of the redemption." The redemption is popularly referred to as "the *Geulah*," a word meaning redemption or deliverance, which, for them, speaks of the coming of *Mashiach*, the Messiah, the Son of David, who will deliver Israel from her enemies and usher in everlasting righteousness. They are awaiting the *Mashiach*, the "anointed one" pictured in the *Tanakh* by the prophets. According to them, He is not Yeshua, but a man from the Tribe of Judah who is alive on the earth today.

Isaiah proclaimed: *7 How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces shalom, who brings good news of happiness, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"* (Isaiah 52:7 TLV). Has this One already come or is He yet to come? We, who have trusted in Him, know that He has already come and He has announced *yeshuah*, salvation, יְשׁוּעָה. His name, *Yeshua*, יֵשׁוּעַ, very appropriate for what He came to do, is personified in this verse. But, notice the difference. Salvation and Yeshua are almost alike, but not quite: salvation: יְשׁוּעָה; Yeshua: יֵשׁוּעַ. They are both pronounced Ye-shua, but salvation has an extra letter, *heh*, ה.

At this time in history with Israel at war with Hamas and war with Hezbollah approaching, the thoughts of Jews, Christians and Messianic Jews turn to Messiah's coming. Speaking as a member of the Messianic Jewish community, I believe that I would be correct in saying that our number one prayer and calling in Messianic Judaism is for the salvation of physical Israel, the Jews of today. While it is our heart's desire, it not something necessarily wanted by them. They appreciate our support through finances, public forum support and prayers for deliverance, but not necessarily our prayers for them to know Yeshua. Yet, we are with them in all these ways and we weep and mourn with our Jewish people worldwide and especially the people of the Nation of Israel currently suffering through these tragedies. Even though we may receive rebuke because of our efforts to lead Jews to Messiah Yeshua, we cannot stop. We feel the deep anguish of the Messianic Pharisee *Sha'ul* who wrote: *1 I tell the truth in Messiah—I do not lie, my conscience assuring me in the Ruach ha-Kodesh—2 that my sorrow is great and the anguish in my heart unending. 3 For I would pray that I myself were cursed, banished from Messiah for the sake of my people—my own flesh and blood, 4 who are Israelites.* (Romans 9:1-4a TLV). Our concern for them is ongoing. But, they have a different view of end time events and the greatest hope right now is that

they will seek to hear from the *Ruach Kodesh*, the Holy Spirit. He will answer those who sincerely ask the question, “is Yeshua *Mashiach*?”

What is currently taught about two Messiahs in the Church and traditional Judaism differs widely. As Yeshua’s followers, we see Him when He ministered on earth as “the suffering Servant,” the individual depicted in Isaiah 53. This verse, in our understanding, clearly shows Him as suffering, even being an *asham* (53:10), a guilt offering, for our sins. But, Rabbinic Judaism believes that Isaiah 53 speaks of the Jewish people who have suffered through the centuries. We agree that they have suffered tremendously and have been wrongly persecuted, but they are not an *asham*, a guilt offering for sins. They, themselves, are in need of the *asham* because of the absence of ADONAI’s original sacrificial system. On *Yom Kippur* when the Temple was present, sacrifices were offered and Israel’s sins were covered, atoned for, for another year. Now, without the Temple and sacrifices, they have no authorized sacrifice and many approach *Yom Kippur* with fear and uncertainty, not knowing if their *mitzvot* are enough to cause them to be inscribed in the Book of Life for another year. That’s those who are religious, but the majority of Jews worldwide have abandoned religion, believing that there is nothing beyond death, so why worry about it. Our prayer for salvation, knowing Yeshua, is for all Jews, both religious and secular. And, ADONAI has said that He will save them. I personally believe that the time is coming when that will happen.

But, what do religious Jews believe about two Messiahs? They do believe that there are two Messiahs, a belief based upon the *Tanakh* and also the *Talmud*. According to Chabad, “*Mashiach ben Yossef* (Mashiach the descendant of Joseph), of the tribe of Ephraim (son of Joseph), is also referred to as *Mashiach ben Ephrayim*, Mashiach the descendant of Ephraim. He will come first, before the final redeemer, and later will serve as his viceroy. The essential task of *Mashiach ben Yossef* is to act as precursor to *Mashiach ben David*: he will prepare the world for the coming of the final redeemer.” This is quite different from what you may have heard. This *Mashiach Ben Yosef*, Messiah, son of Joseph, is not expected to come until just before *Mashiach Ben David*. Some of you may remember our 2018 encounter with an elderly Chassidic rabbi who had formerly lived in Israel and Crown Heights in New York. He had come to Thomasville on a spiritual mission, why Thomasville, I don’t know, even though I had many conversations with him. He attended our *Beit Shalom* services several times and during his two months here, I had many hours, literally hours, of dialogue with him. His reason for being here was partly because of his belief that he was the actual *Mashiach Ben Yosef* and that he would fulfil that individual’s role we just saw described in Chabad’s statement. During the time that he was here, I had conversations with several rabbis under whom he had served and two of his three sons. He had asked me to call them. A son who lives in New Jersey took charge of his care when he left here. It was an interesting experience and I became very fond of him. His health was very poor and I pray that he is still living, but have lost contact with him.

Regarding who is Messiah, who is correct, Rabbinic Judaism or Messianic Judaism? You know that I believe that we are with many voices of Messianic Jewish rabbis in our movement saying the same thing. While, rabbinic Jews may not listen to us, they can listen to the *Ruach*, who is declaring the truth to those who attune their hearts to seek answers from ADONAI. His desire is for all to come to Him, for none to be lost, a truth declared by Ezekiel: 11 “As I live’—it is a declaration of Adonai—‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.’” (Ezekiel 33:11b TLV). By *Sha’ul*: 4 He desires all men to be saved and come into the knowledge of the truth. (1Timothy 2:4 TLV). And by *Shimon Kefa*: 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some consider

slowness. Rather, He is being patient toward you—not wanting anyone to perish, but for all to come to repentance. (2Peter 3:9 TLV). This is the heart of the Father and as Yeshua’s disciples, it must also be ours.

What you believe also greatly depends upon your source of written evidence. Most of us who are leaders in the IAMCS believe what is stated in the book: *The Non-Torah: Exposing The Myth Of Divine Oral Torah*, by The IAMCS (International Alliance of Messianic Congregations and Synagogues). It may offend some, but I strongly believe that which is stated in this book is truth, that “the teachings of Oral *Torah* incorporated in the *Talmud* as *Mishnah* are not *Torah* and not from ADONAI.” Also, in my opinion, writings which are not in the recognized, canonized, Bible, Genesis through Revelation, are not Biblical truth and are not to be used in determining how we are to understand or act as followers of Yeshua. This also applies to such sources as The Book of Enoch, The Book of Jasher and the non-canonical Gospels of Mary, Judas, Thomas and others. ADONAI’s written Word is truth and we cannot trust any other document or any oral tradition. Many in today’s religious world have violated Moses’ command: 2 “*You must not add to the word that I am commanding you or take away from it—in order to keep the mitzvot of Adonai your God that I am commanding you.*” (Deuteronomy 4:2 TLV).

What does ADONAI’s Word teach about Messiah? In our opinion, it clearly teaches that there is one Messiah and that He has come, was rejected and killed and will come again. Whether you believe this or not depends mostly upon whether you believe that Yeshua is the Messiah. If you believe in your heart this to be true, then you are able to separate the words of the prophets into two different events, one which happened in the 1<sup>st</sup> century when Yeshua lived and died and one which is expected to happen upon His return to earth. Yeshua addressed His first purpose on earth while visiting His home synagogue in Nazareth. He was given the honor of reading the *Haftarah*, the writing from the Prophets. In reading, He made clear His reason for being on earth by making the words from the Prophets into a *d’rash*, an interpretation of Scripture. The readings for *Torah* and *Haftarah* were predetermined weekly, even in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. We are told that in Israel in the first century, *Torah* was read in a three year cycle as opposed to the one year cycle which we follow today. We don’t know what the *Torah* portion was for that day, but it is possible that the *Haftarah* would have been from Isaiah 61. The result is the same whether it was the prescribed portion or a portion which He chose. It had to be from Isaiah because that is the scroll they handed to Yeshua. Luke reports: 17 *When the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him, He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, 18 “The Ruach Adonai is on me, because He has anointed me to proclaim Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed, 19 and to proclaim the year of Adonai’s favor.”* (Luke 4:17-19 TLV). Isaiah 61:1 in the *Tanakh* of today says nothing about opening blind eyes. It says: 1 *“The Ruach Adonai Elohim is on me, because Adonai has anointed me to proclaim Good News to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound, ..”* (Isaiah 61:1 TLV). Did Yeshua misspeak? No, He read what was on the scroll. Apparently, there was a variation in some early scrolls of Isaiah and one version included the words about opening the eyes of the blind. In fact, it was that very Hebrew scroll which the translators of the LXX, the Septuagint, had used some two hundred years earlier to translate the Hebrew into Greek. The English translation of this verse from the Septuagint says: 1 *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind,…”* (Isaiah 61:1 LXX). The Greek Septuagint translation of Isaiah 61:1 says exactly the

same as the Hebrew scroll of Isaiah from which Yeshua read. Luke tells us that Yeshua also read the words “to proclaim the year of Adonai’s favor.” *19 and to proclaim the year of Adonai’s favor.*” (Luke 4:19 TLV). Verse 19 of Luke 4 is a part of Isaiah 61:2, the next verse, and it was Yeshua’s reading of these words which made His *Haftarah* reading into a *d’rash*. Isaiah wrote: *2 to proclaim the year of Adonai’s favor and the day of our God’s vengeance, to comfort all who mourn..* (Isaiah 61:2 TLV). Yeshua read the first phrase of Isaiah 61:2 but left out phrases 2 and 3. He read: *2 “to proclaim the year of Adonai’s favor,”* but stopped there, leaving out “*and the day of our God’s vengeance,..*” By not reading those words, He made a statement by what He didn’t read. Because His purpose on earth at that time was to bring salvation and comfort to the lost, He omitted the words “bringing God’s vengeance,” which He will bring when He returns as *Melekh Yisra’el*, King of Israel. That part of the verse didn’t apply to His first mission on the earth. *20 He closed the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue were focused on Him. 21 Then He began to tell them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your ears.”* (Luke 4:20-21 TLV). Yeshua essentially said: “This is what I came to do. I came to bring comfort but did not come to bring G-d’s vengeance as the anointed King, Son of David.” What He read from Isaiah 61 was His mission statement to the earth during His first coming.

In preparation for the coming of Messiah, some Jewish leaders are moving forward today to restore Temple worship. There are two well-known organizations and many other lesser-known ones which are actively working toward restoring Temple worship. One is the “Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful Movement.” This group has a cornerstone, actually two, which they have tried to lay numerous times. They have always been stopped by the Israeli police in fear of Arab rioting if it is laid. Sacrifices can be offered once the cornerstone is laid and Temple construction can come afterward. The second group is the “Temple Institute.” They have completed most of the work necessary for priesthood and offering of sacrifices. This group has constructed the golden *menorah*, the golden altar of incense, the table for the Showbread and all of the implements needed in sacrificial worship. They have also compiled a listing of *kohenim* throughout the world and have the garments ready for the ordinary priests and for the *Kohen Gadol*. There is one major thing lacking, the ashes of the Red Heifer. Recently, a rabbi from Israel reported that the five heifers at *Shiloh* are kosher and that one would soon be sacrificed on the Mount of Olives. Whether or not this is done may depend upon whether or not the government will allow it because it affects the fragile political situation. Personally, I do not believe that the Temple will be rebuilt before Yeshua returns as *Melekh Mashiah*, King Messiah. There is no strong evidence either way, but I believe that it will be built as a fulfillment of the vision which ADONAI gave to Ezekiel.

Ezekiel had a vision, a vision which reveals that Yeshua will rule from that Temple. In the vision, he, Ezekiel, was standing in the middle of the Temple when the glory of ADONAI filled the house and a man standing by him said: *7 ....., “Son of man, this is the place of My throne, the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of Bnei-Yisrael forever. The house of Israel will no longer defile My holy Name—neither they nor their kings—by their prostitution or by the corpses of their kings in their high places”* (Ezekiel 43:7 TLV). The man standing by Ezekiel and speaking was ADONAI, speaking for His Son, Messiah Yeshua. The efforts of The Temple Mount Faithful and The Temple Institute are commendable. They are doing what they believe should be done, but ADONAI Himself will build the Temple according to His own time schedule. And, He will also save the spiritual lives of all Israel. *Sha’ul*, speaking of Israel, wrote: *27 And this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.”* (Romans 11:27 TLV). He was quoting from Isaiah, (59:20-21 and 27:9) who prophesied Israel’s salvation. The day is coming soon when all Israel shall be saved, but until then, Jews

continue to individually trust in Yeshua as they hear and obey the *Ruach*. When the Temple is built, we will see the return of the Levitical priesthood, but with an exception. There will be no Levitical High Priest. Yeshua is the eternal *Kohen Gadol* after the order of *Melechitzedek* who will rule from the Third Temple. But, there will be ordinary Levitical priests ministering there as described by Ezekiel.

Even though we very strongly believe that “all Israel shall be saved,” “now is the day of salvation.” Yeshua brought salvation when He came as our sacrifice for sin, but His period of grace will end when He returns as King. *27 And just as it is appointed for men to die once, and after this judgment, 28 so also Messiah, was offered once to bear the sins of many. He will appear a second time, apart from sin, to those eagerly awaiting Him for salvation.* (Hebrews 9:27-28 TLV). Yeshua was offered for our sins one time, but when He returns it will not be for sins, but for judgment. We must make our decision for Him before He returns. Isaiah wrote: *18 “Come now, let us reason together,” says Adonai. “Though your sins be like scarlet, they will be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they will become like wool.”* (Isaiah 1:18 TLV). We all sin and must have a way to deal with sin. ADONAI’s will is clearly revealed by the prophets: *1 Behold, Adonai’s hand is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear. 2 Rather, your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God. Your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.* (Isaiah 59:1-2 TLV). *20 “The soul that sins, he will die.”* (Ezekiel 18:20a TLV). This is spiritual death, separation from the presence of ADONAI, both while living and after death. It applies to all mankind, Jew and Gentile. Each of us must examine the Scriptures for our own life’s sake. We cannot depend upon what any group says. Ezekiel continues: *26 “Moreover I will give you a new heart. I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove the stony heart from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Ruach within you. Then I will cause you to walk in My laws, so you will keep My rulings and do them.”* (Ezekiel 36:26-27 TLV). ADONAI promised salvation to Israel, but, it will not come without repentance and without an acceptable blood sacrifice. There is only one, Yeshua. *Yochanan* wrote of Him: *10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him; but the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His own, but His own did not receive Him. 12 But whoever did receive Him, those trusting in His name, to these He gave the right to become children of God. 13 They were born not of a bloodline, nor of human desire, nor of man’s will, but of God.* (John 1:10-13 TLV). Yeshua said: *20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.* (Revelation 3:20 TLV). “Come now, let us reason together,” says Adonai. *Shabbat shalom!*