

Shalom Life!

Words of Welcome

Shalom and Welcome to Yeshua Bread of Life!

We are a community that happily embraces the commitment to shine the light of Messiah Yeshua in Central Florida. Our family-orientated atmosphere, activities and spirit-filled services are an integral part of our community. Our vision is the restoration to a first-century, faith-based synagogue that follows the custom of the House of Israel and incorporates contemporary practices for the purpose of enhancing the overall experience while its emphasis will be the study of the entire TaNaK. We embrace the words of the prophet Zechariah who wrote about these days to come in chapter 8 verse 20-23: ²⁰“AD-NAI-Tzva’ot says, ‘In the future, peoples and inhabitants of many cities will come; ²¹the inhabitants of one city will travel to another and say, “We must go to ask AD-NAI’s favor and consult AD-NAI-Tzva’ot. I’ll go too.” ²²Yes, many peoples and powerful nations will come to consult AD-NAI-Tzva’ot in Yerushalayim and to ask AD-NAI’s favor.’ ²³AD-NAI-Tzva’ot says, ‘When that time comes, ten 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 G-d is with you.”’” CJB
We continue to guard Torah principles of our faith and its teachings along with the Jewish people. We are glad that you have taken the time to take a look at our community and invite you to continue our journey with us. It is impossible to absorb everything we have to offer in one visit, so we encourage you to further your studies and deepen your faith in the YBOL community. Come join us and fulfill this vision that The Master of the Universe has designated for the last days...

Blessings,

Ro’eh Tom

S’firat HaOmer—Counting the Omer

Pesach has ended and we are in the midst of counting the Omer. This ‘in between’ mo’ed—in between the joys of salvation provided during Pesach and the joys of Torah and the Ruach HaKodesh provided during Shavuot—is exceedingly important. As we count the seven weeks and a day, we are daily reminded that HaShem provides for us on a daily basis. Additionally, we are building up anticipation for the joys of receiving priceless treasure on Shavuot, as revealed by the giving of Torah and giving of the indwelling Ruach HaKodesh. It is customary to read and re-read Psalm 119—each section reminds us of the joy we have in HaShem’s Torah. Although counting each day may seem tedious, the counting of the Omer teaches us to rely on Him each day. Just as life can be tedious, we anticipate each day the hope of salvation that is promised in His Torah, paid for during Pesach and sealed by His Spirit on Shavuot.

Esther 2:17 And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Q. **Why does King Ahasuerus adore Esther in the Book of Esther?**

A. **Who understands the secrets hidden within the human heart?**

This could explain the Bible's silence on the king's affection for Esther. All we have is the notice that *"the king loved Esther more than all the other women"* (*Esther 2:17*). That he loved her is stated, the why is not.

We could point to various things that the text says about Esther as fitting reasons for Ahasuerus to love her:

- That she is admired by all who saw her (*Esther 2:15*)
- That she was *"fair and beautiful"* (*Esther 2:7*)

You might read further into Esther's story, as both the early and modern interpreters do, and believe that it is for her restraint, bravery, or diplomacy. Problem: This is all conjecture.

There is an interesting point about the statement that King Ahasuerus loved ('ahav) Esther. The Hebrew verb *"to love"* ('ahav) is not always used of couples in the Tanakh. So when 'ahav appears, we need to take notice.

In the entire Tanakh, this word *"ahav"* (*"to love", "loved"*) is applied in 51 verses with 56 matches. From this group, only two verses state that a woman loved a man. Same Woman – Same Man (*I Samuel 18:20, 28* -Saul's daughter, Michal, *loved* David). From this group, there are 11 verses where the man loved the woman.

In the Bible, 'ahav, in describing a male-female relationship, nearly always points to the man's love, not the woman's love. 'Ahav' is not used to describe reciprocal or mutual emotion, and is overwhelmingly associated with men. It may also be connected to their social privilege.

What impact does this have on Esther?

Within the context of her book, Ahasuerus has a feeling for Esther that he has not expressed to any other woman. We must not make the mistake of applying modern Western notions of romantic love to Ahasuerus's feelings due to the meanings of "ahav."

Why?

There are 7 Human Emotions: Anger, Fear, Disgust, Happiness, Sadness, Surprise and Contempt

Where is the emotion of Love?

Why is it not written?

Loving God or another person is not about emotions, feelings or sentiment. It is not about a spiritual stirring deep in your heart.

Loving God or another person is about deeds, not creeds. It is about making the right attitude and obedient choices. It is Nothing more - Nothing less - Nothing else.

Loving God is both difficult and easy. It is difficult because it demands something concrete, not abstract, from us ALL the time. It is difficult because many of us are conditioned to think that ALL that matters is what we feel, think, have experienced, or believe about God, the Messiah, and Salvation. This is very wrong!

Loving God through obedient deeds is easy –

WHY?

Deeds are easier to grasp and evaluate than feelings. You can never be sure of feelings – They come and go and are hard to measure. Feelings change like the sky. Emotions are sometimes cloudy, sometimes sunny.

It is important to observe your feelings and thoughts. Accept them but continue to act and complete the tasks you have before you. This does not mean ignoring your feelings, but we can learn to be driven by purpose instead of feelings. Feelings, because they come and go, are as hard to control as the clouds in the sky.

Deeds are tangible, measurable, and visible. It is by our deeds that our love for God is made known. It is also by our deeds that we reveal our contempt for Him, regardless of how we think we feel.

It may be that the verb *'ahav* signals Ahasuerus's power—the same power that allows him to issue dangerous edicts and bar people from his sight.

It also may be that Ahasuerus's feeling signal another turn of events, one among many, that will put Esther in the right place at the right time (*Esther 4:14*). Had Ahasuerus not loved Esther, the evil scheme of Haman would have succeeded, and her people would not have been saved.

An unexpected coronation.

"He set the royal crown on her head." (*Esther 2:17*). This crown was a signal of a long and obscurely connected series; it was the one effect of a series of causes and effects. Up to this point, no one could compare with it for significance. It will be well to pause concerning this coronation scene.

There have been occasions of coronation which have attracted little notice or interest. There have been some supremely sad, although they have not seemed so to the eye, and at the time. But this coronation scene may yield much more. It has aspects, some unhappy in their surroundings, others happy in their substance, which makes it different from many others.

1. It was not a crown won by effort. It was not one of those crowns which had been placed on the head as the result of athlete's training, poet's inspiration, or the force of genius. In fact, nothing that had been specially done or suffered showed the way to it. Neither of these things caused the gift of this crown.
2. It was not a crown given by the blood of the royal kind, or associations that are elevating.
3. It was not a crown given by hands that are pure, honest, or merciful.
4. It was not a crown of imperishable material, of ancestral record, or that could be reckoned upon to sit easy, or remain long on the head wearing it.

But there are some advantages to this crown.

1. The crown was one that was *not* sought with ambitious self-seeking.
2. It was one that did not come out of hereditary succession.
3. It was one—very rare in this respect—to which it contributed *moral* qualities.

This made it more remarkable at this time.

Why?

It was because those moral qualities had to make their way, and assert their influence, in the most unfavorable atmosphere, and the most unlikely circumstances.

Did Esther crown herself? No. It was not the result of wiliness.

Did she crown herself? No. It was not because she was among the like-minded and the pure of heart.

Did she crown herself? No. It was considering her distinguishing qualities, with the worst kind of character of all for her to go near—the *official* character.

- Bribery had not done it
- Royal ways had not done it
- Insincerity had not done it
- Immorality had not done it

The force of simplicity, of contentment, of modesty, of refusal of a social crown—*these* things did it.

Esther was a pattern of goodness with those who surrounded her, but made that pattern seen, felt, and admired by some of the most unlikely people.

This was an undesirable crown, won by methods full of real honor and grace.

4. It was a crown which God designed for the head it now reached. Without this, there would be nothing to favor it; with this, it claims all the rest

The providence of God raised the crown, but only after raising the head of the humble and meek to receive it. His providence had other ends in view, great, good, and kind, for his people.

There are five different types of crowns mentioned in the Brit Hadashah. Each of these crowns is a specific and distinct reward for believers who have faithfully fulfilled God's call on their lives.

- 1) *I Corinthians 9:25* refers to a crown of incorruption. This crown is given to believers who practiced physical self-governance. Those who practiced self-discipline and refused to let the flesh hinder their faith can look forward to receiving this crown.
- 2) *I Thessalonians 2:19* refers to the crown of rejoicing. This is the soul-winner's crown. It is given to those who brought others to Yeshua.
- 3) *II Timothy 4:8* refers to the crown of righteousness. This crown is specially designated for those who longed for Yeshua's appearing and lived holy lives in anticipation of His return.
- 4) *I Peter 5:4* refers to the crown of glory. This is a special reward that will be given to shepherds who faithfully pastored and taught God's people.
- 5) *James 1:12* and *Revelation 2:10* refer to the crown of life. This crown is known as the martyr's crown. It is given to those who suffered for their faith, those who died for the Messiah, or those who were committed to finishing their race of faith regardless of the difficulties they encountered in this life.

Athletes who prepared, trained, and won their competitions were highly regarded. Likewise, the Messiah will give special honor to those who victoriously ran their race of faith to its conclusion.

On that day in our future, Yeshua the Messiah will stand, step forward to us as we bow before Him, and place one of these crowns on our heads if He has found us faithful to the task that was assigned to us.

The Story of Ruth



What's Up?

Our community enjoyed *The Story of Ruth*, presented by our drama group The Backstory Players. Unfortunately, the original production was delayed due to the hurricane season, but our dauntless drama group persevered. The play opened to a full house and was an immediate hit. The performers, stage team, wardrobe, and everyone associated with the production did a wonderful job! We look forward to future productions from The Backstory Players.

Our entire Mishpochah came together to celebrate our First Annual Chanukah Extravaganza! Everyone enjoyed the various game kiosks and did full justice to the multiple (and delicious) food kiosks. Thank you to everyone who helped make this party a success!

In the same spirit of *achdut* (unity), our Mishpochah rallied to host Ahavat Ammi's *Romans DNA Conference* in March. We welcomed over 150 guests from around the world for the three-day conference. This would not have been possible without the support and dedication of our Mishpochah. Thank you to everyone who volunteered during the event and to all of our Family for showing hospitality to so many visitors.

We finished the first portion of the [Gregorian] year with several exciting events. Our Pesach Seder was a time of remembrance and joy. Mazel Tov to Amanda for completing your Bat Mitzvah! Mazel Tov to Andres and Zuleimy on your marriage! Mazel Tov to all of the new (and very proud) grandparents!

We will share more exciting news regarding our May 24 event in the next newsletter, so stay tuned!

Outreach Corner



SUPPORT

Bibles for
Overseas
Pastors

Kehilat Bethlechem
Hanukkah Video



Bibles for Overseas Pastors

Torah Life Ministries

The Problem: Without Bibles, pastors are unable to Educate and Empower their congregations with the Word of G-d

The Solution: YOU! This can be done three ways:

Prayer: Please cover us with Prayer as we honor this Mission

Support: Bring the Word of G-d to those who desperately need it. Your support will inspire positive changes, and will have eternal consequences.

Share: Connect with other people in your sphere of influence. Give them the opportunity to be used by G-d

One Mitzvah At A Time

Ro'eh Joseph John

Hanukkah is called the "Festival of Lights." And in obedience to the Master's words, Kehilat Bethlechem embarked on a journey to spread the festive joy by coming together as a community each day of the festival to cook and distribute food to the poor and needy in Hyderabad. Over the 8 days of Hanukkah, 850+ food packages were distributed in over 40 locations. Even our children joined in and assisted by helping prepare food and distributing it to those in need!

Stewards of HaShem's Gifts



Last summer and fall, we experienced significant rainfall in our area, which led to our Schul flooding during Hurricane Milton. Once the waters receded, we began implementing a multifactor plan to reduce and prevent future flooding. You may have noticed the work around our pond and back fields. This is just one aspect of the water remediation plan. The work crews cleared out decades of trash left in the back area, cleared out large areas of overgrown vegetation, removed dead trees, and cleaned out the pond area to increase the water capacity.

Babette Allen provided and continues to provide invaluable assistance as we work with local, state, and federal agencies to address the underlying infrastructure issues that are contributing to the ongoing water challenges. Our efforts succeeded in having the City of Orlando clean out several of the storm wells in the neighborhood. Additionally, Orange County is now beginning to address long-overlooked damaged areas of the county's stormwater drainage system on the east side of our property.

As evidenced by the flooding we recently experienced, caused by the May rains, we still have a way to go before the next hurricane arrives. We ask that our community continue to pray for HaShem's grace and favor. In particular, we ask for His favor concerning a state funding request (which will offset the cost of the ongoing drainage project) and a federal grant request (which will enable us to secure our property against those who desire to use it as a dumping ground).

Thank you to all who have contributed, both in time and finances, to this project. We encourage our Mishpochah to continue praying for and investing in our YBOL community. As Rav Shaul stated in Galatians 6:6-10, *"do not grow weary of doing what is good; for if we don't give up, we will in due time reap the harvest."* Although the project is financially very costly, the result will be worth it. We look forward to the day when our backfield and pond become a beautiful park-like area for our Mishpochah to enjoy.

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GIVING

EMET — Truth
TZADDIK — Righteousness
SHALOM — Peace

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