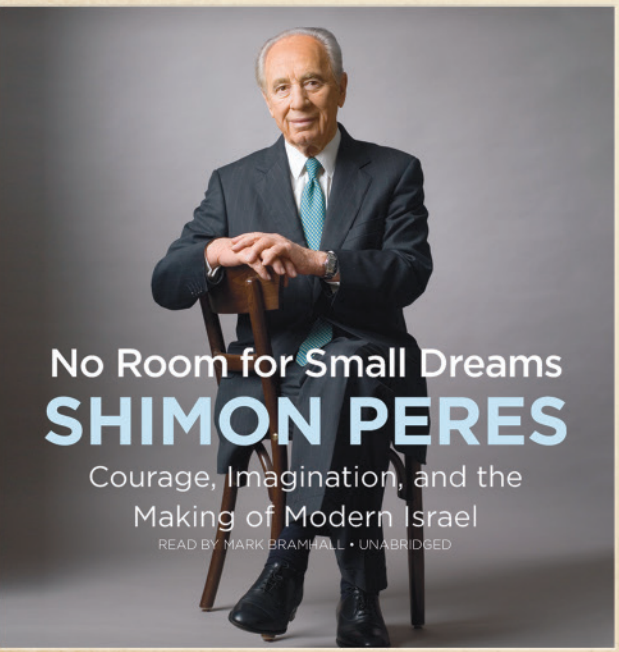
Oasis
Tents of Mercy Network of Congregations and Humanitarian Aid

NO ROOM FOR SMALL DREAMS

EITAN SHISHKOFF, Pastor Emeritus

Regardless of what you think of former Israeli President Shimon Peres' politics, his life story is a parable of the rebirth and the flourishing of modern Israel. Reading his autobiography, ***No Room for Small Dreams*** (London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2017), I am freshly inspired to plant my life in this miracle nation.

Peres was born in Poland in 1923, into a family whose dream was to live in Zion. He arrived in pre-state Israel in 1934. During his youth Peres was shaped by the rugged demands of kibbutz agriculture and was one of the founders of Kibbutz Alumot, overlooking the Sea of Galilee. During his more than seventy years of public service, this man's accomplishments encompassed the fields of defense, technology, economy and national politics. His roles included serving as Prime Minister. Shimon Peres continued to actively serve his nation until his passing at age 93 on September 28, 2016.



His life story inspires me through statements like these:

"...we were all keenly aware that we were part of a mission—something far bigger than ourselves." (p.14)

"...rather than run from the challenge, I fully embraced it." (p.39)

"Never once, in our two thousand years of exile, had there been a more ambitious dream for our people than the dream to return home." (p. 43-44)

"And yet I knew that we would never achieve great things if we let austerity become an obstacle to audacity. To build a stronger, more prosperous state, we had to set our gaze higher than our temporary limitations." (p.60)

With determination, perseverance, sacrifice, intelligence and ever-guided by an optimistic vision for the future, Peres helped forge this nation—bringing us from the trauma of rebirth before statehood, through warfare that challenged our very existence as a country, through tackling hyper-inflation as a struggling economy in the 1980s, into our current place as a young/ancient nation resurrected and blooming both agriculturally and technologically.

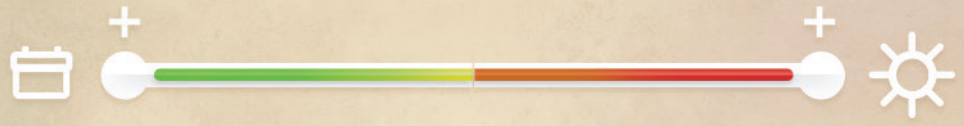
Pioneers still greatly needed!

We may now be a highly developed nation, on par with Western European societies, but there is still a need for a Peres-like approach of "building for the future." This Zionist pioneer, had the "faith" to assist in Israel's miraculous rebirth, even without believing in the God of Israel. How much more then, can we envision a bold faith view of what "can be." This is profoundly true for us as Messianic Jews and all followers of Yeshua who grasp His unabated love for Israel and for all mankind. May we be fueled with passion to set in motion the dynamics of faith—declaring and living for those things that are not yet, as though they are (Hebrews 11:1).

There is so much more God intends to do in our generation here and globally. Here, we are back in the "land," but not yet fully alive in the Spirit (Ezekiel 37:8). Strengthening, refreshing, equipping, and empowering the body of believers in this land is a high priority. As we intercede and give ourselves to the coming of Yeshua's Kingdom, I believe that we are following in the footsteps of both the Zionist pioneers and the heroes of faith recorded in Scripture.

"And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us" (Hebrews 12:39, 40).

It is said of Abraham, the father of us all, that **"He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform"** (Romans 4:20, 21). ●



Recharged Batteries & Renewed Perspectives

AVI & HANNAH TEKLE

HUGE SALE – 70% off!!

This was the bait that enticed two tired parents from their home late at night. We had gone out after putting the kids to bed to try to score at a local clothing store. Despite the promise of good deals, it turned out to be one of those frustrating shopping trips. No matter how hard we looked, we couldn't find anything.

Feeling a bit foolish and defeated we got into our car to drive home. As we left the nearly-empty parking lot, a man beside a car with the hood up was flagging us down. We nearly kept driving but stopped to help him almost as an afterthought.

It turned out he had been waiting with a drained battery for over an hour for someone to stop and help him. His face beamed with relief and gratitude as we positioned the car and hooked up the cables. It took just a few moments to rescue him from his predicament and he thanked us profusely. As we drove away we couldn't help feeling that we had gone to the shopping center with our own purpose in mind, but that apparently God had a different purpose for us to be there right then.

So often we get stuck looking at life through the lens of our own narrow experience: success or failure, hope or frustration, courage or fear. What a gift it would be to have more moments in life when we see what God sees, when we release the grip on our own perspective to allow the Creator of the Universe to perform a "zoom out" and show us His perspective.

In Israel, the summer months can be pretty draining!

Those of you who live in a desert climate can relate. The six months between Passover and the Fall High Holidays can seem like forever. The heat is merciless and the memory of rain and cool weather seem like a dream. Even the small hardship of managing in the heat of the summer can make everything else seem more challenging.

Then there are the very real life-altering challenges that some of our community members are dealing with – learning how to live life as a widow with small children, walking through breast cancer and chemotherapy, major financial challenges, an undesired divorce, a disease that the doctors cannot diagnose, not making it into the army unit you dreamed of and worked so hard for.

In the Psalms of Lament King David showed us that we can cry and grieve and call out to our Heavenly Father in full honesty and exploration of our hearts' emotion. But he also showed us that from the depths of the pit of despair when we lift up our eyes to our Maker He can draw us up to stand on solid ground.

In Jeremiah 29:11 we read, **"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."**

Wherever you are, no matter what challenge you face, whether big or small, we pray that you will lift up your eyes to your Maker, allow Him to show you His perspective, allow Him to recharge your batteries and allow Him to give you a hope and a future.

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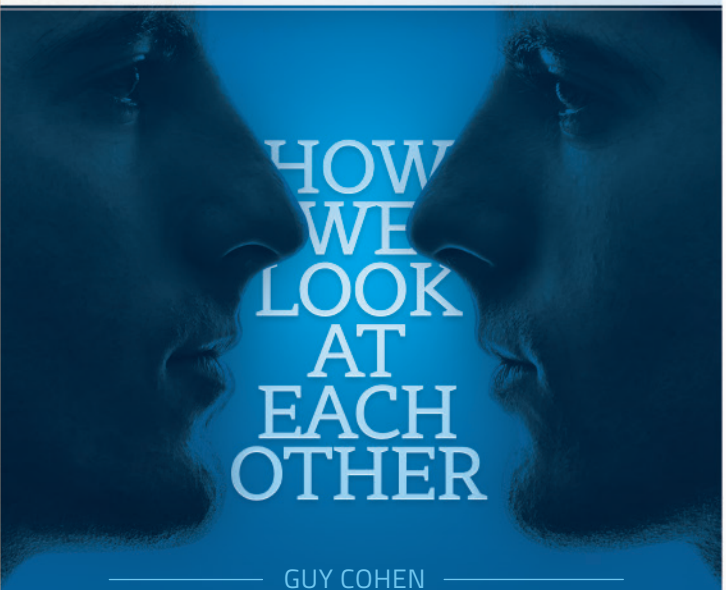

HOW WE LOOK AT EACH OTHER

GUY COHEN

Matthew 5 gives an account of when Yeshua addressed a large crowd of people on the Mount of Beatitudes. He proclaimed:

**"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**Blessed are those who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.**

**Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.**

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."

He spoke of the motivation of the heart, how not to look to the things of this earth but to heavenly things. Yeshua is an embodiment of this heart attitude.

He walked among us, fully man and fully God, yet He acknowledged the worth of each person, viewing everyone without condescension. He encouraged those who recognized their own need, while rebuking those who were puffed up with pride and self-accomplishment.

He still looks upon the heart of each person, not on their outward appearance. God does not play favorites. He is not biased toward poor or rich, young or old, man or woman, tall or short, dark or light.

We need to live on this earth without looking down on anyone, but instead seeing the value of all as Yeshua did. We need to see each other with His eyes – filled with love and compassion for all mankind.

A Tweet from Guy

"SHORESH"

EVGENI STANUKEVICH

"Shoresh" is a Hebrew word that means "root."

"Shoresh" is a theological study course for young people, ages 20 and up. The goal of this study program is to help disciple the next generation of leaders and servants in the Messianic body in Israel, for those who identify themselves as Messianic, Jewish, and Israeli.

Identity and self-determination is very important for those who want to serve God. The understanding of who we are, our calling, what we should do and what happens around us, is very important to young servants and leaders.

God is searching for servants who are strong in his word and are deeply rooted in their identity in Him. Strong deep roots bear healthy fruit!

"The root of the righteous gives forth of itself" (Proverbs 12:12).

We recently finished the first three month long Root course. God touched the hearts of many Messianic teachers in Israel, and they volunteered their time to teach and equip the young with tools of knowledge.

Our goal was not only to study the Word of God but also to let the Holy Spirit lead us. Twice a week, 12 students from all over Israel came together to study, starting each lesson with worship and prayer.

There was a great variety of teachers and topics. The topics included: the roots of the Bible; the history of Israel; the Jewish Nation; the history of Messianic Judaism; Jesus the Jew; restoration of Israel; unity between Jews and Gentiles.

In addition to the studies, a prophetic "workshop" course was added. It was a great combination of the written Word and the Spirit. Students learned about the moving of the Holy Spirit, the significance of prayer and worship and how to listen to God prophetically (Numbers 11:29).

It was a great time of studying and discussions.

Shoresh is a joint project of *"Return to Zion"* and *"Revive Israel"* ministries. The idea first came from the month-long Eagle Project in which young people can take their first step in studying the Word and feeling the movement of the Spirit. Shoresh is the next natural step in growing and learning.

"ושרש צדיקים ימוט" משלי י"ב:ג'

We are currently reviewing participant feedback and evaluating our experiences in order to improve the program and move forward with the next course this coming autumn.

RETURN TO ZION
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The Authority of the Hebrew Bible

DANIEL C. JUSTER

Questioning the Value of the Old Testament

Today, we are dealing with a significant problem in theology. Much of the theology is being taught to believers by preaching media stars and church leaders whom I would call low information preachers. They may have charisma, and they can hold a crowd well, but sometimes they say outlandish and even heretical things. Some of the most glaring examples are statements claiming that the "Old Testament" no longer applies to us or that it is irrelevant for New Covenant Christians. One such preacher even said that he put a sword through the Old Testament to be free from it. The error is even more glaring in the light of the numerous assertions in the New Testament of the authority and value of the Hebrew Bible. One has to ask if these preachers ever had one course helping them to understand the Hebrew Bible and its application to the New Covenant era. I doubt it. Of course, gaining insight into the Torah and the ritual system of the Tabernacle is much more challenging than gaining insight into the love chapter of I Corinthians 13. Yet these writings can be understood and applied. It is important to do so.

The New Testament's Teaching on the Authority of the Hebrew Bible

The Teaching of Yeshua

In Matthew 5:17-18 we read, **"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter or the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."** Yeshua then goes on in the rest of the chapter to show how the Torah is applied in the New Covenant.

The Teaching of Paul

Speaking of the Hebrew Scriptures, Paul tells us in II Timothy 3:16-17 that all Scripture is **"God breathed," and is "profitable for doctrine, reproof and for training in righteousness."** He urges Timothy (and us) to study these Scriptures in order to demonstrate that we are proper workmen who can rightly handle the word of God (2:15). What sort of a workman starts by throwing more than two-thirds of the "materials" away? I wouldn't want to live in a house built by such a workman!

In Romans 15:4, Paul tells us that the Hebrew Bible was written to **"teach us so that through endurance and encouragement of the Scriptures, we might have hope."** In 16:26 we read that what has been revealed to us now has been **"made known by the prophetic writings by the eternal command of God so that all nations might believe in him."**

Peter's Statement

Peter echoes this and says that the Scriptures came not by the will of men, but that men spoke as they were carried along by the Spirit (II Peter 1:20).

Summary

And we can go on and on. We really cannot understand the New Testament without the Hebrew Scriptures. Indeed, much of the New Testament is interpretation and re-application of the Hebrew Bible. So much of God's future plan for world redemption and peace is in the Hebrew Bible. When the Apostles were teaching, there was no New Testament; they relied on the Hebrew Bible. In fact, the entire Early Church was made up of "Old Testament Only" Christians!

The current statements against the Old Testament are reminiscent of a false teaching in the 2nd century A.D. called Marcionism which was condemned in Church History. It is again time to correct this false teaching and restore the authority of the Hebrew Bible. ●