



*Parasha Tetzaveh*

February 28, 2026

*Torah:* Exodus 27:20-30:10

*Haftarah:* Ezekiel 43:10-27

*Ketuvim Shlichim:* Hebrews 13

## **Messianic Judaism 30-2026 CE**

### **#2: Purim**

*Shabbat shalom, Mishpacha.* At this time of the year, the majority of the world is going about their business, unaware of ADONAI's eternal plan unfolding all around them. But it is not something everyone can know. Even right now, a remnant is observing His plans unfold as today's events line up with Scripture. Yes, G-d is love, but He's also a G-d of justice, and the story unfolding is found in a Judaic understanding of Scripture. Some today try to translate the Scriptures into a modern, generic language to get at their meaning. But ADONAI wrote all the Scriptures through Jews and through Luke, a Gentile, who, as a follower of Yeshua, worshipped the G-d of Israel in a Judaic manner. Its best understanding comes from this approach. Read a Messianic-oriented Bible. Many take Scripture out of context, base their interpretations on non-Scriptural sources, and choose to make it fit their predetermined theology. To understand Yeshua, we must understand Him as a Jew who perfectly observed not only the *Torah*, but also everything expected of Him. Referring to understanding and compliance with His words, Yeshua said, "The road to destruction is broad, while the way to life (salvation) is narrow, and few find it." (Matthew 7:13-14). The "narrow gate" is available to everyone, but they must sincerely wish to find it. The truth is written in Genesis through Revelation for everyone to see, and they will find the narrow way if they're sincere and don't try to bend it to fit their own ideas of what it means. The Bible is not antinomian, but is made that way by various translators. Yeshua was not against keeping the Law, but upheld it. He said: 17 "Do not think that I came to abolish the Torah or the Prophets! I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill. 18 Amen, I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or serif shall ever pass away from the Torah until all things come to pass." (Matthew 5:17-18 TLV). Fulfilling the *Torah*, the Law, meant obeying it, not just the Ten Commandments, but everything commanded by ADONAI that could be obeyed in that age when the Temple stood. At that time, His words to obey encompassed everything ADONAI commanded in His *Torah*. Today, there is no Temple and no Levitical Priesthood, so the commandments related to them are inactive and not expected to be kept.

Today, the events ADONAI predicted are unfolding, not only in the Middle East, but around the world. It's an ancient story, one that began in the wilderness as Israel left Egypt. It has persisted through the centuries and came into focus again shortly after Israel was freed from Babylonian captivity. It has come into focus again in the last of the last days, where we are now. While the people groups promoting hate of the Jews have

changed, the demonic spirit behind their hatred has not, and it continues to incite Jew hatred all around the world today.

The real story of *Purim* is about hatred. Remarkably, the hatred that has now spread worldwide against the Jews originated with a relative of the Jews— a great-great-grandson of Abraham. His name was Amalek, and he was Isaac's son Esau's grandson. But the story began with Esau, the firstborn son and rightful heir to the birthright—an inheritance that granted its owner the leadership of Abraham's family. But Esau sold his birthright to his twin brother Jacob for a bowl of red lentil stew. Regarding selling it, the *Torah* states that Esau despised his birthright (Genesis 25:34). Many years later, Jacob was urged by his mother, Rebecca, to deceive his father, Isaac, into giving him the blessing intended for Esau, the firstborn son. Jacob was rightfully named. He was a supplanter who not only took Esau's birthright but also tricked his father into believing he was Esau so that he would bless him. Isaac's blessing of Jacob was: *28 May God give you— from the dew of the sky and from the fatness of the land— an abundance of grain and new wine. 29 May peoples serve you and may nations bow down to you. Be master over your brothers. May your mother's sons bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and may those who bless you be blessed.*" (Genesis 27:28-29 TLV). This blessing rightfully belonged to Esau, and losing it to Jacob made him hate his brother. *41 So Esau bore a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, "Let the time for mourning my father draw near, so that I can kill my brother Jacob!"* (Genesis 27:41 TLV). But Jacob was sent away by his parents to Padan Aram before Esau could carry out his threat. Although Jacob bought the birthright and received his father's blessing through trickery, it was ADONAI's will for him to lead the family, for ADONAI knew Esau's heart. We are told that Esau despised his birthright (Genesis 25:29-34) and treated his calling to lead Abraham's family as worthless, trading it for a bowl of stew. He wanted to be blessed, but had no desire to lead Abraham's family.

But Esau also rebelled against his parents' wishes. He married two Canaanite women, Adah (a Hittite, also named Basemath) and Oholibamah (a Hittite, also named Judith, bringing grief to his parents (Genesis 26:34-35). Later, he rubbed salt into their wounds by marrying Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael (Genesis 28:6-9). Esau's grandson Amalek was born to Eliphaz, the son of his first wife Judith (Oholibamah), who was the daughter of Beeri the Hittite. Rather than submit to his brother Jacob as head of the family, Esau left the area and settled in the hill country of Seir, east of the Dead Sea. The area became known as Edom, meaning "red," the name given to Esau because he came out of the womb "all reddish." While the *Torah* doesn't come right out and say it, seemingly, hatred began with one individual, Esau, and was passed down through his family. His grandson, Amalek, continued the hatred and passed it on to his family, and it persisted for four hundred years. The hatred became physical when Amalek's descendants, the Amalekites, attacked Israel at Rephidim when coming out of Egypt (Exodus 17:8-16). Esau's original hatred was amplified and passed down to each succeeding generation of the Amalek family. After the Amalekites attacked Israel at Rephidim in the Wilderness, their hatred persisted for eight to nine centuries, finally documented in the Scriptures at the time of Esther.

After the Amalekites' defeat at Rephidim, ADONAI said to Moses 14 ..., "Write this for a memorial in the book, and rehearse it in the hearing of Joshua, for I will utterly blot out the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven." (Exodus 17:14 TLV). That was and is ADONAI's will, but their defeat at Refidim didn't end it, and Amalek continued to attack Israel through the years. A little over a hundred years later, they allied with the Midianites to fight against Israel, and Gideon led the army that defeated them. Another hundred years later, ADONAI directed Samuel to have King Saul execute His judgment on the Amalekites. 2 Thus says Adonai-Tzva'ot: 'I remember what Amalek did to Israel, how he set himself against him on the way while he was coming up from Egypt. 3 Now go and strike down Amalek and put all he has under the ban of destruction—so have no pity on him; but kill both men and women, children and nursing infants, oxen and sheep, camels and donkeys" (1 Samuel 15:2-3 TLV). Saul disobeyed and did not kill all of them; however, he eventually killed Agag, the Amalekite king, whom he had initially captured. A few years later, surviving Amalekites attacked David's camp at Ziklag while he was away, taking all the women and children captive. David and his men pursued and found them, rescuing everyone. 17 David attacked them from the twilight until the evening of the next day. None of them escaped, except 400 young men who rode on camels and fled. (1 Samuel 30:17 TLV). The final reported encounter with Amalek was about four hundred years later during the time of King Hezekiah: 42 About 500 of them from the descendants of Simeon (**Tribe of Simeon**), led by Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi, went to Mount Seir (**Edom**) 43 where they struck down the remaining Amalekites who had escaped, and they live there to this day. (1 Chronicles 4:42-43 TLV).

Purim is our subject today, and some believe its events occurred near the end of the Babylonian captivity, possibly around 510 BCE. In the Book of Esther, the Persian king Ahasuerus is identified by some theologians as King Xerxes I, who is believed to have reigned from 486 to 465 BCE. If that timeline is correct, the events of the Book of Esther would have begun around 483 BCE, the third year of King Ahasuerus's reign, and almost 100 years after Israel was taken into captivity in Babylon in 586 BCE. Subsequently, the Babylonians were conquered by the Medes and Persians, during which time the Book of Esther takes place. The setting was Shushan, the winter capital of Persia, also known as Susa. It was located in central Iran near the modern Iranian city of Shush. Esther was a young woman, most likely in her teens. She was born in Persia and knew Jewish history only from her family, having never been to Israel. The text suggests that Jews lived in Shushan freely as residents and participated in community and government activities. But as we discover, not every Amalekite had been eliminated; we find them living in Shushan nearly two hundred years after their last Scriptural mention during the reign of King Hezekiah.

The story in the Book of Esther highlights the enduring toxic hatred that the descendants of Amalek have toward Jacob's descendants, as well as ADONAI's miraculous deliverance of the Jews from their ancient foes. In chapter 3, the Book of Esther introduces us to a man named Haman. 1 Some time later, King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, son of Hame-datha the Agagite, elevating him and setting his chair above all the officials who were with him (Esther 3:1 TLV). Haman's father, Hame-datha, was an Agagite, meaning he was a descendant of King Agag, whom King Saul had executed. As King Ahasuerus's second-in-command, we can appreciate Haman's ambition to excel in

his court and his desire for recognition and respect. We also understand his hatred of Mordecai and his people. Everyone was commanded to bow to Haman, but Mordecai would not: *5 When Haman saw that Mordecai was not bowing down or paying him honor, Haman was filled with rage* (Esther 3:5 TLV). His hatred prompted Haman to act against the Jews. *8 Haman then said to King Ahasuerus: "There is a certain people scattered and dispersed among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom whose laws differ from those of every other people and who do not obey the king's laws. It is not in the king's interest to tolerate them. 9 If it pleases the king, let an edict be written to destroy them"* (Esther 3:8-9a TLV). The king agreed to Haman's plan, not knowing who these people were or that his wife was one of them.

Lots, called *Purim* in Hebrew, were cast, and *Adar* 13 was designated as the day to kill all the Jews. However, they were unsuccessful, and Haman's attempt to exterminate the Jews not only resulted in ADONAI's miraculous preservation of the Jews in Media-Persia but also the deaths of Haman and his Amalekite relatives. King Ahasuerus ruled over 127 provinces, stretching from India to Ethiopia, a vast kingdom that included the Land of Israel. Jews living in all these locations were permitted to defend themselves, resulting in the deaths of 75,000 of their adversaries. Had Haman's decree been executed, the entire Jewish population would have been annihilated. Haman's inability to eradicate all the Jews was vital, as it enabled their survival as a distinct people. About 300 years later, the Jews were again preserved as a people when Judah Maccabee and his army defeated the Syrians and safeguarded Israel as a nation and a people. The existence of Israel as a nation about 150 years later enabled ADONAI's Son, Yeshua, to be born there as a part of the ancient people, fulfilling prophecies.

The importance of Esther's actions cannot be minimized. As a young woman, she understood the importance of saving her people from destruction. While the Book of Esther does not mention ADONAI, we realize He is behind the scenes, perhaps motivating Esther and Mordecai by His *Ruach*. Mordechai's words to her echo through the centuries: *14 "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place—but you and your father's house will perish. Who knows whether you have attained royal status for such a time as this?"* (Esther 4:14 TLV). Esther understood why she had come to the throne, and her willingness to risk her life may have stemmed from more than just a desire to protect her people. I believe that part of her reasoning was understanding that ADONAI had a greater purpose for the Jewish people in the scheme of world things.

While the Jews killed Haman and 75,000 Amalekites with King Ahasuerus's permission, it appears they still were not completely eradicated. We don't know who the physical Amalekites are today, as they seem to have blended with the Arabic people. However, the spirit of Amalek has not disappeared and has multiplied among many people, including today's Iranian ruling party, Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and other groups. Their supporters are now found in nearly every country outside the Middle East, especially Europe and the United States. These people's hatred of Jews has also influenced many non-Arab citizens in the United States, and some of them participate in anti-Israel activities.

What propels the hatred that has persisted so long? It is not a human emotion but a demonic entity that takes up residence in human bodies and readily attaches itself to

new and unsuspecting human beings through their association with those in whom it resides. These demon spirits serve *HaSatan*, Israel's adversary, who has dispatched them against Israel, and his ultimate target, Yeshua, whom He desperately seeks to defeat. The hatred of Israel that we are seeing in the United States and Europe today is being fed in part by the demonic spirit of Amalek and other anti-G-d spirits.

While physical force is sometimes warranted, *HaSatan's* ultimate defeat will only come at the hand of ADONAI and His Son Yeshua. The word of ADONAI came to Zerubbabel through the Prophet Zechariah as he was facing opposition in rebuilding the Temple: 6 *Then he responded to me by saying, 'This is the word of Adonai to Zerubbabel saying: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Ruach!" says Adonai-Tzva'ot.* (Zechariah 4:6 TLV). This is ADONAI's word for us today: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit," says ADONAI. We, as non-physical combatants, must mobilize against the spirit world. How are we meant to do that?

*Sha'ul* tells us how. We are involved in a spiritual battle, and our weapons are not physical. He tells us that as followers of Yeshua, we are physical, but our warfare is not. He wrote: 3 *"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful through God for the tearing down of strongholds"* (2 Corinthians 10:3-4 TLV). Even though our weapons are not physical, they are powerful and can tear down spiritual strongholds. But we must know what our weapons are to use them to overcome *HaSatan*. *Sha'ul* continues: 4 ... *We are tearing down false arguments 5 and every high-minded thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. We are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Messiah—* (2 Corinthians 10:4b-5 TLV). *Sha'ul* was defeating false doctrines and the arguments of the followers of false gods, and he encourages us to do this. Even our thoughts must be obedient to Yeshua. It's all about Yeshua and the truth of His Word. The next verse especially has application to today's body of Messiah. *Sha'ul* had trouble with the Corinthian congregation because some had rebelled against his teaching. He wrote: 6 *ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.* (2 Corinthians 10:6 TLV). In other words, we, the modern followers of Yeshua, will have the weapons to fight evil once we cease our own rebellion and fully submit to our Messiah's authority. That full realization is coming, the Body of Messiah without spot or wrinkle, but it is not here yet. To achieve that goal, we must surrender fully to Yeshua, both individually and as a group, take up our cross daily, and follow His path.

*Sha'ul* also instructed the congregation in Ephesus about spiritual warfare, explaining what our weapons are and who the enemy is: 11 *"Put on the full armor of God, so that you are able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the worldly forces of this darkness, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places"* (Ephesians 6:11-12 TLV). "Powers" are fallen angels of high rank, the Satanic counterparts of ADONAI's Archangels, Michael and Gabriel. The Book of Daniel suggests that individual nations have high-ranking fallen angels overseeing *HaSatan's* activities in those nations. In this verse, the Angel Gabriel spoke to Daniel: 13 *However, the prince of the kingdom of Persia (a demonic entity) resisted me for 21 days, but behold Michael, one of the chief princes (an archangel of ADONAI), came to help me because I had been detained there with the kings of Persia (possibly defending King Cyrus).* (Daniel 10:13

TLV). There is a command structure in the dark spiritual world. The leader of it is our enemy, the ancient serpent, the devil, *HaSatan*. He is the commander-in-chief of the evil kingdom, accompanied by the rulers and powers mentioned by *Sha'ul*, and his foot soldiers are demon spirits. On the side of good are the Archangels Michael and Gabriel and the other angels, the Cherubim, Seraphim, and Guardian Angels. Their Commander in Chief is Yeshua, the King of Kings and L-rd of L-rds, as we are told in Revelation 19:16. Those who have these demonic spirits and exhibit their qualities are not our enemies, and we pray that they will come to know Yeshua and be delivered. We pray that every unsaved person who can be saved would become part of the Messiah's body. It is their actions that are our enemy, not them. ADONAI told Moses that we are not to hate our brother in our hearts (Leviticus 19:17), but also teaches us to love our neighbor as ourselves. As a part of the army of Messiah Yeshua, our battle is not to defeat them physically, but to spiritually free them from *HaSatan's* grasp. This coming change will drastically alter the world around us.

*13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist when the times are evil, and after you have done everything, to stand firm.* (Ephesians 6:13 TLV). *Sha'ul* begins by telling us that, as spiritual warriors, we must have spiritual weapons, all of G-d's available armor. Even before he describes our weapons, he encourages us to stand firm. We must decide if we're going to stand firm, if we're going to do nothing, or if we're going to run away. Standing firm suggests a battle line where warriors stand shoulder to shoulder. That's who we are called to be, a united spiritual force ready to meet the challenges of the enemy. And every warrior is essential. There are no deferments. Everyone must go to the front line.

*14 Stand firm then! Buckle the belt of truth around your waist,..* (Ephesians 6:14a TLV). The belt of truth we wear is the truth of ADONAI's Word, which we use to witness to others. It is His ultimate and eternal truth, made compelling by our honest words, which can set people free. As bearers of truth, there can be no deceit in us.

*14 ..., and put on the breastplate of righteousness.* (Ephesians 6:14b TLV). The breastplate covering our chests and protecting our hearts is our righteousness. While our emotions exist in our minds, it is in our hearts and our spirits that our real selves live. Our hearts are complex, the part of us as human beings that joins with ADONAI, spirit to Spirit. Our heart provides us with spiritual orientation, forming the foundation for our actions. As Yeshua's followers, it is in our hearts that our spirit joins with the *Ruach Kodesh*, the Holy Spirit. Yeshua spoke about the importance of the heart (Matthew 5:8), and *Sha'ul* emphasized that they must be circumcised (Romans 2:29) and turned toward Yeshua (Colossians 2:11). A circumcised heart is an obedient heart. After salvation and trusting in Yeshua as Savior and Messiah, we maintain our ongoing righteousness by obeying Yeshua and ADONAI. Yeshua also taught us about the evil thoughts that come from the heart and about people who honor Him with their lips but whose hearts are far from Him (Matthew 15:8). This does not define us, who are His faithful followers. The breastplate covering our hearts is our righteousness, our right standing before ADONAI. Righteousness is more than eternal salvation; it is also how we serve Yeshua every day of our lives. We can't be passive followers of Yeshua. He has told us that He will spew out

those who are lukewarm from His mouth (Revelation 3:16). He has an aversion to and rejects half-hearted faith.

*15 Strap up your feet in readiness with the Good News of shalom.* (Ephesians 6:15 TLV). Our shoes are our readiness to go where we are called to share the Good News of *shalom*. Yeshua's gift of salvation brings eternal *shalom* to those who choose it. We must always be spiritually aware of every opportunity to share the Good News of the Kingdom, the *Besorah*.

*16 Above all, take up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.* (Ephesians 6:16 TLV). Our shield against the accusations of *HaSatan*, the accuser of the brethren, is our faith. Our faith is our trust in G-d, His Son Yeshua, and the truth that He is the universe's Creator and Savior. But our faith is also our faithfulness in service to Yeshua and the understanding that we are in it for the long term. We must be vigilant and remain faithful as long as we live.

*17 And take the helmet of salvation ...* (Ephesians 6:17a TLV). The helmet that protects our minds is the truth of the promise of salvation. We do not waver in our firm belief that Yeshua's sacrificial blood has paid the price for us to live in eternity with Him. The catcalls of the Atheists and the derision of the followers of false gods do not affect us. We remain firm in our belief that ADONAI is the only real G-d and that He sent His Son, Yeshua, to become the perfect sacrifice for our sins, that we might have eternal life. He will soon return as King Messiah to defeat His enemies, and we will reign with Him for eternity.

*17 ... and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.* (Ephesians 6:17b TLV). Lastly, we use the sword of the *Ruach*, the Word of ADONAI, to answer every spiritual challenge. Just as Yeshua did in the wilderness when he was tempted by *HaSatan*, we should also use the Word, not only to confront ADONAI's enemies offensively but also to defend ourselves when they attack. We all need to be equipped with an understanding of the Word. We cannot depend on others to filter the Word for us. Each of us must be a faithful student of the Bible, rightly dividing the Word of truth: *15 "Make every effort to present yourself before God as tried and true, as an unashamed worker cutting a straight path with the word of truth"* (2 Timothy 2:15 TLV). Who is an unashamed worker? It is a person who diligently responds to the call to study and understand God's Word. The rabbis equate *Torah* study with worshiping ADONAI, a perspective we can all agree on. When you "study to show yourself approved," you are also worshiping G-d, something that we cannot do too much.

What is Purim's message for us today? It serves as a reminder that ADONAI's enemies remain active, and the spirit of Amalek is very much present in today's world. But there is an even more wicked spirit that also inhabits many with the Amalek spirit, the spirit of the Anti-Messiah (the anti-Christ). Near the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, Yochanan wrote, *2 You know the Ruach Elohim by this—every spirit that acknowledges that Messiah Yeshua has come in human flesh is from God, 3 but every spirit that does not acknowledge Yeshua is not from God. This is the spirit of the anti-messiah, which you have heard is coming and now is already in the world.* (1 John 4:2-3 TLV). The good news is that neither the Spirit of Amalek nor the Spirit of Anti-Messiah has to remain in these

individuals and can be removed, that is, cast out, allowing their former hosts to trust in and serve Yeshua. But they must desire it to happen. However, the unfortunate reality is that many will not be freed from these spirits and will continue to lack ADONAI's Spirit (faith in Yeshua) until the end, ultimately facing Yeshua's judgment on a coming *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement). *12 And I saw the dead—the great and the small—standing before the throne. The books were opened, and another book was opened—the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what was written in the books, according to their deeds.* (Revelation 20:12 TLV). This is a picture of *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement, when Yeshua will make the final Judgement; the scene is also shown to Daniel in 7:9-14.

Purim also reminds us that we are the Esthers and Mordechais of today, and our end is much different than those inhabited by these unholy spirits. *Sha'ul* wrote, *11 Trustworthy is the saying: If we died with Him, we will also live with Him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He will also deny us; 13 if we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.* (2 Timothy 2:11-13 TLV). Endurance is essential. We must remain faithful until the end, and if we do, we will live with Yeshua in the *Olam Haba*, the world to come. But while we are in this world, the *Olam Hazeah*, we are called to make a difference in ADONAI's kingdom.

Near the beginning of Israel as a nation, ADONAI said, *14 ... "I will utterly blot out the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven."* (Exodus 17:14b TLV). It will happen, but it has not yet. Only when Yeshua returns as Messiah and King to destroy His enemies will the memory of the Amalekites be blotted out from the earth. And *HaSatan* and all his evil agents will also be destroyed. But until then, our battle continues against the spirit of Amalek and the Anti-Messiah. It is the Nation of Israel to which Yeshua will return to rule and reign as *Melekh Yisra'el*, the King of Israel. ADONAI chose the people of Israel, the Jews, to be His priests to the nations, and they will ultimately fulfill that calling. And Yeshua will reign over the people of ADONAI's Israel for eternity, both Jews and Gentiles in covenant with Him. May we never forget that as *talmidim* of Yeshua, we are called to action. *שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַיִם יִשְׁלַח אֱהָבָה* *Sha'alu shalom Yerushalayim yishlayu ohavayich!* (Psalm 122:6). Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May those who love Jerusalem, the city of our great King, Yeshua, be at peace and prosper! *Shabbat shalom!*