



Parasha Ki Tetze

Torah: Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19

Haftarah: Isaiah 54:1-10

Ketuvim Shlichim: Ephesians 5:8-20

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Messianic Judaism 8

Shabbat shalom, Mishpacha! ADONAI, our G-d, sent His Son, Yeshua, to live on the earth as a man. Matthew wrote: *18 Now the birth of Yeshua the Messiah happened this way. When His mother Miriam was engaged to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Ruach ha-Kodesh.* (Matthew 1:18 TLV). Just as Yeshua became human flesh by the power of the *Ruach HaKodesh*, we, the humans He created, can become spiritual beings by the same *Ruach HaKodesh*. After we trust in Yeshua, what theologians call justification, we enter into a covenant relationship with Yeshua and the Father, a relationship between human and divine, a supernatural relationship. Justification means we have had a life-altering experience with Yeshua by believing in Him as Savior. As covenant members of the New Covenant, we have learned that covenant rules must be followed, just as they were for the members of the Covenant made at Sinai. Covenant members of the first covenant received collective justification, but the New Covenant works differently. Individuals must first have a personal relationship with ADONAI by trusting in Yeshua, who sends His Holy Spirit into our spirits, our inner man. Although that does not follow human logic, we accept it by faith, supported by the Scriptures and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

As ADONAI's creations, we are far more complex than our physical bodies appear. The composition of our bodies is a complex subject, and not all of Yeshua's followers agree on it. Some say that we are a dichotomy, made up of body and soul, and some say a trichotomy, body, soul, and spirit. What I am presenting is my belief, one I know you share, as we both accept the word of *Sha'ul*, who wrote: *23 Now may the God of shalom Himself make you completely holy; and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept complete, blameless at the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah.* (1 Thessalonians 5:23 TLV). We believe that we are made up of body, soul, and spirit. If Yeshua's followers disagree on this subject, it doesn't change the reality ADONAI created.

We introduced today's subject by noting that we become spiritual beings through the *Ruach HaKodesh*. It is ADONAI's Spirit that brings us to life, just as our ancestor Adam was. *7 Then Adonai Elohim formed the man out of the dust from the ground, and He breathed into his nostrils a breath of life—so the man became a living being.* (Genesis 2:7 TLV). A "living being" is *nefesh chaya*, נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה. We are made alive because ADONAI breathed into us *nishmat chayim*, נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים, the breath of life. *Nishmat* comes from *neshama*, נִשְׁמָה, meaning breath, spirit, or soul. Is this just semantics, or did ADONAI breathe His breath, the breath of life, into us, and we became a living soul? I believe it is the literal truth, and the *Ruach Kodesh*, transmitted by ADONAI's breath, caused us to be alive.

Our bodies are wonders of biochemistry, working together in thousands of ways that allow us to live, breathe, walk, and talk. But concealed within our physical bodies are two additional components that determine who we are. One is the soul, the seat of our individuality, and it includes our mind, emotions, and will. It is our conscious self-awareness.

As ADONAI's highest order of animals, we possess complex thought, with brains that are very much like computers. Our brains send electrical signals back and forth along neurons, the millions of nerves that run throughout our bodies. We don't understand how it all works, but our Creator has enabled us to use our brains to think and send impulses to an organ in our throats, allowing us to produce sounds from our mouths, sounds that are much more precise than those of lower animals, which can only bark, meow, or moo. We can turn our thoughts into speech and communicate with others like us. Our collection of thoughts shapes how we act and interact with others and, taken as a whole, forms our personality. The third part of us, our spirit, cannot be identified as being controlled by our brains, nerves, and muscles. Our human spirit is a mysterious component of our bodies, and we don't know where it is located. The *Tanakh* points to the heart as its location, but that is metaphorical, and we really don't know where the human spirit is. In traditional Judaism, *Neshama* is considered the soul. They don't see the spirit, the third part of the body that we do.

We are told in Genesis that G-d made us from the dust of the ground. That doesn't mean just the dirt we walk on, but all of the earth's chemical elements, primarily carbon. Way back in 1979, *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* featured a rogue satellite called V'ger, which attempted to kill humans it called "carbon units." Yes, we are carbon units, with carbon compounds making up 35-40 % of our bodies. That's the dust of the ground. G-d put His breath into these collections of dust, carbon, water, and other materials, and it is His breath that keeps us alive. As long as our spirit remains in our body, we are alive. But when our body stops living and returns to the dust of the earth, our spirit returns to Him who gave it. Solomon wrote, *7 Then the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.* (Ecclesiastes 12:7 TLV). When we die, our bodies decompose and return to the ground, but our spirits are eternal. They came from G-d and, at our death, return to G-d.

A 2022 study published in *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience* recorded brain activity in dying human brains and found changes in gamma oscillations even after the heart stopped beating, with brain activity continuing for some time. In essence, the heart had stopped beating, but there were still detectable impulses coming from the brain. According to the authors, these oscillations are linked to high-level cognitive functions such as concentration, dreaming, meditation, memory retrieval, information processing, and conscious perception, and they continue for some time after the heart stops. (Article by multiple authors: *Enhanced Interplay of Neuronal Coherence and Coupling in the Dying Human Brain* published in *Frontiers In Aging Neuroscience*, 21 February 2022). While the authors don't speculate that this continuing brain activity is the human spirit, we should consider this possibility. At the very least, this continuing brain activity determines that life does not end when the heart and breathing stop. Human life does not end until brain activity stops. And it is possible that when this brain activity ceases, the human spirit returns to ADONAI, and our memories may join it and leave with it. Speaking of what G-d said about resurrection, Yeshua said: *32 "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." He is not the God of the dead, but of the living!*" (Matthew 22:32 TLV). Yeshua also spoke with Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-13), and their personalities were intact. There is so much we don't know; so much remains unknown, and we must not be dogmatic about it.

When we trust in Yeshua, He sends His *Ruach HaKodesh*, His Holy Spirit, to unite with our spirit. *Sha'ul* wrote: *13 After you heard the message of truth—the Good News of your salvation—and when you put your trust in Him, you were sealed with the promised Ruach ha-Kodesh.* (Ephesians 1:13 TLV). I also believe that it's at that time that the righteous decrees

of the *Torah*, the rules of the New Covenant, are written on our hearts by ADONAI, which is the exact moment we enter into ADONAI's New Covenant. These righteous commands are implanted in our spirits. Jeremiah wrote: 32 *"But this is the covenant (the New Covenant) I will make with the house of Israel after those days" —it is a declaration of Adonai— "I will put My Torah within them. Yes, I will write it on their heart. I will be their God and they will be My people."* (Jeremiah 31:32 TLV). ADONAI has inscribed in our spirits what He desires us to follow as members of the covenant. These righteous decrees include Laws that relate vertically, from us to Yeshua and ADONAI, but also horizontally between us, not only our fellow covenant members but also our neighbor who is not a covenant member. Why don't some of Yeshua's followers realize they are there? Probably because they are suppressed by their belief that the Law was fulfilled in Yeshua and is no longer in effect.

Now, almost two thousand years after Yeshua's death on the cross, there is no Tabernacle or Temple. How should we worship ADONAI and Yeshua, our Messiah, today? The answer is to worship them in a supernatural way. There's nothing natural about our relationship with Yeshua and the Father. Yeshua told the Samaritan woman, 24 *"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."* (John 4:24 TLV). We worship Father and Son today in spirit. That's supernatural. We must have His Spirit living in us to worship Him. Those who don't know Yeshua do not have His Spirit and cannot worship Him in that way. True worship comes from the heart, a circumcised heart, a reference to a G-d-filled heart, which we have identified as the human spirit. We worship Him in truth, the truth of His Word, which leads us to keep His righteous commandments. We no longer need a Temple with an Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. Yeshua's death on the cross permanently opened the way to ADONAI, who dwelt there when the First Covenant was in effect, as evidenced by what happened when He died: 51 *And behold, the curtain of the Temple was split in two, from top to bottom.* (Matthew 27:51a TLV). Jeremiah, who prophesied the New Covenant, also prophesied the new way we would worship ADONAI: 16 *"It will be in those days when you multiply and become fruitful in the land." It is a declaration of Adonai. "They will no longer talk about the ark of the covenant of Adonai, nor will it come to mind or be remembered. Neither will it be missed or another one made again."* (Jeremiah 3:16 TLV). The Jews are certainly back in the Land of Israel and thriving today. Over 7 million live there, including twenty thousand or more who follow Yeshua. However, the Ark of the Covenant and a physical Holy of Holies are unnecessary because of Yeshua and the New Covenant. In Herod's Temple, the *parochet*, the heavy curtain separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, stood nearly 60 feet high, was said to be four inches thick, and weighed hundreds of pounds. The *parochet*, the curtain of the physical Temple, was torn completely in two and made unusable for worship by the spiritual power of Yeshua's death. Israel's leaders repaired it, yet the symbolism was already proclaimed—a physical representation of what had spiritually occurred in the Tabernacle in heaven. Yeshua's death opened the way for all who trusted Him to have direct access to the Father. The spiritual Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle in Heaven is now open to us because we have trusted in Yeshua, our High Priest, who has given us His *Ruach Kodesh*, His Holy Spirit.

At His last Passover, Yeshua told His disciples: 26 *"But the Helper, the Ruach ha-Kodesh whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you everything and remind you of everything that I said to you."* (John 14:26 TLV). The Helper was sent on the Day of *Shavuot*, Pentecost, fifty days after Yeshua died on the cross. Hundreds of Jews had gathered on the Temple Mount, obeying ADONAI's *Torah* command to be there that day, including Yeshua's disciples, who would have been disobedient if they had been in an upper room elsewhere. Even after trusting in Yeshua, they continued to obey the *Torah*. *Shimon Kefa* (Simon Peter), who had

been so cowardly the night Yeshua was arrested, was now emboldened and empowered to speak ADONAI's truth. He said to those listening to him: 38 ..., "*Repent, and let each of you be immersed in the name of Messiah Yeshua for the removal of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Ruach ha-Kodesh.*" (Acts 2:38b TLV). This tells us that when we repent and trust in Yeshua, we receive the Holy Spirit as a gift. As we have shown, ADONAI's Spirit unites with our human spirits.

The Holy Spirit, which proceeds from the Father and the Son, now resides in us who have trusted in Yeshua. *Sha'ul* said: 19 *Or don't you know that your body is a temple of the Ruach ha-Kodesh who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?* (1 Corinthians 6:19 TLV). That's supernatural. ADONAI's Spirit came from Him to reside in us. The Greek word for "temple" is *naos* (nah-os), from *naiō* (nai-oh), meaning "to dwell," the counterpart of the Hebrew word *mishkan*, which also means "to dwell." Speaking to Israel in the wilderness, ADONAI said: 8 *Have them make a Sanctuary (**mikdash**) for Me, so that I may dwell among them.* 9 *You are to make it all precisely according to everything that I show you—the pattern of the Tabernacle (**naos = mishkan**) and the pattern of all the furnishings within—just so you must make it.* (Exodus 25:8-9 TLV). In verse 8, "Sanctuary" is "*Mikdash*, מִקְדָּשׁ, a reference to the Holy of Holies. But in verse 9, "Tabernacle" is *mishkan* מִשְׁכָּן, a reference to the entire structure. This means that "temple" in *Sha'ul's* verse, "*your body is a temple of the Ruach ha-Kodesh,*" *naos* in Greek, refers to our entire physical body, the counterpart of the Hebrew *mishkan*. Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. However, just as sins were brought to the altar in the outer court in both the Tabernacle in the Wilderness and the Temple in Jerusalem, our bodies, representing the entirety of our Temple, can also harbor sins because we sin with our hands, feet, and eyes, and with the second part of our body, our mind. But we have a third part. Just as there was a "Most Holy Place" in the Tabernacle and the Temple where ADONAI's Spirit resided, so there is one in our bodies. ADONAI said to Israel: 8 *Have them make a Sanctuary for Me, so that I may dwell among them.* (Exodus 25:8 TLV). *Mikdash*, מִקְדָּשׁ, is the Hebrew word translated as Sanctuary. In the *mishkan*, the entire Tabernacle, ADONAI's sanctuary was a smaller part: the *mikdash*. The *mikdash* is also known as *Kodesh HaKodeshim*, the Holy of Holies. A parallel exists within our bodies. In our *mishkan*, the temple of our entire bodies, ADONAI's *mikdash* within us, the sanctuary for His Holy Spirit, is our human spirit. The *Ruach Kodesh* lives in our *mikdash*, our spirit, ADONAI's sanctuary within our *mishkan*, the temple of our bodies, just as ADONAI dwelt in the *mikdash*, the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. Where our *mikdash*, the place where our human spirit resides, is, is unknown. We know it's there, but we don't know where. But wherever it is, that is where ADONAI's Spirit is joined with ours.

As disciples of Yeshua, our goal is to make our *mishkan*, our physical Temple, that is, our whole body comprised of our flesh and our mind, holy. We are to care for our physical bodies and not subject them to anything harmful. Why? Because they are holy, set apart, for ADONAI (1 Peter 1:15-16). After trusting in Yeshua, our spirit, located in our *mikdash*, our sanctuary for ADONAI's Spirit within the Temple of our bodies, is joined to His Spirit and becomes holy. We have been set apart for ADONAI. *Sha'ul* said, "We are not our own." While unregenerate humans have a spirit given to them by ADONAI that makes them alive, they do not have the supernaturally implanted Holy Spirit ADONAI places in us when we trust in Yeshua. *Sha'ul's* admonition for holiness is directed to the first two parts of our body, flesh and mind. After telling the Corinthians that their bodies were "a temple of the Holy Spirit," *Sha'ul* said, 20 *For you were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body.* (1 Corinthians 6:20 TLV). Yeshua loves us and gave His life for us—the price He paid for our

sake. Let us, His disciples, those who are sincerely committed to Him, strive to serve Him with our *mishkans*, the temples of our bodies, by keeping our physical bodies and our minds from sin. We must be holy because He, Yeshua our Messiah, is holy, and He has told us: 48 *"Therefore be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect."* (Matthew 5:48 TLV). These are not just casual words. If we are Yeshua's disciples, we will want to obey Him, seeking to be perfect in ADONAI's eyes.

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How can we be perfect before ADONAI? Even though we believe that, as humans, we cannot be perfect, we can keep His *Torah* because His Spirit lives in us. Ezekiel wrote, 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 36:27 TLV). ADONAI said He would place His Spirit within us and cause us to follow His *Torah*. In this verse, the word translated "My laws," *בְּחֻקַּי*, *bechuqei*, means ADONAI's statutes. The word translated "My rulings," *וּמִשְׁפָּטַי*, *umishpatei*, means ADONAI's judgments. These are two of the different types of ADONAI's laws, along with a third type, *עֲדוּת*, *edot*, witnesses. This means ADONAI's Spirit living in us will cause us to walk in "all laws possible in our individual circumstances today." Because ADONAI has placed His Spirit in us, we should obey His statutes, judgments, and witnesses. These laws are written in our hearts. Our heart desires to know and understand what ADONAI requires of us, but we must still study to learn, understand, and be willing to obey.

We continue to study *Torah* as an essential part of how ADONAI instructs His people. We know about Yeshua's sacrifice and the eternal life that comes with it. We understand that if someone accepts Yeshua's sacrifice through faith enabled by ADONAI's grace, they receive the promise of salvation. We know how to be saved but less about how to live after trusting Yeshua. That is the process involved in being a *talmid*, a disciple of Yeshua. In his letter to the congregation in Rome, we recognize *Sha'ul* as the foremost *Torah* teacher, which is predominantly the focus of his writing. It is especially important that we, as Messianic Gentiles, grasp this. Yes, Messianic Jews also, but *Sha'ul* primarily writes to Gentiles. In both the beginning and the conclusion of the Book of Romans (1:5; 16:26), we read that *Sha'ul* made a specific comment regarding the Gentiles. At the end of the letter, it was, in essence, a prayer, praying that the mystery of the Gospel, as revealed by the prophets, had been communicated to the Gentiles according to ADONAI's command to bring about in them "obedience of faith," in other words, obedience to the *Torah* because of their faith. He was an Apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 15:16) who spoke about fostering obedience to the commandments among the Gentiles who have placed their faith in Yeshua. *Sha'ul* taught that the saved should follow *Torah*.

As Solomon said, when the dust that was our bodies returns to the ground, our spirit returns to ADONAI. *Sha'ul* wrote, 6 *Therefore we are always confident and know that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 We are confident, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and at home with the Lord.* (2 Corinthians 5:6-8 TLV). We can offer other proof texts, but know that after death, we return to ADONAI's presence. Those who don't have a relationship with Yeshua go somewhere else to await the final judgment. The human spirit given by ADONAI is eternal, and the choice of where one spends eternity rests with the individual.

Being a committed follower of Yeshua isn't easy. As the greatest commandment (Matthew 22, Mark 12, Luke 10) implies, loving ADONAI with all our heart, mind, and strength means obeying His commands. The second greatest commandment commands us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. This includes our loving actions of help, giving, and moral support. When we are offended, He commands us to forgive. The symbolism of

Torah, the teaching and instruction of ADONAI, includes all this and more. Today, we live in an imperfect world, but the coming world is the perfect world of our King, *Yeshua HaMashiach*. Until that day arrives, we have received our marching orders. We are to be *Talmidim ShelYeshua*, His disciples walking in the life of the New Covenant, following His commandments to the best of our ability. And seeking to be continually filled with ADONAI's *Ruach* is our key to spiritual success. *Sha'ul* wrote, *18 And do not get drunk on wine, for that is recklessness. Instead, be filled with the Ruach, 19 speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your heart to the Lord— 20 always giving thanks for everything to God the Father, in the name of the Lord Yeshua the Messiah.* (Ephesians 5:18-20 TLV). The supernatural aspect of us- our spirit, ADONAI's *mikdash* within our *mishkan*, the Temple of our bodies- can receive more of ADONAI's Spirit. Being filled with the Spirit is not just about receiving the Spirit at salvation. It can also happen after salvation when we desire more of ADONAI's Spirit and ask Him for it. Having His Spirit is supernatural—the good kind. Some supernatural things are not good, and they are taking place in the bodies of many humans right now, as those bodies are occupied by demonic forces. We pray that those possessed by evil spirits and held captive by dark supernatural forces will be set free to trust in Yeshua as Savior and Messiah. But may we, those who have ADONAI's *Ruach HaKodesh* living in our *mikdash*, seek to follow Yeshua more fully, even as we seek to be holy as He is? *Shabbat shalom!*