



The ROOT and VINE Newsletter

Resources for Hebraic Understanding of Scriptures

ADAR 5779 (Feb-March 2019)

We believe in Yeshua as Mashiach (Messiah) and Son of the Living God and are passionate about sharing our faith and sharing our understanding of the Hebrew roots of our faith. We are grafted into the tree of Abraham, wild olive branches that wish to provide the resources to others that have helped us on this journey. We observe the Seventh day Shabbat and the Feasts of the Lord.

The Outpouring of the Ruach



The pouring out of the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) at Shavuot (Pentecost) in Acts 2 is considered by most to be entirely a Christian experience. Most will even state that it can only be considered in light of New Testament literature. I intend to show that not only was this event expected by the Old Testament writers, but that although many characteristics are unique to this event, it was an experience the writers of the Tanakh would have recognized from their traditions. I will also show that the outpouring carried a Biblical expectation upon the individual that received it that is related to the sign of the indwelling of the Ruach (Spirit). These details will stand in stark contrast to much of modern theology.

This discussion begins, however, with the outpouring of the *Ruach* in Acts 2 on Shavuot:

¹When the day of Shavuot had come, they were all together in one place. ²Suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³And tongues like fire spreading out appeared to them and settled on each one of them. ⁴They were all filled with the Ruach ha-Kodesh and began to speak in other tongues as the Ruach enabled them to speak out.

Peter explains this event later in verse 16:

¹⁶But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷“And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; ¹⁸even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

This event of the Acts 2 is related to a much earlier event; it is said that God gave Moses and the Children of Israel the Torah on Shavuot. Beginning in Exodus 19 counting days from the Passover and Exodus as scripture details it, the giving of the Torah would be very close to the day of Shavuot but it is impossible to know precisely whether it was Iyyar 6 or 7. Regardless, devout Jews today consider it to be the anniversary of the giving of the Law (Torah) to the Israelites. But for Messianic Jews, and many Gentiles, this day is also the anniversary of the outpouring of the Ruach, the filling of those that waited in the upper room in Acts 2, as quoted, with the power of the Holy Spirit. This filling enabled the apostles to fulfill their mission of spreading the good news of the Mashiach to the Jews and Gentiles in Judea, Samaria, and ultimately across the globe.

This act of the Ruach haKodesh was not a New Testament idea only. The Torah uses similar terms to describe the endowment of God’s Spirit on Joshua, Caleb, Bezalel, and Oholiab. In those examples, the Torah language calls to mind the idea that God’s Spirit can fill human beings like water can fill a jar (also Isaiah 44:3 and Zech 12:10). So this concept was not new.

Going further back into the Tanakh, if we compare the events in **Exodus 20** to the **Acts 2** experience of the apostles, there are striking similarities, enough for some authors, like Boaz Michael of First Fruits Of Zion (FFOZ), to call the **Acts 2** event a “second giving of

Torah.”

Did Yeshua’s disciples experience Shavu’ot as a second giving of the Torah? A well-known Midrash or Jewish commentary on the scripture, Shmot Rabbah “Great Exodus” 5:9, would answer, “Yes”. These rabbinic statements speak about the “words of fire” dividing into seventy languages as they left the mouth of God. They knew the story of God’s voice speaking to all mankind in every tongue. In this Midrash passage (not scripture but known to Disciples at the time of Acts 2), the Children of Israel not only heard the voice of the Lord on Mount Sinai but also saw a fiery substance emerge from the Lord as He spoke. It goes on to say that the Voice travelled around the camp and split into seventy voices/languages so all nations could understand. While this information is CERTAINLY NOT scripture, it was a tradition that was known at the time of the events of Acts 2. Those traditions gave significance to the miracles and signs and wonders that they experienced on Shavu’ot that year, the anniversary of the giving of the Torah.

So, why would anyone look for the events of Acts 2 as a fulfillment of prophecy to begin with? Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 36 answer that question:

³⁰ *“Behold, days are coming”—it is a declaration of ADONAI—“when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—³¹ not like the covenant I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they broke My covenant, though I was a husband to them.” it is a declaration of ADONAI. ³² “But this is the 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. ³³ No longer will each teach his neighbor or each his brother, saying: ‘Know ADONAI,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest.” it is a declaration of ADONAI. “For I will forgive their iniquity, their sin I will remember no more.”*

Here Jeremiah declares that the Torah will be written on the heart of the believer and they will “know” YHWH. The word for know is a form of “yada”, יָדָה, and relates to completely for intimately

knowing God. The second passage is from Ezekiel 36:

²⁴ *“For I will take you from the nations, gather you out of all the countries and bring you back to your own land. ²⁵ Then I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean from all your uncleanness and from all your idols. 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. ²⁸ Then you will live in the land that I gave to your fathers. You will be My people and I will be your God.*

This passage goes further than Jeremiah’s in that it says that God will put His *Spirit* within His people in order to cause them (the children of Israel in this context) to walk in His statutes and to obey His rules (Torah). Though Messiah has come and the outpouring and tongues of fire occurred, I believe these passages have only had a partial fulfillment to date as the children of Israel are not all walking in Torah and Israel is not occupying the entire land given by YHWH.

It is clear to me though that the writing of the Torah on the heart and the filling of one with the Holy Spirit are the same, or at the very least happen together. If the Spirit will “cause” the believer to obey God’s Torah, certainly it’s filling of the believer would do the same thing.

In Ezekiel’s passage the Spirit changes the heart from a “heart of stone” to “a heart of flesh” (Ezek 36:26). Jeremiah refers to the same essential thing with a different image when God speaks through him, “I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts and minds” (Jer 31:33). This is what Moses means when he says, “Circumcise then your heart, and stiffen your neck no more (Deut 10:16, 30:6, Lev 26:41; Jer 4:4; 6:10; 9:25–26; Ezek 44:7). Paul applies this to saving faith in Rom 2:28–29, where he refers to “circumcision is of the heart *by the Spirit*” (see also Phil 3:3; Col 2:11; and implied elsewhere, e.g., Eph 2:11). There is no “circumcision of the heart” without the work of the Spirit of God in the heart/spirit of the person involved. This is true no matter whether we are talking about the Old Testament (Tanakh) or the New (Brit Hadashah).

What is also clear from these passages is what Ezekiel states, that when the Spirit fills them and writes the Torah on their hearts, He will cause them to walk in His statutes. A popular syndicated Messianic Rabbi put it this way recently, *“If Yeshua could not break Torah and it is the Spirit of Messiah that resides in the believer, then if the Spirit is poured out upon a believer, that person will be compelled through the Spirit to obey Torah. Not because they try to obey Torah, but because the Spirit of God within them obeys Torah”*. That seems pretty simple to me – and logical. Are we vessels of the Holy Spirit? If yes, then can God’s Spirit do anything other than obey His own laws? When you think about it, it seems almost ridiculous that we need to have this discussion.

This outpouring of the Spirit does one other thing in writing Torah on our hearts - we will know Torah. Shortly after the scene in Acts 2 described above, we are treated to Peter speaking to the crowd and his linking this scene with Joel 2. He directly quotes the Joel 2 when describing the event to the crowd, Acts 2:17

“And it shall be in the last days,’ says God, ‘that I will pour out My Ruach on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams”.

Acts 3 Peter addresses the crowd in Solomon’s Portico quoting Torah. Acts 4, Peter and John address the Sanhedrin quoting Torah. Going on, there are other instances where these believers show they have an understanding of Torah that goes beyond their formal (or informal) education, indicating filling by the *Ruach*; indicating that the Torah has been written on their inward parts. It is clear that we need to be open to the idea that for God’s Spirit to be poured out upon the believer that they will be compelled by the Spirit to walk in His statutes and they will “know” (or “yada”) Torah.

One other set of points; when Paul, Peter, and others laid hands on new believers and they received the Holy Spirit, this also was a filling by the Spirit that caused the believer to walk in the Lord’s statutes, but those not knowledgeable of Torah (Gentiles) apparently still attended synagogue. This is why in Acts 15, the Jerusalem Council makes it clear that once the new

Gentile believers had obeyed the four restrictions, they needed to be going to Synagogue every Sabbath where they would hear Moses and the Prophets. It is assumed that they would do this, indeed they would be compelled to be in community with fellow believers. We are instructed seventeen times that the believers attended synagogue on Sabbath (Jew and Gentile) according to the scriptures.

It is evident that the prophets predicted, as was shown, that this outpouring would occur. Some even stated that the prophetic fulfillment would reflect the fire of the seventy languages that *tradition* says occurred. It certainly made many Jewish believers take note, not only that the tongues of flame appeared, but that the new believers walked in Torah and also knew it enough to explain it to others.

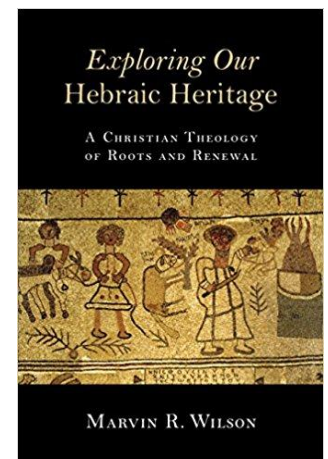
How about us? Today it seems that so many people claim to have been filled with the Ruach Hakodesh but yet have no desire to obey God’s commands. How can this be? I have met many that instinctively and humbly obey God’s instructions (and I believe have been filled) but have no direction to formally obey Torah because their leaders in the faith have told them it is of no concern. Do we expect God to baptize us with His Ruach Hakodesh while walking away from Torah? Does it grieve His Spirit within us when we choose, by the direction of our elders, to walk away from Torah? How much more could He be ready to pour out upon us by finding us willing vessels of His Instructions; to carry them and the Gospel of the Coming Kingdom to the various people groups of the world.

The next newsletter will feature an article on how this event of Acts 2 is linked to the similar events in Exodus.

Book of the Month

Exploring Our Hebraic Heritage: A Christian Theology of Roots and Renewal – Marvin Wilson

This book represents a sequel to Our Father Abraham and calls for the church to restore, renew, and protect its foundations by studying



and appreciating its origins in Judaism.

Designed to serve as an academic classroom text or for use in personal or group study, the book includes hundreds of questions for review and discussion.

Check out this and other resources in the **Books** section of therootandvine.com.

Esther

Normally, this is a section on Psalms but with Purim fast approaching, there is a body of information on Esther that I feel needs to be discussed as found on <https://discernmentzone.wordpress.com/2019/02/14/the-book-of-esther-a-septuagint-vs-masoretic-comparison/>. Check this site out for complete a listing of all affected text from the Book of Esther.

Esther is the only book in scripture that doesn't mention God directly, which is true if using the ubiquitous Masoretic translation. The majority of Bible translations, KJV, ESV, NIV, and others all have been translated using the Masoretic text.

However, if using the Septuagint, the book has many references to God, 25 by my reckoning. While the first verse in most Bibles reads "This is what happened in the days of Ahasuerus, the Ahasuerus who reigned over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia.", there are over 350 words before this in the Septuagint. In total, it is striking what was potentially removed by the Masoretes, over 2700 words. Both Esther and Mordecai's prayers have been removed. The people's fasting has been removed. Esther's mourning has been removed. Any and all mention of God has been removed. Entire books have been written on this.

Why was all of this material removed? All I have is speculation, but I think the logic adds up. During the time this text was compiled by the Masoretes, 400 to 700 AD (also in Babylon by the way, only 1000 years after Esther), Esther's prayer speaks of seeking a personal relationship with God and giving thanks when He helps her; seeking Him daily; the same with Mordecai's prayer. Usually, when Jews did this, they became Christians. I don't think it a stretch to think this had something to do with the removal of any reference to seeking God. There are other historical situations that probably bear considering as well.

When Esther is read in fellowship this Purim, consider reading from the Septuagint or at least studying it prior; it lends itself to the relationship that Yeshua tells us to seek with the Father.

Torah Living – Tzitzit

It seems like such a contentious topic among many believers today; are we supposed to live a Torah-observant life? The answer and reasoning is far simpler than we suppose. Yes, because God told us to.

Should believers in Yeshua wear Tzitzit today? I will not tell anyone that they *should* do anything. I will provide a few reasons why you perhaps should *consider it prayerfully* however.

First, Tzitzit are tassels worn on the corners of the shirt. They are described in Numbers 15

³⁷ ADONAI spoke to Moses saying, ³⁸ "Speak to them that they are to make for themselves tzitzit on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and they are to put a blue cord on each tzitzit. ³⁹ It will be your own tzitzit—so whenever you look at them, you will remember all the mitzvot of ADONAI and do them and not go spying out after your own hearts and your own eyes, prostituting yourselves. ⁴⁰ This way you will remember and obey all My mitzvot and you will be holy to your God. ⁴¹ I am ADONAI your God. I brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God. I am ADONAI your God."



Tzitzit are mention in the New Testament in Luke 8 although most don't realize it:

⁴³ And there was a woman with a blood flow for twelve years, who could not be healed by anyone. ⁴⁴ She came up from behind and touched the tzitzit of Yeshua's garment. Immediately, her blood flow stopped. ⁴⁵ Yeshua said, "Who touched Me?"

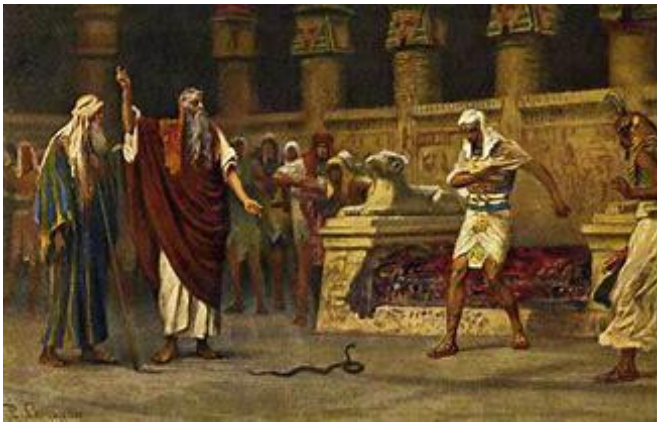
Many Bible versions will use "Hem", "edge", or "tassel" instead of *tzitzit* but this is precisely what the woman touched. It is due to this passage of scripture that we know Yeshua wore tzitzit.

These items are not to be worn because they impart anything to the wearer. They don't make anyone better or worse, they do not offer insight, and they do not provide that anyone is closer to salvation. As Numbers 15 says, they are simply to be worn as reminders only. However, if someone wears these, even if done properly, tzitzit, can offend orthodox Jews if the wearer is a Gentile that has not undergone proper conversion (a word of caution). Also, some will argue that this is only culturally for Jews, which is a debate I am willing to have but don't wish to get into here.

Scripture simply states that they are to be worn as a remembrance of the Torah, simple and straight forward. *We are to LOOK, REMEMBER, so that we may OBEY.* It is clear that this was a practice accepted by Yeshua and His disciples and never spoken against, so please consider including it in your daily walk of living out Torah. If you question something, whether it is a practice or just an interpretation of scripture, consult Adonai through prayer and through His Word.

Idioms and Phrases in Scripture – 2 Timothy

This will be a peculiar article. While reading this month, I came across a reference Sha'ul (Paul) made that turned an unexpected corner.



Paul cites Jewish tradition as history in 2 Timothy 3:8, "Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so do these people oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and worthless concerning the faith". Tradition states that Jannes and Jambres were the magicians referred to in Exodus 7:11-12 (Aram., Targum Jonathan) and this is certainly what the people reading his letter would have believed unless otherwise directed. Clearly we

must be careful with history and tradition, but where it illuminates scripture, it has reason to be *considered*. However, here we have Paul use the story as factual of these two Egyptian magicians. Jannes and Jambres apparently stood with the intention of defeating Moshe (Moses), but the True and Living God defeated them. Just so today, people oppose the truth, men of corrupted mind and worthless concerning the faith. Verse 9 goes on "But these people will not make any more progress—for their folly, like that of Jannes and Jambres, will be obvious to everyone." Sha'ul is referring to people that are in amongst us in the faith but in truth fight God and the truth. We are to stand firm and know that their folly will be exposed to everyone eventually.

The Targums go on to state that these two left with the Israelites as part of the mixed multitude and that they assisted in the building of the golden calf. Jannes is also directly mentioned in the writings of the 2nd Century BC Alexandrian Jewish scholar Artapanus. They had a long tradition of opposing God in these writings and that they were found out and God dealt with them most harshly and publicly.

Paul, in 2 Timothy, pulled knowledge directly from a Targum for practical use for all believers today by applying actual Biblical principles, showing the folly of opposing Adonai. Today, we must be careful when pulling information from Biblical traditions that are not referenced directly in scripture. Clearly, some are correct, but today so much false opinion and false facts have been interwoven with these texts that knowing the truth can be difficult.

Root and Vine Update

We have added sections under "Torah Living", new videos, new articles, new blog posts, and new resources. Also, we have begun a blog series based on the book *Feminine by Design* by John Garr.

Also, the "Kids" pages have been added to. Please check them out for some interesting information that is appropriate for kids.

Shalom!

